



THE  
CHRISTIAN  
GRACES

—  
J. P. THOMPSON, D.D.

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THE CHRISTIAN GRACES.



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THE

# CHRISTIAN GRACES.

A SERIES OF LECTURES

ON

2 PETER i. 5-12.

BY JOSEPH P. THOMPSON,

PASTOR OF THE BROADWAY TABERNACLE CHURCH.



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TO THE BROADWAY TABERNACLE CHURCH.



DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST :

It is at your suggestion that I now commit to the Press a course of Lectures prepared with sole reference to your spiritual improvement. In so doing, I am influenced by two considerations: the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which we have recently enjoyed, has brought into the church many new converts, who require to be instructed and encouraged in the particular graces of the Christian character; and the same work of grace should manifest its fruits in a higher Christian culture attained by every member of the church. If these specific and familiar counsels which gained your attention when spoken from the pulpit, can contribute at all to such a culture among you, I shall be thankful for the privilege of thus repeating them in your family circles, and in the nearer intercourse

of the closet ; “endeavoring that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”

Moreover, these Lectures may serve as a memento of the delightful Sabbath services in our chapel, where a compact and sympathetic assembly has encouraged the most direct and earnest utterances of the pulpit. Yet I am sure, that separated from the circumstances in which they were prepared and delivered, these Lectures will quite disappoint you. The mind crowded with present labors does not easily recall thoughts and expressions uttered in the fervor of moments which are passed ; and, therefore, the unwritten illustrations and exhortations which belonged to these Lectures in their oral delivery, may not reappear upon the printed page. I have endeavored, however, to reproduce with all fidelity, that which your too favorable judgment has in the main approved.

The date of this letter reminds me that I have entered upon the fifteenth year of my ministry among you. Of all the years of this pastorate—blessed as many of these have been with tokens of divine mercy—there has been none more pleasant or more fruitful than that just closed, in which we have met



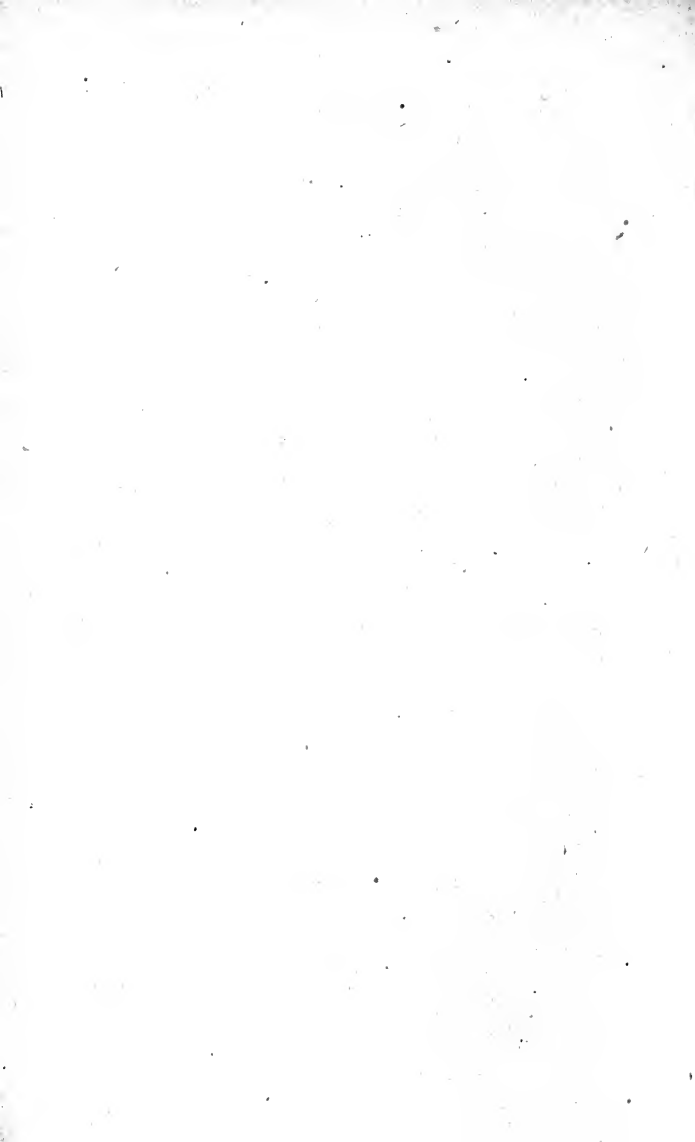
as one family for the devout and practical study of the Word of God. But the years that are before us, will bring upon us as a church wider labors and higher responsibilities. Wherefore, beloved, "building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." That He who hath called you to his kingdom of glory, may "make you perfect in every good work to do His will," is the prayer of

Your grateful and

AFFECTIONATE PASTOR.

APRIL 15th, 1859.





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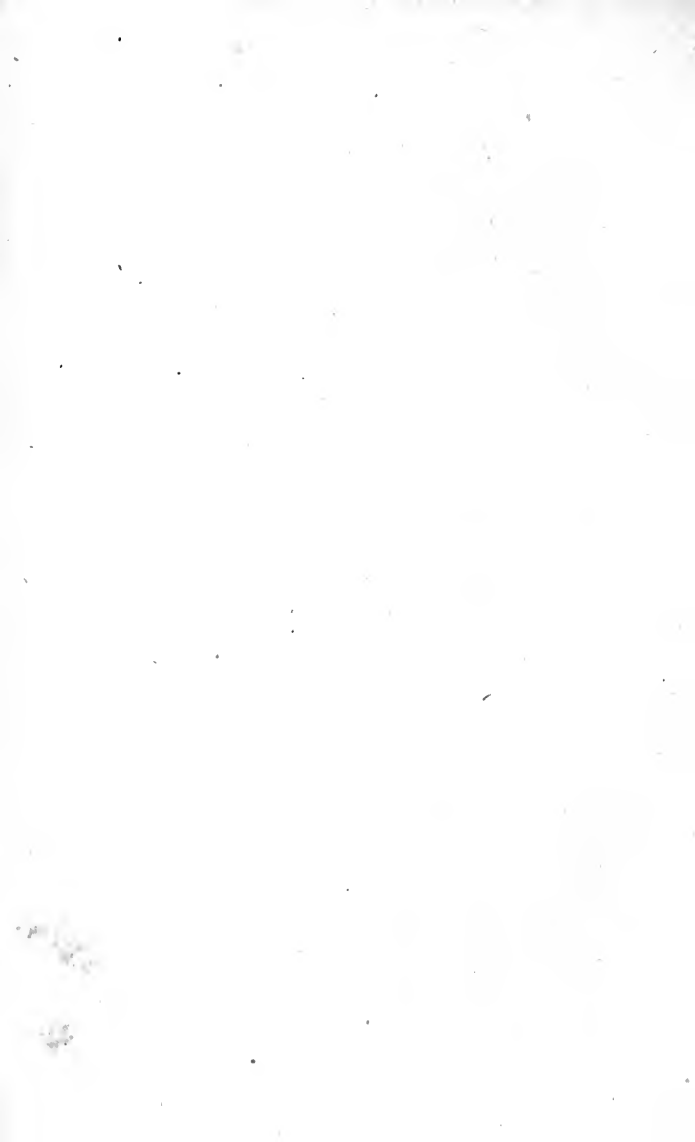
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## LECTURE I.

### VIRTUE.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith, VIRTUE.—2 PET. i. 5.

**I**N common speech every moral excellence is called a virtue. We also give the name "virtue" to that outward conformity to the law of God which constitutes a good moral character. Thus Honesty is a virtue; Veracity is a virtue; Chastity is a virtue; Temperance is a virtue; and he who lives in conformity to the moral law, performing all moral duties and refraining from vice, is a virtuous man. It is evident, however, that the text does not use the word in either of these significations. It cannot intend by Virtue moral excellence in general, since it goes on to enumerate several particular moral excellencies, such as Temperance, Patience, Godliness, and Charity, which must be added

to Virtue in order to complete the Christian character. It cannot intend any one in particular of those moral traits which we sometimes call virtues, since in addition to Virtue, it specifies most of these by name. For the meaning of the apostle we must go back to the primary idea of Virtue—which is, *manhood, manly vigor, a courageous tone of mind*. The old martial Romans from whom our word Virtue is directly inherited, used this term to denote primarily the sum of all corporeal or mental excellencies in their ideal of a MAN. Corporeal strength or vigor, and hence that quality of mind called courage, bravery, made a *vir-tuous*, manly Roman. In this primary sense the highest virtue was valor in war. Transferring this literal meaning of Virtue to a figurative use, it denotes moral courage and force of character; that tone of mind which gives firmness, boldness, decision, energy, in whatever truth and duty may demand.

The use of Virtue in the sense of power or energy is common in old English; and there are some traces of this elsewhere in our ver-



sion of the Scriptures, which help to determine the meaning of Virtue in the text. The Greek word here translated Virtue, occurs but four times in the New Testament. As used by Paul in Philippians, iv. 8, it has the sense of moral excellence. "If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise"—whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy—meditate upon this. But as used by Peter with respect both to God and to man, the word clearly denotes force, energy, power. There is another word, (*δύναμις*—*dunamis*, whence *dynamic*,) whose primary meaning is *power*, which our translators, following *Wiclif*, sometimes render by Virtue; thus showing that they attached to Virtue the old Latin sense of energy or force. "Jesus said, somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that *virtue* is gone out of me." (Luke viii. 46.) "And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went *virtue* out of him, and healed them all." (Luke vi. 19). Here Virtue denotes not moral goodness, but miraculous healing power. *Wiclif* uses virtues as the equivalent of miracles. Where our version speaks of the "mighty works"

done in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, Wiclif styles these "virtues;" "Wo to thee, Chorazin, wo to thee, Bethsaida, for if the *virtues* done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon." (Matt. xi. 20, 24; Luke x. 13). Again: "He could there do no mighty work;" Wiclif reads,\* "He must not do there any *Virtue*." (Mark vi. 5.) So of "the powers of heaven:"—where our version reads, "The stars of heaven shall fall, and the *powers* that are in heaven shall be shaken," Wiclif reads "The *virtues* that ben (are) in heaven shall be moved." (Mark xiii. 25). Milton applies the phrase "celestial *virtues*" to the fallen "powers and dominions" of heaven, rising

"More glorious and more dread than from no fall." †

Here the word "Virtues" conveys no idea of

\* In his translation of the Apocrypha, Wiclif uses *Virtue* for physical power. Thus he says of Alexander the Great, "that he gathered *virtue* and strong host." King James's version reads, "a *mighty* strong host." (1 Mac. i. 4.) Again he describes John, Simon's son, as "Duke of all *virtues*," using the word with reference not to his personal qualities, but to the warriors under his command. The common version reads "Captain of all the hosts." (1 Mac. xiii. 57.) Thus Wiclif everywhere uses *Virtue* in the sense of power.

† Paradise Lost, B. 2.

moral excellencies, but is the equivalent of Potentates. The Miltonic poetess of our own time uses "virtues" with the same signification. Describing the descent of the heavenly host to view the crucifixion, she says:

"Beneath us sinks the pomp angelical,  
Cherub and seraph, powers and *virtues* all."\*

Here again the term Virtues is a poetic synonym for Powers. It is obvious then, that in old English and in the first English version of the Bible, the word Virtue had its primitive Latin sense of manliness, a vigorous or energetic spirit; and that it sometimes retains this meaning in our version and also in good poetry. This is the meaning which most fitly renders the original term in the text; and I have been thus careful to trace and define it, because so much of the force and beauty of the Apostle's exhortation depends upon that "philosophical justness of classification" which marks his "catalogue of virtues."

It is almost impossible to express this idea of Virtue by any one English synonym. Isaac

\* "The Seraphim."—Mrs. E. Barrett Browning.

Taylor paraphrases it as "manly energy, or the constancy and courage of manly vigor." \* The one word which comes nearest to it, while

\* A more minute analysis of the term Virtue is here subjoined for the benefit of the critical reader.

The term ἀρετή (arete) translated Virtue in the text, denotes strictly manhood, prowess, manly qualities. *Stephanus* defines it by "virtus, sed proprie virtus bellica;" martial courage or valor. He cites a gloss on *Thucydides* i. 33; where *Arete* is expressed by *Industria, Navities, Virtus, Fortitudo*; Activity, Zeal, Manliness, Fortitude. *Suidas* defines *Arete* to be "Constantia et animi vigor;" firmness and strength of mind. Homer applies it to his heroes to denote valor in battle, and other manly qualities. The Mycenæan *Periphetes* is said to have been "superior in all kinds of virtues (ἀρετῶν), whether in the race or in the combat." (Il. xv. 642.) Here Virtue denotes physical qualities, such as speed, strength, prowess. So the "god-like Polydorus" in the agility and valor which he displayed in fight, is said to have exhibited "virtue of feet" or limbs (ποδῶν ἀρετῆν. Il. xx. 411.) The same term is applied to the valor of *Meriones*; (Il. xiii. 277), and to the bodily vigor of *Menelaus*. (Il. xxiii. 578.) This primary sense of ἀρετή is strictly expressed by the Latin *virtus*, from which Virtue is derived. This, in its literal sense, is manhood, valor; and is applied to physical courage and to energy of character—*vigor of mind* in dangers and labors. *Cicero* speaks of something akin to virtue in animals, as in lions, dogs and horses; but insists "that virtue of the mind" (*animi virtus*) being the offspring of reason, is to be preferred to "physical virtue" (*corporis virtuti* anteponatur. *De Finibus*, v. 13, 38). He also speaks

it has the abundant sanction of good English writers, is hardly domesticated in the pulpit; yet both the word and the thing were strik-

of "the divine force and virtue of the orator." Here *virtus* is a pleonasm, reiterating the idea of *vis*.

The Vulgate translates *δύναμις* by *virtus*, in the sense of power or energy; and Wiclif, as shown above, uses Virtue for miraculous power. In old English statutes, houses of industry are described as "houses of *virtues*;" Virtue denoting qualities that produce *thrift*.

Of the four instances in which *ἀρετή* occurs in the New Testament, only one (Phil. iv. 8,) is a clear example of the use of the word in its metaphorical sense of moral excellence. The remaining three are as follows:

1 Pet. ii. 9. "That ye should show forth the *praises* (*ἀρετὰς*) of Him who hath called you." For praises the margin reads *virtues*; Vulgate *virtutes*; Wiclif, "tell the virtues." The reference is to divine power and glory in conversion, rather than to the moral excellence of the Deity.

2 Pet. i. 3. "Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Here *δία δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς*, clearly means "through [His] glory and power." Tischendorf reads *ἰδία δόξη καὶ ἀρετῆ*, by his own glory and power. So the Vulgate, *propria gloria et virtute*. De Wette reads "durch Herrlichkeit und Kraft," through glory and power.

2 Pet. i. 5. The general sense of moral excellence is inappropriate here; and we must adopt the primitive meaning of *virtus*, applied to moral courage. *Virtus* shows itself in energetic *action*, and acts on the offensive. *Fortitudo* shows itself in energetic *resistance*, and acts on the defensive. Vide Döderlein's Synonyms.

ingly expressed by an honored foreign missionary, when urging upon the American Board the immediate and thorough occupation of Turkey, with men and means for the service of Christ. Said Dr. Schauffler, "after all the discouragements and disasters of the Crimean campaign, official mismanagement, army jealousies, camp sickness, and the discomforts of winter, the soldiers held on and took Sevastopol, not by science but by pluck"—and what we need is *Christian pluck* to take possession of Turkey in the name of Christ.\*

\* General Havelock, in one of his general orders, referred the victory which had been gained, to the *pluck* of the British soldiers. Richardson, Halliwell, and other standard lexicographers, give this term in the sense of courage. The Appendix to the American Dictionary compiled by Prof. C. A. Goodrich, D.D., gives pluck in the same sense, on the authority of the most popular English writers; and adds *pluckiness, pluckily, plucky*, on the authority of Thackeray. "To pluck up one's heart," is to be bold or manly. Sir Walter Scott says that "what is least forgiven in a man of any mark or likelihood, is want of pluck"; and, surely the want of this sturdy Virtue can least be forgiven in a soldier of the cross.

"Couldst thou not watch one hour? then, sleep enough—  
That sleep may hasten *manhood*, and sustain  
The faint pale spirit with some *muscular stuff*."

This "manhood," this "muscular stuff," is the Virtue of the text.

And surely we do need not only *Faith* to pray in confidence for the overthrow of Mohammedanism and the false Christianity of the East—but added to this faith, *Virtue*—a mind toned up with vigor and courage for the assault, with firmness and bravery in the conflict. Such was the Virtue which that missionary brother himself showed, when in papal and bigoted Austria he braved the threats of the police, and preached the gospel in his own house, with a guard set over him at the door. This is the Virtue which all Christians are expected at all times to cultivate. “Giving all diligence, add to your faith *Virtue*.” The apostle speaks to those whom he fully recognizes as one with himself in Christ. “Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” The faith that bringeth salvation is already theirs;—faith that invests the soul with the righteousness which Christ has provided through his blood; faith in the atonement for the forgiveness of sin; faith by which they have

“escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” But they are not to rest in that faith as the whole of the Christian character and life;—but in and of that faith as a root, they are to cultivate the manifold graces of that character as portrayed in the New Testament. Add to your faith, Virtue; as followers of Christ cultivate a true Christian manhood.

In setting forth this exhortation I propose to consider :

- I. IN WHAT THIS MANHOOD CONSISTS.
- II. ITS PLACE IN A COMPLETE CHARACTER.
- III. HOW IT MAY BE ATTAINED AND CULTIVATED.

1. The Virtue of which the apostle speaks—boldness, vigor, courage, manhood—is not to be confounded with *rashness*. In his earlier experience as a disciple, Peter was sadly deficient in the very Virtue which he here recommends, though he was by no means wanting in a rough physical vigor, and the courage which that inspires. He was rash but not



bold; he had a vapoing bravery but not true manliness. "Though I should die with thee," he said to the Master whom he loved with all the strength of an impulsive nature — "though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee."

And when the multitude came to seize Jesus in the garden, Peter did not hesitate to rush upon them alone, and with his sword to smite a servant of the high priest. Yet a few moments after, we see him following Jesus "afar off," and then standing aloof in the judgment-hall and denying his Master, to save the very life he had just volunteered to sacrifice in the garden. Peter thought himself bold and brave, when he was only impulsive and rash. Doubtless his faith in Jesus was as full and sincere, and his love for the Master as genuine and fervent as that of any other disciple; but he had not then added Virtue to his Faith. He could cling to Christ while He was manifesting his divine power in miracles or teaching lessons of heavenly wisdom; at the word of Christ he would forsake his earthly all to follow Him; at His

command he would go anywhere to testify of the Messiah; he would even go beyond the other disciples in expressing his faith in Jesus—as when he attempted to walk upon the sea;—he was ready for any sacrifice which a generous nature could prompt; but how sadly wanting in dignity and manliness when he stands trembling before the servant-maid in the palace-hall, and denies that he is a disciple of Jesus, and adds cursing to denial! All his boasted bravery, all his belligerent demonstration in the garden, did not contain one element of real courage and manhood. Those whom Paul describes as “heady” or headlong, precipitate in temper and in action, ready to do anything upon the impulse of the moment—however daring they may be upon impulse—are wanting in that cool and fixed purpose in the right, which marks true manliness of character.

2. This manly virtue should not be confounded with *willfulness*. Stubbornness of will is not strength of character. It is doggedness or mulishness, not manliness. If willfulness were a virtue, then Pharaoh was the

most virtuous of men, for he could stiffen his neck in his own way, regardless of warnings and chastisements that filled his palace and his land with woe. Even when for a time he seemed to relax and repented of his tyranny, the moment the pressure of God's hand was removed, his will, which had only bent under that pressure, would spring back and say, "I will not let the people go."

