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THE MINISTER

W. W. STALEY



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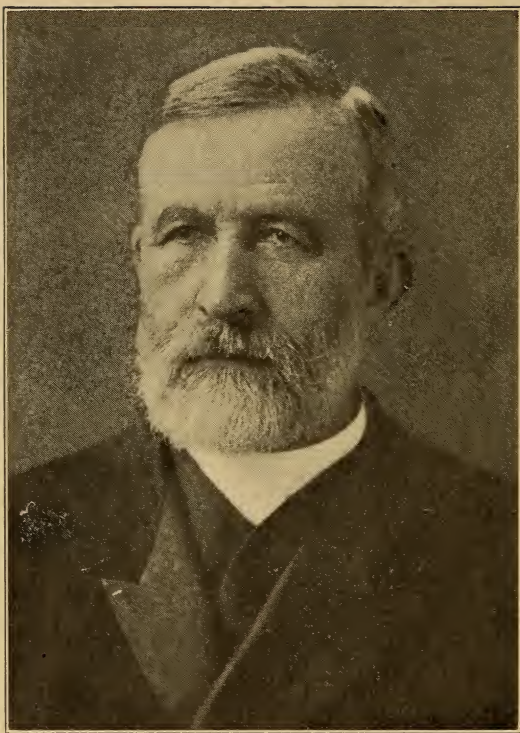
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W. W. STALEY, D. D.

# THE MINISTER

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## *A Series of Five Addresses*

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By REV. W. W. STALEY, D. D., LL. D.

Pastor of Suffolk, Virginia, Christian Church, Since 1882

Delivered at "The Seaside Chautauqua and School of Methods,"  
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D. D., Pastor of the People's Church,  
Dover, Delaware

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## CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION - - - - - 5

### CHAPTER ONE.

THE MINISTER IN HIS STUDY - - - 9

### CHAPTER TWO.

THE MINISTER IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE - - 23

### CHAPTER THREE.

THE MINISTER IN HIS PULPIT - - - 37

### CHAPTER FOUR.

THE MINISTER IN HIS PARISH - - - 53

### CHAPTER FIVE

THE MINISTER IN HIS COMMUNITY - - 67



## INTRODUCTION

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THESE addresses on the Christian Ministry are unique in their combination of comprehensiveness and condensation. They are replete with suggestion, adequate in conception, and forthright and epigrammatic in expression. After reading these addresses many far more pretentious volumes will suffer by comparison. It has been my good fortune to hear this subject discussed by those who were themselves models of the preacher's sublime art. It was my privilege to hear these addresses, and in my humble opinion they are, in some very important respects, superior to any previous deliverances on this great theme.

I desire particularly to commend the style here employed. There is no rhetorical splurge or garish display. Too much color is as suspicious in composition as in complexion. Here

is strength rather than sheen; force rather than flare. There are no trick phrases, no artful alliterations, no startling antitheses, and no attempt to cover deficiencies in thought and argument with the gloss of verbal veneer. Brevity, clarity, simplicity, are here combined with the deepest reflections and the most striking and appropriate forms of expression and illustration. In scholarship, mental poise, intuitive perception, terse and luminous phraseology, the author is one of the best-equipped men to conduct such a series of didactic addresses for the benefit of young preachers.

The author has exalted his theme. The preacher is here presented in his call, his preparation, his mission, his message, his methods of study and work, his personal Christian experience, and his private and public life. One is surprised to find so much included, and so little omitted, in a volume of this size. May God speed it upon its carer of usefulness and make it a blessing and inspiration to those for whom it is intended.

A. W. LIGHTBOURNE.

Dover, Delaware.

CHAPTER ONE



IN HIS STUDY



## THE MINISTER IN HIS STUDY

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“**I** WILL stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.” (Hab. 2:1.) Habakkuk wanted to know God’s message for men through him; and that is the high privilege and plain duty of all ministers. His Study is the “watch-tower,” the “Holy of Holies” where Shekinah glory illumines his soul with visions and messages. Paul exhorts ministers to “study to show themselves approved unto God; workmen that need not be ashamed.” This suggests “a study;” and this study is the mint where his gold is coined. Here he broods over kingdom-questions, weighs soul-interests, meditates upon eternal destinies, and prepares for assaults upon the citadels of wrong.

The minister’s study is larger than the room that contains his books and in which he com-

## THE MINISTER

munes with God in prayer. His study includes all subjects, all worlds, all peoples, all ages, and all of God's plans for redemption. His horizon is larger than that line where earth and sky seem to meet and mark the limits of the world. There is no line of truth that may not run into his fountain of knowledge. If he confines himself within the walls of his study, he will be narrow and contracted; yet he should have such a study; and it should be the hotbed of his garden, the arsenal of his warfare, the pilot-house from which he looks over the sea of humanity and steers the ship of Zion.

In his study books should be examined, great minds consulted, information gathered, problems solved, and inspiration received for the duties of his calling. Richlieu says "that all great things are done in silence." Pilgrim's Progress was born in Bedford jail; and some of Paul's great epistles were written in a Roman prison. But the minister should not use the forms in which he finds truth stored in books outside of the Bible. He should reduce all



## IN HIS STUDY

reading in the mill of his own mind to such fineness that it is meal and not corn. He should break up the crystallized thought of others as workmen break up granite and mix with sand and cement to manufacture concrete. They make a new substance out of old material, and the minister can do the same. He can use books, sermons, comments, magazines, and the Bible; but he dare not copy them. He must make concrete all his own. He may create new archways that will sustain the tonnage of a nation's thought. He can rightly divide the word of truth.

The study is not a place for rest or ease; but a place of prayer, research, testing, decision, creation. Like the camp of the Romans the work here is twice as heavy as on the field. Here all the past, all the future, and all the live questions of the present, converge in the minister's mind like sun-rays in the sunglass. Here his mind and heart mature in the silence and deep reflections of his soul. Here is the place of growth. All growth is under hidden

## THE MINISTER

conditions. The germination of seed, the development of rootlets, real contact with soil and air, the forces that enter into life and burst out into flower and fruit, all work in silence and in darkness. Here self and God are discovered in their holiest relations, and character is crystallized in the quiet of the study. Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, as he paced his palace floor: "Is not this great Babylon that *I* have built?" "But the kingdom departed from him." The woman who was healed said "within herself"—within the secret chambers of her own soul—"If I may but touch His garments I shall be healed." The explosion in Vera Cruz was the result of the quiet loading of the shell in the factory. The Panama Canal was worked out by the engineer, and an act of Congress, before the thousands of tons of earth were removed and two oceans met and kissed each other at the cost of nearly four hundred millions.

