

The Work of Faith with Power

Preached at Providence Chapel, Eden Street, London, on Tuesday Evening, July 31, 1849

"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. 1:11, 12

There is one very remarkable feature in the Apostle Paul; I mean, the spirit of prayer which dwelt in his breast for the churches. I believe there is scarcely an epistle, with the exception of those to the Galatians and the Hebrews, where we do not find the Apostle expressly mentioning how he prayed for the church to which he was writing. The moving cause of these prayers he himself gives us, "Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." So deeply interested was this man of God in the prosperity of Zion, and the care of all the churches lay with such weight and power upon his mind, that it forced, as it were, prayer continually out of his breast. He says, therefore, in another place, "praying always for you." (Col. 1:3.) His soul was continually engaged in lifting up itself in prayer for those who were dear to his heart as living members of the body of Christ.

But the subject matter of the Apostle's prayers is as remarkable as the spirit of prayer itself. And would we know whether we pray aright for ourselves or for others, we should lay down our prayers side by side with those put up by the Apostle Paul for the churches; for he says expressly of himself and of his brother apostles, "We have the mind of

Christ." We may be sure, therefore, that he asked after the mind of Christ; that he prayed, as he wrote, "in the Holy Ghost;" that the Spirit of God interceded in him and for him with groanings which could not be uttered. Thus the subject matter of his petitions is deeply important, and should be well weighed and examined by us. Our prayers for ourselves, and those who are spiritually dear to us, should be compared with them, that we may gather from the comparison how far the same Spirit that wrought in Paul is working in us; and whether the same kind of prayer which that blessed Intercessor wrought in his soul is wrought in ours by the same Almighty power.

In considering the words before us this evening, I think we may observe,

First; the subject of the prayer itself; in other words, what the petitions were which the Apostle Paul here put up for the church of God at Thessalonica.

Secondly; what would be the effect and result of these prayers being answered. And,

Thirdly; the source whence all these blessings must flow—the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I.—Let us then endeavour to dive a little into the meaning of the Spirit here when he wrought in the Apostle's breast such earnest desires for the welfare of the church at Thessalonica. There were *three* things that he begged of God to do for them; and we may be sure that these were three very important and very blessed things. For having access to the throne of mercy, being permitted, encouraged and enabled to spread his petitions there, we may be sure that he would ask for such things as were in themselves deeply important;

and such as if answered, would prove signal blessings to those for whom the petitions were made.

i. The first branch of his petition to God was, "*that He would count them worthy of this calling.*" Are we to gather from these words that there was anything like worth or worthiness to be found in them? That either before calling, or after calling, there was something in them which would merit the favour of God? No; if we were to conclude anything of this nature, we should entirely misapprehend the mind of the Apostle. The persons to whom he was writing had been called by the grace of God. Nay more; they were signal Christians. There is no church in the New Testament that flourished so much in grace as that of Thessalonica. In almost all the other epistles we find reproof mingled; but in those to the church of Thessalonica we find especial mention of their "work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope." It cannot, therefore, mean that the Lord saw any worth in them prior to calling; and from seeing this goodness in them as natural men and women, that he therefore bestowed upon them the riches of his grace; for they had been already called. Thus that view is entirely precluded; nor can this be meant, that because they had improved so much the grace of God; and had in every respect acquitted themselves so worthily and becomingly, therefore for that reason there would be a mighty increase of the grace of God. No; that is not it. But the meaning of the expression, I believe, we find in the margin—that "He would *vouchsafe.*" The word does not convey an idea of worthiness on the part of the creature; but simply this, that God would "deign" to bless them; the worthiness not being in them, but in himself. So a Sovereign is said to 'deign to do this,' and 'vouchsafe that,' to 'condescend' to grant a favour; the whole spring being in the bosom of the Sovereign, he being the source of all dignity, honour, worth, and worthiness. The subject is favoured in