The apostle Paul classes the "high-minded" with the heady, the head-strong with the head-long. These high-minded persons are literally those who are so wrapped up in the fog of their own conceit, that they can see nothing but themselves, and think of nothing but their own will. They do not take a wide survey of things as the basis of a practical judgment, but make up their own will, and keep to that because it is their will, which they regard as the final and sufficient cause of all things. A resolute, unfaltering purpose to do right, a will to honor God and to stand by truth and duty, a will which cannot be broken upon the wheel, nor relaxed by the fires of martyrdom, but like steel grows more

firm and inflexible under pressure and heat—such a will is, indeed, a manly Virtue. But “will-worship,” the magnifying of self-will, adherence to a position or course, not because it is known and felt to be right, but because it has been taken, and pride forbids to change—this willfulness is as far from Christian manliness as a spoiled child is from an angel.

3. But the Virtue of which we speak, while it is neither rash nor willful, is always bold, firm, and determined in maintaining truth and performing duty; it is *a manly and energetic tone of mind*—a resolute and enduring efficiency—all which the same apostle intends when he says, “*Gird up the loins* of your mind,” invest yourselves with the spirit of courage and firmness for the defence of the truth.

(1.) An obvious constituent of this state of mind is *an intelligent conviction of truth and duty*. “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” Steadfastness in purpose is impossible where the mind is doubtful as to the object in view. “If the trumpet give an un-

certain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" Though the trumpet is of the finest quality, and in the hands of the most skillful player, if the summons is uncertain, it will cause excitement and agitation in the camp, but will not rally the army to battle or inspire them with courage for the fight. But if the trumpet gives forth the unfaltering notes of faith and courage and anticipated triumph, though the instrument is but a ram's horn, the people will rally with a shout, and the walls of Jericho will fall flat before them. If the summons from within, the voice of conscience, the inward conviction of duty and right be clear and strong, the outward purpose will be bold and steady. There may be uncertainty as to the result, there may be a certainty of conflict and trial; the immediate prospect in obeying conscience may be the fiery furnace and the lion's den; but the voice within is stronger than all outward terrors, and the simple conviction of truth and right nerves the soul with manly Virtue. But if the mind is not sure of its own position as to the issue or principle involved, if it hesi-

tates in its conviction of right and duty in the case, it will have no strength or persistence of purpose in action. It may move promptly, boldly, earnestly, under an impulse of feeling or a sudden sense of duty, but it will not hold on under opposition. It will be ready to draw swords with Peter against the mob, but it will lie with Peter to a servant maid :—

“As God had called thee to a *seraph's* part,  
With a man's *quailing* heart.”

A purpose springing from mere feeling is apt to prove unstable, since feeling is a variable quantity. Neuralgia, dyspepsia, or the headache, may change a mere nervous courage into a nervous timidity. Manly resolve rests upon intelligent conviction. When the mind which has received Christ as the object of its faith and the hope of its salvation, perceives clearly what Christ requires of it, and resolves to carry out its conviction of truth and duty with an earnest purpose to the end, then it adds to its faith, Virtue. Strength of conviction gives courage to resolution.

(2.) But in order to this manly Virtue, *the*

*principle of obedience to God must be established in the soul as final*, above all personal interests, above all earthly good, above all merely human custom or law, above whatever would obtrude itself between the personal soul and a personal God, its Creator, Ruler, and Judge. There is no motive of action which can give to the soul such energy and fortitude, such lofty and determined purpose, as this of obedience to God—for this alone is unmixed with the earthly, the temporal, the perishing. This lifts the soul out of the sphere of the body into that world of spirits where it walks with patriarchs and prophets, with psalmists and apostles, with confessors and martyrs, with Christ and with God. You cannot cower down a soul that rests implicitly on God. Threaten it with torture and cruel death, show it the dungeon, the rack, the stake, it calmly replies: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and in this confidence we are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present

with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of *Him*." With this in view, with the thought of God overmastering all other thoughts, with the presence of God felt in the soul as seeing *Him* who is invisible, there comes a conscious strength to do every duty, to meet every trial, a strength which is not violent or impetuous, but calm and invincible.

When Luther stood before that court of the German empire which held his life in its hands, it is said that he was the only person in the assembly who was perfectly undisturbed. When called upon to retract the heresies of his writings, "he made answer in a low and humble tone, without any vehemence or violence, but with gentleness and mildness, and in a manner full of respect and diffidence, yet with much joy and Christian firmness." He said that if in anything he had used severe and bitter language to men, he was wrong; but as to doctrine, said he, "I cannot submit my faith either to pope or councils. If I am not convinced by Holy Scripture, and if my judgment is not thus brought into subjection



to God's Word, I neither will nor can retract anything, for it cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his conscience."

"If you do not retract," said the papal chancellor, "the emperor and the diet must proceed to deal with you as a heretic."

That meant the prison and the stake, and Luther's friends trembled and wept. He looked up calmly and said, "Then God be my helper, for I can retract nothing."

On the way to Worms, Luther had been shown a portrait of the Italian monk Savonarola, who had been burnt for denouncing the pope. After gazing long and earnestly upon it, he exclaimed, "Out of the fire into glory—I take no fear but comfort from this picture." Such was the lofty courage of a soul whose principle it was in all things to obey God. Luther was ready to die for the doctrine of justification by faith, since he himself had added to faith—Virtue, a manly courage, a holy energy of soul—proceeding from an intelligent and principled obedience to God.

(3.) One other constituent enters into this

manly virtue—that is, *frankness or sincerity in avowing one's convictions of truth and duty*. One cannot be manly unless he is frank. Even those who practise concealment and duplicity, at heart despise it. The most adroit politician will denounce such arts when turned against himself. Meanness and manliness cannot exist together, much less can duplicity and Christian manliness abide in the same heart. He who would be manly must be open. Frankness is not forwardness; it does not require that one should be always thinking aloud and talking aloud about his own affairs; neither is it bluntness and roughness of manner; its plainness of speech is always kind in tone and spirit; but it does forbid one from a selfish motive, to conceal his convictions when truth and duty are in question; it does require that one shall always avow his adherence to the truth when truth is in jeopardy; that he shall let it be known where he stands upon any question of right in the great controversy between God and men.

He who has an intelligent conviction of

truth and duty, and with whom the principle of obedience to God is the highest law of action, must be ready always to give a reason for the faith that is in him, to avow it, and to stand by it. When the Jewish Sanhedrim threatened Peter and John, and forbade them to speak or teach in the name of Jesus, the apostles fell back upon conscience and the law of Christian obedience, and said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken to you more than to God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." That was Christian manliness, the avowed determination in the very face of a threatening power, to stand by their convictions of truth and duty, and to carry out those convictions under a sense of direct responsibility to God. Peter had now learned to add to his faith, Virtue. With none of the rashness and bluster of the garden, with none of the timidity and concealment of the palace hall, his faith enlightened and invigorated, his convictions strengthened, his resolution fixed in principle, instead of trying to hide his connection with Christ, he openly pro-

claims it, instead of following afar off, he declares his purpose to preach Christ everywhere. Simon Peter has now become a rock.

Is there any other requisite for such Virtue? It seems to me that this analysis exhausts it: An intelligent and thorough conviction of truth and duty; the fixed principle of obedience to God; entire frankness in all suitable times and places; in avowing that conviction, in standing by that principle;—these give to the mind that lofty, firm, independent, invincible tone, which is Virtue, courage, manliness.

II. *The importance of this Virtue to completeness of character* is evident without argument. There can be no sterling character without this. “Unstable as water,” said Jacob to Reuben, “thou shalt not excel.” Reuben had many excellent qualities. When his brethren were resolved upon killing Joseph, Reuben persuaded them to spare his life, and cast him into a pit, intending afterward to deliver him, and restore him to his father; and when in his absence the boy was sold, “he rent his clothes, saying the child is not, and I,

whither shall I go?" But with all his amiable and gentle traits, and with his position as the first-born, at the head of the family, Reuben could not become the leader of the tribes, because he lacked this very virtue of firmness and courage. Unstable as water, he could not excel. The apostle Paul exhorts believers to be so established in Christ, that they shall "be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine;" and again, that they "stand fast in one spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries." This standing fast in manly Virtue, this girding up the loins of the mind to do all duty and to brave all trial, this calm rich tone of vigor and endurance in all that conscience and the truth demand, this Virtue intermingling with and sustaining all the gentler graces, like the swell notes of an organ opening upon its softer stops, this gives us the sense of completeness and of abiding strength in character.

In the character of Washington we feel this majestic undertone. Never rash nor revengeful; never timid nor despairing; mild

without weakness; stern without cruelty; cautious to retreat when retreat was the only possible deliverance, but bold to cross a bridge of ice at midnight that he might conquer the enemy at break of day; always self-poised amid the fears and losses, the cares and perils, the doubts and struggles of a wasting war;—his manly bravery resting in his calm confidence in the right and his disinterested devotion to the right—this gives to the character of Washington a lofty and imperishable greatness.

The annals of Christian martyrdom often exhibit this manly Virtue grafted upon child-like faith. Long before Luther braved the pope in Germany, Savonarola had braved him in Italy. The head of this Italian reformer in the pictures which have come down to us, reminds one of the ideal head of Christ in the prevailing type of the great masters.\* It has the same "halo of sanctity." The fair complexion, the "calm blue eye," the graceful outline, indicate a soul of rare delicacy of

\* The original by Fra Bartolomeo is in the gallery of St. Mark at Florence.

feeling and beauty of perception. But "the full, firm lips," and the "steady bearing" of the figure, mark also a character of high decision, of unflinching purpose to do or to suffer. And such he was: a gentle, loving child, nursed in the bosom of affluence, and educated in the best manner, he yet tore himself from the heart of his family, from the enticements of wealth and ambition, that he might satisfy the hunger of his soul in a convent—the best place of religious retirement and instruction that the age afforded. Like Jerome, also, whose name he bore, he devoted his convent life in part to literary labors. But finding vice and corruption within the convent, he for a while mourned in silence, till he found comfort and strength in the "sweet love of Jesus." At length he came forth a bold and earnest preacher against the corruptions of the church itself. With the fidelity of John the Baptist he reproved the sins of the court, and warned the people of coming judgments. He even assumed the functions of a prophet, and sometimes weakened his denunciations by his enthusiasm. The Duke

of Florence, of the rich and noble family of the Medici, sought to bribe him with costly gifts; but Savonarola answered, "The good dog barks to defend his master's house, and if a robber offers him a bone, he pushes it aside and barks still;" and he continued to denounce the luxury and vice of the Florentine capital and the papal court. His manly courage exasperated the pope, who, finding that he could not silence the fearless monk, pronounced against him the sentence of excommunication.

"From the pope" said Savonarola, "I appeal to the heavenly Pope, Christ Jesus."

He was brought to the stake. They stripped him of his priestly robes, the bishop using the form of excommunication against heretics, "I separate thee from the church triumphant."

"Nay," replied the martyr, with a calm, firm tone—"from the church *militant*—from the church *triumphant* thou canst not separate me."

Meekly bearing the taunts of his enemies, he prayed with his companions—and "while the flames were circling around his arm, he



raised his hand and made the sign of benediction upon the multitude who were exulting in his death." Call him a Mystic, an Enthusiast, if you will;—yet does not such a soul stand before you in kingly majesty? And do you not feel that this Virtue which you are exhorted to add to your faith, is the very essence and glory of all Christian heroism?

III. HOW SHALL THIS VIRTUE BE ATTAINED? How may *you* be endowed with this high and holy resolve for duty and for Christ? The text teaches that you must cultivate Virtue with all diligence. Set your mind upon it as within your reach, to be attained, necessary to a complete Christian character; and seek it with wakeful desire, with determined study.

(1.) *Study the examples of those who have manifested Virtue.* Look at Noah, standing up against the cavils of an apostate world to do the command of God—a preacher of righteousness. Look at Abraham, with firm tread walking trackless wastes to unknown lands, his courage rooted in faith. Look at Moses confronting the stubborn will of Pharaoh, and

leading forth the people of God—not fearing the wrath of the king. Look at Paul, ready to face a Jewish mob, or the prejudiced Sanhedrim, or pagan governors and Roman captains, or the wild beasts at Ephesus, or the dungeon at Rome, and to stand in Cæsar’s palace as a witness for Christ. Look at the long line of martyrs whose manly virtue is the sublimest heroism of history. The study of such characters is a tonic for the soul when depressed with fears. Look at those ancient worthies, “who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens;” or who, with a passive courage no less sublime, “were tortured, not accepting deliverance, and had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment; who were stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword.” When our courage falters, let us reassure ourselves by looking up from the dust and strife of the arena to that

great cloud of witnesses compassing us about like a crowded amphitheatre. Above all, let us reassure ourselves by standing as ever in the great Task-Master's eye; "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet *resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*"

(2.) To attain the full vigor of Christian manliness, you must *exercise this virtue whenever you have opportunity*. Virtues will not come to serve us upon great occasions, unless they are trained and developed day by day. One who allows himself habitually to be led by others in little things, will have no manly independence when tested with some great responsibility. He who suffers timidity to prevail against duty in the least thing, will sacrifice the greatest interests to his personal fears. Are you moved to speak to another upon the state of his soul—and yet do you shrink from the possibility of a rebuff? Resolve that you *will* perform this duty; pray that you may conquer your weakness; *go and*

*do it*, and you will add to your faith, Virtue. Are you moved to admonish an erring brother? No matter how painful the task, take up that duty and perform it. Go in meekness, in the spirit of love, but with the Master's strength, and you will add to faith, Virtue. Are you called upon, in the providence of God, to take some untried responsibility for the cause of Christ? Do not shrink from it, but stand in your lot; it may be just the discipline you need to add to your faith, Virtue. John Knox wept for very weakness when his brethren called him to be their leader; but with faith in Christ he put on manly resolve, and then the wayward and willful Queen trembled and wept under his bold rebukes.

The young Christian should begin early to cultivate this holy courage;—learn to say NO to every solicitation of evil; learn to say YES to every call of duty. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greatest. The gunner who held his finger on the touch-hole till it burnt to the joint, that he might save the life of the ram-

mer, from a premature discharge, would have saved the Austria by that cool courage which conquers fire and flood.

(3.) Since Virtue rests upon faith, you can strengthen and develop it *by increasing faith as a living power in the soul*. Much as we may discipline ourselves to Virtue, our strength must lie not in ourselves, and our purposes, but in God our Saviour. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And Paul proved this when he stood before Nero. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. Notwithstanding the LORD stood with me and strengthened me." In Christ we can stand *alone*. A living faith secures a manly piety. A faith that rises above a mere conventional belief, and becomes a vital presence of Christ in the soul, will lift the man in thought and action above the dictation and opposition of the world.


"May the God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make

you perfect, *stablish, strengthen, settle* you.  
To him be glory and dominion, forever and  
ever. Amen.”

## LECTURE II.

### KNOWLEDGE.

Add to virtue Knowledge.—2 PETER i. 5.

IRTUE we have defined to be Christian valor or Manliness ; that tone or quality of mind which gives it firmness for duty, courage in danger. Not rashness, nor willfulness, but an intelligent conviction of truth and duty, an uncompromising principle of obedience to God, a frank and hearty commitment of oneself to the right—these combining to produce in the mind a tone of decision, of quiet but unflinching resolve, in whatever God in his providence may require us to do for his glory and for the cause of Christ. This Christian valor is finely personated by Mr. Greatheart, in the Pilgrim's Progress. Mr. Greatheart, a strong man, who was not afraid of a lion, gave his services as guide to Christiana and her children, defending their faith by his

vigorous arm. He was of a most gentle disposition, so that little children would cling to him; he was devout in feeling and could converse to edification upon the doctrines of faith; but his valor was grounded *in* faith, and therefore partook of the strength of Christ himself. When challenged by giant Maul and commanded to turn back from the heavenly way, Greatheart replied: "I am a servant of the God of heaven. I am commanded to do my endeavors to turn men, women, and children from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." And when the giant fell upon him with his club, and they fought till both were exhausted; while the enemy was refreshing himself for a new attack, Greatheart betook himself to prayer, and thus prevailed. This Greatheart was Christian courage implanted in a poor, weak woman, and giving her the victory of faith. The Christian pilgrim should promptly enlist Greatheart as his champion and guide; adding to his faith Virtue, a manly vigor in the Truth, a holy courage for the Right.

But this is only one item in the catalogue



of graces which Christians are exhorted to cultivate; perhaps that which was first needed under the persecutions of those days—boldness and firmness in the faith—but by no means completing the Christian character. It is not enough that we have faith; but faith and firmness must be attended by Knowledge as a counsellor, must be inspired also by the higher communications of divine wisdom;—add to your faith virtue, and to virtue KNOWLEDGE.

The meaning of the term Knowledge must be ascertained by a comparison of the text with other passages in which this word occurs. It is of course knowledge with respect to spiritual things and religious duties, of which the apostle here speaks. This word is used in the New Testament some thirty times, and with various shades of signification. Sometimes it denotes a supernatural gift, knowledge by immediate inspiration. Perhaps it is in this sense that the “word of knowledge” is classed with the gifts of healing and of tongues, and with other miraculous powers. But since all Christians are exhorted to *add* Knowledge to their faith, the apostle cannot intend a

miraculous gift which God only could bestow. And for the same reason, he cannot here intend the power or faculty of knowing, in which sense the word is used when it is said that "the love of Christ passeth knowledge" *i. e.* is beyond the natural comprehension of men. We cannot add a new sense or faculty to our natural endowments.

Again, the word knowledge is used for the *object* of knowledge, and especially the system of truth made known in the Gospel. But this must be known, in a measure, before we can have faith; and the Knowledge spoken of in the text comes after faith. Knowledge is used also to denote a general apprehension of religious truth; but, as this is essential to the act of faith in Christ, it could hardly be referred to as a something to be added to faith. Isaac Taylor says, this Knowledge is "neither human erudition nor general intelligence, but that specific knowledge of which the Gospel is the subject." His negative statement is of course correct; but "the specific knowledge of the Gospel must *precede* faith as its basis; and the apostle bids us *add* Knowledge to Faith.

There is another use of the word which applies it to the *deep, clear, and cordial apperception of truth, followed by the discriminating adaptation of truth to practical ends*. Thus the apostle Paul speaks of the Christians at Rome as "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able to admonish one another;"\* *i. e.* they possessed that discriminating insight into truth which would shed light upon questions of practical duty.

Again, in writing to the Corinthians upon the question of eating sacrificial meat, Paul speaks of Knowledge, the clear discernment of things in their spiritual relations, as enabling the Christian to discriminate between the act of eating for food meat which some pagan had offered in sacrifice to idols, and the act of sacrificing to idols or of partaking of meat as sacred by reason of such sacrifice. The true spiritual recognition of "one God, of whom are all things," leads to a wise practical use of all things as from Him. Such a discriminating insight enlightening the judgment, is Christian Knowledge.† Where the same apostle dis-

\* Rom. xv. 14.

† 1 Cor. viii. 6-11.

tinguishes Knowledge from "wisdom" on the one hand, and from "revelation" on the other, he seems to characterize Knowledge as a certain insight into spiritual things, which differs from mere mental sagacity, and which though not of the nature of inspiration, is attained and exercised through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit.\* In the same sense the word is used by Peter in the text. Knowledge is a *spiritual apperception of divine things, forming and controlling the practical judgment*. A soul informed by such Knowledge discerns the way of truth and duty. This Knowledge is not the mere *perception* of the truths of the Gospel in their objective form, not only a substance of doctrine assured to the intellectual assent, but an *apperception* of Gospel truths in their inward spiritual relations, the mind illumined by the Spirit, revolving things divine, till objective truth is transformed into experimental knowledge, which guides the life.

