



Episcopal Church in Connecticut

Selected Sermons of Samuel Seabury, First Bishop of Connecticut and the United States

*See full text of Samuel Seabury's sermons and publications at Project Canterbury*

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### *Hebrews 1:14*

On Jewish and Christian understanding with regard to angels. A letter from John Moore in Norwich, dated 9 February, 1788, is written across two pages of the sermon (the sermon is written over the letter.)

### *1 Peter 4:6. No original text. Guilford, CT ca. Sept.-Oct. 1785.*

An explanation of some of the translations of the Greek in this New Testament passage: especially what is meant by "dead," that those who live in sin are "dead". Seabury refers to other commentators, Dr. Hammond and Dr. Whitby, and notes the diversity of understanding of the text.

### *1 Corinthians 4:1-2.*

Ministers are "the stewards of the mysteries of God" and they should endeavor to illustrate the Gospel through their preaching, and other expected duties and behaviors, such as diligence. Archivist Dr. Cameron notes: "this sermon was most probably the one preached to candidates for orders at New Haven on Sept. 16, 1785. It is filled with the forms required for the "occasion."

### *Philippians 4:6. New Brunswick, 1754.*

We are not to be mindful of worldly things beyond what is allotted us; we are to be constantly employed to provide ourselves and our families the necessities our bodies dictate, "but the care of the soul demands the greatest attention."

### *John 1:14. No original text. New London, Christmas, 1786.*

"The Word made Flesh" means that God took a human form, but he did not lose his divine nature: "...both remain distinct in him, yet so united as to make one person." The words "dwelt among us" mean that God truly became united to this world, "became easily and truly man." The Word came into the world to save sinners, "...and such all are we."

### *1 John: 3-10*

The distinguishing mark between the children of God and the children of the Devil is the doing or not doing of righteousness. There are some sins of which any one single act will forfeit righteousness, and there are frames of mind contrary to the will of God "that

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whoever...indulges in them must give up all pretensions to the doing of righteousness."  
Doing righteousness not only involves the absence of certain tempers of mind... "but also a constant, earnest and vigorous endeavor after universal holiness in will and deed."

*Deuteronomy 32:29, Haggai 1:7. New Brunswick, 1754.*

We have available to us as rational creatures the faculties of reflection and consideration; if we seriously deliberated before proceeding to action, the influence of the Devil, the world, and are own unruly passions would be lessened by half. Inconsideration is a common excuse for the commission of sin, but this is "laying one sin at the door of another."

*. Titus 3:8. New Brunswick, 1754.*

Faith and good works, the profession of Christianity and a good life were never intended to be separated. God doesn't promise happiness to anyone except under the conditions of obedience. "...universal benevolence in will and in deed are essential duties of Christianity."

*Luke 10:42. No date or place listed.*

Care of the soul is a duty above all others and requires these things: a distinct knowledge of what is necessary for salvation; a practice of what is necessary; frequent examinations of past behavior and living; and the daily exercise of prayer both public and private.

*Timothy 2: 19. No date or place listed.*

Holiness, piety, and charity: only by these virtues is the design of the Christian religion, the perfection and happiness of human nature, achieved if we behave in thought or action in ways contrary to the moral perfection of God, we undermine our profession of Christianity. We lay ourselves open to scorn and contempt if the lives we lead do not correspond with what we say we believe to be true.

*Titus 2:11-13. Jamaica, Advent, 1759.*

To obtain the salvation of the Gospel, we must deny ungodliness (idolatry, superstition and false worship); deny worldly lusts; and live soberly and righteously, regulating desires and passions and cravings of the body, preferring the glory of God and the welfare of our souls to the enjoyments of the world.

*John 3:19. Westchester, 1772.*

The Gospel obliges us to believe and obey it. Considered as a method

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of making us happy, of reconciling us with God and freeing us from evil, it can only be of service to those who believe it. We are, with our ability to reason and free will, to choose whether or not to fulfill the duties outlined in Scripture. If we do not believe it, we cannot obey it, and if we cannot obey it, we cannot receive any benefit from it. Faith is what induces us to believe.

*1 Timothy 4:8. First Sunday after Easter, 1776.*

The good man who embraces godliness in this life, eschewing riches and perhaps suffering disappointments and losses in this material world, is secure in the world to come. He is also happier in this life. It is a mistake to think that a man's happiness consists of the abundance of the things he possesses. The profit of godliness is the correct proportion between a man's possessions and his wants and needs.

*Psalms 109. Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, May 23, 1784.*

An explanation of the 109th Psalm; that the speaker of the curses against David is Shimei, which is implied by the syntax of the passage, but not explicitly stated.

Inferences and observations of this Psalm: that despite the denunciation of curses appearing to be in the form of a curse, the Psalm is consistent with itself throughout. The Psalms are meant to be taken as whole works, so care must be used when portions are chosen for singing by a congregation, that the sense of the psalmist is expressed; and their various uses.

*Acts 8:17.* Stratford, September 25, 1785. A discourse on Confirmation.

*Romans 8:12-13. New London, 1786.*

St. Paul's arguments for the superiority of the Christian religion, especially the pre-eminence of the Gospel over Jewish law, because of the remission of sin and the promise of immortal life.

*Romans 8:17. New London, Trinity Sunday, 1786.*

To be the children of God is one of the greatest privileges of the Gospel. The gift of God's spirit is what frees us from the slavery of sin and enables us to do that of which reason and conscience approve.

*Psalms 16:8-11. New London, Easter, 1787.*

A history of the Resurrection that it gave evidence that both hell and the grave are

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subject to Him, and that when "He descended into hell" as in the Apostles Creed, Christ descended not into a place of torment, but into a "receptacle for departed souls."

*1 John 4:9-10. New London, First Sunday in October, 1787.*

The love that God manifested toward us by sending His Son into the world puts the question of his love beyond all possibility of doubt, and ought to oblige us to love Him and one another. From this gift we should understand the peril we were in, that such a sacrifice was necessary in order to save us from sin and death.

*Luke 2: 22, 24. Feast of Purification, 1788.*

An explanation of the Feast of Purification. Upon recovery from successful childbirth, women should follow Mary's example and give thanks to God in His house, offering alms to His service and dedicating their children to Him.

*Acts 26:19-20. Sexagesima, 1788.*

A sermon marking St. Paul's conversion. Difficulties in interpreting this text have arisen, around the question of "irresistible grace" and St. Paul's conversion, and his assertion that we are saved by faith, not "works." ("Works" here refers to Jewish law.)

*Acts 22:21. Sexagesima, 1788*

Why God chose St. Paul to carry out his will. This sermon appears to have been given on the Sunday following the Friday on which the preceding sermon was given.

*Matthew 15:28. New London, 2nd Sunday in Lent, a.m., 1788.*

From the Syro-Phoenician woman, who was persistent in her supplication to Jesus, we learn the great efficacy of fervent and constant prayer. She bore the appearance of indifference, neglect and contempt with patience and humility and was steadfast when her faith was being tried.