

**LYMAN BEECHER LECTURES
ON PREACHING YALE
UNIVERSITY, 1917. GOOD
MINISTERS OF JESUS CHRIST**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649780044

Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching Yale University, 1917. Good Ministers of Jesus Christ by
William Fraser McDowell

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Cover @ 2017

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WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

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MINISTERS OF JESUS CHRIST**

Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching
Yale University, 1917



GOOD MINISTERS OF JESUS CHRIST

By
WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

One of the Bishops
of the
Methodist Episcopal Church



THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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First Edition Printed May, 1917
Reprinted June, 1917

CONTENTS

LECTURE	PAGE
PERSONAL FOREWORD.....	7
I. THE MINISTRY OF REVELATION..... "Show us the Father."	11
II. THE MINISTRY OF REDEMPTION..... "He shall save his people from their sins."	51
III. THE MINISTRY OF INCARNATION..... "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."	89
IV. THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION... "We are ambassadors for Christ."	127
V. THE MINISTRY OF RESCUE..... "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."	165
VI. THE MINISTRY OF CONSERVATION..... "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these . . . should perish."	201
VII. THE MINISTRY OF COOPERATION..... "We are workers together . . . and members one of another."	235
VIII. THE MINISTRY OF INSPIRATION..... "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me."	271

PERSONAL FOREWORD

FOR more than a generation I have been reading the Yale Lectures as the successive volumes have appeared, reading them with an ever-growing profit and interest. On my way to be a student in the School of Theology I carried with me to read on the train the lectures of both Brooks and Simpson, then recently published. Through the years since then these and other volumes have helped to keep my ideals fresh, my standards from sagging, and my vision of the ministry clear and attractive before my own eyes. For twenty-five years I have been out of the pastorate, in positions which by their very nature tend to make a person official and administrative in his attitude and spirit. These lines, perhaps all too personal for such a place, are intended to suggest what they cannot express, an undying and increasing gratitude to the men and the influences that have helped to preserve for me, in my ministry through the years, "the vision splendid."

The gracious invitation to serve as Lyman Beecher lecturer in this year brought more than ordinary embarrassment just because of this

PERSONAL FOREWORD

long and devoted use of the lectures given by other men. What they have said so well, what has soaked into me, what has been absorbed by me must surely reappear in every one of these chapters. I am entirely willing to have it so, but other men must not be held responsible, even though their influence can be seen and felt in every page, an influence that is large and real, but cannot be indicated in detail. It would be easy to make pedantic display in the way of references, but this would be no more attractive here than it is in sermons. So this broad and grateful acknowledgment is set down here at the beginning, the acknowledgment of a lifelong indebtedness to multitudes of "men and books."

These addresses were prepared and delivered in a time of unparalleled "storm and stress" in the world, a time in which everything is thought of as affected by the unspeakable war. Men naturally wonder what kind of world we shall live in, what kind of ministry will serve the world and how it will serve it, and even what sort of Christianity will exist when the war is over. The very life of Christ's kingdom seems involved in this world crash. Men can scarcely think or speak of anything else. "All our talking and thinking have become like the open page of a monthly magazine, with a bloody

PERSONAL FOREWORD

smear, a thing of red and black dragged across it." Nevertheless, the war is not at all prominent in these lectures. It has been my eager desire to see and my earnest endeavor to present a ministry that might be worthy and vital while war lasts and when war has passed, as it will pass; to lay hold for our ministry of principles steadfast and eternal even in the day when the earth is rocking under our feet. I dare not think that I have succeeded as the subject deserves, but in putting the ministry of the Master in its spirit, purpose, and essence under the ministry of men in these troubled days I dare believe that I have tried to do what is well for us all.

The wish to do this explains all that is said and all that is omitted. His ministry is constantly treated in these studies as both an event that occurred and a principle that ever abides. His life in its deepest meanings is held to contain the essential principles of all human life. He himself is regarded both as pattern and power for men. I desire the ministry of the Master to lie in power under, around, above, and within the ministry of the men of our own and later days.

For the dear church of which I am a minister, for my "brethren and companions" and for myself I make hearty but inadequate expression of