"Celestial Light

Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
Irradiate ;—*there plant eyes.*"

\* 1 Cor. xii. 8 and xiv. 6.

From this general definition of the term,\* we pass to consider more specifically

I. WHAT THIS KNOWLEDGE IS.

II. HOW IT MAY BE CULTIVATED.

III. THE EXCELLENCE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE IN ITS EFFECTS.

1. This *inward experimental Knowledge* of

\* Classical usage helps us little as to the meaning of *γνώσις* (*gnosis*) in the New Testament. Plato uses it commonly of "understanding," though sometimes of a deeper philosophical insight. But with the *Neo-Platonists*, *gnosis* came to be almost a technical term for higher insight, deeper wisdom, a certain mysterious knowledge reserved to the initiated. In this sense of deep spiritual insight, but without the associations of mysticism or mystery, the word *gnosis* is often used in the New Testament. It is a term peculiarly liable to abuse by enthusiastic minds, and before the close of the apostolic age there began to appear a sect of *Gnostics*, who claimed to have "an extraordinary insight into divine things beyond the system of faith, which the people commonly received on authority." This insight they professed to have gained through certain secret traditions handed down from Christ, the higher light. Their *gnosis* corresponded to the *esoteric* doctrines of the old Greek philosophers, mysteries to be communicated only to the initiated. The Epistles of John seem to have been aimed in part at this Gnostic tendency. The true Christian knowledge is as far as possible both from the obscurity of Mysticism and from the pretensions of Clairvoyance. The *gnosis* of the New Testament is the privilege of all Christians alike.

Christ and his truth differs from *the intellectual perception* of truth, just as the feeling that we know the mind and heart of another differs from the knowledge of his person which we gain through the eye; it is the difference between heart knowledge and knowledge merely by perception or intellection. You are asked, "Do you *know* such a person?" "Yes," you reply, "I know him, but not intimately." This may mean simply that you know his figure, his countenance, his manner, and are upon speaking terms with him;—you have not merely a knowledge of his existence from the testimony of others, but a personal acquaintance. Or your general knowledge of this person may go farther. You may know somewhat minutely his mental characteristics, his peculiarities of disposition, and his moral habits. But if you know these only as objects of thought, while these characteristics make up your estimate of the man, you do not yet feel that you know the *man* himself; you have not come heart to heart with him. Want of intercourse, or a degree of reserve, has kept you from becoming intimate, so that

while in one sense you know him, in another, and this the most important sense, you do not know him. You have an outward, superficial eye and ear knowledge, but nothing of that knowledge which links soul to soul with indissoluble ties. You do not know him as the poet Tennyson knew his friend Hallam, over whose early death he poured his sad, wild requiem in *Memoriam*.

“Whatever way my days decline,  
I felt and feel, though left alone,  
*His being working in mine own ;*  
*The footsteps of his life in mine.”*

Now we may know Christ, and yet *not* know him; may know him as to his person revealed as divine, the glory of the Father, the fullness of the Godhead; we may know him as to his character recorded in the four gospels, holy, perfect, full of grace and truth; we may know him as to his doctrine and his work, and may accept these as the highest expression of divine truth and love to man; and still we may come far short of really *knowing* Christ. Such knowledge is objective; *i. e.* it exists in our thought *as an object*, and does

not bring us into personal sympathy with Christ as our Saviour and friend. It is in the brain but not in the heart.

We may be convinced of the truth of the New Testament; may take its representation of the character of Christ and the work of redemption, and rest upon this as a reality; but still we may not have that inward Knowledge of Christ, in which the soul takes *Him* to itself, feels that he is its friend, lays itself open to his love, with all its sins, and wants and cares, and realizes that he is with it in the closest confidence of friendship. Christ characterizes this heart knowledge when, in his last confidential interview with his disciples he says: "Henceforth I call you not servants; but I have called you friends."

2. And here again, this Knowledge *differs from faith*. Faith is that belief in Christ upon the evidence of the Gospels, which leads the soul to rely upon him as its Saviour, and to commit itself to his service. This faith rests upon a degree of knowledge as its warrant. It has good and sufficient evidence, and therefore is not credulity or superstition.



Thus in the context we read, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; according as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the *knowledge* of him;" the knowledge of God in Christ, of the incarnation and the atoning death of Jesus as reconciling us to God and making life and godliness possible for us—this is the very foundation of a saving faith. But having gained this faith, and rested ourselves in it, we are exhorted to add to it Knowledge; not the mere knowledge of the doctrine of Christ as a Saviour—for that we have already—but Knowledge of Christ himself, which comes through the heart, *proving* his doctrine, his promises, his love, in its own blessed experience.

When the Samaritan woman returned from Jacob's well to the city, telling what Jesus had said, many believed upon her testimony that he was the Messiah. But after Jesus had spent two days in their town, going from house to house, "many more believed, and said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him

ourselves, and *know* that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." We should take Christ into the house and into the heart, till we know Him. Paul attained to such fellowship with Christ that in the hour of his extremity, upon the verge of martyrdom, he could calmly say, "I *know* whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Such Knowledge is the seizing upon Christ with the heart till we know that his love and grace are ours, and all his promises are ours.

3. But this inward Knowledge of Christ has its outward expression in *a judgment wisely exercised upon truth and duty*. Faith and valor alone do not make the complete Christian. We may believe with all the heart that which we regard as true; we may stand by it firmly because we believe it to be true; we may be open in declaring our convictions, and ready to take the consequences of adhering to the right; but as men of fallible judgment we are liable to err in our views of truth, to mistake our duty, and to expend our courage

and fortitude in defending an error, or in maintaining a point of secondary moment. We need therefore to cultivate the judgment as well as to fortify the spirit, to attain to a sound discernment *of* duty as well as to firmness *in* duty.

It is a proverb that discretion is the better part of valor; a critical judgment as to the time and manner of acting is important to the success of the boldest and bravest action. Never was there a bolder, braver deed upon the field of battle, than the charge of six hundred English cavalry upon the Russian battery at Balaklava. But through lack of judgment in the commander as to the point of assault, it proved to be a wholesale sacrifice of heroism and life for no adequate or even possible object.

“Stormed at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well  
Into the jaws of death,  
Into the mouth of hell.”

“Grand, terrific, magnificent!” exclaimed the French general, as the six hundred rode right up to that flaming rampart of death;

“but this is not the art of war.” It was not the boldness that was in fault, for the courage for such deeds is a strong element of success in war, but it was the misapplication of boldness through want of discrimination in the orders.

In his description of the good man, the Psalmist happily combines a sound judgment with boldness and firmness as essential qualities of his character. “He will guide his affairs *with discretion*; surely he shall *not be moved* forever. His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid.” A sound judgment, and a firm and courageous heart, are here joined to give completeness and permanence to the good man’s character. And it is this union or combination of qualities which supplement and regulate each other, that the apostle intends when he says, “Giving all diligence, add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge.”

This practical bearing of such Knowledge is difficult to express by any one word as a synonym. Our experimental Knowledge of Christ, and our habitual intercourse of thought

and feeling with Christ, should lead to a practical discrimination on questions of duty. Such Knowledge is not what men of the world call *prudence*, which is exercised more in the cautious avoidance of evil to oneself, than in devising and executing that which is good. Mere prudence as distinguished from knowledge and wisdom, is hardly to be classed with the moral virtues; never rising higher than a certain intellectual keenness, it often sinks into timidity, or runs into craft and cunning. But this Knowledge is a sound practical wisdom growing out of that inward critical discernment of truth and duty which comes by knowing Christ.

There are two or three words which somewhat approach to this meaning—discernment, discretion, discrimination; these all in their radical idea mean “to separate,” “to distinguish,” to “make a difference,” especially between the true and the false, the right and the wrong, in theory and in practice. This discrimination as to truths and motives duly exercised by the mind itself, and faithfully applied to our outward conduct, constitutes

Knowledge as a practical thing. In addition to faith and firmness, cultivate the faculty of discerning what is truth, and the skill to use this in action. Add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge. So live in Christ, so know Christ by an inward experience, that you will act in outward things, as Christ would have you act.

II. HOW SHALL THIS KNOWLEDGE BE ATTAINED?  
How shall we gain that experimental acquaintance with Christ which shall guide the life in practical duty?

1. *By the prayerful study of Christ as he is set before us in the Gospel.* We must learn Christ from the Scriptures; for there is his character transcribed in every feature, not merely as it appeared to men, but just as it was, and as the divine artist, inspiring human pens, has caused it to be traced. But its beauties do not all come out to the unassisted eye; they are spiritually discerned. As in a true work of art, especially if it be an old picture, the determining qualities of tone, manner, finish, are not superficial, but require study

and a practised eye, so in this one model character for the world, this portrait of a life so far beyond all human conception or delineation, while from any point the impression is that which perfection alone can give, yet not the whole of that perfection comes in any one impression. The mere tourist sauntering through a gallery of art recognizes in one painting a work superior to the rest; but the artist lingers before that picture and scans its every point, till without the help of catalogue or cicerone, he discovers it to be a Titian, a Tintoretto, a Murillo, and feasts his soul upon those diviner touches that reveal the Master's hand. You must not look only, or read by catalogue and note-book, but must *study*; like that artist monk who studied his head of Christ with prayers and vigils and spiritual agonies, till the canvas caught his unearthly inspiration, and the pictured Christ was the Christ within his soul. "An inch deeper and you find the Emperor," said a wounded guardsman of Napoleon to the surgeon who was probing a wound just above his heart. The Christian should have the image of Christ

transfixed upon his heart. Once introduced to Christ by Faith, you must follow on to know the Lord. Prayer is the life element of such a study. When we enter into the closet to contemplate Christ, the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us.

2. We gain this Knowledge by a *diligent and teachable seeking after the will of Christ*. The spirit of obedience helps to the knowledge of duty. It is wonderful what light arises upon practical questions which seemed doubtful and complicated, the moment the mind resolves that it will do the right whenever found; that it will do the right, and take the consequences. Then it discovers that many of the prudential and intellectual perplexities supposed to exist in the question itself, were really the controversy of its own selfish interests and passions. This determination to do the will of Christ, is like a signal rocket piercing the gloom of night from a ship on an unknown shore. Not only does it mark a pathway through the darkness, but answering signals come from off the shore, beacons are kindled, and a line of light guides her into harbor. Yea, in the storm of



doubt the Master comes walking on the sea, saying to the obedient and trusting soul, "It is I, be not afraid." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him."

3. We gain this Knowledge by *studying questions of right and duty in the closet*. Most of our practical mistakes arise from impulse, or from excessive confidence in our own judgment, or from a susceptibility to mere outward impressions. How seldom do we take a question of practical religion or of personal duty, and *study* it as we study a business venture, a political campaign, a question of science. We glance at it and go forward upon impulse, or, upon first thought or feeling, we pronounce a mechanical stereotyped judgment, or we talk about it and do as others say, taking their impulses and perhaps their prejudices for our guide. But instead

of talk, talk, talk, upon questions of any perplexity, we need to think, think, think, and to pray, pray, pray. The place for calm, mature judgment is the place of secret prayer. That judgment which is the practical equivalent of spiritual Knowledge, that all-penetrating sagacity which compasses and fathoms its subject in one view, is gained only when every earthly passion is hushed, when the noise of the camp is stilled, and the soul goes up alone into the mount with God. How little would there be of error and of diversity among Christians, if before controverting a question they would severally study it in the light of prayer. At the base of the mount they may differ as to the way; but when by different routes they reach the summit, they take in the same wide survey.

4. We may gain this Knowledge *by being willing to learn, and to correct mistakes*. The key of Knowledge is humility. Were we to name the two men in the circle of the Apostles, who gained the most thorough insight into the life and power of Christianity, and at the same time had the most practical discernment in

its application, we should name John and Paul. I do not speak of their inspired writings, but of the characteristics of the men. Now these both were as remarkable for their humility as for their wisdom; John always suppressing his own name in the Gospel narrative, and keeping himself in the background; Paul not counting himself to have apprehended, nor as already perfect, but pressing towards the mark, and seeking the full knowledge of God in Christ. Bacon testifies that if he had accomplished anything for the advancement of knowledge, "what led to it was a true and genuine humiliation of mind." The oppressive sense of the height, depth, length, and breadth of Knowledge in Christ, kept Paul always humble as to his attainment, always aspiring as to his aims. And this same sense of imperfection, of littleness, of almost nothingness in our actual Knowledge, and of fullness, vastness, infinity itself in Christ, would keep us ever willing, yes, eager to learn; so that we should profit even by our own errors and mistakes, making these a help through grace to a higher wisdom.

5. We may cultivate this Knowledge *by often testing ourselves by our principles*. If we were careful to keep a daily balance-sheet of our actions and principles, we should be more quick to detect errors of judgment, and to increase our stock of practical wisdom. If we were careful always to test our motives by our principles, we should gain more of that heart-knowledge which prepares us for the fuller Knowledge of Christ. The heart that would know Christ must know itself; must know its weakness to estimate his strength; must know its sin to value his grace; must know its ignorance to desire his light; must know by repeated failures and disappointments its own folly, in order to appreciate his wisdom. If we would grow in that inward Knowledge which gives practical wisdom, we should not only pre-examine questions of duty by the test of prayer, but should re-examine actions by the test of principle.

True principle is a fixed quantity. It rests upon the eternal base of truth and justice, and is firm as the pillars of heaven. As the old Egyptians took their astronomical bearings

from the sun-line upon the pyramid, so should we take our moral bearings by the light of Christ's teaching and life, giving the meridian line of principle and duty.

### III. THE EXCELLENCY OF THIS KNOWLEDGE IN ITS EFFECTS.

1. *This Knowledge combined with firmness in faith, gives beauty and dignity to character.* The apostle enumerates virtues and graces which in their combination make the complete Christian. And while discussing each in its order, with a view to come at its precise significance, we must not overlook their relations to each other as one family of virtues, or in the figure of the text, as one choir of graces marshalled around Faith as their leader. We have seen that Virtue gives energy, strength, resolve; but a character in which force and earnestness predominate, is one-sided; may easily run into extremes. Knowledge presiding over the purposes and feelings of the soul, that Knowledge of Christ which introduces him as our counsellor and guide, imparts to the mind a calm dignity, which, when

added to Virtue, increases strength. We feel instinctively the weight and dignity of one, who, while firm in his convictions, and resolute in his purposes, shows a wide and candid comprehension of the sphere in which he is called to act, and forms his purposes in the serenity of unimpassioned judgment. How much of the majesty of Jesus lay in the fact that he knew all things, and needed not that that any should tell him what was in man.

2. This Knowledge *gives us power over ourselves*. Man was created a Power, and not a Thing. A thing moves and acts only under a necessary law of cause and effect; a power acts by will through choice, and is "able to originate new trains of effects."\* But man's power over things, his power over nature, lies not in superior force, but in that Knowledge which gives him command of natural principles and laws for his own advantage. Till he gains this Knowledge, he is himself but the slave of material forces, the dependent and drudge of nature. But with all his knowledge

\* See this distinction finely wrought out in Dr. Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," pp. 85-90.

of nature and power over her, man may still be the slave of lusts and passions and whims if he does not know the truth, if he does not know Christ. The Truth makes free; and Christ entering the soul as a regenerating power, gives it dominion over the body, dominion over self. In proportion as the soul gains a true spiritual power over its inferior desires, does it become a power over the world

3. This Knowledge *gives us power for good and even great achievements.* It is no modern discovery that "knowledge is power." That is a noteworthy saying concerning the men of Issachar;—when the armies of David were gathered at Hebron, after the warriors of other tribes had been spoken of as expert in war, mighty men of valor, it is said that "the children of Issachar were men that *had understanding of the times*, to know what Israel ought to do, and all their brethren were at their commandment." The army with all its strength and numbers and valor, required a head, and that head was with the men who "had understanding of the times, to *know*

what to do." Bravery and sagacity, Virtue and Knowledge must go together. Knowledge, so far from repressing courage, animates it. Sometimes one seems rash in the very boldness of his strokes; when in reality he is far-sighted, and perceives that the crisis demands sudden and decisive movements. Napoleon's campaigns, conceived with such daring, and executed with such startling rapidity, were not ventures of fortune, but were planned in midnight studies over maps and charts; and every road, stream, valley, hamlet, wood, was in his mind before he set foot upon the battle-ground. He failed at Waterloo, not for lack of foresight, but because his plans and orders were not executed by others as conceived and mapped in his brain. In the great conflict waging for truth and right, those whose innermost Knowledge of Christ makes them as quick to perceive, as they are resolute to act, will take the lead and win the day.

4. This Knowledge of Christ *gives us power over evil and over death.* It is half the battle to know the enemy, his ground, his re-



sources, and his tactics. What we fear in the dark, we may laugh at when daylight comes. So long as death could wrap himself in gloom and silence, he kept the world in bondage through fear. But since Christ hath burst the bars of death and opened wide the grave, and showed it to be the camping-ground of angels, and brought life and immortality to light, death hath no more power over souls that know the Lord. They go down into the grave singing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

"With a glad and fearless mien,  
Should a Christian man be seen,  
Wheresoe'er be cast his lot.  
Yea, though death seem close at hand,  
Calm and quiet let him stand,  
And his spirit tremble not.

"Fount of joy, my Lord divine,  
Thine I am, and Thou art mine,  
Naught can tear Thee from my heart;  
Bring me, bring me to that place,  
Where enclasped in Thine embrace,  
*I shall know Thee as Thou art.*"

Say not, brethren, "such knowledge of Christ is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it." High it is above all earthly wisdom—above all the philosophy of man;—

but that which none of the princes of this world knew, Christ will give to the least of his disciples. It is the Knowledge of Himself, and this He gives always to prayerful seeking. Give all diligence to gain it. Add to Virtue Knowledge. Seek to know Christ. Study to know Christ; to know Him by prayer; to know Him in the written word; to know Him by a daily trust; to know Him by that inward experience of his grace and truth and love, which is eternal life. "Beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and forever. Amen."

## LECTURE III.

### TEMPERANCE.

And to Knowledge, TEMPERANCE.—2 PETER i. 6.

**T**HIS is the third figure in that sum in compound addition, the footing up of which makes the complete Christian character. Though the virtues and graces here enumerated are of different denominations and values, every one of them is not only important, but indispensable to a correct result. The distinction between some of these traits may seem merely verbal; but upon analysis, we find that each word conveys a separate and important thought, a distinction which the mind should dwell upon till it has become fixed as a trait to be studied and cultivated in ourselves.

If we could but carry on this addition in our hearts as rapidly as we can make it in our thought and speech, we should soon grow to

be substantial and complete Christians. And surely while studying this text as to its meaning, we ought to be making these virtues our own—strengthening and improving what we already possess, and seeking to develop what we have hitherto neglected. Every virtue in the list should be cultivated by every Christian; and so cultivated that each shall have its due place and proportion in the character. Have you, then, renewed your diligence in cultivating a manly regard for truth and duty? Are you adding to your Faith the firm determination to obey God, to do always and without shrinking that which a conscience enlightened by his word requires? And with this Virtuous persistence in truth and duty, and in order that this may never become a misguided and excessive zeal, are you at the same time seeking that inward personal Knowledge of Christ which shall guide you by his Spirit in doing his will?—that Knowledge, which by elevating the soul into the calm, pure regions of spiritual light, quickens its discernment of practical duty, and leads it whither Christ would have it go? While

Virtue makes us active, open, strenuous, bold, firm, whenever truth requires this manifestation at our hands, Knowledge makes us clear, calm, considerate, discerning as to what should be done or avoided for the glory of God, and the best good of our fellow-men.