What sort of a man must the minister be in his study? Sincerity and self-surrender to God should characterize the minister in his study.

## IN HIS STUDY

His heart must be engaged as well as his head. He must not only seek after human wisdom, but spiritual inspiration. He is not working out science, he is seeking a message from God. The mineral wealth of the world was fashioned in the quiet recesses of the mountains or underneath the rocks of the plains long before the mines were opened or the iron was wrought into use. The Bessemer process fashions the steel rails that glisten across a continent and bear the tonnage of an empire. The chick comes forth after those brooding weeks of the mother, the most trying and exhausting of her life. It is brooding over the thoughts in the library, in the study, that brings forth new ideas to move mankind to Jesus Christ and a new life. Ideas are not born in the crowd. Great thoughts are born in solitude. Jesus retired from the multitude to prepare Himself for great service and ministers can do no less. He spent most of that time in prayer. Napoleon spent whole nights in his tent mapping out his plans for battles and campaigns. Napoleon did not depend on the

## THE MINISTER

inspiration of the occasion to win battles. He worked out his plans in his tent. The minister ought to study the map of his own work, of his own country, of Bible lands, and of the whole world. This will give him a vision of missions and fire his heart with a zeal according to knowledge. The field is the world and the minister ought to know the field. Geography is close to the Bible. It is "The Land and the Book."

The study is the place of prayer. There is no harder work than prayer; it is easier to read than to pray; but prayer is of more importance than reading. Jesus spent whole nights in prayer. Prayer was the only exercise that drew from Him drops of blood. Prayer engages the whole being and it is the only effort that does. Study puts us in touch with all that is material and human; prayer puts us in touch with the spiritual and divine. Paul and Silas prayed at midnight, in the Philippian jail, and the Roman prison trembled and the doors opened; and the jailer trembled and opened his heart to

## IN HIS STUDY

let the Savior in. Thought touched the mine under the last ledge of rock in the Panama Canal, by an electric wire from Washington, and opened the isthmus between two great seas; but it was the power of God that turned the Nile into blood and opened the Red Sea to set a nation at liberty. Moses got out of trouble every time by resorting to prayer. It was not his eloquence but his faith that made him the emancipator of millions. The world is slow to learn that knowing the truth sets men free. Daniel's habit of prayer was a power greater than the king's decree, and the lion's den could do him no harm. It was that quiet prayer chamber in Jerusalem that witnessed the noise and tongues of fire and, later, the conversion of three thousand souls. The scales never fell from Saul's eyes till he prayed; the prayer-chamber is the dark room where the image of Jesus Christ is developed in the soul. It is in this chamber where the care of the church weighs heavily upon his whole being, where the factious spirit among members clamors for

## THE MINISTER

solution; where poverty cries from rags, huts, and domestic broils; where pride and ambition look in upon him with vulgar eyes; where shame threatens his church; and lynx-eyed jealousies and complaints fret his being so that he cannot study. Then his only resource is prayer. He must have a new sense of God's help; that "His grace is sufficient." There is no book on church methods that can tell him how to deal with these grave problems. He must get divine help not only for himself, but for those lives that fret his own. It was fasting and prayer that saved Esther, and the Jews in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces in the empire of Ahasuerus; it was prayer that held out the golden scepter and granted the queen's request. The study is the altar where the minister offers his sacrifices, makes his vows, communes with God, and renews his strength. The spirit said to Ezekiel, "Go, shut thyself up within thy house \* \* \* \* but when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord." 3:24-27.

## IN HIS STUDY

There are times when the minister must retire, and keep silence, till God unlooses his tongue and puts words into his mouth and power in the words. His study is his waiting place for orders and a message.

He stands between the living and the dead. His library is peopled from the past—Abraham, Moses, Elias, Paul, Luther, Elizabeth, Mary, Florence Nightingale, Victoria—a multitude which no man can number, who have come up through great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Moses and Elias appeared with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration; a mighty host surrounds me in my library. Peter, James, and John did not see as much nor hear as much as the minister in his library. Jesus is here, too, in the Bible and by the Spirit. There are more people in my library than in my church. They speak to me, they kindle the fires of my imagination, they quicken my faith, humble my pride, rebuke my wrong-doing and wrong-thinking, warn me against sin, and point my

## THE MINISTER

soul to the living Christ. I find tombs with angles, deserts with fountains, gardens with Saviors, prisons with praises, and crosses with crowns. Above the roar of the tempest, the flap of the split sails, the creak of the breaking timbers, and the cry of endangered men, I hear Jesus say: "Peace, be still." I hear Nebuchadnezzar say: "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God." I hear Paul in the midst of darkness and the raging sea, say, "There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not." The past is a mighty host, their thought, faith, love, and lives still speaking to our own. The library is a transfiguration scene, crowning lofty summits, silently and sweetly speaking to the minister so as to inspire him with renewed strength and satisfaction that arms him for the good fight of faith. Beyond this teeming past are the living millions moving to and fro, loving and hating, helping and hindering, neglecting age,



## IN HIS STUDY

crushing childhood, desecrating the Sabbath, greedily preying upon their fellows, preparing for war and killing the flower of the age. The study should be the tower from which the minister looks out upon this age of living humanity, with all of its progress, religious movements, charity institutions, educational forces, its pleasure-loving and pleasure-seeking peoples, that he may come forth with a message of rebuke for sin, of hope for the despondent, and life for the lost. The minister should seek to interpret the present age in the light of the gospel and past civilizations. From his study as a tower, he should get his vision of mankind and God and then go forth to preach salvation to a sinning world. His sermon should be a message from God, supported by His word, fired by His Spirit, and delivered in the spirit of love. Lectures and tirades may have their place on the platform, but they should not come from the minister's study in place of a message from God. His study is the mint for purer gold.