receiving what the Sovereign bestows; the good pleasure of the King being the fountain head of every favour and dignity conferred. Thus, when the Apostle prays, that God "would count them worthy of this calling," he means that the desire of his heart was, that God would kindly vouchsafe, would benignantly deign, would graciously condescend, to make their calling more and more manifest in their souls. There is an expression of almost a similar kind in the epistle to the Ephesians, where the Apostle prays that they might "know what is the hope of his calling;" that is that their calling might be made clear to themselves; that the fruits and benefits resulting from this calling might be made manifest to their hearts; that they might realize and know the blessings in prospect springing out of that calling; that thus they might be trained up for the enjoyment of the inheritance whereunto God had called them. It is as if he addressed them as branches of the seed royal. The heir of a crown is educated with a view to the kingdom which he is to possess; the whole tenor of his training and education being to prepare him to be king of the realm which he will be called upon one day to govern. In our country, the Prince of Wales has tutors and governors, and an education designed to fit and qualify him for the post he is one day in the providence of God to occupy. This, then, is the meaning of the Apostle, when he prays that God would "count them worthy of this calling;" that he would 'vouchsafe' to give them clear views and blessed manifestations of the grace and glory to which he had called them; that thus their minds might be trained, as it were, and educated for the inheritance of the saints in light; that they might not grovel here below in the cares and anxieties of this mortal scene; but having a bright prospect of what God had called them unto hereafter, their heart's affections might be lifted above the poor perishing things of this time-state, the trifling toys of earth, and be fixed where Jesus sits at God's right hand.

But with respect to the word "*calling*," what does it imply? That God calls them to certain blessings. We may summarily say, that in calling, God calls his people to a knowledge of himself here, and to an enjoyment of himself hereafter. When the Apostle, then prays "that God would count them worthy of this calling," it is, that he might bless them with some testimony of what he had called them to enjoy, know, and feel in their experience below, as an earnest of what he had called them to enjoy eternally above. Thus, when God calls a man, it is to accomplish in him a certain purpose; his call is preparatory to something to be revealed in his heart. It is the first link in divine religion; it is the first budding of immortal glory; it is the first touch of the finger of God upon the conscience; it is the begetting of the soul into a life that shall never die. But when we are called, in the first instance we know little else but convictions of sin, the curses of a broken law, the terrors of conscience, the dread of hell, and the fears of eternal damnation. We can no more see what this calling is intended for, than a prince, while a babe in arms, can see he is designed to be the monarch of a mighty empire. We are blind to the future, and know not what God means by it. But as the Lord, in due time, begins to take off the shackles, and drops into our souls some knowledge of himself as he brings his precious gospel near, shews us the blood of sprinkling, gives us to taste of his mercy, and to feel something of his favour; then our eyes become enlightened and anointed with divine eyesalve to see what we are called unto—"to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent;" to taste his love; to enjoy a sense of his goodness; to be delivered from the filth, guilt, bondage, and power of sin; and thus to experience a sense of God's mercy and love to such undeserving wretches as we see and feel ourselves to be.

Now, the Apostle, praying for the believing Thessalonians,

desires, "that God would count them worthy of this calling;" that is, would make it more and more manifest to their souls; would bring into their hearts more and more the blessings connected with it; would set before their eyes the prospect of that bright inheritance to which he had called them by grace, by giving them stronger and clearer views of their interest in the blood of Christ, laying eternal things with greater weight and power upon their minds, and showing them more and more of the riches of his mercy and love in the Person of his dear Son; and by counting them worthy of this calling, would unloose, unfetter, and deliver them from the bondage of sin in all its various shapes and forms, and the cares and anxieties of this life, and thus set their affections on things above.

This, then, appears to be the subject matter of the Apostle's first prayer for his beloved Thessalonians.

ii. The second is, *"that He would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness."* Perfect goodness is an attribute of God. "Why callest thou me good?" said the Lord to one who called him "good Master," as though he would take the man upon his own assumption, 'How canst thou call any man good?' He does not deny that he is good; but he takes the man upon his own word, 'Why callest thou me good if thou merely believest me to be man? for there is none good but one, that is God.' "Goodness" is an eternal attribute of Godhead. He cannot cease to be good any more than he can cease to be God. By "goodness," I understand his kindness, his benevolence, his love, his tenderness; that disposition in him to bestow favours fully, freely, and bounteously, because it is in his heart to do so. The "goodness" of God is made manifest in all the works of creation; it is made manifest in his various dealings and leadings in providence; but it is made more particularly manifest in sending his own dear Son

to save them that believe.

