

A Sermon  
from 2 Corinthians VI, 1.

We then as workers together  
with him, beseech you also  
that ye receive not the grace  
of God in vain.

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To a man of an humble & modest  
mind nothing is more unpleasant or difficult  
than to speak of himself or of  
any subject in which he is personally  
or officially concerned or inter-  
ested. Yet duty may at times  
urge him to overcome the diffi-  
culty or his natural feelings  
of delicacy & timidity to approach



freely & boldly a subject of this  
kind ~~to discuss~~ a topic which  
may have reference to his character  
office & person. And if conscious  
not to accuse him of unfaithful-  
ness or sinful neglect he  
will do so with less hesitation  
as then he does not justly  
expose himself to the blame  
of presumption & pride, but  
may appeal confidently to the  
feelings of justice in those  
whom he addresses. These  
remarks, my brethren, are, in  
particular applicable to the  
ministers of the Gospel, who  
are such indeed, truly called  
to the ministry & faithful in the  
discharge of their duty. Every man



the consciousness of their own weak-  
ness & shortcoming they may & must  
at times declare that they have  
a commission - a charge received  
from the Lord, and that those  
to whom they are sent do well to listen  
hear them, <sup>that they will be brought to an account for him self</sup> inasmuch as it is not  
their own word but the word of  
the Lord which they preach.

St Paul the author of our text  
you will observe had repeatedly  
occasion - duty & the interests  
of the cause of Christ led him  
~~again & again~~ to speak & write  
of his ministerial character  
of his solemn charge, his aposto-  
lic authority & even his personal  
qualifications. He defended  
himself as a true minister of  
Christ; as regards the Corinthians



whom he is addressing in our text  
he could appeal to their own  
conversion to the faith in Christ  
as having been brought about  
by his instrumentality. Humility  
would have led him to refrain  
to keep silent about his own  
character & qualifications  
but circumstances - that is to say  
chiefly the insinuations of false  
teachers compelled him to  
plead his own cause as the  
minister of the Gospel, he was  
so much so that once he is ready  
to pronounce his advocacy foolish  
boasting, though necessary for  
the good cause he has in view;  
the glory of Christ.

It will be generally admitted  
that this great & zealous Apostle

11 & being  
therefore a  
seal of his  
apostleship.



who have laboured more <sup>abundantly &</sup> successfully  
than any other in the cause of Christ  
and his Gospel, had a just claim  
to the honorable distinction of being  
an ambassador of Christ and  
was justified in his plea for his character &  
this office to speak of his ex-  
ecutions & success. But how far  
others can lay claim to a <sup>distinct call & divine</sup> leaving <sup>appointment</sup>  
embassy, how far men at the  
present day can present them-  
selves before the world as speaking  
to them in Christ's stead and on  
what grounds they can do so is  
a question respecting which a  
variety of opinions are entertained  
at the present day, a question which  
has often agitated the Christian  
Church & perhaps never more than  
~~at present~~, in these days of strife.



& Division when forms & external marks are so often mistaken for the realities of religion & inward grace when the outward constitution of a Church is by many urged as <sup>an</sup> essential <sup>part</sup> or a matter of first importance whilst inward spiritual religion is neglected or made dependent altogether on the outward ordinance, when one Church or denomination of Christians claims a superiority over another simply on some external ground ~~without~~ or one party claims an exclusive right of being a true Church, condemning others as false not necessarily on the ground that is true as they have not or teach not the Gospel, but because ~~they~~ they may be wanting in certain outward forms or rites. The question my brethren we are then approaching whether there be & who are true ministers of Christ is one of great importance & much depends on its true scriptural solution,



in order to render us firm stand-  
fast & consistent in our religious  
principles. I should be wanting in  
my duty, I wonder if I did not  
at this time when our Church is  
so much agitated, when some of our  
ministers in this Colony have forsaken  
our communion, <sup>& have become Brethren of the Gospel</sup> ~~expressing my sentiments~~ <sup>if I did not</sup>  
needs & my conviction from the Scriptures  
on the subject, though I can do it but  
briefly. I trust you need no pledge  
from me, whether or no I am resolved  
to adhere faithfully to the Church of which  
by God's grace I am <sup>now</sup> a minister. I  
trust, I have at all times, even  
amidst many shortcomings in zeal  
and efficiency, proved to you that  
I preach the truth as it is in Jesus,  
that I set forth no other Gospel  
than that which Christ & His Apostles  
have preached, that Gospel which  
is embodied so beautifully & com-



preluding in the articles, famu-  
laries & liturgy of our Church  
that Gospel which has been so  
manfully & nobly <sup>confessed &</sup> defended by  
our Reformers for which ~~they~~ <sup>many</sup> died & died. To this Gospel, because  
it is the true Gospel, I am resolved  
to adhere, for if I trust by your  
help I shall live & die fully  
fully persuaded that it is eternal  
truth able & effectual to save  
souls.