CHAPTER TWO



IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE



## THE MINISTER IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

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**T**HE Minister is a distinct personality from the personality of the MAN. Jesus was a man; but He was more than a man; he was the Son of God. He said and did much as a Son that He could not have done as a man. As God manifest in the flesh He said: "I am the light of the world." As a man He said: "I am a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Two distinct personalities were in Jesus Christ. Two distinct personalities are in the minister. He is a Man and a Minister. Jesus was man last. He descended from the highest to the lowest; the minister ascends from the lowest to the highest. Minister is higher than man, though man is only a "little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor." The minister is more than a man, and, therefore, he should be more in his personal life than a

## THE MINISTER

man. His ministerial personality should represent his high calling.

The chief thing in the gospel dispensation is the personality of Jesus. "*I am the truth.*" "*Come unto me.*" "*He that believeth on me.*" "*This is my son.*" The cross stands for the "*crucified one.*" The old dispensation was legal, ceremonial, sacrificial, and symbolical; but, in the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son. The personal element in the gospel is the vital force in salvation. No matter what the theological concept of this personality may be, the spirit of Christianity would disappear, if this personal Savior were left out of the equation of salvation. This same personal element is involved in salvation. "*Son, daughter, give me thy heart,*" *i. e.*, *thyself.*

Jesus distinctly says, "*As the Father hath sent me, so have I sent you.*" That must include a personal ministry. Pulpit ministrations are only one function of the minister. His personal life is the largest thing in his ministry. His personal character, habits, influence, attain-

## IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

ments, constitute the largest value in his ministry. In gunnery the rule is, that the gun should be a hundred times the weight of the projectile. In preaching the minister should be a hundred times weightier than his message. Jesus was always larger than His message or His miracle. What He *did* was never as large as what He *was*. No wonder Jesus spent thirty years in preparation and only three years in His public ministry. The most important thing in a minister is to prepare *himself*. We are all conscious that our ministerial weakness is in ourselves and not in the gospel. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Yet we know that we are slow and weak and do not reach the hearts of men. Our sermons are often better than ourselves. The need of the age is not good sermons, but good ministers. We are wise enough but not harmless enough. We

## THE MINISTER

have not fully appreciated the importance of ourselves in the ministry. The personal value appears most plainly in the personal fall of a minister. A brilliant ministry may collapse in the personal indiscretion of the minister. The majesty and glory of the ministry of Jesus was in His spotless personality. They attacked His teaching but found no fault in His personal life.

The least attention is given to personal training, though most important of all. Literary and theological training are stressed in school and before committees, while personal life is left to the result of forces that work without direction. The minister's normal habits are the indexes to his real character as expressed in his outward life. Whatever others may do he is not at liberty to indulge in games that waste time and contain no element of recreation. Keeping busy in good service satisfies the public mind and his own conscience. His habits should express his interest in people and in the gospel. "On the job" is a modern phrase that expresses what the public demands. No one



## IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

objects to recreation and the minister might well take one day out of seven as his day of rest. Saturday or Monday seem to be the natural days from which to make his selection. He must cultivate the habit of sincerity among the people. There is no room for specials; he must indulge in no hard feelings; his normal attitude must be that of impartiality. His disposition must not be churlish. He must not be grouchy. While he should be pleasant, he must not drop below the dignity of his high calling in Christ Jesus.

Dress is more important in personal life than people imagine. Dress indicates stages in human progress. Trace British progress from the time when naked savages lined the shores of the British Isles till the present time and it will appear that dress is no mean part of that empire's greatness. Even in our own day savagery appears in our dress without the virtue that goes with savage stages of society. The tendency downward always appears in the fashion plates and the styles that force police-

## THE MINISTER

men to arrest women on the streets. The minister and even his family must set a standard of modest dress that common judgment approves. The minister himself must strike a medium ground in dress as well as other personal habits; he must not dress in too clerical a fashion, and he must not put himself in the class with the dude, the sport, or society man. Simplicity, neatness, comfort, should characterize his dress. Gay colors, latest cuts, jaunty style, are out of place. Spotless linen is always in taste and a personal asset for the minister. Moreover the minister must not be led into the danger of "gay clothing." Jas. 2:3. His dress and his manner will go together and both should be inconspicuous.

Business enters into the minister's life as well as all others. Here is a field of danger and opportunity. His life should be exemplary in this field as well as others. Business with the minister should come to him, in the necessities of domestic life, and church enterprises. He should not court business nor seek wealth;

## IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

but in all his business duties he should be honest and fair in his dealings. It is a mistake for ministers to think they must keep pace with the styles and luxuries of the age. If possible, debt must be avoided. It is the peril of all men, but especially of the minister. Men will overlook almost everything sooner than an unpaid bill. His example here will mean much to the community. There is no better place for the minister to "deny himself and take up his cross" than here. He needs clothes, he needs books, he needs furniture, he needs food for his family. He is tempted to get them. Anybody will trust him till he quits paying. Remember Jesus "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:7. It was this self-denial that made Jesus; though He "had not where to lay His head." The combination of personal poverty, decency, honesty, and manhood, is the most valuable asset in the minister's life. Nowhere has a rich and stylish minister been of great value. "They left all

## THE MINISTER

and followed Him'' is the greatest comment on the early apostles. We are not doing it now; but we ought to do it. The world never needed it more than at the present. Crowns bejewelled above the British crown in the tower of London await the families of ministers who live with him in the plain and simple life that helps the poor to be honest as well as pious. Extravagance is one of the dangers to religion of this age, and the minister's personal life counts for more than pastoral visit or sermon in this danger field. Extravagance in expenditures leads to extravagance in every line of life. Those who overspend will overspeak—overlive—and overpromise. No minister can preach with the incubus of debt upon him, nor with his family leading in the fashions of the day; downright honesty crowns learning, piety, and personal character. The minister cannot excel in business, or luxury, or even learning; his only field is to excel in personal life; and here is the field of largest opportunity to represent Jesus Christ.

## IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

The minister is no less a social being than other men and his associations and affiliations will enter into his value among men. Jesus attended places of worship, funerals, marriage feasts, dinners, and suppers in private homes, and entered into the social life of His day, with all the ardor and sincerity of His nature. Ministers may follow His example in all the relations that represent the real life of their age; but their ministerial value is reduced when they seek popularity through doubtful associations in social entertainments, political contests, or sporting games. Paul entered the theater, but not as a spectator; "when the city was filled with confusion, they caught Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, and rushed them into the theater. When Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not." Acts 19:29, 30. The minister need not spend all his strength in war on dancing, card-playing, and theater-going from his pulpit; but his social life must be a rebuke to all wrong-doing and an example for all sane living.

## THE MINISTER

No rule can be fixed for his social relations except he must not subject himself to adverse criticism by the pious nor be used as an excuse by the godless. Jesus identified himself with no sects, held Himself aloof from no class, lived worthy of the imitation of all and taught purity of speech, purity of thought, and love unfeigned. The minister may exercise his political rights as a citizen, but should avoid partizan controversies and associations, lest he divide the flock. His patriotism should never obscure his Christianity and his political views should not destroy his spiritual influence over men. His personal rights and ministerial duties do not conflict; but in all social relations his ministerial obligations are the largest of all. Paul was a great scholar, and a great Roman, but he was greatest as a minister. "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." Phil. 3: 8. Political, educational, and reformatory opportunities should have no attraction for the real minister of Christ. There may be ministers called to these fields; let

## IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE

every minister weigh that question well. Paul exhorts Timothy not to participate in "other men's sins" in the selection of ministers. He would thereby adopt the sins he overlooked. Then Paul exhorts him, "Keep thyself pure." The personal life of the minister is the real asset in his ministry. The winebibber cannot teach temperance, the fornicator virtue, the debtor honesty, the spendthrift economy, nor the despondent man hope. The gospel runs through the minister as the city water through the earth and its purity will be determined by the minister's life. Amos came from the vineyard; Elisha from the plow; Peter from the fishing smack; Matthew from the receipt of custom; and Paul from the office of a persecutor; but they all represented personalities of great strength and loyalty to Jesus Christ. The schools cannot make ministers; they can only educate them. We think of armies, navies, and forts as our national defenses; but the real strength of the nation is in the shops, stores, fields, schools, churches, and homes of the

## THE MINISTER

interior where the arts of peace move on in regular activities, and souls fill temples with quiet praises. It is not the outward utterances from pulpit and platform that represent the real power of the ministry; but away back in the domain of his inner thought and affection, where character is crystallized and life is fashioned, that the minister becomes mighty in influence over men. The wealth of the world is not in the rumbling volcano sending forth smoke and fire; but in the quiet mountains where God fashioned the coal, the iron, the lead, and the gold. The volcano attracts the reporter, the mine the investor. Ministers need not court popularity nor the applause of multitudes; let them, rather, furnish thought, example, devotion, and character worthy of approbation and imitation. Men who have undertaken to give us the ministry of Christ have called their writings "The Life of Christ." All biography follows this example. It is "The Life of Cromwell," "The Life of George Washington," "The Life of Luther," "The Life" should be the largest, the best thing of the minister.



CHAPTER THREE



IN HIS PULPIT



## THE MINISTER IN HIS PULPIT

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**T**HE minister's study and personal life enter into his pulpit ministrations as seed and cultivation enter into the harvest. The pulpit is not the place where sermons are made, but the place of their delivery. The minister in his pulpit is more than preacher, though that is his chief function. In his pulpit he is the leader of devotion, the director of worship, the representative of all the activities of the congregation. The prayers, the reading of the Scripture, the music, the attention and reverence of the people, all enter into the ministrations of the pulpit. The minister in his pulpit is the conductor of all forces that pray, sing, preach, offer gifts, and worship.

Old Testament preachers had messages from God to the people. Jonah was instructed to "preach unto Nineveh the preaching that *I* bid

## THE MINISTER

thee." 3:2. The prophets were preachers of righteousness to the people. John the Baptist preached after long retirement and great preparation. Jesus Himself spent most of His life in preparation for His brief ministry. Pulpit is used once in the Bible. "Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and Ezra opened the book." Neh. 8:4, 5. John and Jesus spoke often in the open and Jesus used Peter's boat for a pulpit. The pulpit now stands for the whole ministry of the Kingdom. The minister, in his pulpit, stands at the center of his ministry. What he utters there determines his value in the kingdom. Here the public hears him, weighs him, and renders its verdict.

The minister should be himself in his pulpit. He is neither an actor nor an elocutionist. He should not try to ape other ministers in thought, manner, or style. His own individuality is the only usable quantity for the Holy Spirit. Unless God utters a message through Him that could not be uttered by any other, he is self-

## IN HIS PULPIT

deceived or a deceiver. His personality is nowhere more conspicuous or more potent than in his pulpit. You may not be able to define the strength of his ministry. You cannot tell whether it is in the man or the message. It is really in both; and the one would be powerless without the other. The name of Paul is powerful. He was a distinct personality touching not only his own time, but all times. The printing press cannot eliminate the minister, gigantic as the printing press is. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed." 1 Cor. 1:21. Paul says: "My preaching was not with enticing words but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." 1 Cor. 2:4. Preaching differs from all other human utterances in the source of the message and the character of the minister. Scientific or historic truth may be found and delivered without reference to the character of the author. An orator may portray great historic characters or events and be an atheist; but a sermon must be uttered by clean lips. It is this high quality

## THE MINISTER

of character that makes the pulpit stand for all that is purest, highest, and holiest. Job asked: "Who can bring an unclean thing out of an unclean?" "Not one." Isaiah speaks of himself as a man of unclean lips, dwelling among a people of unclean lips. Then he speaks of a seraphim bringing a live coal from the altar and laying it upon his mouth saying: "This hath touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged." Then Isaiah was prepared to say: "Send me." The pulpit is not so much a place as a ministry. In coining money the metal must be of a certain fineness, a standard required by government. It must have the stamp of the nation that coins it. "Whose image and superscription is this?" The mint is the coining and stamping agency of government. The minister is called of God and ordained by the Spirit. In his pulpit he is himself called and ordained to this high office of preaching. No human society can make ministers. Counterfeiters never use pure metal, and man-made ministers are spurious

## IN HIS PULPIT

because man is not clothed with authority to call men into the ministry. Amos says: "As I followed the flock, the Lord said unto me, Go prophesy unto my people." Isaiah was associated with kings and courts and God called him through a vision in the temple and said: "Go and tell this people." Saul's conversion and call to the ministry seem to have been almost simultaneous. Remaining with the disciples a few days in Damascus, "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogue." All his previous history pointed in an opposite direction. The minister is, therefore, a unique personality, differing essentially from all others in his call, his qualifications, his work, and his influence.