But the Apostle speaks here of "the good pleasure of his goodness." If I may use a figure to illustrate his meaning, it is as though the goodness of God were dwelling in him eternally, and yet a channel was needed through which it was to flow. We may conceive a river ever flowing, and sending down to the sea a perennial stream; but if a channel were cut from that river, the waters would issue by it and irrigate the land; then all the blessings contained in the stream would flow freely on the pastures, and "make them rejoice on every side." Something like this seems intimated in the expression, "good pleasure of his goodness." Goodness is in the bosom of God eternally and unceasingly. It is a part of his holy nature; an attribute of the divine essence; but there is a way in which he has seen fit to make it manifest. Angels know he is good; and that it is his very nature to be such; but sinners, redeemed sinners, not only know his goodness, but the "good pleasure of his goodness." He has been pleased in his eternal mind to manifest that goodness in a certain way, and cause it to flow in a particular channel unto certain predestinated objects.

Thus, the Apostle does not pray that they might simply know the "goodness of God," but the "good pleasure of his goodness," in the channel through which that goodness is manifested, the Person, blood, love, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the image of God. His desire was that they might know him as the divinely consecrated medium of all communication, the Mediator between God and man, through whom, as an Intercessor, all divine goodness flows into the soul. And thus, that they might know the "good pleasure of his goodness," by the mercy, favour, tenderness, compassion, and lovingkindness of God flowing into their souls through this consecrated medium, the Person of the God-Man, Immanuel, God with us. This is because we cannot

know the goodness of God abstractedly. If we were pure as first created, we might know the goodness of God as dwelling eternally in his glorious Essence; but as fallen sinners that door is barred against us; and his goodness is now only known in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the only Mediator, between God and man. When Christ, then, is made in some measure known to our souls, we view him as God's anointed One, as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person. And when we see him as the God-Man, the glorious Immanuel, and feel a measure of the goodness, mercy, and love of God flowing into our hearts through him as the Mediator between God and us, this is tasting and knowing something of the "good pleasure of his goodness."

But there is something more than this. "The good pleasure of his goodness," not only points our eyes to the Mediator, as the divinely consecrated channel, through which all blessings flow; but it also directs our sight to the objects to whom God is pleased to shew goodness. It is "according to his good pleasure." This goodness does not flow out to man as his goodness flows out towards angels. This goodness flows through the Lord Jesus Christ, as an Intercessor, to certain definite objects, and comes into the heart of certain chosen, predestinated individuals. When we can view the love of God not only in the Person of Christ, through his blood and obedience; but also receive it into our hearts as vessels of mercy set apart of God from all eternity, as predestinated to experience his love, then we begin to taste something of "the good pleasure of his goodness." This is not merely to know that God is good; but to see also that there is a pleasure "in his goodness, that he delights in mercy." This is knowing the "good will of him who dwelt in the bush." As, then, your minds are led into this truth, that the goodness of God not only flows in a glorious channel, Immanuel, God with us; not

only flows into certain hearts which have been set apart in God's predestinating purpose and love; but also flows at such times, in such ways, and through such means, as depend upon the "good pleasure of God;" you will then see that there is not only a person to receive, but also a time in which that goodness is to be known; that the ways and means are all of God's devising, through which that good pleasure should be displayed. Thus, such a minister is appointed to preach such a sermon from such a text, by which the good pleasure of God is revealed to the soul; such a path is allotted in providence as unravels the "good pleasure of God;" each having his own peculiar path in which God leads, as though he were the only individual God had to guide. As, then, we receive not only "the goodness of God," but also "the good pleasure of his goodness;" as we see the Person through whom it flows, and feel it flow into our hearts as objects of God's mercy; as we view the various means which God has appointed to make that good pleasure known, overruling every circumstance and event that takes place in providence or grace, and opening up as it were a path for his goodness to flow into:—as we are led to see and feel these things, then God is pleased to "fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness" in our heart's experience. This, then, is what the Apostle prayed that these believing disciples might enjoy at Thessalonica, that God would fulfil in them all "the good pleasure of his goodness;" that all those treasures of mercy which he had designed for them, the aboundings of all that blessedness and love which was stored up in his bosom and intended to issue forth at certain times, certain seasons, and in certain ways, might so flow into their heart, that God would in each individual fulfil "the good pleasure of his goodness."

iii. The third blessing that he prayed for them was—"*the work of faith with power.*" What is the "work of faith?" It is that

work in and upon the soul whereby faith is brought forth into living exercise. And not only so, but also the work which faith has to do when it is brought into exercise.

Thus, by "the work of faith," we may understand two things; 1, the operation of God upon the heart whereby from time to time faith is raised up, and brought forth into living exercise upon the things of God; and 2, the work that faith has to do when thus raised up and strengthened in the soul.