To these virtues, the apostle bids us add TEMPERANCE. Our modern use of this word restricts it mainly to abstinence from strong drink, making temperance the opposite of drunkenness, or of any excess in the use of intoxicating drinks or drugs. In the old English, however, this word had special reference to chastity or continence; and the original term has a still wider meaning, denoting the control of all the appetites and passions. *Abstinence* alone does not fully express the idea, since this presents rather its negative side. The word means strictly "ruling with a strong hand," having the mastery; and when applied to a person, the temperate man is he who governs himself firmly, who has the mastery especially over the passions and appetites of his lower nature. Temperance is Self-control, "an entire command over our passions

and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than the law of God admits," and reason and conscience, enlightened by that law, approve.\* Let us now inquire—

### I. WHAT THIS SELF-CONTROL INVOLVES OR IMPLIES.

\* 'Εγκράτεια (*engkrateia*) is used by Plato and Aristotle to express *self-discipline*, *self-mastery*. Xenophon uses it to express the government of all the passions and appetites; such a mastery of the natural desires for food, drink, and sensual gratification, and such a power to endure cold, heat, fatigue, and want of sleep, as become a good general in time of war. (Mem. 1. 2, 1; 1. 5, 1; 2. 1, 1.) So Paul used the word when addressing Felix, who lived in open adultery with Drusilla, and who indulged every selfish and sensual passion; "he reasoned of righteousness, *temperance*, and judgment," till the wretch trembled.

*Passow* translates *ἐγκράτεια* by *Selbstbeherrschung*, self-government; and *Mässigung in Sinnengenüssen*, moderation in sensual enjoyments.

The Latin *temperantia*, from which our word temperance is derived, has the same meaning; moderation, regulation, government, self-restraint. And it is applied not only to sensual appetites, but to the government of the tongue, the eyes, the temper; to the restraint of the emotions of grief under calamity or of exultation in victory, (*Georges*). Cicero defines *temperantia* to be that which teaches us to follow reason, both in what we seek and in what we avoid; a firm and judicious control of reason over impulse and desire. (De Finibus 1, 14, and 2, 19.)

## II. BY WHAT MEANS IT MAY BE ATTAINED.

1. This Christian Temperance or self-control implies and demands the *absolute subjection of all evil appetites, passions, and desires*. Sin, in its radical idea, pertains to a state of the Will, as contrary to or alien from the will of God. But this willful alienation from God, this voluntary self-seeking, this supreme love of self or of the world—by whatever name we characterize it as a principle—acts in every individual, mainly through some particular form or forms of carnal or worldly desire which become prominent as specific sins or sinful habits; and like certain venomous creatures whose parts continue to move and to give out poison even after the head is cut off, these habits, impregnated with the virus of the sinning will, retain their vitality and their power of evil long after the will itself is changed in its supreme and permanent direction. Hence, while in urging men to repent, the Bible lays stress upon the change of heart, mind, will, purpose—a change of the voluntary state of the man—as the radical, essential, and comprehensive thing; it also

exhorts those who have made this radical change of purpose and life, to subdue specific sins which have acquired in them the force of habit. The epistles of Paul addressed for the most part to persons, who, before conversion, had lived in all the vices and corruptions of heathen society, abound in exhortations and warnings against specific sins. Thus he writes to the Ephesians: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;" "fornication, uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;" and to the Corinthians he says, "I bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the lasciviousness which they have committed."

Those grosser social vices with which the pagan society of the old world was thoroughly infected, and which the old pagan religion encouraged—vices which destroyed home, corrupted literature, debased art, and defiled the altars of the gods—were so little thought of as evils, were so fully sanctioned by custom, were so gilded over by the example of public men, the toleration of law, and



the flattering arts of genius, were so protected by the priests, who made them a means of revenue, that it was an easy thing for a Christian at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Antioch, or any like luxurious capital, to slide into sins the bare suggestion of which we should resent with abhorrence. Paul recognizes as Christians, the children of God, the followers of Christ, those whom he warns so earnestly against specific and grievous sins. As he writes to the Romans,—“When we were in the flesh”—living for mere self-gratification, “the motions of sin did work in our members,” incitements to sin wrought upon us through the natural appetites; wherefore, he says, “Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments [or agents] of unrighteousness unto sin.” In the same tone he says again, “if ye live after the flesh ye shall die;” if you make the gratification of natural appetites and tastes, and carnal desires, your aim in life, you shall lose the life of your soul; “but if ye through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye

shall live. MORTIFY, therefore, your members which are upon the earth. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." Such language addressed to Christians, shows that over and above that surrendering of the will to God, which is conversion; that yielding up the soul to Christ in trustful obedience, which is faith;—over and beyond this there is a work of self-subjection, with regard to specific passions, habits, and desires, which every Christian must labor to achieve in himself. The apostle describes this by such words as "mortify," "crucify," which show that this work of conquering particular passions or habits of evil requires severe and painful effort. Precisely this conquest, even to the destruction of every evil habit, is required in that Temperance which the text enjoins. It is *ruling such passions with a strong hand*, subduing and keeping them under effectually, which makes the self-control of the Christian. That self-control is not complete till every passion or tendency in its nature to evil, is not barely restrained, or brought within bounds, but is

put down and mastered, so as to rise no more.

*Anger*, in the common use of the word, is an evil passion. While there is such a thing as a virtuous indignation against outrage and wrong, a holy indignation at sin, yet by anger we mean a violent passion or excitement of mind on account of injury, real or supposed, attended with a feeling of resentment, a desire to retaliate upon the offender. Now such a passion is evil, and only evil; and self-control requires its absolute subjection. An excitable temperament, or a passionate habit of mind, allowed in youth, may palliate in the Christian occasional freaks or outbreaks of passion, so long as he is conscientiously and earnestly endeavoring to conquer his propensity to anger; but this cannot serve him as a standing pretext for the indulgence of this passion. It is his duty to subdue it; to govern his temper. It is not enough that he should be sorry after anger, and willing to humble himself by confession; it is not enough that he should deprecate this as an infirmity; it is not enough that he should learn to bite his lips and curb

his tongue while he is choking with rage within; he must so master temper and temperament that he shall hold the passion of anger in complete subjection, never suffering it to rise. A passionate man cannot exercise self-control till he has gained that conquest. Some ancient philosophers used the word Temperance as the specific opposite of irritability.\*

*Self-indulgence in appetite*, whether under the form of drunkenness or of gluttony, is a sin. It is a sin against the body, whose beautiful mechanism we strain and impair by any excess. It is an offence against the mind, whose faculties we clog and stupefy, by excess of food or drink, or derange by an unnatural stimulus, and whose lawful dominion over the body is usurped and dishonored whenever an appetite gains the ascendancy over reason. It is a sin against God, the gifts of whose bounty are perverted, when used as if appetite were the chief thing to be consulted. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask

\* See in Passow—*Mässigung*; comp. in Flügel.

amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

*Covetousness*, is specified again and again in the word of God as one of the worst forms of carnal passion; and the subjection of this is indispensable to self-government. Hardly any passion so blinds its victims, so insinuates itself into every thought and plan of life, so paves the way for all that is unlovely in spirit and evil in practice. Hence the Bible always puts the covetous man in the worst possible company. "Mortify your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and *covetousness which is idolatry.*" Our blessed Lord has taught us that "out of an evil heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, *covetousness*, wickedness, deceit;" and with solemn emphasis he warns us, "Take heed, and beware of *covetousness.*" The greed of gain must be subdued, or it will choke the life of Godliness in the soul. The Christian must learn to moderate his views and desires of worldly possessions. If he finds the least disposition to count upon

these as his portion, if he finds himself hankering after more and more of this world's good, he must give himself no rest till he conquer that passion, or it will conquer, and degrade, and destroy his soul.

The tendency to *a self-satisfied and even luxurious enjoyment of the world*, is perhaps the strongest antagonist in our times to a simple scriptural piety. The grosser vices which were tolerated and even sanctioned in the best society of Greece and Rome, and which are constantly referred to in the apostolic letters, have been so thoroughly branded by Christianity, that they are outlawed by the code of our civilization. Yet the propensity to self-indulgence in the world, is not subdued; but rather whetted by the refinements of modern luxury. The world is still a tempter and a snare to whatever soul may incline towards it for its satisfaction. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father; but is of the world." Sensual appetite, pleasure-seeking for its own sake, and frivolity in the methods of enjoyment, a vain love

of pomp and show, these proceed from a propensity which cannot be reconciled with the love of God—these must be conquered if the soul would give itself unconditionally to the love of the Father. Here lies the test of piety in our times. Clothed in better raiment than adorned the court of Queen Elizabeth, living in more sumptuous abodes than were the palaces of England three centuries ago, living in a society which makes the pomp of furniture and the richness of entertainments the test of social worth, and which even uses religion as an auxiliary to fashion, we are called upon to preserve the unaffected simplicity of the Gospel, and to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world.” *Here* it is that the Christian of to-day has most need of Temperance; *Virtue* to assert his faith; *Knowledge* to discern his duty; and a rigid and watchful *Control* over those propensities toward pleasure and pride which would bring him under the dominion of the god of this world.

2. Besides this absolute subjection of all evil passions and propensities, the law of Temperance requires that *those natural de-*

*sires which are in themselves innocent and lawful, should, both as to the manner and the measure of their indulgence, be regulated by a regard for the highest good of the soul.* Appetites and tastes we have, which were never designed to be our tempters and tormentors—making the body a mere battle-field of the soul—but were meant to minister to a pure and healthy enjoyment. But the peculiarity of these native appetites and tastes in man, is, that they do not, like the instincts of animals, regulate themselves, but require the mild restraint of reason. Hence the Christian law of Moderation, an enlightened regard for the soul's highest welfare, must control the measure and the method of all lower gratifications. A person who, on medical advice, had begun the daily use of wine, being accidentally deprived of it, felt such a hankering for its exhilaration, that he took the alarm, and at once abandoned it, choosing rather to suffer a physical infirmity than to endanger his self-control. That is a nice point—a hair-line—where Desire instead of ministering to rational enjoyment, oversteps the bounds of reason,



and becomes an ungovernable passion. Keep well within that line.

3. It has been assumed in this discussion, that since all sin concentrates in a selfish Will, this of course must be subdued in order to a sound and perfect self-control. But I wish to insist, for a moment, upon the idea that selfishness is not merely to be restrained, moderated, held in check by compromises, but to be conquered, if ever the soul would gain the mastery of itself for God. Our love of God, to be complete, must be unconditional. The moment we attempt to *condition* it upon what He may be willing to do for us, it ceases to be love, and becomes a mere mercenary passion. What should we think of a child who should make his love for his father for the day, depend upon his father's giving him this or that which his fancy might covet, or his appetite crave; and should withhold his kiss of affection, until he should see what *gain* the day would bring to him? The existence of this calculating, selfish spirit is incompatible with the very idea of love. Till we have put down all self-seeking, so as to say to-day, and to-mor-

row, and always, and unflinchingly,—“**THY** will not mine be done,”—we have not conquered ourselves for God.

II. This virtue of Temperance, or self-control, we are commanded to cultivate, with all diligence. Let us now inquire, therefore, HOW SHALL IT BE ATTAINED?

1. *Not by mere force of will*, determining to override, and if possible to annihilate the sensibilities and propensities of our nature, whether for good or evil. The cold impassiveness of marble is not self-control; nor can the Christian perfect his moral nature by cutting away all natural emotions and sympathies, and carving his soul into a statue, to be mounted upon an iron pedestal, and to look always in one direction. If Washington himself had been a statue, we should never have erected a statue of Washington. If his soul had been of brass, his self-control would never have impressed us, as it now does, with the magisterial dignity of his character. The stern, cold, iron discipline of the ancient stoic and of the modern Buddhist, hardening the

mind to an unnatural insensibility to pleasure or pain from without, has nothing in common with Christian self-control. One may conquer many an appetite and passion by mere force of will, and in so doing may strengthen the will itself in resistance to God, and may stiffen that will with the pride of self-righteousness.

The philosophy of this stoical indifference to natural desire, is as far from the philosophy of Christian self-government, as is the crank that moves the springs and wires of an automaton, from the soul that moves the nerves and muscles of the man. One who refused to govern his appetites by the moral law, may be rendered very temperate by a fit of the gout; but we do not feel that his coerced abstinence by mere force of will, under pressure of danger, is Christian self-control; for when the twinge of pain is over, the will relaxes, and appetite again has sway. Not abstinence alone, through some stern, intellectual or medical philosophy, but the control of self by the love of God, is the true Temperance.

2. Neither is self-control to be attained by *the arbitrary mortification of the body, by means*

*of denials and penances.* Christianity was not made for the desert and the convent, but for the living and hostile world; and we are not to become saints by secluding ourselves from the outer world, but are to *be* saints in it, by the power of a new life. The experiment of monkery, of celibacy under a vow, of hermit life, away from the haunts of men, as a means of promoting personal holiness, has resulted either in a morbid Pietism, a bigoted Fanaticism, or a gross Sensuality of life. The monk and the hermit subsisting on scanty fare, and mortifying the body by hard usage and voluntary tortures, have not conquered pride and self-will, have not thus subdued Satan within them—have even made new devils out of phantoms—have not always even conquered the lusts of the flesh. The gross and monstrous “chambers of imagery” still to be seen in old Egyptian temples—as at Dendera—were transcripts of the pent imaginations and passions of priests who devised them, and of later monks who inherited them. A vivid writer who has reproduced the era of Christian monkery in Egypt, rightly combines

a fanatical outward abstemiousness with the cravings of morbid desires.\* You cannot conquer the world by running away from it, much less can you conquer yourself by hiding away from the world. The avoidance of temptation, always a duty, is not to be accomplished by putting locks and bolts upon the doors of our houses, but by watching at the door of our hearts. The spirit of Christian Temperance is not the spirit of monkish penance—making a virtue of some forced outward abstinence. The control which the text enjoins is a matter not of outward regulation, but of inward power over self. It does not consist in checks imposed upon the outward *action* of the desire or will, but in reducing the *inner man* to a state of harmony with reason and the law of God.

“We need not bid for cloistered cell,  
Our neighbor and our work farewell,  
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high,  
For sinful man, beneath the sky.

“The trivial round, the common task,  
Would furnish all we ought to ask;  
Room to deny ourselves; a road  
To bring us daily nearer God.”†

\* Kingsley's "Hypatia."

† Keble's "Christian Year."

3. But in order to gain Self-control, we must *study ourselves*, especially as to our weak points of character, and *aim to conquer specific modes or habits of evil to which we are prone*. The apostle speaks of "the sin which doth so easily beset us;" and every one who is accustomed to study his heart, finds some point at which Satan works with special facility. If one is repeatedly affected with heart-burn, with headache, with nervousness, with nightmare, he begins to scrutinize his diet, and when he ascertains what it is that deranges his system, he refrains from that as if it were poison. If we were half so careful in the dietetics of the soul, we should keep up a far more healthy and vigorous tone of Virtue. Whenever anything goes amiss in our outward conduct, or when we find an indifference or languor of heart towards spiritual things, if we search into the springs of our spiritual life we shall discover that at some point an evil propensity, an old unconquered habit, has gained a temporary ascendancy over us, and has betrayed us into sin; and we must set ourselves resolutely by the grace of God to con-

quer that evil. I have instanced the case of one who found himself insensibly contracting an appetite for spirituous drinks, which he had begun to use as a medicine. The discovery of the danger gave him resolution for the remedy. I have learned also of one who finding the spirit of covetousness growing with the increase of his wealth, fought it down by signing checks in blank for benevolent societies, and keeping these ready to be filled up on every application. He conquered himself by writing his name. Robert Hall, so weighty and eloquent in the pulpit, was apt to be impetuous and overbearing in uttering his opinions in private. But he watched and prayed against this infirmity, till he perceptibly gained in modesty and sweetness of temper. Once when he so far lost his self-command as to become heated in a debate, he abruptly closed the discussion and left the room. The company supposed that he had gone away in anger; but he was overheard to ejaculate with deep feeling, "*Lamb* of God; LAMB of God, calm my excited spirit." He went away not to show anger, but to conquer

it by prayer ;—willing to lose his accustomed triumph in an argument, if he could win the greater victory over himself.

4. Again ; the power of Self-control will be strengthened, *if we cherish habitually the sense of God's presence and of his watchful eye.* When David has portrayed the omnipresence and omniscience of God, in that Psalm which is as the fire of Sinai kindled within the soul, when he has realized God in his spiritual Personality as knowing every word of the tongue and every unuttered thought, compassing the earth and the sea, outflying the wings of the morning, and piercing darkness with the blaze of noon—he prostrates himself before the omnipresent and omniscient Jehovah, and cries, “Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” \* Could we form worldly and selfish plans—if we felt the presence of God about us, felt his eye upon us ? Should we debase ourselves by any evil appetite or passion, if

\* Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.



we saw the Lord continually before us? Could we allow ourselves in anger or in vain and foolish talking, if we remembered that there is not a word on our tongues but the Lord knoweth it altogether? Do we not first put God out of mind, and then abandon ourselves to sin? There is no government over our evil propensities, like the simple thought, "Thou God see'st me."

"Oh! may this thought possess my breast,  
Where'er I roam, where'er I rest;  
Nor let my weaker passions dare  
Consent to sin, for God is there."

And not only the thought of God as ever nigh to us, but *the presence of God by his Spirit within us*, must be cherished, if we would govern ourselves by His law. The Apostle enumerates Temperance, self-government, among the fruits of the Spirit. And surely when the Holy Spirit is so honored and cherished in our hearts, that He consents to abide there as in a temple, when his blessed influence, sought by prayer, steals over us like the fragrance of heaven, like the music of

angels, every noisy passion, every unworthy motive, every selfish wish, every carnal desire, must lie vanquished before Him. As the notes of a wind instrument attuned to softest music, breathing sweeter and sweeter chords, floating into the upper heaven, almost vanishing from the outer ear, but whispering still to the ear of the spirit—hush the idle conversation, the restless wandering, the fashionable coquetry of a vast and mixed assembly, subduing every soul by a gentle, invisible power—so the voice of this celestial dove, the still small voice, the inbreathing of heaven, so pure, so gentle, yet so controlling, stills all that is earthly within us, and holds us captive to divine love. “If ye through the *Spirit* do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are *led by the Spirit of God*, they are the sons of God.”

And now, in conclusion, let me urge you to give all diligence to add this grace to your character;—to *perfect yourself in the government of your own heart*.

1. I urge you to this diligence, *by the great-*

*ness of the object to be obtained.* Consider what it is to gain the mastery over a single passion. And think, also, what it is for the mind to be ruled by an appetite! Look at Coleridge—a poet who might have sung for all time, a philosopher capable of teaching and moulding generations, skulking away from the eye of friends and of servants to drink his bottle of laudanum, and then bewailing his weakness and sin with an agony the bare recital of which makes our hearts bleed for pity. Think of the poets, the statesmen, the warriors, who have sunk under the inebriating cup, and have left a dishonored name. And as you mourn over the melancholy ruin of greatness by appetite and passion, think how great it is to master these; to subject all passions and desires to the wise and sound control of Reason acting for Love. It is not only to subdue a serpent, to tame a lion,—there is a whole menagerie of evil passions to be kept in subjection. “Every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind. but the tongue can no

man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." The grace that can subdue tongue and thought and heart to the mild constraint of love, is the very power of God.

2. I exhort you to be diligent in this Self-conquest because *it is made practicable by timely diligence*. Passions indulged have a rapid and fearful growth. Give them sway, and they become like very fiends within you. But as the crocodile of the Nile, which devours a man at a meal, and snaps a boat asunder with its jaws, can be crushed within your hand when in the egg, so the passions that devour human souls could be exterminated by one *timely* and decisive blow. "*Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.*"

3. I exhort you to this Self-control, *for your own peace of mind*. In a sense all our unhappiness proceeds from the want of self-regulation. I use *unhappiness* in distinction from that sorrow which afflictions bring. The personal experience of David at various times, as recorded in the Psalms, points this contrast between the man made unhappy by his own sins, and the saint afflicted by God's Provi-

dence. The contrast is most effective when you throw these experiences into parallel columns, and compare them side by side.