But to come to the momentous question  
~~suggested~~ already intimated & sug-  
gested by our text - the question of what  
constitutes a true minister of Christ  
I only would premise that, some there  
must be still at the present day,  
who can lay claim to be Christ's ~~ministry~~  
& messengers. He who has promised to  
be with his Church even to the end, must  
and will surely continue a Church  
- a true or his Church and if believers  
we must be able to recognize it even



amidst all the confusion & division  
that ~~are~~ exists in the Christian world.

In order however to discern the Church  
of Christ, in its true character we must  
not be too narrow minded, we must  
not confine it to one or other parti-  
cular communion, we must above  
all not seek it only under some  
particular form, <sup>some peculiar form not a specific form</sup> we must not  
make external things the criterion  
else we shall soon go astray &  
perhaps mistake the most corrupt  
portion of the visible Church for the  
true Church. The grand mark of a  
true branch of Christ, Church must be  
purity of doctrine it must show its genuine  
character by being founded on the  
Scriptures. The word of God alone not  
human Tradition must guide us in  
our decision. If we lose sight of that  
standard we are in peril of mis-  
taking Christ, true Church, we are in peril  
of neglecting spiritual heart felt religion  
and substitute form in its stead.



Now as the Church must continue  
it follows as a necessary consequence  
that its ministry must continue like-  
wise. There can be no doubt, even  
now there are those who can call them-  
selves Christ's ambassadors, free  
messengers of the Gospel, such who  
according to our text can declare, "We  
are workers together with him that  
is with God & Christ. By a reference  
to the concluding part of the previous chap-  
ter you will find that the Apostles making  
a distinct & solemn declaration of the  
momentous charge implied in the sacred  
ministry it being an office of no mean  
character, but dignified both by the  
high authority who sends & the message  
entrusted. <sup>he says</sup> Now then we are am-  
bassadors <sup>for</sup> Christ, or in Christ's stead  
as though God did beseech you in  
Christ's stead by us, we pray you in  
Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God.  
I need not quote other passages of simi-  
lar import showing the sacredness, solemnity  
excellency & responsibility of the ministry.



real officer. It is a charge a trust, a  
stewardship committed unto us, which  
whilst we may feel ourselves honored, may  
well impress us with reverential fear &  
awe. We may justly inquire, <sup>into their qualifications, &</sup> whether we <sup>are</sup> <sup>essentials</sup>  
are truly called by God & lawfully appointed.  
To intrude ourselves into this office without  
a due call would be presumption &  
expose us to justly to God's <sup>greatest</sup>  
displeasure. We are to work together  
with God himself as his instruments,  
as fellowhelpers for the salvation of im-  
mortal souls, of whom if we neglect  
them we have to give 'an account to God.  
Well may we exclaim, "Who is sufficient  
for these things?" But how do we know  
that we are truly & lawfully called. Some  
there are who lay much & the greatest  
stress on their ordination. If that  
be performed by what they consider  
a true & <sup>canonical or</sup> lawful bishop, they imagine  
their call & ministerial authority are  
established beyond a doubt. We cannot  
now enter into this question at large. But  
it is evident if the power can be  
& must be only bestowed by a regular