Every grain of true faith is from God. Living faith is the work of God, and stands in "the power of God." Whatever faith we may have had in times past, or think that we have had, we have no power whatever to raise it up again in our souls. We are in this matter completely dependent upon the good pleasure of God. He that was pleased at first to give faith must communicate it afresh, raise it up, strengthen it, and bring it forth into lively exercise. And in doing all this, he fulfils "the work of faith with power." Of this the children of God have a living testimony in their own conscience, feeling, as they all do, an evil heart of unbelief; being as unable to raise up living faith as to create a new sun in the sky; being utterly powerless to deliver themselves from the temptations that beset them, or to bring sweet and precious views of the Lord Jesus Christ into their souls. Thus all the family of God, each in his measure, are convinced that true faith is of the operation of God; and must be wrought in their soul by his almighty power. When this is felt, it cuts the sinews of all creature faith; it lays the axe to the root of freewill; it brings a man to his right place—to be a poor, dependent sinner, hanging as a pensioner upon God's mercy and love. Until the sinews of creature faith, human strength, and legal righteousness are cut, we do not fall into our right position,—to have nothing but what God gives; to be nothing but what God makes; to know nothing but what God teaches; to feel

nothing but what God inspires. Until we are brought into this completely helpless, needy, dependent position, we know nothing experimentally of the "work of faith with power." For God is a jealous God. And until we are thoroughly powerless, we do not find the working of God in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Thus, by "the work of faith with power," we understand that operation of the blessed Spirit upon the soul, whereby he influences us to receive what God has revealed in his word; to believe in his dear Son; to look to his blood and righteousness; to trust in his grace; to hang upon his promises; and to wait at his blessed footstool, until he in due time blesses, comforts, and enlarges our soul. And not only so; but every act of faith whereby we see our interest clear; whereby the spirit of love is brought into the soul, casting out that fear which hath torment; every real gospel hope; every blessing that works solid peace and satisfaction in the heart—all come from the same bounteous Author, the giver of every good and perfect gift.

This is "the work of faith with power;" because only so far as we feel the power of God in our souls, do we find any faith to believe. When the word of God is applied with power, it raises up faith; and when the power of God is felt, then faith is drawn forth to believe what is presented to it. But when the power of God is not put forth; when the operations of the Spirit, according to our view and feeling, are suspended, we are left (as we are often left) to grapple with the hardness, darkness, unbelief, and infidelity of our fallen nature, and feel as utterly unable to raise up a single spark of faith in our souls as to create a world. But when power is felt; when the word of God is applied; when the operations of the Spirit are experienced; when the things of God are brought near; when Christ is revealed and made precious; when the blood of

sprinkling is made known; when the love of God is shed abroad; then as power is felt in the soul, faith is raised up, and we are enabled to believe, receive, embrace, and cleave unto all that God thus freely and blessedly makes known.

This is what the Apostle desired for the church of God to whom he was writing, "that he would fulfil the work of faith with power."

But, as I before hinted, faith has a work to *do*. Faith can do nothing till it is raised up. To use a comparison; it is like a steam engine. Put together the wheels and the cogs, the cylinder and piston, and all the various appurtenances of the machine. But what will the engine do without steam? Take away the motive power, and what are the cogs and wheels, and all the beautiful arrangements? But let the motive power be given, and then the cogs and wheels, rods and beams, work harmoniously together, and the effect produced is such as the designer meant when the engine was erected. So it is spiritually. The grace of faith is never extinguished in the soul. A man to whom God has given faith never loses that faith out of his heart; but it is as powerless to any operation, as to any active experience, as to any work, or bringing forth of anything spiritual, as the steam engine is powerless, except there be the motive power, steam, applied to it. But when the motive power comes, when the steam is raised, then it begins to work. So it is with faith in the soul. Faith is powerless till God is pleased to breathe upon it, and draw it forth into exercise. Then, as he works upon it, and the motive power is applied, it begins to act according to its nature, and do the work which God has appointed it to perform.

1. It is the work of faith to *believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ. ("Dost thou believe on the Son of God?")—to believe in him

as our Righteousness, our Mediator, our Saviour, our Friend, our Lord, and our God. We cannot raise up faith to see and believe he is all this to us. But if the Lord is pleased to give us faith, and draw it forth by the operations of his Spirit in our soul, then faith spreads forth its wings, lays hold of this precious Saviour, and brings him down into the heart. And this is "the work of faith with power."

