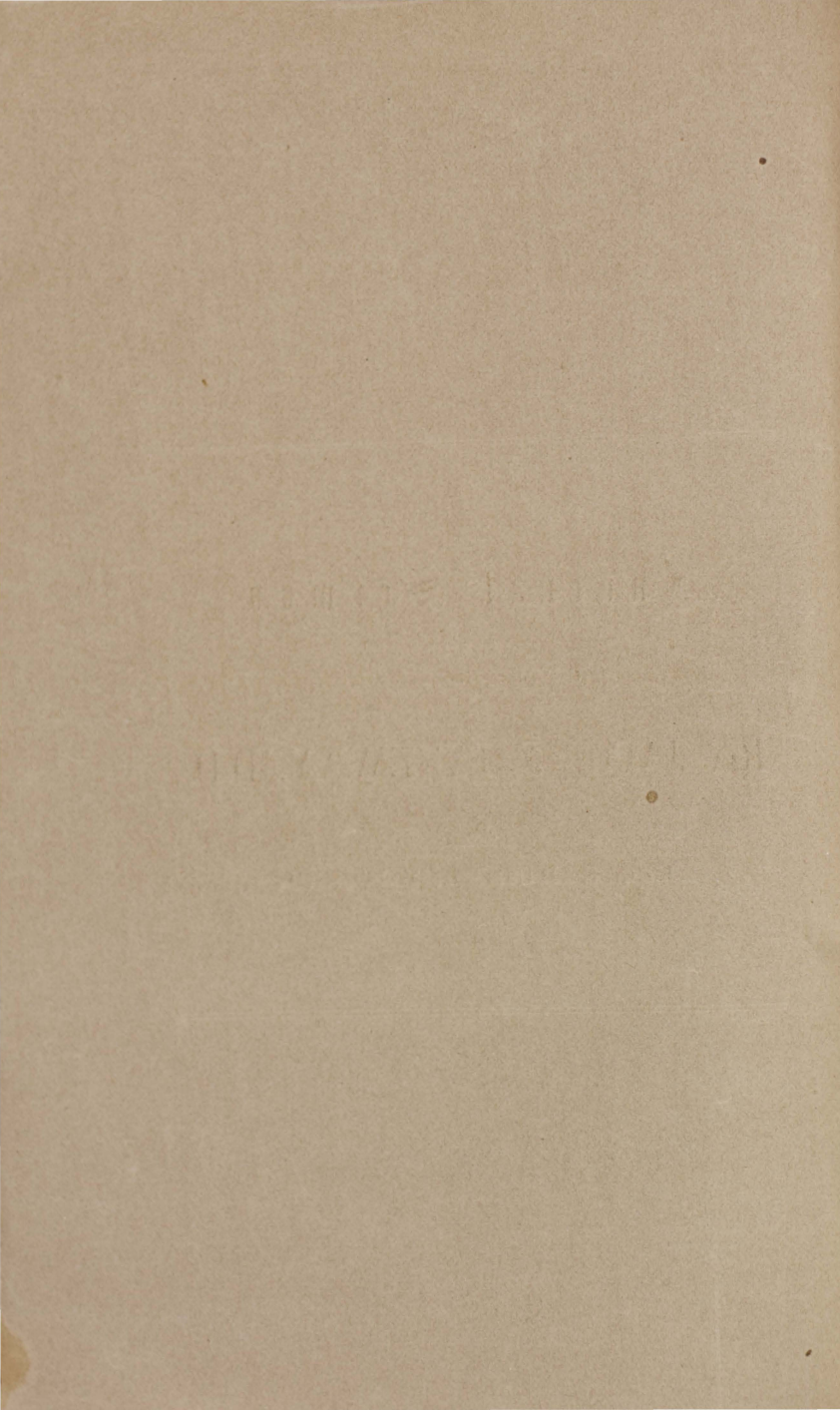

Funeral Sermon

ON THE DEATH OF

REV. JACOB J. JANEWAY, D.D.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL B. HOW, D.D.



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FUNERAL SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

OF THE

REV. JACOB J. JANEWAY, D.D.

PREACHED IN THE FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH IN
THE CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, JULY 18, 1858.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL B. HOW, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIAM S. & ALFRED MARTIEN,

No. 606 CHESTNUT STREET.