an unworthy minister may be called  
God's minister. <sup>It is appointed of God; permission for some time</sup> The unworthiness of a  
minister for instance does not disannul  
the validity of the administration of the  
sacraments, if received by <sup>The validity</sup>  
faith, though his unworthiness may detract <sup>& effect of the</sup>  
from the blessing which is received by earnest <sup>sacraments by</sup>  
prayer accompanying the administration. <sup>peace, mainly</sup>  
As regards however the preaching of the <sup>& the office</sup>  
Gospel much is lost by an unworthy <sup>not in the person</sup>  
minister or one who does not even un- <sup>of the attainment of</sup>  
derstand & can therefore not preach the <sup>The Church is in</sup>  
Gospel. How can he whose views are <sup>outwardly in-</sup>  
erroneous as regards true religion, who teaches <sup>struction may</sup>  
& defends grosser heresies & errors <sup>commit mistakes</sup>  
say or think that he is an instrument for <sup>in its opposi-</sup>  
good in the land of God, that he works <sup>tion, but for</sup>  
with God? The Divine call to the ministry <sup>promising fruit</sup>  
must first be felt within us, we must <sup>not for them</sup>  
be moved & constrained like the Apostles <sup>& faithful</sup>  
by the love of God & the love to our fellow sinners, <sup>seek</sup>  
not incensed by worldly ambition, or love of  
ease or a desire of the filthy lucre. We  
must also discern within us at least some ability  
to teach & without thrusting ourselves into the office



as any Layman or even any circumstances  
needing & humbly submit to such authority  
as the Church has appointed to be tried &  
examined & lawfully appointed.

To them who bear us the best criteria  
of our true state will be, the purity of the  
doctrine we set forth, the warmth & fervor

of which by which we inculcate the golden precepts  
waiting in these things which we endeavor to promote every good  
cause & work, and the holiness of our life  
& example. That such is the intent & meaning  
of our Church, that on these criteria she places  
more importance than on any thing besides,  
is clearly implied by the question put to  
~~those who~~ <sup>those who</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~consecrated~~ <sup>consecrated</sup> at the time  
of the ordination as well as by the numerous  
prayers the ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> ~~pastors~~ <sup>pastors</sup> appointed to  
be used for the ministers that they might  
set forth in their lives & doctrine the  
word & will of God. Let us beware then  
to lay too much stress on any outward ceremonial  
rite or ceremony both as regards the ministry & the  
Church lest we be ensnared by the sophistries  
& subtleties of that Church which shut its  
doors & exclude all who differ from it in participation  
of mercy & salvation for corrupt the pure faith



of Christ & obscure the truth of God by human  
inventions. And as we must own that there are  
some denominations professing the pure word of God  
on orthodox doctrines & having ministers who  
faithfully & zealously set forth these truths  
labouring for the glory of Christ & the salvation  
of sinners, that they must be Christ's ministers  
& true ministers called by God workers together  
with him, though they may not be orthodox &  
appointed according to the order & rule of  
our own Church. We have no right to limit  
God's call, way, & operations & appointments.

Much of what is called a schism & unlawfully  
constituted ministry, if such it can be proved  
to be will be chargeable on that very Church  
its errors corruptions & oppositions to a saint  
which we so justly protest & fear which our  
fathers have had good cause to separate.

If we are true ministers of Christ we desire  
to cooperate with you likewise to improve  
our office & ministry by our diligence in teaching  
all manner things exhortation, by prayer & exhortation  
often reminding our hearers of God's gracious invita-  
tions his precious promises & the privilege of access  
unto him, the advantages we enjoy, that they



may not receive the grace of God in vain, that  
that which was intended for a blessing may not prove a curse  
or even an impossibility without any real benefit  
derived. Let me beseech you, exhorter that  
and warn you that you receive not God's grace so many  
mercies & privileges in vain. If you are true  
believers, if you have trusted the good word of God  
great undoubtedly great is the mercy bestowed on you.  
you have much cause for gratitude but take heed what  
use you make of such blessings, bring forth fruit even.

But if you if some of you, it may be many of you have only  
enjoyed the outward privileges of the Church such a baptism  
a frequent opportunity of hearing God's word, the ad-  
vantage of belonging to a Church which stands on a scriptu-  
ral apostolic foundation, remember greater are these  
blessings & privileges on thy will but better avail you  
may thy will only add to your condemnation, if you neglect make  
a right use of these things. You have received a certain  
measure of grace, of God's favor, or receive it yet is vain.  
Many then are to be pitied themselves, to belong to this or that parti-  
cular Church, many members of our Church comfort themselves  
simply because they belong to a Church which has just claim on  
a Scriptural, or the most & highest catholic character and  
even some ministers will constantly praise up its excellencies  
or superiority as if the mere outward membership, with little  
corresponding or making were sufficient, so that people scarcely mistake  
their profession of Church membership as religion itself. Far better will  
it be to have the necessity of acting up to the privileges & light we  
enjoy  
Nothing will avail but to do even.