

**AN ESSAY ON THE PASTORAL  
OFFICE, CONTAINING A DEFENCE  
OF WESLEYAN METHODISM,  
ESPECIALLY THE RIGHT AND  
EXERCISES OF HER PASTORS**

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An Essay on the Pastoral Office, Containing a Defence of Wesleyan Methodism, Especially the Right and Exercises of Her Pastors by James Catton

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**JAMES CATTON**

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ON  
THE PASTORAL OFFICE,  
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A DEFENCE OF WESLEYAN METHODISM,  
ESPECIALLY THE RIGHTS AND EXERCISES  
OF HER PASTORS.

BY JAMES CATTON,  
WESLEYAN MINISTER.

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61.



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TO THE  
MINISTERS OF THE WESLEYAN CONNEXION,  
THE STUDENTS IN THE THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION,  
THE LOCAL PREACHERS, LEADERS, AND MEMBERS IN SOCIETY,  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD,  
THIS SMALL VOLUME,  
IN WHICH THE RIGHTS, AND EXERCISES, OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE  
ARE STATED AND VINDICATED,  
BY WHICH IT IS HOPED THE MINISTRY MAY BE GUIDED,  
AND COMFORTED,  
IS HUMBLY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.

## PREFACE.

IN 1837, a premium of one hundred pounds was offered by a gentleman of Manchester, for the best original essay on the scriptural character, duties, and claims of the "Pastoral Office;" with a special reference to the manner in which that office is defined and exercised in the Wesleyan Methodist connexion.

Eight Essays were received, "several of which" the adjudicators considered to "possess considerable merit." The present Essay was one of the eight.

The Prize was offered, no doubt, with a design to excite the attention of the preachers, and the connexion in general, to investigate the subject; believing that a right understanding of it would have a tendency to promote peace and stability in the societies which have been, and still may be, agitated, in reference to the rights and exercises of the "Pastoral Office."

Only one of the Essays having yet been printed, the end for which the Premium was offered would not have been fully answered; for there are a variety of minds, tastes, talents, and circumstances, which could only be met by a variety of Essays coming forth on the same subject; and several would like to see a variety of minds and talents exerted on the same subject. I therefore waited for some time hoping to hear of another coming forth; but being disappointed, I ventured with unfeigned diffidence to give this publicity.

While engaged in writing this Essay I was interrupted for several months by personal affliction; and since it has been in the press I have had my mind painfully afflicted by the loss of two of my beloved children—so that I could not give it that time and attention which I desired, and it needed.



As to the manner in which the work is accomplished, I need say but little, the public will decide. I may however be permitted to say—considering my feeble qualifications, little leisure, and many and great interruptions—"I have done what I could."

The "Pastoral Office" has been thought a subject of sufficient interest and importance for the Press, ever since the invention of Printing. Among the Fathers, St. Chrysostom wrote on the priesthood. Since the Reformation, the subject has been one of the great points of controversy. Zuinglius Ulricus, Bishop of Zurich, wrote a work on this subject, which was translated and printed by Vernon in 1550, entitled:—"The ymage of bothe Pastoures, a most fruitful and necessary booke, to be had and redde in all churches therwyth to enarm all symple and ignorant folke agaynst the raveninge wolves and fals prophets." Gilbert Burnet of the church of England published his Pastoral care: and a long list of others wrote on the same subject.

The non-conformists also considered this a vital subject. Baxter published his *Gildas Silvianus, or Reformed Pastor*; and after him several others. "On the people's need of a living pastor asserted and explained." "Or on the pains of painful pastors," &c.

And now after existing a hundred years we are called to prove that in the truest and best sense, we have succeeded to the doctrines, spirit, work and successes of the apostles. And though our ministry by many is considered irregular and supplementary; we would reply, so was St. Paul's; he was an irregular apostle and supplementary, for he was the thirteenth apostle.

The Prize Essay is an elegant and lengthened work; but my plan and materials differ so much from it, that they may be both needed. This Essay however, being so much less in size and price may at least suit those, who have but little time, and as little money.

May the blessing of the Great Head of the church attend it.

J. C.

GRANTHAM, *Feb. 29th*, 1840.

# THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

“Whatever gladdens the heart of men or angels, with any real or satisfactory joy, comes from heaven. It is a portion of the pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; a ray issuing from the brightness of everlasting life.”—BLAIR.

1. CHRISTIANITY employs various and numerous instrumentalities; it says to all, “Work in my vineyard;” “Be not weary in well doing;” “To do good, and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

2. But Christianity has also established a regular order of labourers; who are to be wholly devoted to it, and employed continually in promoting it, “To preach the word; to be instant in season and out of season.”

3. The “Pastoral Office” is so dissimilar to any prior sacred office, that it may be said to have originated with Christianity.

The priesthood and service of the temple were principally typical of Christ and his work; unless we may consider the Levites' offering up incense and blessing the people as typical of a part of the work of Christian ministers; but the builders of the temple, and those who digged the stones out of the quarry, and squared and fitted them for use, more fully typified the work of the Christian ministry. Some of the prophets came nearest to this office; they were the voice of God, and frequently had a message from God to the people; and some of them taught the people; as Ezra, who read the scriptures to the people and gave them the meaning of it; and so the apostles sometimes term preaching, prophesying; but, after all, the "Pastoral Office" has so many peculiarities, that it may be considered as originating with the Christian system.

4. The "Pastoral Office" derives its authority from Christ, and may be termed a divine legation. The twelve appear to have been first called to be disciples, and then after they had been with their Master for several years, were chosen to be his apostles. After the resurrection, our Lord reinstated Peter (who had, by denying Christ, forfeited his office), thrice interrogating him, "Simon Peter, lovest thou me? The third time, Peter answering, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" was then commissioned to feed Christ's sheep, and his lambs; and unto him were given the keys of the kingdom, to open the gospel dispensation, and the church of Christ to Jews and Gentiles. The general