## THE UNHAPPY MAN.

"When I kept silence"—harboring sin in my heart, and unwilling to confess it—"my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long"—I was tormented with inward pains of conscience.—"For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer."—(Ps. xxxii. 3, 4.)

"My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight. . . . Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. . Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. . . . Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation."—(Ps. li.)

## THE AFFLICTED MAN.

"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me; many which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Driven out from Jerusalem by a rebellious son, dethroned and forsaken of men—"I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.—(Ps. iii.)

In the midst of enemies, surrounded by bloody men, he sings, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. . . For in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in his pavilion."—(Ps. xxvii.)

Unhappiness is quite another thing from that sacred and chastened sorrow which the heart may lawfully indulge under afflictive dispensations of Providence. Whenever we are unhappy it is because of some ground of perturbation within ourselves. But the due control of our desires removes all those inward occasions of perturbed feeling, which produce an unhappy spirit. "Let your moderation be known to all men. . . . Be careful for nothing." Allow yourself in no excess; indulge no solicitude for worldly good; "and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

When Mr. Webster stood before the eager thousands at Bunker Hill, on an occasion which must have agitated any common man, his wife, regarding him from a distance, observed to a friend, "I do not care to remain; for I see that he is *calm*, and I know that he will succeed." A conscious Self-control gives that assured calmness which is the repository of strength.


4. *Your duty to Christ, and your professed hope in Him* require that you shall govern your

*hearts in his spirit.* "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to Him which died for them, and rose again." And if Jesus was nailed to the cross to deliver you from sin, shall not you nail to his cross every darling lust? You owe it to your professed hope in Christ that you shall be an example of holy living. "Every one that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." Let us keep ever in mind that saying of Paul, who, having endured all earthly loss and shame for Christ, still enjoined upon his own heart the most vigilant self-control. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now, they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*; lest that by any means, when I preach to others, I myself should be a castaway."

## LECTURE IV.

### PATIENCE.

And to Temperance PATIENCE.—2 PETER i. 6.”

EHOLD we count them happy which *endure*. “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” This uncomplaining and inflexible *endurance* is Patience; literally “a remaining under,” or abiding in the place and circumstances of duty to which we are called; bearing up under labors, and difficulties, and trials, and conflicts, and sorrows, calmly and resolutely awaiting the end, in God’s own time and way. “If we hope for that we see not, then do we with Patience wait for it.” “We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope *unto the end*; that ye be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and Patience inherit the promises.” Here continuance in faith and



endurance under trial constitute the Patience of the saints. Warning the Hebrews against drawing back or wavering in their profession because of trials, the apostle says, "cast not away your confidence;" forsake not that trust in Christ which you have thus far maintained; cast not away that sheet-anchor of hope which has held you through so many storms; "for ye have need of Patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." "Behold," saith James, "the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long Patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also Patient; establish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Abraham after he had patiently endured wandering, affliction, exile—"had patiently endured, obtained the promise." "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." The prophet Jeremiah, in his lamentations, while bewailing his own sins and the sins and calamities of his people, yet exhibits the virtue of Patience when he says, "the Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him; it is good

that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." And David, when compassed about with evil doers, and threatened by the pride and prosperity of the wicked, thus exhorts the righteous to Patience. "Commit thy way to the Lord; trust also in him. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him."

These examples will serve to bring out the general signification of the term Patience as used in the Scriptures.\* We pass to consider.

## I. THE ELEMENTS OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN PATIENCE.

\* The literal meaning of *ὑπομονή* (*hypomone*) is *remaining behind*, or *remaining in the house*; *i. e.* abiding,—*das zurückbleiben, zuhausebleiben* (Passow). Hence constancy, stability, steadiness. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none *abiding*." (1 Chron. xxix. 15.) The Septuagint here uses *ὑπομονή* to denote stability, the opposite of that which is transitory and fleeting. In the text De Wette renders *ὑπομονή* by *Standhaftigkeit*, steadfastness. It is something more than *submissiveness*, by which Isaac Taylor defines it. *Patientia* denotes the quality of bearing or enduring. Cicero applies it to the endurance of hunger and cold.

## II. THE PLACE AND VALUE OF PATIENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

1. In analyzing Patience into its elements, we must view it both upon the negative and the positive side. *Patience does not imply a want of sensibility to suffering, sorrow, or wrong.* A North American Indian would think it unmanly or cowardly to betray a consciousness of pain; to utter a cry or shed a tear for any physical suffering. There is possible such a schooling of muscle and nerve, and such a stiffening of the will through pride or self-determination, that there shall be no wincing under the severest torture. Or where this impassiveness of the animal nature does not exist, a desperate course of life may have so deadened the sensibilities that there is no apparent yielding under pain. The criminal who has hardened himself to deeds of blood may seem as insensible to his fate as the stone he hammers in the jail-yard, and may even tread the scaffold with an air of bravado. But though no cry of pain escape him, no murmuring at his fate, though he wear out uncomplaining years in the penitentiary, or

bend his neck to the gallows' noose as if it were a common neck-tie, it would be absurd to speak of him as patient under suffering.

So intense were the sufferings of Jesus upon the cross, that his physical frame sank beneath them in less than half the time allotted for the cross to do its work; such too was his inward agony that his cry pierced the heavens; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Yet one of the thieves at his side, enduring the same physical torture, could even join in the derisions of the crowd below, and rail at him, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." But we feel that this unflinching criminal was a hardened wretch, and that the sensitive, quivering, moaning sufferer at his side was the Lamb of God, the dignity of whose Patience is not impaired in our thought by his visible anguish. We cannot associate with Jesus upon the cross the idea of weakness or of faltering. He suffers keenly, and his pure and sensitive soul manifests his suffering; indeed, had he gone through the closing tragedy of his life in a mere mechanical way,

with no apparent feeling or sense of pain, we could not have been drawn to him as our Saviour. We should have felt him to be wanting in the sympathies of our humanity; and our guilt would still have felt the need of some vicarious suffering for its expiation.

Christ suffers visibly, keenly, intensely; he feels the loaded scourge as its iron prongs tear his naked flesh; he feels the thorns as the rough soldiers force them into his bleeding brow; he feels the insult when they spit on him, and mock him, and buffet him; he feels the injustice when the judge who has pronounced him innocent, surrenders him to the mob; he feels the weight of the cross upon his mangled frame; he feels the piercing of the nails, and the strain that makes every fibre of the body a burning dart to his soul; he feels the pang of thirst and the drear sinking of unsupported nature; he feels all this and shows that he feels it; and yet we look on him not with pity but with awe, like that which made the Roman captain, who would himself have met death without flinching, exclaim of this meek sufferer, "Truly he was

the Son of God ;” which made the skeptical Rousseau exclaim, “Socrates died like a hero—Jesus Christ like a God.”

“What grace, O Lord, and beauty shone  
Around thy steps below ;  
What patient love was seen in all  
Thy life and death of woe.

“For ever on thy burdened heart  
A weight of sorrow hung ;  
Yet no ungentle, murmuring word  
Escaped thy silent tongue.

“Thy foes might hate, despise, revile,  
Thy friends unfaithful prove ;  
Unwearied in forgiveness still,  
Thy heart could only love.”

The sublimest conception of vicarious suffering which ancient mythology ever reached, is given in the tragedy of “Prometheus Bound.” Prometheus, of a race of giants, and at the same time the intellectual head of the human race, snatches fire from heaven for men, and also imparts a knowledge of sciences and the arts of life—in a word, he is the great benefactor of mankind, averting from them the destruction resolved upon by Jupiter.

His daring inventions excite the jealousy of the father of the gods, who causes him to be seized and chained to a rock in a desert, where every day an eagle preys upon his vitals, which are always restored by night, so that each day his anguish may be renewed. It is required of him that he shall give up his inventions and submit to Jupiter. But Prometheus consoles himself with the thought that he has procured such benefits for man, and braces himself to endure his torture as the decree of Fate.

“And I—oh, miserable!—

Who did devise for mortals all these arts,  
Have no device left now to save myself  
From the woe I suffer.”

And so he refuses all terms from Jupiter, and suffers on hopelessly, bravely, sublimely, saying ever:

“And helping mortals, found mine own despair.”

But when you come to analyze his feeling, you find no Patience nor submission, but a hatred of Jupiter, and a tremendous willful-

ness in his own determination. Prometheus is not calm in the greatness of his purpose; but like Napoleon at St. Helena, he chafes under restraint, and his giant soul heaves and rages like the ocean that surges against his rock-prison. He holds out in defiance, saying, "Let outrage and tortures be increased; let lightnings flame, and thunders rack the universe, I will not bend. Never shall I, affrighted by Jupiter, become womanish, and importune him whom I so much loathe, to release me of my shackles." *There* is a heathen's conception of endurance under suffering and wrong.

Turn now again to Him who brought from heaven to men, not fire, and science, and art, but light, and love, and life; who did this, not against the will of God, but for that will; yet in doing it, suffered for the sake of men, the hiding of God's face, and suffered also indignity and ingratitude, outrage and cruelty from those he sought to bless. There is no chafing of his soul, no proud, sullen endurance of fate, no stern defiance of woe; but "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with



grief," he meets all, bears all, suffers all, with the uncomplaining meekness and Patience of a lamb led to the slaughter;—who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously,"—saying, "not my will but thine be done," and drinking the cup that shrinking nature would have set aside.

"The sea of ill, for which the universe  
With all its pilèd space, can find no shore,  
With all its life, no living foot to tread!  
But He, accomplished in Jehovah-being,  
Sustains the gaze adown,  
Conceives the vast despair,  
And feels the billowy griefs come up to drown,  
Nor fears, nor faints, nor fails, till all be finished."\*

We may not seek for Patience in an insensibility to suffering, whether natural or forced; nor in a sullen disregard of personal consequences in carrying out some purposed end, or meeting an imagined fate.

2. And here we may note, more particu-

\* The Seraphim. Mrs. Browning.

larly, that *Patience does not argue indifference to the issue of the trials or labors which are upon us.* We have already marked the distinction between firmness and self-control in the Christian, and the counterfeits of these qualities, produced by the Stoical Philosophy. And here again in this matter of Patience the Christian is no Stoic, but is ever greater than the Stoic. According to the best interpretation of that philosophy, men should endeavor to attain a feeling of indifference as to the events of life, and should submit without complaining, to the unavoidable Necessity by which all things are governed. But this, if carried out, goes to destroy what is most vital within us—a personal will, a power of choice, and I had almost said, an *instinct* to choose good before evil. Could we bring ourselves into a state of stolid indifference to events as fated, and therefore unavoidable, we should take away the highest stimulus to right action as a means of the best good, both general and personal; we should come as near as possible to self-annihilation.

But this absolute indifference of the Stoic,

is in the nature of the human mind a thing impossible. The mind *will* forecast its own future; will have hopes; will have fears; will have a choice as to events affecting its own happiness; no logic or philosophy or schooling can destroy these essential qualities of the human soul; take away these, and man ceases to be a man. The Turk of to-day is the nearest example we have of the Stoical philosophy. The Turk is a Fatalist. He holds that what is must be; and that each event is to be taken as a decree of God, and however unwelcome in itself, is to be borne as a necessity. He therefore affects a Stoical indifference to the nature of events, whether of pleasure or of pain. But this state of mind is not Patience; it is sullenness; it exists along with malignant and revengeful passions, and may be turned into the wildest fanaticism. The Turk may sit sullenly by and see his religion dishonored, his sceptre broken, his empire dismembered, grimly bowing to his Fate; but the patriot of Italy or Hungary, though often baffled in his plans for the emancipation of his country, his family scattered, his property confiscated,

himself a prisoner or an exile, does not give over at last to a forlorn indifference, but holding his country's freedom still most precious, he waits for that, and suffers for that, and labors for that as his one end, and is *patient* because he is *not* indifferent to the result, but realizes that the good he labors for will be worth all that it may cost. He who professes not to be troubled about events because he does not care what happens, is not an example of the patient man. The true patient man does care what happens; does have a choice and an end in life; he does have principles which he values, hopes which he cherishes, and for these he is willing to wait and toil and suffer, through whatever difficulty and opposition, till their time shall come. The *care-nothing* spirit is not true Christian Patience.

3. *Neither is a do-nothing spirit to be identified with Patience.* There are times when Patience counsels to inaction; when "the strength of Israel is to sit still;" when Jehovah saith to his people, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and

in confidence shall be your strength ;”—when like the children of Israel with the sea before them and the foe behind, they have nothing to do but “ to stand still and see the salvation of God.” But this patience of *waiting* is not the inaction of sluggishness nor of despondency. It is a watchful inaction, like that of men sleeping upon their arms, with their camp-fires always lighted and the sentinels at their posts. He who gives over an undertaking as too arduous or unpromising, and then waits to see what will come to pass, is not patiently waiting upon the Lord. He has neither the patience of Faith nor the patience of Hope. A true Patience disposes one either to labor or to wait, to do or to suffer, as God’s wise Providence and the end in view may require. But a Christian Patience can never imply a voluntary acquiescence in wrong.

The shipwrecked mariner in an open boat without oar or sail, has nothing to do but wait for the appearance of relief. But if he has a compass and a paddle, and knows himself to be within a hundred miles of land, then Patience will be shown not in idle waiting or in

praying for some chance relief, but in working on without murmuring and without despair, though the hand is weary and the head is faint, and neither sun nor star appears over the waste of waters. Patience is neither insensibility, indifference, nor inaction; but that state of mind, in which evils and wrongs are endured without murmuring, and justice and redress are waited for without discontent, and in which duty is steadily performed against all opposition and discouragement. It exists with the most delicate perception of injury, the keenest sense of wrong, the liveliest aversion to evil.

Viewed then positively, Patience requires,

1. *The Consciousness of a Right Intent.*

This removes from within all disturbing causes which might irritate and unsettle the mind, and enables us to commit our way to the Lord in confidence. We may have the most deep and painful consciousness of sin and ill-desert in the very matter concerning which we are now called to exercise Patience; we may feel that the affliction we suffer has come upon us through our own sin or folly; but *in* the

affliction and with regard to that, if our intent is to use it rightly, to profit by God's dealing, we shall be not restive and fretful, but submissive and patient. We shall grow patient under trials in proportion as we grow unselfish.

And so too of labors; if we enter upon these with a pure intent, if we rise above all selfish feeling to the grandeur of working for mankind and for God, then shall we hold on by the attraction of the work itself, never ruffled by opposition, nor disheartened by difficulty. Hence the exercise of a true Christian Patience demands a conscience void of offence towards man and God. "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently; but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." A true Patience demands an unselfish heart—a heart accepting with meekness all divine chastisements as deserved, and therefore seeking to profit by these; a heart intent upon good towards others, and therefore patient of misconstruction, outrage, and wrong.

2. The exercise of Christian Patience *demands implicit confidence in God, and in our cause as approved by Him.* Patience and faith go hand in hand. It is said of Moses that, "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." He knew the character of Pharaoh—proud, daring, stubborn, revengeful; he saw his pride and rage excited against Israel; but above and behind the throne of Pharaoh, Moses saw the king Eternal, Immortal, Invisible—the King of kings, and lord of Lords; and he took his orders from *that* throne;—the sense of God's presence, faith in God's power, gave him that heroic Patience which endured the slights of his brethren, which endured forty years of exile in the desert, and forty years more of wanderings with a murmuring people. The main element in Patience is Christian submission to the will of God. This rests upon confidence as its basis—confidence in the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. To be patient, we must believe that God always intends some good in the evil which he



brings or suffers to come upon us. We must not only believe that God reigns—but that He *loves*, and reigns in love. We must have confidence also in the wisdom of God, as to the time and manner of the issue of any event affecting our welfare, and the prosperity of his cause. Remembering how “the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain,” we must not be weary in well-doing, knowing that in due season we also shall reap, if we faint not.

3. Patience must have in it *the element of hope*. “If we hope for that we see not, then do we with Patience wait for it.” Patience is incompatible with despair. The depression and gloom, the melancholy inaction which fastens upon the mind when hope is gone, is no part of Christian patience. This is the sinking of the soul, not its bearing up. But where there is the faintest ray of hope, then Patience may come in to soothe the mind and keep it steadfast. Patience in sickness may not depend upon the specific hope of recov-

ery, but it does involve the hope of relief and deliverance in God's own time and way. Patience under trial expects God's appearing. Patience in labor awaits God's help.

The virtue of Patience, by reason of its quiet and retiracy, commands but little notice and admiration from men. Men do not lay the stress of greatness upon the passive virtues. Indeed they rather take these as marks of weakness and the lack of spirit. Some bold action, some brilliant achievement, some exhibition of energy, daring, and active courage, more impresses the masses with the idea of greatness, than does mere patient doing and suffering in an unseen work or way. And yet when we come to analyze this Patience, we find in it the sublimest heroism. There is in it no taint of pusillanimity. The apostle prays that believers "might be *strengthened with all might*, according to his glorious power, unto all Patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

Were we to single out one incident of the life of Washington to show the greatness of

his character, it would be his conduct at Valley Forge, in the second dreary winter of the war. The enthusiasm of the first rush to arms is over, and war has become an earnest matter for the undisciplined yeomanry whose families and farms are suffering at home, while they have only an inglorious winter of hardship before them. The people have lost the first glow of independence, and shrink from the burdens of a conflict which has yet given no brilliant successes to the republican army. Congress is divided by jealousies and factions. The supplies needed for the army are not granted, or are long delayed. It is midwinter, and yet the huts are not built, and men who have marched for miles with naked and bleeding feet, are shivering in their tents. Three thousand men are disabled for want of food and clothing. There are signs of mutiny in the camp. There are intrigues also against Washington, both in the army and in Congress; and complaints of his inactivity are made in Legislatures, and by the press. Without funds, without provisions, without helpers, without the prestige of success, Wash-

ington maintains the steadfastness of his own heart, and keeps up the spirit of Patience and perseverance in the army. "It is much easier," he writes to Congress, "and a less distressing thing, to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room, by a good fire-side, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets. I feel abundantly for the naked and distressed soldiers, and from my soul I pity those miseries which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent. . . . It adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress, that on the ground of safety I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny." Never was the hero of a great cause placed in circumstances so unfavorable to all common traits and impulses of heroism. Yet he struggled on, and kept the life and soul of the army together. Well does Irving say that, "in no part of the war did he more thoroughly evince that magnanimity which was his grand characteristic, than when he thus rose above the tauntings of the press, the

sneerings of the cabal, the murmurs of the public, the suggestions of some of his friends, and the throbbing impulses of his own courageous heart, and adhered to that policy which he considered essential to the safety of the cause. To dare is often the impulse of selfish ambition, or hare-brained valor; to forbear is at times the proof of real greatness."

How sublime was the patience of Kane in that long, dreary, second winter in the Arctic; the object of his search unaccomplished; his plans baffled, his supplies wasted, his men crippled, his own frame broken by disease; yet his spirit never fails, and that noble, patient heart, maintains sunshine and summer through all the polar night.