1859.

FUNERAL SERMON.

A FAITHFUL MINISTER OF CHRIST.

COLOSSIANS i. 7.

SUCH was the testimony concerning Epaphras, the minister of the church at Colosse, which was given by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He speaks of him in his official character as one who was invested with authority by Christ to preach his gospel; for the term "minister of Christ" means this, as is evident from what the Apostle elsewhere says to the Corinthians, "Who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" He thus shows that the commission given to the Apostles to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" extends to those who are lawfully called to succeed them in the work of the ministry. It is possible, and, alas! it is too often the case, that a man may hold this sacred office, and yet be wholly unqualified for it, and unfaithful in it. Epaphras did not belong to this class. He was "a faithful minister of Christ;" and we have selected these words for our text, because we consider them as truly applicable to him who immediately preceded in his office your present minister—we mean the late Rev. Jacob J. Janeway, D.D. We shall consider,

I. What is implied in the office, and the commendation given to it in our text.

II. Their applicability to him who is the subject of our present discourse.

1. The very name "a minister of Christ," implies that Christ has chosen, called, and appointed him who holds it to his office. In common with all the true servants of God, he must have experienced that effectual calling of the Holy Spirit by which he has been convinced of sin, enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, and enabled to embrace him by faith as the Redeemer of his soul. Without this, no man is qualified for the office of the ministry. But the mere fact that a man has been called out of a state of spiritual death into spiritual life does not, of itself, give to him a right to assume this office. Besides this, there is a special, internal call of God; that is, the Holy Spirit awakens in the soul an earnest desire to live for the glory of God, and to promote the spiritual and eternal interests of men; with lively gratitude and love to Christ; clear and affecting views of his grace and glory, and of the greatness of the salvation which he bestows. He gives a painful apprehension of the fallen and lost state of our whole race; of the terribleness of that woe which awaits, in the other world, those who die in their sins, and an earnest desire to be instrumental in saving some. These views and feelings produce a desire, and sometimes so strong a conviction of the duty to enter the ministry, that he who is the subject of it feels as Paul did when he said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Christ." Because of these internal operations of the Holy Spirit, each faithful minister can say, "I was made a minister of the gospel according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of his power."

2. To this internal call by the Holy Spirit must be added the call of the Church, and ordination to

the office by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.

It has been said that "the essence of ordination consists in the choice and acceptance made reciprocally by the minister and the people, founded on their mutual faith and affectionate desires to be helpers of each other's joy in the Lord"—implying, that under the gospel dispensation, organized and visible churches were established before the ministry, and that through them, and by their approval, and choice, and appointment, the ministry has been constituted and perpetuated. But this, we think, is a mistake. It certainly was not thus that the Apostles, the first preachers of the gospel, received their appointment, for Christ himself, and not the Church, gave them their commission. On the day of Pentecost, the whole company of the disciples were "filled with the Holy Ghost," and thus were called immediately by God, and qualified for the work of the ministry. It is evident from the Scriptures that evangelists, whose special office it was to travel for the purpose of gathering and organizing churches, were ordained by the laying on of the hands of ministers who had themselves been previously ordained; and that thus the right to hold and exercise the office of the ministry was conveyed to others by those who were already invested with that office. It was thus that Barnabas, Saul, and Timothy were ordained (Acts xiii.; 1 Tim. iv. 14). This laying on of the hands of the Presbytery was not designed to impart any extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, for such gifts God only can bestow; but it was the exercise of an authority derived from Christ to perpetuate in the Church a standing ministry. It

should always be performed in the fear of God, with a view to his glory and to the edification of his Church, and under a deep sense of accountability to him. The Apostle enjoined on Timothy to "lay hands suddenly on no man"—that is, do not rashly and inconsiderately ordain any to the work of the ministry, lest you should, by so doing, introduce unworthy persons into it.