In all ages men have respected their priests, followed their teachings, imitated their example, and feared their rebukes and warnings. This is conspicuous in all pagan religions—Confucianism, Mohammedanism, and Mormonism illustrate this. Roman Catholicism confirms this claim. Protestantism is less so because of

## THE MINISTER

the democratic ideas that dominate it; though the Protestant pulpit largely fashions the moral and social ideals and activities of the age. Hardly any institution can stand against the combined pulpit of Protestantism. Louisiana lottery disappeared under pulpit protest, and the saloon is doomed if the pulpit continues its "cry against" all wrong-doing. Jonah's method is not antiquated—it is the most modern pulpit utterance because it is God's method. The pulpit must "cry against" all wrong-doing. It would be a shame on the nation and a disgrace to the pulpit to make war on flies and mosquitoes and leave the saloon and the brothel. The minister in his pulpit can "cry against" all evils in terms of scripture and by authority of the Holy Ghost. He may say a "sinful nation," a "people laden with iniquity," or "thou art the man." The pulpit is no place for trivial speech, personal complaints, petty lectures on small questions; but the place for exposition of God's word, the treatment of great moral themes, the



## IN HIS PULPIT

appeal to the highest in human hearts, the comfort of those in trouble, and the invitation to all to come to Jesus for pardon and life. The pulpit is the place of authority; here the minister can say: "Thus saith the Lord," as the judge on the bench can say: "This is the law." It is this association of the minister and the pulpit that adds the weight of divine authority to his message. What the judge says in the store does not have the weight of what he utters on "the bench" in the courtroom.

The minister should have "his pulpit"—the pulpit that is open to him and for which he is responsible. His place is not in commerce, politics, the market-place. His ministry should not be subordinate to some other avocation; all other avocations should be subordinate to his pulpit. Paul was a tent-maker; but preaching was his business. His pulpit was not in one house, one place, or even one nation. His whole life from his conversion was pulpit ministrations. Prisons became temples, wrecks became pulpits, scourges anointing for wider fields of

## THE MINISTER

usefulness. His learning put him before kings and philosophers, and his courage enabled him to speak to the mob from the stairway in the castle in Jerusalem. His religious convictions and utterances opened the way for his great messages. If beaten and dragged out of the city and cast upon the garbage heap on the dumping hill, he would come back by the grace of God and go on his way preaching the gospel. Paul calls this ministry a "high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" Phil. 3:14, or, "heavenly calling." It is difficult to conceive of one called into the ministry and not called into a pulpit. Jonah was called and sent to Nineveh; Amos was sent to his nation; Nathan was sent to David; Moses was sent to Egypt; Peter was sent to Caesarea; Paul was sent to many cities and countries. It would seem a contradiction for the United States to call men into the navy and never assign them, when prepared, to a ship. It seems reasonable that men called of God to preach will be called of God to a field. Is it not possible for ministers to defeat God's plans and

## IN HIS PULPIT

their own welfare by choosing a field or waiting for a "good opening." Is not the smallest field large enough for the largest minister? Cornelius and Peter were both under the direction of the same Spirit. Do not churches decide what sort of a minister will suit them without asking God to direct them in their choice? The pulpit is commercialized, socialized, and educated away from God. Minister and people are making contracts, and trying to run the church on "business principles." What do they mean by "business principles?" Do they mean surrender to the will of God, or do they mean that which will satisfy their own notions and carry out their own ideas? The pulpit is nothing unless it represent God.

The minister in his pulpit should never court popularity nor fear criticism. These are the Schylla and Charybdis between which ministers must pass after escaping other Sirens of the world. Popularity is a giant monster that greedily devours the worldly-minded. How often have we heard of the "popular minister."

## THE MINISTER

Can that be said of any of the prophets or apostles? Was not their ministry a keen knife in the sores of men and of nations? Is it not said that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church?" Is not popularity the dream of vanity? To court popularity is to court a phantom and to lose out in the end. Sincerity endures longer than popularity. All popular fashions and popular men are short-lived. Criticism is the other rock of danger. Some ministers resent it; others are overwhelmed by it. The best way is to profit by it. It may enlighten the wise minister, show him his weakness, reveal his opportunity. It may be the result of green-eyed envy, ignorance, selfishness, or ambition. No matter what the source of criticism, it may be treated in such a good spirit, answered in such a faithful life, contradicted by such useful service as to really develop the stronger powers of the minister. "Jesus was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth."

## IN HIS PULPIT

Pilate said to Jesus: "Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?" "He answered him to never a word." Jesus did not court the best nor fear the worst. His pulpit had a cross in it, but He never left His pulpit. A crossless pulpit leads to a crownless life. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul did not glory simply in the fact that Jesus suffered on the cross; but that he had *his* cross; for he said: "I am crucified with Christ." Gal. 6:14, 2:20. He gloried that he was counted worthy to suffer in His name. The minister must have his cross in his pulpit and if cruel criticism nails him to it, he may glory in it; but he should not challenge criticism any more than he should court popularity. His ministry should strive to do the will of God without reference to flattery or complaint. Sincerity and impartiality will add much to the pulpit.

