

Preaching and Cure of Souls

“To have a cure of souls ... is the highest task to which any minister can be called. To stand in the pulpit on Sunday and see the eager and expectant faces of the people turned toward you, and know they have come for worship and for the bit of bread that you have been preparing for them in the week; to feel as you look at them: ‘These are my people’; to know that in all the great hours of their life, when they want to be wed, when a child is born into their home, when trouble comes, when the doctor is going in and out, when bereavement robs them of every scrap of joy—to know that in that hour the door is open, and you not only may go but you must go; that the cry of their heart then is for their minister ... to dwell upon that is to know a joy which, to my mind, not even the unquestioned delights of scholarly research can surpass. To receive the confidence of people, to know the secrets they have told to no other living soul; to blush with them over their sins and exult with them when the sin is flung under the table; to know their private affairs and to be the sharer of their highest ideals, is to have a joy of which not one of us is really worthy.”

- W. E. Sangster, *The Approach to Preaching*