The word *faithful* in our text calls for special notice. "A *faithful* minister of Christ" is one who is worthy of confidence and trust, because of his fidelity in the performance of his duties. It is greatly to be lamented that all are not so. When we consider the origin and the nature of the office; the purposes for which it was appointed, and the consequences which will result from the manner in which its duties are performed, we shall see that it is no light matter for them who hold it to be faithful. Instituted by Christ for the purpose of calling men back from their apostasy to the obedience of the one only true God; of presiding in the religious assemblies of his people; of conducting their worship and administering to them his sacraments, and especially of preaching his word as the chief means of the conversion and salvation of sinful men, and without which true religion would soon perish from among them, a tremendous responsibility rests upon those who hold it, to take heed to themselves and to their doctrine.

A faithful minister supremely loves and fears God; considers himself as devoted soul and body to him for time and eternity; lives for the promotion of his glory, and desires above all things else his approbation and blessing. To Christ as his Media-

tor and Redeemer he cherishes warm and lively gratitude, and while he trusts in him as "the Lord his righteousness, his strength, and salvation," he rejoices in his gospel as "the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth," and prays for the assistance of the Holy Spirit that he may preach it in its purity, and that his preaching may be effectual for the conversion of his hearers. Thus influenced by love, guided by faith, and sustained by constant communion with God, he looks forward in the joyful hope of soon seeing and dwelling with Christ in the abodes of perfect holiness and bliss.

II. We shall now proceed to show how the character of a faithful minister of Christ was exemplified in the life of our departed father in Christ, Rev. Jacob J. Janeway, D. D.

He was born in the city of New York in the year 1774. His parents and family belonged to the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, in which he was baptized and educated, till he reached the years of manhood. In the struggle of the Revolutionary war his father espoused the cause of his country, and in common with many others, he and his family were obliged to fly from their home while the British troops held possession of the city: nor did they return to it until he was nine or ten years of age. He completed his course of academic studies at Columbia College, New York, in which institution he graduated with distinguished honour.

It was his privilege during his youth to sit under the preaching of the Rev. Dr. John Livingston, then one of the ministers of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Churches in the city of New York, and at the age of nineteen he became a member in the full com-

munions of those churches. Having been brought, in early life, to the saving knowledge of God, he considered it his duty to devote himself to his service by entering the gospel ministry, and accordingly commenced his studies under Dr. Livingston, who was then Professor of Theology in the Reformed Dutch Church, as well as one of the ministers of the Collegiate churches. That revered man of God possessed rare qualities, which eminently fitted him for educating young men for the sacred office. With great dignity and refinement, he united much kindness and affability, and courteousness of manners, which while they commanded respect, won confidence and attachment from others. His students regarded him as their friend and father. A sound and learned divine, who was extensively read in the best theological writings of his own and of former days; especially who had profoundly studied and was in a remarkable degree familiar with the word of God, and who was eminently devotional and spiritually minded, Dr. Livingston exerted a strong and most salutary influence in forming the characters of his students, by his example and his spirit, as well as by his teaching. Dr. Janeway considered it to have been his "happiness to sit under his teachings till he received his licensure to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ." There existed between him and Dr. Livingston, till the Doctor's death, mutual esteem and attachment, and the most cordial intercourse. In the year 1799 he became copastor with Rev. Ashbel Green, D.D., of the Second Presbyterian church in the city of Philadelphia, then one of the largest and most influential and intelligent congregations belonging to that numerous and powerful deno-

mination. Dr. Green was justly considered as one of the first pulpit orators in the country, and was then at the height of his fame and popularity; and it must have required no common talent and industry for a young man but lately licensed, to have sustained himself with reputation by the side of so eminent a preacher. This, however, he did with entire success by divine assistance and grace. His connection with that congregation, either as pastor or copastor, continued for near thirty years, during the whole of which time he stood high in their confidence, respect, and esteem. He relinquished his charge of it in the year 1828, and accepted an appointment by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, to become the Professor of Theology in their newly established Theological Seminary at Allegheny City, in Pennsylvania. In consequence of unanticipated and unforeseen difficulties he deemed it his duty to resign his Professorship in this Institution, and shortly afterwards, in the year 1830, he became pastor of the First Reformed Dutch Church in the city of New Brunswick. Finding the extent of that congregation too great, and the number of its families and the duties expected from him too much for one man alone, he relinquished his pastoral charge after a short connection with it, carrying with him the regrets and high esteem of the people. He has, however, since that time resided chiefly in New Brunswick, and while his health permitted, he continued to preach as opportunities to do so offered. He held, for a time, the office of Vice-President of Rutger's College, and after the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Milledoler, he was chosen its President, but declined the appointment. He

died and left us June 27, 1858, at the age of eighty-three years and seven months.