The minister's pulpit should speak the word—Paul's advice: "Preach the word, be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

## THE MINISTER

exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”

2 Tim. 4: 2. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

2 Tim. 3:16, 17. Modern preaching is often lacking in the WORD. Fads and fancies, reforms and social service, charities and endowments, political problems and scientific questions, the topics of the day, furnish themes for pulpit treatment. These may all be used to illustrate the Word, but not to substitute for the Word. The Word is the only thing “that is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Heb. 4:12. Other topics pierce the head, the word the heart; never mind that the “time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts will

## IN HIS PULPIT

heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.' 2 Tim. 3:3-5. The pulpit needs the genuine minister in this age. Any man can run with the crowd, drift with the current, respond to the tendency of the age. It takes an Amos or an Isaiah to rebuke the sin of the age. No intellectual sword can conquer the evils of the age; only the sword of the Spirit can cut to the vitals and win men to God. The pulpit is not a show window to be changed with every new fashion that invades society; it is a lighthouse sending forth rays of light the same in every age. No matter what weather or what ships pass the light is the same; this is the one institution that must send out rays of spiritual light. The lighthouse tower stands on a firm foundation, surrounded by shifting sands or changing waters, and sends out its light over

## THE MINISTER

calm or raging seas; so the pulpit is not changed by the evanescent movements among men; but holds up the word of God to light up the pathway of safety for voyagers over life's sea amid storms and darkness.



CHAPTER FOUR



IN HIS PARISH



## THE MINISTER IN HIS PARISH

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**T**HE minister is more than a preacher. His work is not Sunday service; it is all week labor. It is no small task to perform the duties of a minister. Jesus came into contact with large groups, small groups, families, and individuals. Jesus was a minister. There are some preachers who are not ministers. Men who teach, or edit, or manage institutions, or fill diplomatic places. Some of them are great preachers—great occasion preachers. But this address is dealing with ministers, not preachers only. A good minister is larger than a great preacher, because he deals with more phases and needs of humanity. The great ministers of the world have been great teachers and great burden-bearers. Jesus was the great example. He said Himself: "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Paul's

## THE MINISTER

description of his experience in 2 Cor. 11:23, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." The modern minister is not exposed to the same kind of perils as Paul; but as large a variety; and the care of his parish is an everpresent weight that tries his strength of body, mind, and heart. Opposition to the gospel is less than in the past, but indifference is almost as perilous to the kingdom. Pride, vanity, self-indulgence, and luxury, stand in the way of spiritual progress. In fact, ministers themselves are in danger of loss of

## IN HIS PARISH

spiritual vitality by reason of the ease by which they are surrounded. If any worker needs robustness, a little hardship, it is the minister. Parishioners often think more about the minister's dress than his sermons; more about his manners than his character; more about his living than his life.

Ministers ought to identify themselves with their congregations so as to enter into all their experiences. Jesus "emptied Himself" and took upon Him the form of a servant." But this is not the modern idea; it is that the minister must be a "good mixer." Jesus was no mixer. Light does not mix with darkness. Right does not mix with wrong. The doctor does not mix with diseased ones. Jesus came close to all sorts of sinners; but He maintained His matchless purity. His sympathy was so genuine, His love was so great, His life was so helpful, that the common people heard him gladly. The minister should come close to men, but not mix with men in the sense of a "hail fellow well met." There is a dignity and a

## THE MINISTER

gentleness, a loftiness and a humility that goes with every true ministry. The minister should not be so high as to make the lowest stand in awe of him; nor so low as to make the highest feel no moral fear of him. The best should love him and the worst should respect him; and all should feel at home in his presence.

You have seen the cart going about the city gathering up the waste and unsanitary heaps piled up on streets and back alleys. There is much accumulation of trouble, doubt, and misunderstanding in every congregation. Heaps of gossip, piles of imagination, pools of bad feeling, thoughts and hates that poison the social atmosphere and sicken church members. The minister is a "carter" going among his people to gather up this waste and this deleterious matter. Sometimes he need say but very little. His value is in his ability to listen sympathetically, to load up his mental cart with what overloaded lives will tell him. Men cannot carry their own burdens alone; that is the reason Jesus "carries our sorrows." Many

## IN HIS PARISH

people have troubles they dare not tell their neighbors; it would make matters worse like throwing bones, cans, feathers, and egg shells into the neighbor's yard; but it is safe to tell it to the minister; and the minister should be so near his parish that all will feel like telling their inner life to him. When he leaves the house he "carts away" their troubles. If he dumps it out in the neighborhood it only makes matters worse; his dumping-ground should be beyond the pale of his parish. There is no better and no larger work than this for the minister to perform. Many a troubled life has been relieved of burdens and sorrows, in this way, by the minister who did nothing but listen. Broken-hearted mothers with drunken husbands, wayward sons, disgraced daughters, have found the friendly and sympathetic minister a source of sweet comfort as they have poured into his ears woes enough to crush life out of them. Pastoral calls in elegant parlors, teas and dinners in mansions, where intelligence and hospitality feast the minister, are not

## THE MINISTER

the only places where the minister's life counts in his parish; though these furnish him an opportunity to extend help to hearts that carry burdens sometimes larger than their fortunes.

But his ears may be open to other than tales of woe and current topics. Many men in the church, and out of the church, have views and experiences which they love to tell to the minister. They have brooded over some passage of scripture, some personal vision, some business or domestic experience, until it burns in their being. The minister is the one to whom they love to tell their story. It may help the man to be more religious and the minister to preach more effectively. His teaching is broadened and deepened, his power over men is increased because they have led him into new fields and new opportunities. No experience has much force till it is told to others. Witnessing for Jesus Christ strengthens the believer. "Go home to thy friends and tell what great things Jesus has done for thee." Even telling objections may lead to acceptance. Causes win in



## IN HIS PARISH

debate by allowing the opposition to speak. It will make an angry man friendly to allow him to abuse you in his own angry way. He talks of his anger. The mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart; and hot words are like pus from a wound—let them out and get relief. Do not undervalue ear service; it is not like “lip service” an abomination. Jesus always permitted the afflicted, the troubled ones, to tell Him their story. He even permitted the men to tell on the woman; but they went out ashamed of themselves and He said to her, “Go and sin no more;” and the presumption is that she did not.

The minister in his parish should be benevolent, not only helping the destitute, but in bearing with peculiar people. Some good people are eccentric and almost every parish has this class. They are always suggesting what the minister and the church ought to do. They have some pet plan that no one could work. They hold strange views of certain passages of scripture. They tell you why the church fails.