But it is preëminently in woman that this virtue of Patience is exemplified, as indeed her sphere gives more occasion for the passive virtues than for active and noisy heroism. Often it is given to her to suffer, where it is given to man to toil; and too often does woman suffer without due sympathy from that sterner nature whose very toil she sweetens with her gentle assiduities. The

noblest pages of heroism and of martyrdom are unwritten, save in God's book of remembrance; for who could write the Patience of a wife's devotion, of a mother's love, in seeking salvation for her house? Where there is one Miriam to lead the song of the exultant host, there are a thousand Marys living in obscurity, pondering in their hearts the promised redemption, and through ignominy, and disappointment, and delay, and sorrow piercing like a sword, still magnifying the Lord, and waiting for his salvation, beside the cross and at the door of the sepulchre. Where there is one Deborah to arouse the tribes to battle with her war-chants, there are a thousand Hannahs, who, with silent but agonizing prayer, wait upon God, and who bring their Samuels to his altar as the sacrifice of love, and faith, and hope. The mother of the great Augustine, who for fifteen hundred years has so largely moulded the creed of the church, the devout Monica, had in her own household the most bitter trials. Her husband, a proud and sensual Pagan, hating the cross, and hating her for having

embraced the cross, would not only annoy her by all manner of heathen orgies in the house, but being a man of most violent temper, would turn upon her the fury of his passion. Especially did he seek to thwart her religious influence over their son. He brought up Augustine in pagan schools, and even allowed him in the vices of the times. But through all this Monica was so gentle, so kind, so meek, so patient, so faithful, that at length she softened the tiger to a lamb, and her husband before he died accepted the faith of Christ. But his evil example outlived him in his son; and Augustine, at twenty, beautiful in person, brilliant in intellect, had all the ungodly impulses of his father's fiery nature, strengthened by indulgence, and now left without restraint. But Monica had given him to God; she had scattered divine truth along his path from infancy upward; and clinging to the unfailing promises of grace, she followed him still with her patient love. One day she stood before her pastor, "the tears streaming down her careworn cheek," and besought him to use his influence to

reclaim her son. “*Wait,*” said the man of God, “*wait patiently; the son of these tears cannot perish.*”

Now a popular teacher of rhetoric—Augustine leaves Carthage, which he had found a “caldron of unholy loves,” to seek his fortune at Milan, the court of the empire. There, while winning applause as a rhetorician, he pursues the same godless and dissolute life amid the gaieties and dissipations of the capital. But his mother followed him, across the sea and into strange lands; and for thirteen years of his manhood, she carries this great sorrow of an apostate son, waiting upon him in love, waiting upon God in faith, saying, “I will see him a Christian yet before I die.” At length Patience has its perfect work. Before she dies, Augustine lives. And as her star of hope, which had been the only light of his stormy seas, sinks to its peaceful rest, his sun arises to illumine the church of God from age to age.

From this analysis of the elements of Patience, and these general illustrations of its power, we pass to consider



## II. THE PLACE AND VALUE OF PATIENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

1. This virtue of Patience we need *in all our labors for the cause of Christ and the good of men*. In working against evil we are prone either to irritation or to despondency. Our weak natures are annoyed by the opposition we encounter in a good cause. Reformers grow impatient, unamiable, violent, denunciatory, because others will not unite with them against a palpable and grievous wrong; or they grow weary in well-doing, and give over the world to its fate. Alas, where had *we* been, had Jesus grown impatient in his work and abandoned it because of opposition or ill-success. "When men have great works on hand their very enthusiasm runs to impatience. When thwarted or unreasonably hindered, their soul strikes fire against the obstacles they meet, they worry themselves at every hindrance, every disappointment, and break out in strong and fanatical violence. But Jesus is just as even, just as serene, in all his petty vexations and hindrances, as if he had nothing on hand to do. He is poor and hungry,

and weary and despised, insulted by his enemies, deserted by his friends, but never disheartened, never fretted or ruffled." \* A sacred Patience invests him everywhere. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself; lest ye be weary and faint in your mind.

2. We need this Patience *under the afflictions and wrongs which we personally suffer*; afflictions at the hand of God, persecution, calumny, wrong from our fellow-men. The apostle James bids us even rejoice in the trials that afflict us, "knowing that the trying of our faith worketh Patience. Ye have heard of the Patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." How sweet is Patience under the hand of God. It is like sunlight and flowers in the chamber of sickness—where some poor invalid, bereft of fortune, of friends, of beauty, of health, of all earthly good, possesses still that "meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price." But

\* Dr. Bushnell, "Nature and the Supernatural," p. 294.

it is easier to bear great and prolonged afflictions which come directly and visibly from the hand of God, than the petty vexations and wrongs which arise from untoward circumstances and evil men. How few can rise to the self-control of Newton, who when he entered his study and saw that his dog had thrown into the fire the calculations of months, said only, "you have done me great mischief, Carlo," and sat down to reproduce his work.

"If you will put a character to the severest of all tests, see whether it can bear without faltering, the little common ills and hindrances of life. Many a man will go to his martyrdom with a spirit of firmness and heroic composure, whom a little weariness or nervous exhaustion, some silly prejudice or capricious opposition, would for the moment throw into a fit of vexation or ill-nature. Great occasions rally great principles, and brace the mind to a lofty bearing, a bearing that is even above itself. But trials that make no occasion at all, leave it to show the goodness and beauty it has in its own disposition." \*

\* Dr. Bushnell, Nat. and Super. p. 293.

This grace of Patience, this truest Christian heroism, does not require for its development the rough blasts of persecution, or some high field of labor and of conflict; your own home with the little incidents of every hour, your daily life with its vexations, disappointments, and ills; your business with its temptations, its cares and its losses; is the sphere where Patience is most required, is best exemplified. It diffuses over the daily life a quietude which is neither slackness nor sluggishness, but the blissful serenity of heaven.

3. We need Patience *with respect to the fulfilling of God's plans of mercy for the world.* God's promises are like century plants. They grow silently, almost imperceptibly, through sunshine and shade, through wind and storm, by day and night, and year by year; and when the generation that saw them planted, and the generation that watched their early growth, have passed away, they are living and growing still; but when the great dial of the heavens has marked a hundred years, of a sudden there opens a flower

of matchless beauty and perfection. But the ages must wait for it. Many a promise is yet to flower; many a hope is yet to expand in joy. "He is faithful that promised; be ye followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the promises." In the conflict of principles and the chaos of systems; in the defeat of well-ordered plans, and the seeming overthrow of truth and virtue;—

"We will trust God. The blank interstices  
Men take for ruins, He will build into  
With pillared marbles rare, or knit across  
With generous arches, till the fane's complete."

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the *patient waiting for Christ.*"

## LECTURE V.

### GODLINESS.

And to Patience GODLINESS.—2 PETER, i. 6.

**T**HIS term, *Godliness*, cannot be taken in the general sense of religion, since it is a certain something to be added to that personal and practical faith in Christ, which makes one truly a religious man. The beginning of religiousness, or the religious life in the soul, in the Christian sense, is that faith in Christ which brings the soul to God with confession for its sins, and with the consecration of its powers to His service. A religious man is he who practically makes his accountability to God the law of his life;—who is *bound to God* with the sense of personal obligation for all that he receives, in all that he does. But he who has attained to that precious faith in Christ which delivers him from the corruption of the world,

and introduces him to the righteousness of God—this renewed, and therefore religious man, is still exhorted to add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience *Godliness*. There must be, therefore, in this term *Godliness*, a something definite which we are to cultivate as an element of the religious life.

What then, is that *Godliness* which is capable of being nurtured as an addition to saving faith in Christ, and to the several virtues before enumerated? Some understand the term in the old English sense of *god-like-ness*; a moral resemblance to God—an assimilation to him in character. But this does not express the objective sense conveyed in the original word. *God-ward-ness*, if we might make such a term, would be nearer this than *God-like-ness*;—a state of mind which is *toward* God, as the sole object of its adoration and religious reverence, the central, supreme object of its trust and love, the final source of moral obligation and authority. The word is compounded of two—one signi-

fyng to fear or reverence, the other rightly, or well—a *due reverence toward God*. The more devout and discriminating of the old Greek philosophers used this word to denote that wise and happy mean in religion, which lies between the two extremes of atheism and superstition. Atheism is Godlessness; the ungodly are without God; they have no fear of God before their eyes; no awe of the divine presence; no reverence for the Supreme Being; no acknowledgment of obligation toward Him; no regard for his law. Superstition regards as divine powers and agencies, things which really lie within the course of nature, and the powers of man; it carries to excess and absurdity the spirit of religious veneration, applying to mere natural objects and events, or human persons, or imaginary things, the sentiment of reverence which God alone should command. Between *atheism*—the absence of all recognition of God and all reverence for a higher power—and *superstition*, a weak and credulous belief in supernatural powers and agencies, which causes the mind to fear and venerate creatures of sense or of



imagination as if these were God—between those opposite poles lies true *Godliness*, or Godwardness—a just reverence toward God, which controls our moral conduct by the love and the fear of God. This I take to be the meaning of Godliness in the text.\* And this

\* The term *εὐσέβεια* (*eusebia*) here translated Godliness, is used in the New Testament to denote that *reverence toward God*, which is a spontaneous feeling of the heart in view of his character. (See in Robinson.) Cornelius was “a *devout man*, (*εὐσεβής*) and *feared God*.” The prevailing use of *εὐσέβεια* by classic writers gives to it this same objective sense. Plato, Thucydides, Demosthenes, use it to express veneration *toward* the Deity (*πρὸς Θεοῦς*). See in Stephanus, Suidas, and Passow ed. Rost und Palm. In the “Definitions” sometimes ascribed to Plato, *εὐσέβεια* is defined to be *Δικαιοσύνη πρὸς Θεοῦς*, that which is just, fitting, meet, as toward the gods. The Stoics defined it to be *ἐπιστήμη Θεῶν θεραπείας*—the appreciative or becoming service of the gods. Stephanus defines it by *religiositas*; thus expressing the same idea of reverence *toward* God. DeWette, in his note upon 2 Peter, i. 6, says *Ehrfurcht und Liebe gegen Gott*; veneration and love toward God. This use of the word precludes the idea of God-like-ness, and favors the less euphonious, but more expressive term, Godward-ness. It denotes also, something deeper than a formal outward reverence for the commands of God, and refers directly to the reverence of the soul *toward* Him.

you will perceive may be grafted upon faith, along with other virtues and graces, as a distinct element of the Christian character of life.

One may have a certain faith in Christ, who is yet wanting in a just and commanding reverence toward God. A mind that believes in Christ as historically revealed in the New Testament, accepts him as a real person and a manifestation of God, accepts him as a divine teacher, and even regards his death as in some way connected with the redemption and reformation of mankind, but which does not recognize a necessity for that death as an atonement between human guilt and divine justice, is wanting in that Godliness of which the apostle speaks. It has not attained to that *reverence for God* in the holiness of his Being and the purity of his Law, which was felt by Moses, by Isaiah, by David, by Paul, and which when felt makes the atonement at once a moral necessity for the soul itself, and a legal necessity for the divine government. A belief in Christ as teacher, leader, hero, martyr, may exist without Godliness; but when the soul attains to a just reverence for God himself, when

it stands in awe of that purity before which Moses trembled, and Isaiah cried "wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips," then will it have a view of the enormity of sin, of the majesty of holiness, of the awful purity of love, of the inflexible rectitude of God as the law-giver, which shall compel its faith in Christ as its Redeemer, and in his atoning sacrifice as its only approach to God as a Father.

A mind that looks to Christ as the author of a universal and indiscriminate salvation for the race, and admits no distinction in the results of probation between those who accept and those who reject the terms of that salvation, is surely wanting in this Godliness. A just reverence for God as lawgiver and judge, a just estimate of his truth and love as conserving the order and beauty of the universe, a just contemplation of his holiness filling that mind with awe, would cause it to throw aside such vague and easy faith, and to regard the admonition of the apostle, "let us hold fast grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, *with reverence and Godly fear*—for our God is a consuming fire."

And among those who hold fast as a form of sound words the doctrines of atonement, of justification by faith, of future judgment and retribution—are not many deficient in that reverence and godly fear by which alone we can serve God acceptably? Add to your faith this Godliness. “Sanctify the Lord of hosts in your hearts, and let Him be your fear.”

And if even Faith in some sort and degree may exist without genuine Godliness, it is quite obvious that all the other virtues named in the text may be to some extent manifested by a soul yet lacking this. One may have moral courage and persistence in what he regards as right and duty; may cultivate a knowledge of divine truth; may attain to perfect self-control, and be exemplary in patience under suffering and wrong; and yet none of these virtues may spring from or descend to the central life of his being; and he may be wanting in that veneration for God which would enthrone Him in the inner sanctuary of the soul as its divinity and its law. “Wherefore giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to

knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience Godliness.”

From this general outline of thought in the text we pass to consider :

I. THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GODLINESS.

II. THE MODES OF ITS EXPRESSION.

III. ITS VARIOUS COUNTERFEITS.

IV. THE MOTIVES TO ITS EXERCISE.

As a characteristic of this grace it should be noted,

1. That *it is most inward in its seat and power*. It is a sentiment or feeling of the soul toward God—of one intelligent personal mind toward another to which it owes its veneration and homage. The apostle Paul has in view this internal spiritual quality of true Godliness, when, writing to Timothy, he says “follow after righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” Here Godliness is distinguished from righteousness—God-fearing in the soul, from right-doing in the outward conduct. *Righteousness*, as it stands in this catalogue of Christian qualities, denotes rec-

titude of action; *Godliness* points to the inward spring of that action, and the ground of its righteousness, in a just sentiment of veneration toward God. True Godliness has the soul for its seat and God for its object. All dependence upon forms of worship as sufficient, all substitution of outward religious services for an inward God-fearing spirit, is but "the form of Godliness" without its power. All religious homage paid to creatures of whatever grade is a superstition which dishonors God. GODLINESS makes God himself, in his being, his character, and his law, the one sole object of religious homage; and it consists not primarily in acts of worship or forms of service—though these may give it expression—but it is the sentiment itself of the soul, its humble, reverent, devout recognition of God as the all in all. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.

2. *This sentiment is equally compounded of love and fear.\** That veneration or reverence toward God which is true piety, is grounded

\* "Ehrfurcht und Liebe gegen Gott."—DE WETTE *in loc.*

in a *love* of his holiness. There is a veneration whose chief element is awe; a reverence for dignity, station, greatness, power, which is cold and formal and distant—compelled by an overpowering sense of the superiority of its object, but not kindled by love for that object. Such is the veneration which barbarian tribes manifest for the mysterious powers of Nature—a vague dread of the invisible, an awe of that power which utters its voice in the thunder and the earthquake—a superstitious fear, like that which steals over the coolest and bravest when night comes on in the lonely forest or in the wildness and solitude of unknown mountains. Such was the reverence of our pagan ancestors for those mysterious powers which they worshipped with dark and bloody rites amid the swamps and forests of ancient Britain. Such is the reverence of the native tribes of Africa for the spirits of their ancestors, and for demons which are supposed to produce disease and death.

But the veneration of the Christian mind for God, is not a dim awe of invisible power,

a dread of that Almighty force which heaped up the mountains and gave the sea its bounds, which utters its voice in the heavens, and shakes terribly the earth;—the veneration of the Christian for his God is a reverence for that which is greater than physical force, however sublime and terrible, even the greatness of a good, and just, and holy character; a reverence which does not arise from nervous tremor, or some terror of the imagination, but is seated in the intellect and in the heart; a reverence which is proportioned, not to ignorance, but to intelligence; which does not feed itself upon mystery, but increases with the right knowledge of God. Compared with such a reverence as this, the sentimental adoration of poets for the divinity *they* see in mountains and waterfalls, in clouds and forests, in tempests and the sea, is as empty of Godliness as is the rudest superstition of pagan minds. Godliness springs from an appreciation of the character of God, especially in that feature of it which least impresses the senses or the natural mind—its perfect, infinite, and unchanging holiness. It



is an appreciative regard for this as the highest grandeur of the universe; it is an intelligent love of this, as the glory of the divine nature, which lies at the root of all true Godliness.

The poet Shelley disowned a personal God; yet what one has aptly styled "the atheistic hunger of his soul" caused him to fill the universe with invisible powers to which he paid that credulous homage which atheism always pays to mystery. Compare the most sublime and terrible imaginations of this gifted but godless poet, with that homage to God paid by the pious old negro who sat under the preaching of Dr. Bellamy, and after hearing his grand discourses on the divine character and government—discourses whose metaphysical acumen far transcended his feeble intellect, but whose moral sublimity stirred his sensitive and emotional nature—exclaimed, "Oh, Massa Bellamy, he make God so *big*, so BIG;"—and tell me if there is not more of poetry and pathos in the godly adoration of that simple mind, than in all that Shelley, and Byron, and Goethe and Emerson

have said and sung of a universe without God.

But with this love and adoration of the character of God, should mingle always a salutary *awe* of his majesty. "Perfect love casteth out fear;—it dispossesses the mind of that slavish fear of God which Superstition nurtures, and which Atheism cannot wholly set aside;—love casts out the terror of the slave; but a true love for God cherishes that awe of his holiness and justice and power, which the Bible always attributes to the righteous man as the fear of the Lord. "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil." We serve God acceptably, when we walk before him with reverence and godly fear. When Isaiah had a vision of the Lord upon his throne, that which filled his soul with awe was not the splendor of the throne itself, nor the glory of the seraphim, nor the quaking of the temple, nor the fire and smoke that filled the house—but that ceaseless cry of cherubim and seraphim, *Holy, HOLY, HOLY*. "Woe is me," cried the prophet, "I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips." But when

those lips were touched with a live coal from the altar, and his iniquity was taken away, the prophet could offer himself to the Lord as a willing and grateful servant. This is true Godliness;—*the homage of the soul toward God in reverence and love for his character.* And while we cherish every virtue and grace that has reference to the right government of our inferior propensities, and the right regulation of our outward conduct, we must give all diligence to cherish in our inmost souls this sentiment of filial reverence toward God.

## II. WHAT ARE THE MODES OF ITS EXPRESSION?

1. We should cherish this reverence *for the being of God, when we approach Him in prayer.* The prayers of godly men recorded in the Old Testament are always marked with a deep sentiment of reverence. Abraham and Moses, and Samuel and David, with all their importunity in supplication, were filled with reverence and godly fear when they drew nigh to God in prayer. Some seem to imagine that such reverence belonged to the

dimness and mystery of the earlier Revelation, and that through Christ we have more free and familiar converse with God. Blessed be God, we have the freest access to his mercy-seat, and may come even with boldness—with unfaltering confidence, to the throne of grace. “God hath sent forth his Spirit into our hearts, crying Abba, Father.” But has not filial piety the element of reverence as well as of love? With what reverence did Christ himself approach the Father in prayer. “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. . . O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee. . . Father, if thou wilt remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” What reverence, what submission, what Godliness is here! “In the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that he feared,” or as the margin reads, was heard *for his piety*. This last is evidently the true meaning; as Tyndale and Luther both give it in their versions, he was

heard "because he had God in reverence." His filial veneration and submission brought to him succoring angels from the presence of his Father. And if Christ so prayed, surely reverence becomes us sinners before God. The godly man will be always reverential in prayer.

2. We should cherish reverence *for the name of God*. A promised sign of the return of Israel to God's favor was this: "they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel." So in the time of Ezekiel when the people were in captivity, Jehovah said, "I have pity for my holy name; and I will sanctify my great name which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes." "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." This reverence for the name of God was not peculiar to his guardianship over Israel as a nation. Has not the Saviour taught us to pray, "Our Father

which art in heaven, *Hallowed* be thy name?"

The ancient Jews had a superstitious reverence for the proper name of Jehovah which forbade them to pronounce or even to write it. Indeed, some critics are of opinion that by reason of this superstition we have lost the true spelling and pronunciation of the name of the great I AM, as given to Moses. My own Jewish teacher in the Hebrew tongue, on coming to the name Jehovah in the Old Testament, would invariably pause and pass it in reverential silence. A Mohammedan who cannot read will carefully preserve every scrap of writing which he may find, lest it should contain the name of God, which it would be blasphemy to mutilate. While we disavow such superstition, let us cherish a true reverence for the name of God. Those who have once been profane, when truly converted, show the genuineness of their change by the deep reverence of their minds for the name of the Lord. How much of this appears in the writings of John Newton and John Bunyan, who were once accustomed to profane the

name of the Lord. The *godly* man will never use lightly the name of Jehovah, to enliven an anecdote or point a joke.