Among the theologians of his day Dr. Janeway stood in the first rank. A close student, economical of his time, conscientious in its improvement, and remarkably regular, methodical, and exact in his habits, he made large attainments in both theology and literature. He was a firm and decided Calvinist of the Old-school, receiving the standards of the Presbyterian and Reformed Dutch Churches as faithfully exhibiting, in the usual and long-established meaning of their words, the doctrines and duties which are taught in the Holy Scriptures.

He was an able, faithful, and successful preacher of the gospel. His discourses were carefully prepared, and were instructive and edifying. They were richly fraught with gospel truth, and adorned by clear and methodical statement, sound argument, and close and earnest appeals to the consciences and hearts of his hearers. Indeed, some of the most powerful and earnest appeals that the writer has ever heard were addressed by him to the impenitent and irreligious, with that deep seriousness and urgency which showed that he believed and deeply felt what he preached, and that he anxiously desired the salvation of those whom he addressed. While he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, he yet delighted to dwell on Christ crucified as the power of God, and the wisdom of God "unto them who are called." It was manifest to every attentive hearer, that in his preaching he spoke in the fear of God, and not in the fear of man; and that he sought, by manifestation of the truth, to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

His publications were numerous and useful. We cannot specify each of them, but would mention, as highly valuable and instructive, his "Letters explaining the Abrahamic Covenant," and showing the first organization and constitution of the visible Church in the family of Abraham, in which, we think, he clearly establishes the validity of infant baptism. His work on the "Internal Evidence of the Holy Bible" is very able, and alike instructive and convincing; and we are surprised that it has not received greater attention. It deserves to be introduced and studied as a class-book in our colleges and higher schools.

He was faithful and laborious in the discharge of his duties as a pastor, and throughout his whole ministerial life he was punctual in attending the meetings of the ecclesiastical judicatories to which he belonged. In these judicatories he was highly respected and influential for his ability in debate, while the uniform uprightness, dignity, and prudence of his conduct, with his unwavering firmness in adhering to what he believed to be truth and righteousness, secured the attention of his hearers, and gave weight to his counsels.

He was eminently useful in bestowing his personal services and influence, and liberal contributions in money, on many of the religious, benevolent, and literary societies and institutions of our day. He was one of the establishers and first members of the Philadelphia Bible Society, which was the first Bible Society in our country. He took a lively interest in the Tract and the Colonization Societies. He was an active member of the Board of Trustees of Princeton College, and, during part of the time of his

residence in New Brunswick, he was a Trustee of Rutger's College. He was one of the founders and directors of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, and contributed to its funds, and took an active part in securing its endowment. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church appointed him a member of their Committee of Missions, when it was first established in 1802. As the chairman of that committee he took the whole charge of its affairs, and after it was enlarged and changed into a Board, he still continued a member of it, and in the year 1848 was elected its President, which office he held till his death. Notwithstanding the distance of his residence he constantly attended its meetings till prevented by increasing infirmities. He was equally punctual, while his health permitted, in attending the weekly meetings, in the city of New York, of the Executive Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Assembly. There were several other institutions with which he was connected, and to whose funds he liberally contributed; but it is unnecessary to specify them all; it is sufficient to say that he was unwearied in doing good. Possessing a large estate, he considered himself as a steward of God, entrusted with it to be used in his service and for his glory; and sensible of his accountability to him, he acted as a good and faithful steward. It has been estimated by members of his family that he gave away, for years, one-fifth of his income. One who is now in the ministry informs us, in the *Presbyterian*, that when he was a young man he became convinced that it was his duty to devote himself to the gospel ministry, but as he had not resources of his own,

and there was then no Education Board of the General Assembly, the way seemed hopelessly closed against him. But Dr. Janeway "generously furnished from his own funds the means by which he was enabled to commence and to complete his preparation for the sacred office." He afterwards took part in his ordination; and when they were alone he attempted to express his sense of obligation for what the Doctor had done for him. He would not permit him to proceed, but remarked that "if God would be pleased to make him an instrument for good to his fellow-men, he should be amply repaid." The amount of his private benefactions, we have reason to believe, was very great. He was liberal to the poor, the sick, and the widow; and in promoting benevolent efforts for their relief he was always one of the foremost.