## THE MINISTER

They know certain bad things that they cannot tell. They have been ignored or mistreated by a leading member. They contribute nothing but words. They come just before preaching with new tales of calamity. They stuff you with stuff. Now the minister must use benevolence in judgment, discretion in treatment, and love within. This quality in the minister has to be cultivated. He must be all things to all men. Not do as all men do, but be adequate to all men, adjustable to all men. The hardest task for the minister is in his parish. The complaints and pessimism, the excuses and indifference, the immorality and stinginess, the domestic infelicities and dishonesty, continually fret his righteous soul; but he must endure all for the gospel's sake, and not his own. In order to meet these conditions in patience, sweet spirit, and hope, he will need much prayer, much spiritual help.

He must have no pets, no partial feelings, no special friends. His parish should be his ministerial family; and he should love and treat all

## IN HIS PARISH

alike. Their sorrows become his sorrows, their joys his joys, their adversities and prosperities his own. His real life should be a model for their life; he should not walk on stilts nor wear any mask. Partiality is as bad as neglect. His life teaches as well as his sermons; and is understood better. He is no dictator, making rules for life; but a guide pointing the way along which each one must walk in his own way and on his own feet. He is nobody's conscience and everybody's light. His spirit is more than his acts. The parish watches nothing so close as the minister; quotes no other so often; and chooses no other as exemplar for their children and themselves so naturally. They watch his life and follow that more than his words. One of the most striking things in the ministry of Jesus was, "Follow me." Any minister who can say that has reached the highest place in his ministry. It is easy to say, "Do this;" it is harder to say, "Follow me;" but that is the ideal minister in his parish.

## THE MINISTER

The minister should not only touch the life of his parish but the property of his parish. He need not tease and urge individuals to give for things he deems of most importance; but he might lay great and worthy objects before them in such fashion as to increase their sense of stewardship and their obligation to worthy causes in need. This may be done by his own example, his pulpit ministrations, and his personal intercourse with his people. What the minister does counts above what he says. He can do nothing that will interest and enlist liberal donations from all, but he can do enough to secure ample support for causes and institutions dependent upon the church. He should avoid requests that provoke denial, for that will lessen his power over wealth. It is easy to blame the rich and pity the poor. The principle of giving is the lesson to impress, and the manner of giving left to the individual who gives. Do not provoke the unjust criticism that the preacher is "always after money." Sensible men know that money is essential to the

## IN HIS PARISH

maintenance and extension of the gospel and the cultivation of a sensitive conscience and a worshipful soul will bear fruit in due time.

Human distinctions often bar the way of real ministerial help. The rich embarrass the minister by their surroundings and the poor excite a morbid sympathy; both alike need spiritual sympathy and help; and that is the very thing the minister can give. Jesus set a good example when He went to the house of rich Zacchaeus. That man had no friends; and it is too often true of the rich; but Jesus went as a minister and his heart surrendered and salvation came to his house. Put the ministerial visit to the rich in place of the social call. Their hearts long for genuine spiritual interest. Do not think the poor want bread; they want the bread of life; they want soul-touch, human-touch, a friendly interest in their life. Nobody can give this so well as the minister. The poor should never be embarrassed in the presence of the minister, and the minister should never be embarrassed in the presence of the rich. Human

## THE MINISTER

fear and human taste have marred many a minister's usefulness. He is not dealing with conditions and environments alone; but with souls; and "all souls are mine" saith the Lord. It is this soul-power and this soul-touch that carries influence in the parish for good. Many can resist argument who dare not resist life. Many reject appeals who surrender to love. The minister's love wins where his learning fails. The heart is the center of being, while mind is only a function of life.

CHAPTER FIVE

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IN HIS COMMUNITY





## THE MINISTER IN HIS COMMUNITY

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**T**HE minister's sphere is larger than his own parish. "The field is the world," and he is related to the whole field. It would be as illogical as it is unscriptural for a minister to care for his own parish and leave the regions beyond to the missionaries in foreign lands. But this address deals chiefly with those near-by relations that involve the minister's visible life.

His relation to other ministers is one of equality. No matter what education and what forms of ordination induct them into church relations the highest position is that to which ministers are called and ordained by the Holy Ghost. Any superiority claimed by one class of ministers, above another class of ministers, is of human origin and unsupported by Scripture or historic facts. The highest call and the

## THE MINISTER

highest ordination is by the Spirit of God. Paul was never ordained by the church; in fact, the church refused to accept him at first. This principle of equality should be recognized by all ministers. The question of a closed pulpit might be justified by church polity, but not by the word of God. Jesus went into Jewish synagogues though the synagogue was not orthodox in the gospel sense. It is not a question of intellectual orthodoxy, but of spiritual life. Other ministers should be accorded genuine recognition in our hearts and in our churches. The one should be as open as the other.

The presumption is that this subject includes ministers of one's own denomination as well as other denominations. It includes all ministers of Jesus Christ. The minister's relation to them should be fraternal, frank, co-operative. Congregations follow ministers more than either knows. Unbrotherly ministers estrange congregations and weaken Christianity. It is not the divisions of Protestantism so much that weaken its force as the ignorance and unbrotherliness

## IN HIS COMMUNITY

of ministers; and that sometimes inside the pale of the same denomination. Petty jealousies, unholy ambitions, political scheming, and hostile attitudes have defiled the ministry and reduced church efficiency. Fraternal relations must not be feigned, but frank, growing out of heartfelt genuine brotherly love. This feeling may be cultivated like any other Christian grace; and no minister should wait for others to make the advance. If snubbed, do not recognize it. Persist in brotherly advances and win out in your own soul, if you do not with other ministers. Jesus did not agree with all men, nor was He well received by all; but He was genuinely fraternal and affectionate towards all men. Ministers should be known, as the early Christians were known, by their love for one another. Co-operation is a law of nature, a law in modern business, and should be a law among ministers. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has undertaken the Herculean task of cultivating this principle, not only among ministers, but

## THE MINISTER

among denominations; and wonderful results are flowing from this movement. In every community, ministers should co-operate in all common interests of the kingdom; such as temperance, Sabbath observance, social virtue, charity. Some things are too large for one minister, yet easy for all. In some communities ministers are less cordial than business men or society women; but it should be remembered, always that ministers are responsible for the unbrotherly feeling, unrighteous treatment, and unchristian spirit among churches and people. Negative wrong often counteracts positive good. Individual churches lose as well as whole communities by ministerial aloofness or antagonism. The gospel *lived* is more potent than the gospel *preached*. This is seen in the life of Jesus who came to fulfil the law. His personal life was more than the ten commandments or the Sermon on the Mount.