3. True Godliness implies a reverence *for the law of God, as the supreme and final rule of moral action.* "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." It is one thing to be in terror of the law of God as the symbol of his government over us, and of its penalties as threatened upon the disobedient, and quite another to revere that law in our hearts for its intrinsic holiness and purity, and as a written expression of the character of God. The Israelites had such a terror of the concomitants of the law at Sinai, the thunder, and lightning, and smoke, and earthquake, and the voice of the trumpet, that they cried to Moses, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die." But when these outward demonstrations at the giving of the law subsided, and Sinai smiled in peace, under the cloudless sun, and its own resplendent cloud, now silent, grew familiar, so utterly wanting were they in reverence for the law of God that they violated its first com-

mandment, and made a molten calf in the very face of Him who had said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." It is one thing to fear law, as law with penalty, and another to reverence God in his law.

4. We should cherish also a profound reverence *for the will of God as manifested in his providence*. If that will calls to suffering, the godly heart will say, "Let the Lord do that which is good in his sight;" "I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." The godly mind rises above all secondary causes in nature, and all intermediate human agencies, to perceive and acknowledge the hand of God in its afflictions, and with deepest humility and reverence to say, "Father, thy will be done." This submissiveness is not a passive bending of the mind to the necessity of its condition; it is a calm and even blissful acquiescence in the will of God, as the highest manifestation of good.

If the will of God calls us to action, our devout inquiry will be, "Lord what wilt thou have us to do?" The mind which has enthroned God in its thoughts, affections, pur-



poses, as the one object of its reverence, the centre and source of authority, can have no desire or plan for itself but to know the will of God. Such a one has "meat to eat" that the world knows not of. The will of the Father becomes incorporated with his very being—his life, his strength, his abiding joy.

Having now set forth the nature of true Godliness and the modes of its manifestation, it is important that we should,

### III. GUARD AGAINST ITS COUNTERFEITS.

The Scriptures caution us against two counterfeits of Godliness—the one having reference chiefly to the inward conception of piety, the other to its outward expression.

1. We are cautioned *not to confound gain with Godliness*. The apostle Paul warns Timothy against "men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is Godliness." At first view this seems a strange and almost incredible form of heresy. But call to mind the fact that under the Old Testament dispensation temporal prosperity was promised to godly living, and you will readily

see how the idea might arise, as it did, that outward prosperity was always a mark of inward piety. Thus the friends of Job reasoned that his afflictions were a consequence and a proof of sin. Perverse men would both use religion as a means of gain, and would then make their pecuniary success an evidence of their Godliness. The heresy is not so strange as at first it appears.

If we turn to the Epistle of James, we shall find evidence that this tendency to reckon gain as Godliness had so far crept into the churches as to call for special rebuke—"If there come into your assembly, a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in cheap clothing; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say to him sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, stand thou there, or sit thou here under my footstool; do ye not judge with evil thoughts?" The early Christians in their weakness and poverty were in great danger of counting gain as Godliness, and of regarding a man with a gold ring and gay apparel as a greater acquisition to their numbers

than one meanly dressed, however pious. It is to be feared that this heresy, though strongly condemned by Paul and James, is not entirely rooted out of the churches; that there are still those who measure the worth of Christians by their standing on the assessor's list, and who estimate the strength of churches by the bank accounts of their members. This substitution of gain for Godliness is one of the most subtle and depraving devices of the enemy of souls. It is making a calf of gold under the very brow of Sinai, and setting aside the Holy One of Israel for an image of Mammon.

2. The other error is thus characterized by Paul. He speaks of men who are "lovers of their own selves; lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"—who yet *have a form of Godliness but deny the power thereof*. manifold are the forms under which such Godliness appears. There is a *poetic* form of Godliness; a sentiment which takes the air of reverence and breathes the name of the divinity, when singing of the grander forms of Nature, or the more sublime and terrible of her phe-

nomena. The old Greek and Latin poetry peopled the invisible with gods, whose presence and agency it represented in all the mysteries of nature, and in all leading events of human experience. The machinery of Homer's great epic lies within the supernatural; the gods played their part in every Greek tragedy. Indeed we know the religion of Greece and Rome mainly through their literature. Modern poets and novelists who would scorn the epithet religious or godly as applied to themselves, yet indulge largely in veneration for unseen powers and the mysteries of being. But while true Godliness is due veneration for God, not all veneration is Godliness. A phrenological organ of veneration, however largely developed, is not a sure indication of Godliness in the heart. To feel melancholy at sight of falling leaf, to be stirred with admiration at a gorgeous sunset, to feel the majesty of mountains and the sea, and the dim grandeur of the forest—this is not Godliness. It may lead the soul to God, or it may not lie deeper than the sentient and the imaginative.

There is an *artistic* or *esthetic* form of God-

liness. The Greek mind, which under the fairest clime and the most liberal government was stimulated to the highest culture in taste and art, expressed its devotion through artistic forms, especially in sculpture. Hence Paul speaks of the carefulness of the Athenians in matters of religion as exhibited in the number of their objects of devotion. The Gothic mind, trained amid the grandeur of forests and under the law of feudalism, embodied its devout sentiment in the majestic and aspiring yet sombre beauty of its type of architecture. But taste and art, however subsidiary to the expression of devotion, can never be of the essence of Godliness. When made an end in themselves or disproportionately regarded, instead of assisting devotion they displace all true reverence of thought and feeling from the soul.

There is a *ritualistic* form of Godliness, which substitutes a form of praying for heartfelt prayer; an ordinance or ceremony for the fact or truth it was designed to illustrate and convey; a type or symbol for the reality which it should only express to the eye. It is

to such an abuse and excess of forms indeed, that the term formalism is distinctively applied. The Hindoo devotee, the Moslem saint, the monastic of the Papal and Oriental churches, are common illustrations of this form of Godliness. But the exhibition is not confined to those who make their ritual conspicuous, and pray by rote or routine. Where no audible form of prayer or of worship is used, there may be a mere pantomime as empty of spiritual life as are the whir and jingle of a Japanese prayer-wheel. Whoever uses his form of worship, be this simple or elaborate, as worship itself, while yet there is no power of true religion in the soul, denies the power of Godliness, however zealous for its form.

There is a *dogmatic* form of Godliness, a creed-worship, a veneration for dogmas and authorities in religion. This may take quite the opposite direction from the former tendencies; and denouncing alike the sentimental, the artistic, and the ritualistic, as wanting in true Godliness, may insist upon a form of sound words as the one essential in true piety.

Where true piety exists, the form of sound words may do much for its conservation, as the apostle writes to Timothy, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." But if faith and love are wanting, the form of sound words, an orthodox confession, can neither produce them nor supply their place. Wherever the creed is put before the life as evidence of piety, the profession of the lips before the confession of the heart, there the form of Godliness is substituted for its power.

There is a mechanical *work*-form of Godliness. This puts all the religious energy of the soul into such outward visible acts as seem to be deeds of piety, but which may be only deeds of self-righteousness. The Jews of Paul's time had a zeal of God which was far from true Godliness. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God." It is quite possible under our Protestant system to use a routine of religious and charitable activities as the most superstitious Papist uses a

round of ceremonies. The methodical and laborious Southey was once describing to a friend his minute allotment of time for his diversified labors in reading and writing; such an hour being given to French, the next to Spanish, the next to a Review, the next to classics, the next to history, etc.; "but pray Mr. Southey," interrupted the friend, "at what time do you think?" Might it not be asked of some who abound in the drill-work of religion, "at what time do you pray?"

#### IV. THE MOTIVES FOR CULTIVATING A TRUE GODLINESS.

1. *That God is as He is.* Could we but form a conception of God as revealed in the Scriptures, surely we must bow reverently and walk softly before Him. Great as is this material universe whose orbs are yet uncounted by the telescope, whose distances are yet unmeasured by the calculus, it is but the word of the Almighty. Great as is the universe of mind, from man up through angel and archangel to the incomprehensible seraphim, this is but the breath of the Almighty.



But in his Holiness we behold a grandeur greater than in his Essence, and before that all heaven adores. Cherubim and seraphim bow with reverence, not before the mere presence of Jehovah—

“Where the shadow from the throne,  
Formless with infinity,  
Hovers o'er the crystal sea;”—

but before HIM whose Holiness shames even the purity of their natures, and awes souls untouched by sin.

2. *The blessedness of Godliness both here and in the hereafter.* “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” “What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth. . The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and he will show them his covenant.” Such Scriptures do not promise material riches and earthly honors as the absolute and uniform possession of those

who fear God; but they do insure God's blessing upon those virtues of industry and temperance and frugality which Godliness enjoins; they do insure the protecting love and the favoring providence of Jehovah. The fear of the Lord in the heart brings the favor of the Lord upon the life. Godliness is peace; Godliness is stability; Godliness is fellowship with the infinite, and it brings to the soul the resources of Jehovah's love as its present and available possession. "All this is mine," said the nobleman to the peasant, pointing proudly to castle and park, and meadows and well-tilled acres. "And *Heaven*, too?" meekly asked the peasant whose portion was in the skies. Without God, Dives is in want of all things.


3. *The fact that we shall soon meet God face to face.* This same apostle brings Jehovah before us in the grandeur and the terror of that Day, when at his coming the heavens shall pass away and the elements shall melt; and with that picture in view, he asks, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and Godliness?" The early

Christians' lived much in the fear of God because they regarded the advent of Christ and the day of judgment as always impending. And surely for every one of us those scenes which mark but moments on the dial of the heavens, are ever more impending. So let us live, that we shall not be amazed or ashamed at His APPEARING.

## LECTURE VI.

### BROTHERLY KINDNESS.

And to godliness, BROTHERLY KINDNESS.—2 PETER i. 7.

OME former terms in this series of graces have called for minute analysis and definition. This was true especially of Virtue, Temperance, and Godliness; neither of which in its every day use, conveys the meaning of the apostle as a distinctive grace in the Christian character. The term Brotherly-Love hardly calls for explanation; but alas for the manifestation of the *thing!* It is the heart rather than the head that needs instruction in this grace. Yet this, more than any other single grace, is made the characteristic mark of a Christian. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.” Our Lord himself

made this a test commandment in the code of Christianity. In that tender hour of parting, when after the last supper—thenceforth exalted into a sacrament of love—Jesus washed the disciples' feet and discoursed to them of humility and affection, he said, "A new commandment I give to you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Three times in that sacred discourse, when speaking of his own love for them and the love of the Father for himself, which they should share, he repeats with emphasis this one command: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. These things I command you, that ye love one another."

A *new* commandment, said Christ; but "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," was as old as the law at Sinai. All natural, domestic, and patriotic affections were enjoined by the Jewish code; and the all-embracing love of the human race was required as second

only to the love of God. How then was this a new commandment? It was the old law of love proceeding from God, which had almost decayed among men, revived, renewed by Him who was the embodiment of love—that law of general good-will from man to man renewed, and made spiritual in its application to a type of character, and as the bond of a community, and enriched also with the element of self-sacrifice after the example of Christ. Hence the apostle John, the beloved disciple, who drank most deeply of this spirit, calls this same commandment both old and new; “I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning; again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you,”—new in the experience of their renewed minds; new in the specific application which Christ made of it to a renewed character and life, as the basis of fellowship; new in its type of self-sacrificing devotion as set forth by Him who “having loved his own, loved them to the end.”

This love is distinguished from all other

love in that it is based upon the evidence of a Christly character, is prompted by love to Christ himself, and goes to that extent of self-sacrificing devotion which marks the love of Christ for us. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, *as I have loved you*; greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Hereby perceive we the love of God," or of God in Christ, "because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

The topics suggested by the text are:

I. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF BROTHERLY-LOVE.

II. THE GROUNDS OF THIS PECULIAR AFFECTION.

III. THE MEANS BY WHICH IT MAY BE CHERISHED.

1. This Love *is based upon the evidence of a Christly character, and is prompted by love to Christ himself.* It is not the doctrine of a universal fraternity which the text inculcates, but Brotherly-Love between the members of

the body of Christ.\* The brotherhood of the human race as the spiritual offspring of one Father and the lineal descendants of one pair, "made of one blood," is a doctrine of the Bible; and the duty of good-will, practical and cordial benevolence toward every man as a neighbor, is shown in the parable of the good Samaritan illustrating and applying the second great commandment. But this practical and universal benevolence, which prompts to acts of sympathy and kindness toward the needy and the suffering, and which forbids all jealousy and animosity between man and man, is not founded in the approval of the character of others, but simply in their common *humanity*, and in the wants and claims

\* The term Brotherly-Love so literally expresses the meaning of *φιλῆδελφία* (*philadelphia*) that the original here calls for no farther elucidation. It is worthy of note, however, that the classic writers of antiquity applied this term strictly to the affection for brothers or sisters in blood. It was reserved for Christianity, to refine and exalt the term by applying it to the mutual love of those "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In the New Testament the word is applied only to the love of Christians for their fellow Christians.



arising out of that; for we are to love even our enemies and to do good to those who hate us. But this Brotherly-Love rests primarily upon a *character* recognized and approved as the basis of fellowship; it is the love of a friend of Christ for another in whom also he discerns a friendship for, and a likeness to Christ.

The *profession* of love to Christ is not enough to command this Brotherly-Love. Such a profession invites, indeed obliges us to inquire into the evidences which attest its genuineness; and it should also dispose us to a favorable judgment. The fact that one openly professes to be the friend of Christ should predispose us to give him our fraternal confidence; but it is not in itself a sufficient warrant for this peculiar love of the brethren. The apostle John who insists upon Brotherly-Love as vital to the Christian character, says also, "Little children, let no man deceive you;" "beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." And the Saviour himself,

while he made Brotherly-Love the test of true membership in his kingdom, warned the disciples, saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name saying I am Christ—who if possible shall deceive the very elect." We do not then bestow this brotherly affection indiscriminately upon all who call themselves by the name of Christ. We must have evidence that they are His disciples.

But on the other hand, we may not withhold this love from any who show truly the *spirit* of Christ. Wherever we find evidence of a vital union of soul with Christ Himself, evidence of a renewed heart, evidence of a godly spirit and life, though this may be accompanied with minor errors of belief, with practical errors of judgment, with infelicities of manner, with intellectual and social inferiority, and though the inward light of grace may be somewhat obscured by outward position—as where one is converted in the midst of superstition and idolatry, and still retains some of the impressions and customs in which he was educated—yet if love to Christ appear

in this feeble, unenlightened, struggling soul, we must take that soul to us in the full embrace of Brotherly-Love. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations;" not for controversy but for love; "for we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." The love of Christ will prompt to this. That love is the most potent of moral affinities. Not more surely does the magnet search out and draw to itself particles of steel in a heap of sand, than does the love of Christ in the heart draw to itself, by its sweet and potent magnetism, whatever has a real affinity for Christ.

It is not an external and formal fellowship, not the spirit of sect or party, not alliance in a particular church, which generates and feeds this love; but an inward affection for Christ himself, which causes us to delight in whatever is like Christ or is pleasing to Christ. In one word, this love for the brethren is love for them as Christians; it is a love springing from the belief that they are really in Christ, and from a delight in them upon that account. Where true love to Christ exists, the heart will

warm toward any one who recalls any feature of Christ, or reflects the spirit of Christ. It does not require that a Christian shall be perfect, for then this love would be impossible until we gain the purity of heaven. But neither is it possible for this love to exist where there is a want of confidence in the evidences of a renewed heart. We are not required to love as a brother one who calls himself a Christian, but whose life belies his profession ;—we must judge him candidly and charitably as to his faults,—but if he does not give satisfactory evidence that he loves Christ, we *cannot* love him in Christ. Our very love for Christ forbids that we should love as brethren those who do not, above all errors and faults, clearly evince their love for Him.

2. This Brotherly-Love *does not require in Christians an entire agreement in opinion or coincidence in practice.* The communion of the saints is broader than the affinities of schools and the boundaries of sects. It is the fellowship of those whose “fears, and hopes, and aims are one;” the fellowship of minds made kindred not through a common

intellection or a common organization, but through the same divine life and love infused into their renewed and sanctified nature. John Calvin, John Bunyan, John Newton, John Wesley, John Robinson—Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Methodist, Congregationalist,—do we not love them all in Christ?

3. This Brotherly-Love *does not forbid Christians to controvert the opinions or reprove the faults one of another.* It requires that they do this without malice, or personality, or censoriousness, but in the love of the truth and of Christ. “If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.” “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear.” “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him.” Paul loved Peter with all his heart. But when Peter tried to carry two faces on the question of circumcision, and “practised dissimulation, not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel,” Paul says, “I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.”

4. True Brotherly-Love *does not require the same marks of outward consideration toward all Christians.* We may love in Christ a brother or a sister whom we would not be willing to marry. We may love as a brother one whom we would not choose as our religious teacher, or to represent us in Congress. This love is neither a vague sentimentalism nor a levelling radicalism. It is love for the best character—even the character of Christ reproduced in his disciples. Wherever that is found we love it because we love Him. This love prompts us to relieve the wants of our brethren; to give them our counsel; to share their burdens, with kindly aid and sympathy; to guard their reputation; to be tender of their feelings; and it should go to the extent of self-sacrifice for them after the example of Christ. “Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for an offering and a sacrifice to God.” Our godliness must not be the secluded piety of the convent—a round of fasting and prayer; it must reproduce toward man the love which it invokes from God. The hermit in his cell,

the anchorite in the desert, cannot represent Christianity as a life-power. Christ contemplated a living body of believers bound together in love. The exhortation of the text is in keeping with the whole spirit of the New Testament: "Add to godliness Brotherly Kindness."

From this analysis of the nature of Brotherly-Love we pass to consider

## II. THE GROUNDS OR REASONS OF THIS MUTUAL AFFECTION OF THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST.

We have seen that this brotherhood of believers is founded originally *in their common relations to Christ*. Once involved in a common ruin and misery, partakers now of a common redemption, having the same supreme object of affection, the same ennobling aim, the same hope of glory, the same inheritance beyond the grave, and owing their salvation equally to Christ, they are linked together in those interests and affections of their being which alone are vital and imperishable. "This family resemblance among Christians, this homogeneity of character,

springs from a common centre ; and there exists as its archetype, an invisible Personage of whose glory all have in a measure partaken.”\* The brotherhood of Christians is not the result of any policy, compact, convention, concession on their part ; but exists by virtue of their union with Christ, and under his law.

Descending now from this general survey, we may note more particularly,

1. That *Brotherly-Love is the only real bond of union in a Church of Christ*. What is a Church ? A body of professed believers in Christ, associated under a covenant for mutual watchfulness and help in the Christian life, and for maintaining the ordinances of the Gospel. Its basis is a covenant. This implies a common belief, a common religious sentiment, and mutual confidence and good will. Without these a covenant of Christians cannot exist. A covenant differs herein from a constitution. A constitution is a system of rules and principles for the government of persons united under it. It requires of the members of the body nothing more than com-

\* Isaac Taylor ; “ Saturday Evening.” Med. xix.



pliance with certain rules, and does not necessarily extend to the spirit which they should cherish one toward another. But a covenant, as the term is used in church affairs, is “a solemn agreement between the members of a church, that they will walk together according to the precepts of the Gospel, in brotherly affection.”

Now it is obvious that this covenant cannot stand one moment without love. Love is its essence; its vital element. In the normal structure of our churches, we have nothing to hold us together but the simple bond of love. There are nominal Churches of Christ which, in the countries where they exist, are in alliance with the State; so that social distinction and political preferment may be closely connected with membership in the Church. This was once true to some extent in New England. Till within a comparatively recent period in England, the only avenue to political life was through the Establishment—membership in that being made a qualification for office; and at this day, social distinction in that country, depends much upon the same church

connection. The full privileges and honors of the ancient universities can be enjoyed only by members of the Established Church. Hence there are powerful motives aside from the simple profession of faith in Christ, to hold together the members of that communion. In other cases the possession of a large fund or endowment, or facilities for power and influence, may hold together a community of professed Christians without any special bond of affection. They stand by their church, just as one stands by a bank or other institution in which he is a stockholder.