In domestic life he exhibited a fine example of conjugal and parental affection and fidelity, and he had the happiness to see two of his sons in the gospel ministry, and most of his children in the full communion of the Church. We have understood also that several of his domestics were hopefully converted to God through his instructions and prayers. In his general intercourse with men his conversation was as became the gospel of Christ, and he has passed through a long life, leaving behind him a bright example of firm adherence to sound principle; of strict integrity and uprightness; of purity and harmlessness; of usefulness to men and devotedness to God. Though he possessed large wealth and much worldly prosperity, he yet exhibited the humility and kindness which become a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus. I am in-

formed that his Diary shows that he spent many days in private fasting, and that he was in the habit of frequent daily private prayer, and thus habitually cultivated close intercourse with God; dwelling near his mercy-seat, and under the shadow of his wings. He walked by faith, and as seeing Him who is invisible. His whole dependence was on Christ for salvation, and he looked to him as the glorious Head of the Church for constant supplies of the Spirit of all grace. In common with the best of men he had his infirmities, his conflicts, and his shortcomings; but he has left them all, and has gone away to the pure abodes and the enraptured bliss of heaven.

It is fit that we should offer with humility and earnestness the supplication of the psalmist, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men." How many of the most eminent and experienced and faithful ministers of Christ with whom Dr. Janeway was connected have been removed from us by death within a few of the last years: Green, and Alexander, and Miller, and Milledoler, and Cannon, and Ludlow; and now he is added to their number, and Janeway is among the dead! Another man of God has left us. A bright and shining light, placed by God in his Church to cheer and guide the weary pilgrim in his pathway to heaven, has been put out, and the voice of the faithful messenger of God, proclaiming amid the sins and desolations of this world the glad tidings of salvation, and calling us to look to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, is hushed in death. But though dead, he yet speaketh.

The death of this "faithful minister of Christ," who once dwelt among you as your pastor, and went in and out before you in the service of God, is an event that should produce in your bosoms the deepest solemnity, and serious inquiry as to your own spiritual condition and prospects for eternity. It is the exhortation of the Apostle, that in common with all the professed disciples of Christ you should "remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Remember his upright and holy example; his clear and scriptural instructions; his solemn admonitions and warnings; and his earnest entreaties that you would be reconciled to God through Christ. The folly and criminality of those who are living in unbelief and sin, and of worldly minded and careless professors of religion, is greatly aggravated by their abuse and neglect of so exemplary and faithful a ministry. Contrast his fear of God with your neglect of him; his faith in Christ with your unbelief in him; his watchfulness and prayers with your habits of sinning and omission of prayer, and seriously ask, who has acted as best becomes an immortal and accountable creature, and whose end will be the happiest? Yours, or his? Let reason and conscience give the reply, as in the sight of God.

From the separations and the sorrows of earth let us turn away to contemplate his exalted state now in heaven. It is the promise of the Redeemer, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The death of a Christian is a victory over sin, and death, and hell, and the hour of

his triumphal ascent to heaven. Holy angels hasten from their seats of glory to minister to him in his final struggle; to welcome him to the world of spirits, and to conduct him to the presence of Christ his Redeemer. Often, on the highway of life, he had been annoyed with fightings without and fears within; and when assailed by temptation, or sunk in affliction, or distressed by his indwelling sin, or wearied with labour and toil, or disgusted with the falsehoods, and treacheries, and impieties of men, he had raised his longing look to the world of spotless purity and peace, and wished he were there. Now that wish is fully realized. With intense delight he hears the welcome of his Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." He is now presented faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. With the body he has put off every infirmity and imperfection; he shall never again experience the struggles and pains of death, for he has put on the robes of immortality and glory. He is admitted into the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and enrolled among its citizens, and entitled to its privileges. He is joined to "an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect;" with them he sees Christ in glory, and exults in the presence and the beatific vision of God.

THE END.

