

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN

**The Commercial and the Lazy Minister.**

"A Layman" in the *Lutheran Standard* (March 26) writes letters to his son who has decided to become a minister, and says, amongst other things:—

"Again, if you seek first the kingdom of God, as you expect to tell your people to do, you will have no need of earthly cares. You have the promise of the Lord that He will care for you and that you shall not suffer want. If you will cast all your cares upon your Savior, if you will trust Him in earthly things as you will in spiritual

things, you will realize that the Lord keeps His promises. It is to be feared that too many ministers at present are saying: 'What shall we eat, what shall we drink?' etc., and are longing more to see the names of their congregations upon the 'Honor Roll' than to see the names of their members written in the book of eternal life. If the ministry becomes commercialized, what will become of the people, how then can the minister preach: 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God'? If the leaders of the Church do not stand as a bulwark against the great greed for money, if they will not show their people by word and act that we are living for eternity, who will do so? More than ever ministers must preach the Gospel, not only from the pulpit, but also by their life, their example, by every word and deed, and your parents want you to do so even now while you are preparing yourself for your calling.

"You also have considered that the ministry of the Gospel is a calling that calls for work, and for much hard work. In no other profession is so much required or is the work so varied. You will have to preach two and three times every Sunday, conduct Sunday-school and teachers' meetings, lead in the different societies, preside at the vestry and congregational meetings, instruct the young and the adult catechumens, call upon the sick, seek the wayward and lost, bury the dead, oversee the financial affairs, and do many other equally important things.

"It is no lazy man's calling. It is true, the minister has no one really to tell him what and when to do this or that. He, in a certain sense, is his own boss. His people often put up with him when he neglects his work. A lazy minister can slight much of his work, can neglect his duties, and his pay goes on, but his congregation must suffer, his conscience must be hushed, his people become negligent, and souls are lost. But what a reckoning on Judgment Day! What a name and reputation he receives amongst his own people and his fellow-ministers! A student who is lazy, who shuns work, who looks forward to an easy time in the ministry, should be told to look for a lazy man's job, should not be permitted to continue his studies at the seminary. My son, study the lives of Christ, of St. Paul, of Luther, of John Paton, who were men of work, of hard and continuous work.

"A leading minister who had occasion to visit many pastors said that many pastors really do not earn the salary they get, because they do not exert themselves and are negligent of their duties. Even if they are not considered lazy, they are not energetic, they are not heeding the words, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' Success in any other calling depends mostly upon hard work. Some great man has said: 'Genius is work.' Jesus Himself was very busy and said: 'I must work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.'"

Paul warned a young preacher against *philargyria* (1 Tim. 6, 10), and when he called himself and his colleagues in the ministry *hypocritai* of Christ, he used a word that means an underrower in a galley (1 Cor. 4, 1).