2. Again. There is a *promise* in the word very suitable to your state and condition. But you feel you have no power to lay hold of it. There it is in God's word, very sweet and very suitable; but you cannot touch it; or, if you touch it, you cannot bring any sweetness, blessedness, or comfort out of it. But when the Lord is pleased to bring that promise near, to operate upon your soul with divine power, and so raise up and draw forth living faith upon the promise, what is so easy as to believe? I have often said, that faith is the hardest thing in the world, and the easiest thing in the world. There is nothing so hard, nothing so impossible, as to believe when the Lord does not give faith, is not raising it up, and drawing it forth by his almighty power. But when the Lord is doing this, or in any measure blessing the soul, bringing the truth near, applying the promise, dropping it in with sweetness and savour, then nothing is so easy as to believe: it is then so simple, so sweet, so easy; there is no effort about it: it seems to come in and flow out freely as God gives it. And when this is the case, it is "the work of faith with power," to receive the promise; to suck its sweetness; to take it warm into the heart, and believe that God will accomplish it.

3. So with *the precepts*. God has given us precepts; and we would desire to obey them. We see a beauty and a blessedness in them; we admire them, and desire our lives to be conformed to them. We dare not set them aside. On the contrary, we take them as an integral portion of God's word;

and see at times as great a beauty, as deep a necessity, and as real an importance in them as in the promises. But we are as powerless to perform the precept spiritually, as we are powerless to believe the promise spiritually, except as the Lord works in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure." The promise is a part of God's word; but we want faith to believe it; and the precept is a part of God's word; but we want faith to perform it; God works in us to believe the promise; God works in us to perform the precept. "Love your enemies," says the precept. "If smitten on the one cheek, turn the other." Can I do either of these things? Not spiritually, except so far as faith is wrought in my heart. I may do it in the letter, or hypocritically. But what real performance of the precept is there except as the Spirit who gave the precept works in us to obey it from the heart, from spiritual motives, to do it under divine impulse, or perform it under gracious operations; and thus obey the precept, not merely in conformity with the letter, but in spirit and in truth?

4. The "work of faith" is to fight against unbelief. But how can I fight against unbelief if I have no faith, and unless God fulfil "the work of faith with power?"

5. The "work of faith" is also necessary to overcome sin, to subdue the flesh with its desires and carnal lusts; to put off the old man, and put on the new. But, it must be "the work of faith with power:" for God must fulfil that work in me, if I am to fight to any purpose. He himself must put the sword in my grasp, must teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight. It is, then, "the work of faith" to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts; but this can only be done by having faith brought with power into the heart. The old man can only be put off and the new put on by the manifestations of the love and mercy of God to the soul. If I abhor self, it must be by my conscience being made tender in the fear of the

Lord. If I love the Lord Jesus Christ, it must be by his love being shed abroad in my heart.

Thus, we can believe no promise, perform no precept, mortify no sin, except so far as the Lord is pleased to fulfil "the work of faith with power."

II.—But we pass on to our second point, which is, what the *effect and fruit* would be of God doing all this.

i. First, "the name of our Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in them." By "*the name* of the Lord Jesus Christ," we are to understand everything revealed in the word of God concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. For instance, I am known by a certain name, and you the same. When my name is mentioned, all that I am in bearing that name is brought before you. So with "the name" of God. It means what God has revealed concerning himself; the character of God as made known in the Scriptures. Thus, "the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" signifies all that is revealed concerning Christ. It is the character of Christ; all that is made known concerning the Son of God. Now the effect and result of God's fulfilling this prayer would be, "that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in them;" that is, everything which the word of God has revealed concerning Jesus would be glorified in their hearts. For instance:

1. There is the *Person* of Jesus, the object of our affections. Now, if the Lord "would be pleased to count them worthy of this calling, and to fulfil the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power," then the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in them. The answer that these prayers would bring into their souls would be such sweet manifestations of the Person of Christ, that the glorious Immanuel, God with us, would be glorified in them. They would see his Person by the eye of faith, and feel his

glory shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost.

