

**THE MUTUAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES  
OF PASTOR AND PEOPLE: A SERMON,  
PREACHED, ON SABBATH, SEPTEMBER  
4, 1836, IN THE SOUTH PARISH CHURCH,  
ABERDEEN, ON OCCASION OF THE  
INTRODUCTION OF THE REV. W. K. TWEEDIE**

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The mutual duties and responsibilities of pastor and people: a sermon, preached, on Sabbath, September 4, 1836, in the South Parish Church, Aberdeen, on occasion of the introduction of the Rev. W. K. Tweedie by Alexander Duff

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**ALEXANDER DUFF**

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**A SERMON,**

PREACHED, ON SABBATH, SEPTEMBER 4, 1836,

IN THE

**SOUTH PARISH CHURCH, ABERDEEN,**

ON OCCASION OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE

REV. W. K. TWEEDIE,

TO THE PASTORAL CHARGE OF THAT CHURCH AND PARISH.

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER DUFF, D.D.

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TO THE  
KIRK-SESSION AND CONGREGATION  
OF  
**South Parish Church, Aberdeen,**  
THIS SERMON,  
PUBLISHED AT THEIR UNITED EARNEST REQUEST,  
IS DEDICATED,  
WITH SENTIMENTS OF GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE,  
BY  
THE AUTHOR.



## SERMON.

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“ So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel ; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die ; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it ; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity ; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”—EZEK. xxxiii. 7-9.

WHEN a country is invaded by some foreign foe : when the armies of the aggressor have overspread the land : when a blighted surface marks the progress of their ravages : when the chains of unoffending victims display the relentless cruelty of their revenge : when the active movements of hostile squadrons are discerned, and the voice of the trumpet that hitherto has sounded the certain note of battle and defeat, is heard from the watch-towers of the fortress, that forms the last and lingering hope of a once flourishing, but now greatly diminished power :—when it is dreaded that within are many faithless men, whose treacherous machinations are concealed under the mask of friendship, and who only await the critical moment of disaster or despair, to strengthen the hands of those who have



laid bare many an altar, and left many a city smoking in its ruins :—Shall he be hailed as a patriot citizen, who whispers in softest accents that danger is far distant,—who circulates and foment the ruinous suggestion to relax those efforts that might yet render resistance successful, and, turning the tide of conquest, lay prostrate the insulting foe,—who encourages the thousands around him to banish idle cares and silence unfounded alarms, and speedily betake themselves to gay and luxurious delights, and loll in the lap of voluptuous ease, and run the round of lawless revelry ? No. He is pronounced a traitor to his country's cause ; to him is awarded a traitor's doom ; and over his remains are raised the insignia of a traitor's grave.

Now, have ye not heard, at least by the hearing of the ear, that the earth we dwell upon is a vanquished territory of the prince of darkness ? Ever since the hour of that fell catastrophe which “ brought death into the world with all our woe,” down to the present, has the great adversary of God and man, laboured with sleepless vigilance, to consummate the triumph which he then gained. The unquenchable longing of his soul has been to thwart the plans, and subvert the purposes of the Almighty. And all his vast energies have been intensely engaged in subtle artifice to deceive, and murderous cruelty to drag the miserable race of Adam headlong to “ the lake that burneth.”

When, therefore, this earth, instead of being a garden for refreshment and rest, is none other than the arena of mortal combat : when the enemy is in possession of its extended territories, and no place of safety is left save the

refuge provided by the Gospel : when the sudden vicissitudes and strange convulsions of nature herald the presence of the conqueror ; and the voice of weeping, lamentation, and woe, ever resounds in the train of his success : when all possible advantages in the field of strife are in his favour : when he can appeal, without ever appealing in vain, to the eternal sanctions of God's righteous law, to the frowns and allurements of the world, and to the evil propensities of wicked and deceitful hearts, to aid him in the attempt to carry by storm or stratagem the only remaining citadel :— Shall he be hailed as the friend of man, and a patriot citizen of Zion, who sits down in ignoble repose, and softly whispers, “ peace, peace,” when all is the cheerless peace of the sepulchre?—who, by delusive prospects of security, beguiles thousands into the snares of the foul destroyer, or, by the application of active stimulants, hurries them to the streams of false delight, and leaves them without a sigh, gaily to dance around the brink of the bottomless pit, and plunge beneath, the victims of perdition ? He may be so hailed by the thoughtless and giddy throng, who are the blinded instruments of Satan's malice, the miserable drudges of his imperious will, the cowering subjects of his dire dominion. But hailed he shall not be, by the sons of light, who are loyal adherents of the cause of Heaven. By saints, and by the King of Saints, he shall be arraigned as a traitor ; to him shall be allotted a traitor's award ; and in everlasting burnings he shall wear the memorials of a traitor's crime.

And who is this traitor that shall be so recompensed ? Every faithless, careless, inconsistent, hypocritical profes-

sor of the religion of Jesus is such traitor. And every minister who is a faithless, slothful, and slumbering "watchman" on the walls of our Zion, is an arch-traitor to his God. Hearken to the language addressed to the prophet of old, when appointed a watchman to the House of Israel; and as addressed to him, so in substance, to all, in every age, who have undertaken to be watchmen to immortal souls against surrounding enemies:—"When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

In the face of such a charge as this, involving responsibilities at which one may well pause and tremble, shall we wilfully evoke the justice of Heaven to require at our hands the blood of lost souls? Shall we soothe the fears of those who are smitten with the plague-spot of sin, by pronouncing them "whole," when "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is nought but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores?" Shall we assuage the rising tumult of alarm by sounding the lullaby of "peace, peace," when deadly war is raging through the vitals of the kingdom? This were not kindness, but cruelty—not love, but hatred—not friendship, but enmity—not the savour of life, but the savour of death unto death.

We may not, therefore, we must not, we dare not, withhold the warning addressed by God himself to the wicked; for, the terms of the Divine appointment are, "thou shalt hear the word at *my* mouth, and warn them from *me*,"—and the alternative presented to the watchman is, "If