Ministerial association is essential to these conditions. It is not time wasted for ministers to meet and exchange views and cultivate per-

## IN HIS COMMUNITY

sonal attachments. They will learn from one another and inspire one another. It will harmonize their pulpit ministrations and justify their association.

Churches watch ministers in their relation to other churches than their own. Proselytism is one inexcusable fault in ministers. Were it right to win members from one church to another, it would add nothing to the Kingdom. It is ecclesiastical gambling, one gains, another loses; nothing is added. Besides this, it disgusts intelligence not to say piety. The minister who enters another's flock and wins members is a thief and a robber. If members change, for reasons of their own, it is their matter and no blame attaches to the minister. It is the minister's business to look after the lost and all know there are many of them. His work is to save sinners; membership is secondary. This remark is made because it is one of the hard lessons to learn and harder to practice. In revival results it is difficult for the minister to be willing for converts to go to another

## THE MINISTER

church, but let him grow in that direction. The difficulty is not in winning members, but in holding and developing them.

Consideration for other churches, in planning for one's own, should enter into the equation of relation to them. It would be discourteous to hold some great social or musical affair in the midst of a revival in another church, in the same community. As far as possible all plans outside of regular services should include other churches. Churches should be neighborly institutions. Even social courtesy would call off a dance next to a home darkened by a death. Churches are really in a position to set standards of social courtesy and to do it in such genuine fashion as to teach great lessons by great kindnesses. Ministers should keep in touch with other churches and set an example worthy of imitation.

The minister can do much good by visits to services in other churches. Congregations appreciate it more than ministers imagine. While modern opinion feels that ministers are

## IN HIS COMMUNITY

not held in the same respect as in former days, yet that view is not sustained by facts any more than that religion is declining, because people do not shout in meeting. Intelligence reduces noise and distance. Ministers are closer to the people now, but not less regarded, if their lives represent real ministerial worth and fraternity. A visit to a funeral, a special service, a marriage, any meeting is almost a personal visit to the individual members. The church is ignorant of herself and this multiplies the spiritual reasons for such visits and intercourse. The minister is more than an individual and must do most of his service in a public capacity. Exchange of pulpits, where church polity does not bar the way, has value in this matter of enlightenment and fortification. Business associations look to the common good and churches need this for progress. Any man or institution that lives within itself becomes case-hardened. Even crabs throw off their shells to grow larger; and the chick comes out of the shell to grow in the barnyard. We might intro-

## THE MINISTER

duce interchurch lines as well as interurban lines. The ocean flows toward the rivers and the rivers toward the tides; a stagnant sea would mean a dead sea; and a stagnant river would mean a river of death; flowing together they enrich the valleys and give health to continents. When a minister turns a good current into another church that church meets it with a purifying tide and good feeling. Never extend ministerial courtesy for popularity; do it because it is Christian.

The minister is related to the community as well as to churches. The community is the largest body near by him. There is nothing so keen-eyed and so heartless as the public. It never nails its victims to the cross with tack hammers. It wields a sledge hammer with the arm of a Hercules and drives great spikes through its victim. But the gentleness of giant strength is the tenderest of all. There is no water so gentle and so graceful in its movements as the thin wavelets of the mighty ocean as they smoothe the tiny grains of sand on the



## IN HIS COMMUNITY

white strand. A baby may paddle in the gentle waters. The sun would consume the world as your stove the paper you throw into it; yet his beams touch the tiniest flower with a gentleness that dries up the dewdrop in its bright face and fills its life with sweetness. The big fireman lifts the babe from the burning house with hands that might grace an angel; though with those same strong arms he seizes the resisting burglar and leads him to prison. That huge thing we call "the public" passes judgment on ministers and judges Christianity by them. The public reads papers, men, current events. The public does not read the Bible. Ministers, Sunday-school teachers, invalids, and decrepits read the Bible. The public reads the "living epistles read and known by all men." The ministers are the pages read most thoroughly and most often. Here is the minister's largest opportunity. He is the latest edition of Christianity. He circulates in society. They discuss him around the fireside, in the political meeting, in the saloon. He is not simply a clergyman, he

## THE MINISTER

is a man of God. The minister cannot preach to the community from his pulpit. Many people never enter church. He cannot visit every home, the task is beyond any one person. How shall he reach the community? By a life that contains all the essential elements of Christian manhood. Is he lazy? The community knows it. Does the ledger show him in debt? Every body knows it. Is he socially indiscreet? It is the community gossip's feast. Does he neglect the poor and ignorant? The air is full of it. No matter what he is, or what he is not; he is known and many estimate the gospel and the church by him. Here is a field large enough for all his power of influence. He need not know more about any one thing than anybody else, but he should know about more things than any other person in the community. His life must interpret his teaching, and his experience must touch God and humanity, not a few people. Jesus saved but one man in Gadara, but He touched the whole community.

## IN HIS COMMUNITY

The minister may visit the sick, bury the dead, and help the destitute outside of his parish, with the same sympathy and willingness as he ministers to those in his own congregation. Respond to all calls of real need and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, and not in the interest of your own church.

The minister does not have to own property, do business, hold office, or belong to lodges to fill his true relation to the community. He is called to the task of living before the community all the virtues and graces that can cleanse the heart, purify politics, make honest business, expel evils from society, and cultivate a sensitive conscience. He deals with individuals; but his largest work is for the community. A negative view of his relation to the community will more clearly express his value. Eliminate the minister entirely from the community; let him fail in honesty, virtue, industry, or humility, and see what remains. He is a moral force, a spiritual personality, a divinely chosen teacher, a living example in the community. Every

## THE MINISTER

working man ought to do better work, every home ought to be happier, every business house ought to be more honest, every neighbor ought to be more neighborly, every life ought to be purer, because the minister lives and moves and preaches in the community. His value is not in what he has, what he does, or what he says, but in what he is. A live horse has a value all his own. A dead horse does a damage all his own. The minister need not get rich himself, but the community ought to be richer because he is in it.







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