2. The *blood* of Jesus is a part of his name. It is revealed to us as cleansing from all sin. And thus, if God fulfilled the petitions, the blood of Jesus would be glorified: that is, there would be that manifestation of the blood of Jesus applied to their conscience, and sprinkled upon their heart, that they would see a divine glory in it; they would see what precious blood it was, and how it flowed from him as the God-Man; they would experience the cleansing, healing, purging, pardoning efficacy of it; they would feel it as a rich stream of atoning blood flowing forth from the glorious Mediator between God and their souls, whereby sin was for ever blotted out. Thus would "the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" be glorified.

3. His *righteousness*, also, is a part of his name. When the Apostle speaks of the name of Jesus, it is to set forth what he is. He is "our righteousness." (1 Cor. 1:31.) "Thus is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." (Jer. 23:6.) Now when we get a view by faith of his righteousness, we see a glory in it; we view it as the glorious robe of righteousness with which the church is covered. And thus, when this glorious righteousness is made known to the soul, "the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified" in it.

4. So with his *love*. This is a part of the name of Jesus—the infinite love and mercy that dwelt in him. When this is made known to the soul, and revealed to the heart, his name is glorified. There is a glory seen in that eternal love of Jesus, which brought him down to suffer, bleed, and die.

5. His *suitability in all his covenant offices*; his mercy, his tenderness, and all that He is as Mediator between God and

man,—all this is "the name of Jesus," whereby he is known and glorified in the soul. There is a glory and a beauty seen in it which surpasses everything, and can only be known by being felt.

ii. But there is another effect which would flow from the petition the Apostle puts up, "*And ye in him.*" Not only the effect of his prayer being granted would be, "that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in them" but they would also "be glorified in him." How does this take place? In this way. As we get a view of the Lord Jesus Christ, and behold his glory, that view conforms us to him; as the Apostle speaks, "We all beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) As Moses, when upon the mount he saw the glory of God, in his face reflected that glory,—the glory shining upon him, casting its own image and reflection upon his forehead: so as we see the glory of Christ by the eye of faith, and as that glory shines into the soul, it will create a resemblance to it in our heart. There will be not only the glory of Christ shining into the soul, but there will be a conformity to the Lord and his glorious image—a changing from glory to glory. Thus, the greater the view we have of Christ's glory, the more the mind is transformed into the same image; and by this we get separate from the world; for as we see the glory of Christ, that glory transforms us into his likeness. What then, is this poor, dying world? What are all the honours, riches, treasures, emoluments, and pleasures of this transient state? They all fade away. We only love these things as we lose sight of Christ. The glory of the world lays hold of our affections just in proportion as the glory of Christ loses its grasp upon us. Let the glory of Christ be seen; let his love be felt; let his glorious Person be made known; let the kingdom of God be set up with power; let a ray of divine favour shine

into our hearts out of his eternal fulness; let us see light in God's light—then in that light we see the true value of the world. What, then, are all the men and women in the world? Moths, worms, caterpillars, crushed in a moment. What are all its honours and popularity worth? All are as insignificant as the atoms that dance in the sunbeam. We can then write, vanity upon all, and say, 'These things can yield us no solid profit or pleasure: none but Christ can really make us happy.' Thus, when we see his beauty, and taste his love, we have neither heart nor relish for the creature. This is the effect and thus we are "glorified in him."

III.—And this leads me to the third point, on which I must be very brief, the crowning source of all—"According to the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ." He does not mention creature strength, creature wisdom, creature righteousness; but directs our eyes and hearts unto the fountain head of all—"according to the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ." Grace beginning; grace carrying on; and grace finishing; grace devising the original plan of redemption; grace bringing it forth and accomplishing it; grace predestinating; and grace applying predestinating mercy to the objects of the Father's choice. Thus grace must have all the glory. Grace first, grace middle, grace last. All to the glory of God's grace.

Thus feebly have I attempted to set these things before you. Now what do we know of these things? Upon what is our dependence? Upon what we are doing for God, or upon what God is doing for us? If we hope to do anything by the strength of the creature, that hope will fail; but if our hope rests upon the free grace, sovereign mercy, eternal goodness and distinguishing love of God, that hope will not fail us. Can we, then, lay down our heart's desires step by step with those of the Apostle, and feel union and communion with

him? Can we sum up our desires in his? If so, how can I better take my leave of you this visit than by using the prayer of the Apostle, that God would "count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you—"in your hearts, in your lips, in your lives, in your walk, in your conversation;" that you may be glorified in him, and be enabled from day to day to depend only upon "the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ."