

"LETTER TO THE MINISTER"

Selected from Adam Clarke

Concerning a choice of text—never take a text which you do not fully understand. Remember you are called not only to explain the things of God, but also the words of God. Seldom take a short text. Never take a text out of its setting, but always give the meaning intended by the Holy Spirit. Beware of allegorizing on one side, or literalizing on the other.

Concerning your behaviour in the pulpit and mode of conducting the public service—Go from your knees to the pulpit. Be careful how you say things to make your congregation laugh. Never assume an important air while in the pulpit. Avoid fantastic attitudes. Endeavor to gain the attention of your congregation. You are a witness for God and are bound to tell the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Keep your eyes closed while you pray.

Read your text distinctly and begin to speak about the middle of your voice. Be sure to have the matter of your text well arranged in your mind before you come to the pulpit. Preach Jesus Christ. Never ape any person, however prominent he may be for piety or ministerial ability.

Concerning your behaviour on your circuit or at the place where you exercise your ministry—never disappoint a place. Be punctual in getting in proper time to the place where you are to be entertained. Do not make a whole family wait upon you.

Never leave any place where you visit without reading a portion of Scripture and praying with the family. Take heed that while you avoid levity on the one hand you fall not into sour godliness on the other. Tell your secret trials and temptations to very few. Never go in debt for food, clothes or anything else; it is no sin to die in the ditch through hunger or cold; but it is a crime to go in debt when there is not the fullest prospect in being able to pay. Get a genuine friend whenever you can. Beware of forming hasty friendships.

Concerning your behaviour in the house where you lodge—in your arrival get as speedily as possible to private prayer. Show yourself satisfied with everything that you receive. Be punctual at meals and rise when called. Be not nice in your food. Give the family where you lodge as little trouble as possible. Keep your room in such orderly manner that even your absence will testify to the regularity of your habits. Go out as little as possible to eat and drink. Go not from house to house.

Concerning the cultivation of your mind—pray much, read much, write much. Have always some essay, dissertation (Lk. 10:7), etc. upon the anvil; and be sure you finish whatever you undertake. Read the Bible regularly through at least once in the year; and take down in order every text that you think you have sufficient light to preach from. Always carry a New Testament with you.

No man can fully explain the Bible who has not a general acquaintance with the most important sciences and arts. There are a multitude of texts in that blessed book which no man can explain who has not a tolerable knowledge of history, chronology, geography, anatomy and chemistry. Illiterate piety may be useful in exhorting sinners to return to God, but it certainly cannot, without immediate inspiration, explain and apply the deep

things of God. * * * The indolent preacher is soon known by his preaching: he has little or no variety. That knowledge which has for its object God and His works can never rob you of your religion, nor deprive you of your simplicity, but, on the contrary, will be a powerful means of increasing both.—Free Methodist.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

For the—

Artist He is the Altogether Lovely—Song of Solomon 5:16.

Architect He is the chief Cornerstone—I. Peter 2:6.

Astronomer He is the Sun of Righteousness—Malachi 4:2.

Baker He is the Living Bread—John 6:51.

Banker He is the Unsearchable Riches—Ephesians 3:8.

Biologist He is the Life—John 14:6.

Builder He is the Sure Foundation—Isaiah 28:16; I. Cor. 3:11.

Carpenter He is the Door—John 10:9.

Editor He is Good Tidings of Great Joy—Luke 2:10.

Educator He is the Great Teacher—John 3:2.

Electrician He is the Light of the World—John 8:12.

Engineer He is the New and Living Way—Hebrews 10:20.

Farmer He is Sower and the Lord of the Harvest—Matthew 13:37; Luke 10:2.

Florist He is the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley—Song of Solomon 2:1.

Geologist He is the Rock of Salvation—Psalm 89:26; I. Cor. 10:4.

Horticulturist He is the True Vine—John 15:1.

Jeweler He is the Living Precious Stone—I. Peter 2:4.

Jurist He is the Righteous Judge of all men—2 Timothy 4:8; Acts 10:42.

Juror He is the Faithful and True Witness—Revelation 3:14.

Lawyer He is the Counsellor, the Lawgiver, the Advocate—Isa. 9:6; James 4:12; I. John 2:1.

Philanthropist He is the Unspeakable Gift—2 Cor. 9:15.

Philosopher He is the Wisdom of God—I. Cor. 1:4, 30.

Policeman He is the Power of God—I. Cor. 1:24.

Preacher He is the Word of God—John 1:1; Revelation 19:13.

Sculptor He is the Stone Cut Without Hands—Daniel 2:34, 44, 45.

Servant He is the Good Master—Matt. 19:16.

Sheep-raiser He is the Good Shepherd—John 10:11, 14.

Statesman He is the Desire of All Nations—Haggai 2:7.

Student He is the Incarnate Truth—John 14:6.

Theologian He is the Author and Finisher of our Faith—Hebrew 12:2.

Toiler He is the Giver of Rest—Matt. 11:28.

Sinner He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—John 1:29.

Believer He is the Son of the Living God, the Saviour, the Redeemer, Lord and Hope of Glory—Matt. 16:16; Luke 2:11; Revelation 5:9; John 13:13; Col. 1:28.

—Author Unknown

THE SAVIOUR'S CALL

(Revelation 3:20)

Behold I stand at the door and knock,
And if any hear my voice
And will open the door I'll enter in
That together we might rejoice.
I do not bound, just a gentle knock,
My voice when I speak is low.
I will not force you to open the door,
Tho' your answering it be slow.
I've waited outside thru the heat of the day,
Now the day is fast fading to night;
And tho the shadows are growing thick
From your window there shines no light.
I've brought you a gift that was bought with
a price,
Far greater than ever was told;
It's the gift of life that could not be bought
With all of earth's silver or gold.
So soul that's weary and sick with sin,
Won't you hear my patient plea,
Ond open the door that I may come in
To sup and to stay with thee?

—Wilma Baldauf

A NEW NINETY AND NINE

There are ninety and nine that safely lie
In the shelter of the fold;
But millions are left outside to die,
For the ninety and nine are cold—
Away in sin's delusive snare,
Hastening to death and dark despair,
Hastening to death and none to care,
For the ninety and nine are cold.
Lord, Thou hast here Thy well-fed sheep
Are they not enough for Thee?
But the Shepherd made answer, "Millions
sleep
On the brink of eternity;
And these My sheep within the fold
Care not for the dying in sin's stronghold,
Care not for the dying outside the fold,
On the brink of eternity.
But none of the ransomed ever knew
How the Shepherd's heart did yearn,
Nor the travail of soul that he passed through
For no other way had he to reach
The millions of earth, His way to teach,
The millions of earth, except thru each
Of His sheep without concern.
"Lord, whence are those marks in hands and
side,
And whence the scars of Thy feet?''
"They were made for those for whom I died,
Both saved and wandering sheep."
"Lord, when wilt Thou come to claim Thine
own?"
"Not till the wand'ring My word have known,
My wandering, dying sheep."
Ah, ninety and nine, dost thou hear His voice?
Forth then to the work so great;
Beyond this life there is no choice
For those outside the gate.
If they're brought at all, it must be now—
Then, ninety and nine, don't question how;
O sheep of Mine, go quickly thou,
Else for them—and you—too late.—Sel.

You cannot understand a sin, or see it clearly until you have begun to fight it. As long as it possesses you, it will never show itself to your eyes. It is only when it is grappled with, that it manifests its ferocity and its ugliness.—Selected.

A sanctified life, is a satisfied life.