

**PASTORAL ADVICE TO YOUNG  
MEN, PARTICULARLY  
THOSE IN COUNTRY  
VILLAGES, IN SEVEN SERMONS**

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Pastoral advice to young men, particularly those in country villages, in seven sermons by  
Edward Berens

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**EDWARD BERENS**

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TO

YOUNG MEN,

PARTICULARLY THOSE IN COUNTRY VILLAGES,

IN

SEVEN SERMONS,

BY THE

REV. EDWARD BERENS, M.A.

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## SERMON I.

ON THE HABITUAL REMEMBRANCE OF GOD.

ECCLES. xii. 1.

*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.*

THE minister of a parish must naturally feel anxious for the welfare of every individual committed to his charge; but this anxiety will be felt in an increased degree for such of his flock as are exposed to peculiar danger. This, certainly, is the case with those young men who are just entering the world, and beginning to think—(what they generally think at a period much too early)—that they may now venture to act for themselves, may venture to throw off the control of masters and teachers, and even the salutary restraint of parental authority. Great, indeed, are the dangers to which they thus heedlessly expose themselves. Let me, therefore, intreat such young men, to attend seriously to a few words of advice, dictated by a heartfelt desire to advance your best interests. Consider what I say as the admonition of a *friend*; of one who sincerely wishes you well, and who can have no object in view in thus addressing you but *your good*.



## 2    *On the habitual remembrance of God.*

As the most effectual preservative from the many dangers, to which, at your age, you are exposed, endeavour to comply with the advice of the wise man in the text, to remember your Creator in the days of your youth. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, when the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when ye shall say, I have no pleasure in them.* Try to maintain constantly in your heart a deep sense of the *relation* which you bear to God, and of the *duties* which you consequently owe to him. Try to keep the principal truths and obligations of religion deeply impressed upon your minds.

Remember God as your *Creator*. Consider that you were made by him; and that you owe to him, not only your life, but every comfort which you enjoy. You cannot but acknowledge, that he has a clear and undoubted right to the services of that being which he has himself made. You *belong* to him; and consequently are in justice bound to make his will, his precepts and commandments, the rule, the governing principle, of your conduct.

Remember God as your *Redeemer*. When you, together with all the rest of mankind, were in a lost state through sin, God was mercifully pleased to *redeem*—to save—you from that state, by giving his Son Jesus Christ to die for your sake. *He tasted death for every man.* It is in him that *we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin.* Remember, therefore, that being thus redeemed—thus *bought with a price*—even the blood of the Son of

God, *you are no longer your own*, are no longer at liberty to live according to your own will, according to your own appetites and desires, but are bound by every tie, both of justice and of gratitude, to live according to the will of him who has thus bought you.

Remember God as your *Sanctifier*. So weak and corrupt is the nature of man in consequence of the transgression of our first parents, that we cannot serve God acceptably without his grace, without the assistance of his Spirit. That assistance is freely offered to you if you will ask for it—if you will seek it in fervent prayer. *Ask and ye shall have*, says our Lord, *seek and ye shall find*; and he assures us, that his *heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him*. Remember, then, that it is the Holy Spirit alone who can effectually *help your infirmities*. Implore his aid to enlighten your understanding, to give strength to your good resolutions, to correct and purify your heart and affections.

Lastly, remember God as your *Judge*. Never for a moment forget that *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness; that God shall bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*: and ever remember, that he who will judge you is a Being from whom nothing can be hidden. *All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. He is about our path, and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways. There is not a word in our tongue, but God knoweth it altogether.*

#### 4    *On the habitual remembrance of God.*

*He even spieth out the secret thoughts and intents of the heart.* Young people sometimes venture to yield to temptations to sin, in the hope of concealment. But there is no possibility of concealing any thing from God. *If I say, peradventure the darkness shall cover me, then shall my night be turned into day; yea, the darkness is no darkness with God, but the night is as clear as the day, the darkness and light to him are both alike.* Remember therefore that there is no possibility of escaping the observation of an all-seeing Judge. If, in the high spirits of youth, you are tempted to *walk after the way of your own heart*, according to your own appetites and desires, and *after the sight of your own eyes*, yet be assured that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

The keeping upon your mind of this habitual remembrance of God, will require some attention and watchfulness on your part. Both from the distractions, the cares, and the pleasures of the world, and from the waywardness of your own heart, you will be in no small danger of forgetting him. But reflect, that though you may forget God, God will not forget you; and think both on the ingratitude, and on the awful danger of forgetting him. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God. O consider this, ye that forget God, lest he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you.*

Make use therefore of every means in your power for maintaining the habitual remembrance of God upon your minds. Often employ yourselves in read-