Again, the notion of a sanctifying grace in a church organization, mere ecclesiasticism, may hold together a body of communicants who have no special affection for each other; and thus the Church as an organization, with its hierarchy, its ritual, its history, its order, its sacraments, its wealth and power,—the Ecclesiastical Corporation with its vaguely defined spiritual prerogatives and efficacy—may be regarded with reverence and affection, and clung to with tenacity as the dispenser of salvation.

But the simple Christianity of the New Testament provides no such bond of connection among professors of the Christian faith. Its vital and permanent connections are spiritual. An Ecclesiastical Society may be held together by church property. Habit, tradition, history, worship, the ministry, the choir, the incidentals of the sanctuary, social reunions and the like, may keep together those who have little of Christian faith and love. But in such cases, the ecclesiastical society or the church association is a bond of union only as a Masonic order or an Odd-Fellow's Lodge may be such a bond. The church proper, the body spiritual, the body of Christ, is held by no such ties. Not the building, not the forms, not the ministry, not the music, not the associations, not the society, but above all these and even without all these, Love is the one bond of union among the members of the household of faith. If this is wanting the covenant dies, and the church dies; for the life of both is gone. Hence the apostle speaks of Charity as the *bond of perfectness*; the one complete bond; the one basis of affi-

nity and union among the followers of Christ—the one thing—the only thing that holds them together as a church; and hence believers are exhorted “*above all things,*” above prayers and forms, and ordinances, and worship, and even above the outward duties of Christianity toward the world—above all things to “have fervent charity among themselves.”

Since then, this mutual sympathizing, approving Love is the only possible basis of Christian union, and the only bond of that pure and simple society which we call a church of Christ, the cultivation of this Love is of paramount importance to the existence of a church. Without this a church organization is an empty name. Though having doctrine, ritual, architecture, music, pomp, wealth, numbers, social culture, hierarchical dignity, political influence, whatever may cluster about such an organization, yet without Love it is “in want of all things.”

2. *Brotherly-Love is the truest evidence of a regenerated and sanctified heart.* The heart of man is by nature selfish and proud. It

careth for its own things. and not for the things of others; it loves preëminence and the factitious distinctions of family, or wealth, or education. Natural and providential differences are made the occasion of social distinctions; birth, condition, color, talent, whatever constitutes a real or an imaginary difference among men, is seized upon as the basis of *permanent* distinctions in society; and thus what should develop only humane and benevolent sympathies and kindly affections between man and man, is made to foster pride and self-conceit, and becomes a barrier to all generous feeling. There is an aristocracy in human nature itself. It is seen in the social and political constitution of tribes of men the lowest in the scale of intelligence and of civilization. In some nations it is connected with religion. The Brahmin is of a divine origin—a different order of being from other Hindoos, born upon the same soil, and reared under the same institutions. He springs directly from the gods, and suffers no intercourse upon equal terms, with those of an inferior caste. The nobility of Europe take pride in a

blood untainted with labor; and rest their claim to distinction upon the mere accident of birth.

In this country, where all such distinctions are professedly discarded, the spirit of aristocracy develops itself with so much the greater intensity in the line of wealth; which however suddenly acquired, however unattended with true refinement, intelligence, and worth, and however liable to be dissipated by some sudden whirl of fortune, is made the basis of a distinction as wide as that of birth or of caste in other lands. Sometimes, too, we find in our new society some feeble imitation of the aristocracy of family or of talent in older countries, where men wear hereditary titles, succeed to hereditary honors, and are governed by hereditary brains. But the spirit of pride, the feeling of caste, is natural to the heart, even where there is little in the outward to encourage it. If one cannot feel proud because his ancestors died without the assistance of the hangman, or went unwhipt of justice notwithstanding their rapacity and their oppressions of the poor; if he cannot

feel proud because in himself or in his ancestors he may boast gifts of nature, physical or intellectual, which others have not; if he cannot feel proud because the turn of fortune enables him to "make a fair show in the flesh;" if one has none of these grand occasions of pride, then he is proud because he is white and not black, or because he is descended from Saxon brigands and idolaters instead of Celtic buccaneers.

Or if pride is not thus dominant in the natural heart, some other form of selfishness is dominant there; and each man makes his own interest and advancement, and the interest and advancement of his own family and friends,—whatever interest clusters about himself or has relations more or less personal,—every man naturally makes this superior to the interests of others, and even superior to the public good. And thus it is that covetousness, or ambition, or vanity, or family, or pure self-will, so often get the better of the humane and honorable impulses of the soul.

Now the spirit of the Gospel is directly the reverse of all this. The Gospel does not

violently subvert the constitution of society; it does not equalize property and talent; it does not change the appointments of Providence with respect to color or condition; but it lays the axe at the root of pride and of selfishness in the heart; so that if from prudential reasons or by the law of social affinity, distinctions of some sort shall yet remain in society, moral considerations and the spirit of love shall so far overbalance these, that they shall not be cherished in an exclusive pride of selfishness.

And this is just the point in human nature most difficult to be reached. Such a feeling is the fruit only of a renewed and a sanctified heart. Nothing but that radical change in human nature effected through the Gospel, can bring the Jew to renounce his prejudices against the Gentile, can bring the Greek to overcome his contempt for the Jew and to embrace him as a brother; can bring men of different social rank, of different color and condition, to live upon equal terms with brotherly affection. The Gospel makes the soul and its interests paramount to all temporal distinctions; it puts the spiritual infinitely above



the physical; it honors character above all rank, and station, and wealth, and power; it honors all men as the offspring of God; and it looks upon the renewed man in Christ as the image of Christ, to be received and loved for his sake. "One is your Master even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

3. This law of Christian brotherhood declared by our Lord, not only secures to each and every disciple the same rights and privileges in his kingdom; *it forbids any relation between Christians which is inconsistent with their absolute equality before Him, and their fraternal love for each other.* Perhaps the most striking illustration of this, is seen in the effect of this doctrine upon the relation of master and servant, in the Apostolic age. The Roman, unlike the Hebrew law, gave the master absolute control over the body of his servant, to sell, to maim, to put to death. Now, a master and his slave are both converted to Christianity and received into the same church. We know from authentic sources that converted pagans often accompanied their profession of faith in Christ,

with the public and solemn manumission of their slaves. But sometimes legal difficulties made this impracticable; yet in that case, the law of Christian brotherhood insured the virtual manumission of the slave. To masters the apostle says, "Give to your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a master in heaven; and there is no respect of persons with Him." And to Christian servants the same apostle says, "they that have believing masters, let them not *despise* them because they are *brethren*"—and therefore only their equals in the Church—"but rather do them service *because* they are believers and beloved, partakers of the benefit." The relation of master and servant is thus transferred from the pale of the civil law into the higher plane of Christian love.

In the churches of Ephesus and Galatia, were both masters and servants, as is evident from the letters of Paul. But the epistles to those churches are addressed equally to every member: and the apostle says to each and to all alike, "Submit yourselves *one to another* in the fear of God;" and "Bear ye *one*

*another's* burdens;" with much of the same import. If we read through any of the epistles with this thought in mind—that in the church to which it was addressed there were rich and poor, master and servant, nobleman and plebeian, and consider that the *same* instructions and exhortations are given to all alike, we cannot resist the conviction that Roman chattelism found no place in those early churches, and that no relation which was inconsistent with fraternal love was tolerated, simply because it had the sanction of custom and the civil law.

And this law of Christian Brotherhood also requires that in all lawful relations, and all social intercourse, Christians shall manifest toward each other their peculiar love. While the spirit of Christian fraternity must do away with every relation between Christians which is inconsistent with a genuine, honest, hearty, mutual affection and esteem; on the other hand it retains and fosters those mutual relations which are founded in nature or propriety, even where these involve a degree of superiority on the one hand and of depen-

dence on the other;—as the relations of parent and child; master and servant, apprentice or ward; employer and the employed; rulers and the ruled;—but into all these relations the spirit of Brotherly-Love infuses a new dignity and life—making the outward condition a thing of accident, a transitory matter, to be regulated ever by this higher Love.

“Christianity invests every human being with immeasurable importance, and so incalculably enhances whatever affects his welfare or his moral condition. The affections of earth, how vehement soever, are transitory, as itself; but the love which has become combined with the idea of immortality, is firm, profound and indestructible. Atheism, in all its forms, desiccates the affections. . . . It is *only in religion* that we can find the true philosophy of love, for love apart from the belief of an after state has neither substance nor purity.”\*

Where the Gospel possesses the heart, it puts an end to selfishness and pride, and infuses

\* Saturday Evening, xix.

the spirit of humanity, and courtesy, of kindness, of union, of peace. Hence that Brotherly-Love which goes forth equally toward all that are in Christ, without respect to physical or social differences, is the highest evidence of a renewed heart. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." Nay, where this is wanting, there is no valid evidence of regeneration. "If a man say I love God, and loveth not his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Vain is profession, vain is doctrine, vain is prayer, vain is alms-giving, vain is zeal, without this Love.

3. *The fraternal love of Christians gives to the world the highest and most convincing proof of the reality and the power of Christian faith, and is the necessary condition for the advancement of Christianity in the world.*

The relation of Brotherly-Love to the evidences of Christianity, and to its propagation in the world, is twice announced by our Sa-

viour in his prayer for his disciples at the last supper. "That they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. . . . That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

The evidence of Christ's mission, of Christ's divinity, of Christ's union with his church, of Christ's power and grace, the final convincing evidence of this would be given in the union of his disciples, made up from all nations, all classes, all temperaments, all interests, yet one in each other, and one in Christ their head. This was the demonstration of his Gospel before the world, upon which, humanly speaking, He chiefly relied for its progress and success.

In that age stood Judaism, with its intense nationality; its religious pride; its Pharisaic spirit; Greek philosophy with its mysteries for the initiated and its contempt for the com-

monalty and the outside world of barbarians; Roman supremacy, with its claim of descent from the gods, and its disdain of all whom it had conquered; everywhere there existed the most marked religious and social distinctions; despotism in government, and slavery in private life; and there was no system of religion, of philosophy, or of government, capable of bringing men of different nationalities and of different social rank upon a common platform of fraternity; there was none that had even shaped to itself such an ideal.\* But Christianity began with this; the Jew and the Gentile must come together; the Greek and the barbarian must come together; the Roman citizen and the Scythian outcast must come together; the master and the slave must come together; the Pharisee and the publican must come together; the philosopher and the rustic, the centurion and the common soldier,

\* The small communities of Essenes, fraternities of *Jewish* ascetics and communists hardly constitute an exception to this remark. De Quincey, by the way, has revived the notion that the Essenes themselves were "the *product* of Christianity under its earliest storms."

the rich and the poor, the officers of Cæsar's palace and the tent-makers from Alexandria, the royal eunuch riding in his chariot, and the humble evangelist travelling on foot, all must come together in one body and be known as *brethren*. This was the very first step in the progress of the Gospel; and to the men of that proud, Pharisaic, philosophic, despotic age, it was the highest evidence that here was a new element in society, a religion not of man but of God; which offering no emolument, claimed only and everywhere *love*. The idea of Fraternity, not in the low sense of a political or financial or literary club, a Brotherhood of mutual confidence, sympathy, affection and esteem, was then first broached, and first realized before the world.

And this Love of the brethren was an argument of great force for Christianity. "See," said the heathen, everywhere, "see how these Christians love one another." Origen, Tertullian, and other apologists, make much of this Brotherly-Love in their arguments with heathen opponents of the Gospel. This mutual love led the Christians at Jerusalem,



in an emergency, to devote their entire property for the common benefit; and when that special occasion had passed by, it still prompted to a liberal hospitality and charity. Indeed "so ready, entire and constant was the affection of the early Christians, that the heathen accused them of having private marks upon their bodies, whereby they fell in love with each other at first sight."\* Would that the same harmony which the freshness of the life in Christ then induced, and which circumstances of common peril necessitated, might now pervade the whole body of believers, to the admiration and conviction of the world!

Sometimes upon heathen ground this early simplicity is renewed. Beautiful is the incident narrated of an accomplished Hindoo, a young man of high caste, delicate, refined, educated in the belief of his native and hereditary superiority, who on becoming a convert to Christianity, made a profession of faith side by side with a poor woman of the lowest

\* Neander and Cave.

caste, whose very shadow he would have avoided in the days of his unregenerate pride; and not content with being baptized from the same water, and assenting to the same covenant, turned to her of his own accord, and in sight of the congregation took her by the hand and said, "*My sister.*" There was the triumph of Christian love over the pride of the natural heart, and the pride of social custom and of false religion; and there too was the demonstration to the world that *this* Religion is not of man.

The conviction of the divine character and mission of the Gospel of Christ will be in proportion to the love and the unity of His followers. And by this Love, also, will Christianity become a reforming power for the complete conquest of evil in the world. Let Brotherly-Love prevail between master and slave, let Philemon receive his Onesimus not as a servant but as a brother beloved, and how soon will the chains fall, and all that is selfish and oppressive in the relation of master and servant come to an end. Let Brotherly-Love prevail between ruler and sub-

ject, and oppression will cease on the one hand, and rebellion on the other. Let Brotherly-Love prevail between the employer and the employed, the capitalist and the laborer, and the jars and conflicts of society will end in a state of perfect equity and satisfaction.

For the spread of Christianity, therefore, it is not enough that we found schools and colleges, build churches, establish missions, multiply tracts and Bibles; all this apparatus is needed for the work; but they who would reform and save the world, must *above all things have fervent charity among themselves.*

### III. HOW SHALL THIS LOVE BE DEVELOPED AND CHERISHED?

1. Wherever this is possible, *Christians must cultivate a familiar acquaintance with each other.* This holds especially of those who are associated in the same church fellowship. There can be only the most vague, impersonal regard for one another, upon general grounds, among Christians who hardly know each other's personal identity; to whom the

names of members who have signed the same covenant and are registered in the same catalogue recall no familiar face, and suggest no traits of personal character. This Love includes a personal esteem, complacency in character, and a cordial sympathy; but these cannot exist toward an individual whose name is known only as an algebraic sign. The great want of our church fellowship, especially in cities, is social contact; some provision whereby Christians can see each other face to face, other than the pews of the church, and the half vacant benches of the lecture room; some provision for church-society, which, without dispensing with other forms of social intercourse proper and useful in themselves, shall yet make the society of fellow-Christians a positive and peculiar attraction, and shall knit the whole circle in sacred love. Without this a church can hardly be expected to prosper. It can have no warmth of Christian love, and no energy of Christian union. How to gain this is a problem. The first Christians accomplished it in Rome, in Antioch, in Alexandria, cities

as populous as this. But then Christianity was fresh; all its impulses and experiences were new; Christians were few in number; hemmed in by idolatry; driven to each other for countenance and sympathy, welded together by the fires of persecution. Yes, and then too the love of Christ was fresh, and sweet, and powerful, and attractive, and all-absorbing. The Gospel was felt to be a reality, and the Christian profession was a reality. Can any change of outward circumstances excuse us for the neglect of this vital part of Christian culture? Can we afford to dispense with that which was the life of the early churches? Not unless we would have Christianity degenerate into a lifeless form; not if we would have anything of fellowship except the name. For often a church is rather an aggregation of independent units than the coalescing of congenial fervent hearts.

2. We must cherish Brotherly-Love *by dwelling in our thoughts and speech upon the excellencies of brethren rather than upon their infirmities and defects.* It is a pleasant dis-

covery that one wakes up to now and then, that there is more goodness in the world, and more goodness in individuals, than he had suspected to exist. And it is surprising how this discovery grows when the mind of the observer is in a gentle and loving mood. Prejudice invents faults; through green glasses the purest white is turned to green. But charity covers a multitude of sins;—not conniving at sin, not countenancing crime, but overlooking faults in the esteem of virtues. It dwells upon the great outlines of character, and seeing the likeness of Christ truly stamped upon the soul, it overlooks the minor defects of the image in the joy that the likeness is really there.

Our independent American habit of thought and of speech, together with the comparative isolation of city life, betrays Christians into a harsh and censorious judgment of one another, or into a spirit of controversy when some defect of character is brought to light in one whose general character is little known; and forthwith one who has many sterling excellencies, and gives clear evidence of Christian

character, is condemned as reprobate, void of principle, the chief of sinners, because some infirmity for the time is conspicuous, and his excellencies are hid. But should we dwell habitually upon the excellencies of Christian brethren, and overlook their faults, or humbly and kindly seek to correct them, how would our hearts burn towards them with holy love.

At this point emphatically we must give all diligence to cultivate this grace. It is not our brethren whom we should seek to cultivate and improve, so much as our own hearts. Have you faith in Christ? But Christ himself has made the crowning fruit and evidence of that faith to be this very Love of the brethren. "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and *love* one another." Have you Godliness of heart? But remember that "If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." "If we *love* one another, God dwelleth in us." "Put on, therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another


and forgiving one another, if any man have a complaint against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye ; and above all these things put on charity, *which is the bond of perfectness*, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts ; to which also ye are called in one body.”



## LECTURE VII.

### CHARITY.

And to Brotherly-Kindness CHARITY.—2 PETER, i. 7.

ND what *is* Charity? Not alms-giving merely, nor benefactions to objects of public utility, however frequent and liberal, for “though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have *not* Charity, it profiteth me nothing.” Shall we then take Charity in the broader sense of love? This is warranted by old English usage, and in substituting the word Charity in this verse for the word love found in the older versions, no doubt our translators meant to convey by it the same idea. Charity means primarily *dearness*, as denoting the high price or value of an object;\* and hence the word denotes metaphorically a high regard

\* *Caritas annonæ*, dearness of provisions, is a frequent expression in Latin authors. The high price of fruit, grain, wine, oil, etc., is expressed by *caritas*.

or esteem for any one—a love produced by a sense of value or a principle of esteem. Milton speaks of the natural affections between members of the same family as *charities*. The idea of kindness to the poor, which common usage has attached to the word, is but a secondary meaning. It stands in the text as the representative of a wider thought; add to Godliness Brotherly-kindness and to Brotherly-kindness, Love.

But Love has so many forms and applications that this also needs to be defined in order that we may get at its precise signification as a Christian grace. The *Love* here enjoined differs from that brotherly-love already expounded, since this must be added to that; and for the same reason it must differ from that love toward God which Godliness implies, and that love to Christ which Faith implies. It is an affection definite in its nature and specific in its object, to be *added to* all the rest. Rightly to comprehend it, we must study the Christian interpretation of those duties between man and man which are comprised in the second table of the law.

Christ summed up the law in two commandments; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind—this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." This summary of the law is set forth by the apostle Paul in the form of a demonstration. "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;" all this refers to those in official station, to whom, as good subjects or citizens, Christians should pay that tribute and respect which the law demands. Then from those in authority the apostle passes to survey all men, and says "*owe* no man anything, but *to love* one another;" all other debts, whether of money or of respect, should be scrupulously paid—they grow burdensome if *not* paid—but Love is of perpetual obligation; so that to carry out the figure of the apostle, it may be said of it, "this debt increases the more, the more it is paid, because the practice of Love makes the

principle of love deeper and more active." All other dues can be cancelled, wiped out by payment; but this debt is renewed as often as it is paid, and every day demands a new installment. But though Love can never cease to be binding as duty, yet where it is both perfect and constant, it meets all the requirements of the law, so that "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law; for this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore Love is the fulfilling of the law." This gives us the key to the meaning of the word. Love *worketh no ill* to another; it is the spirit of *universal good-will to man*.

So new a thing was this spirit in the world, that the writers of the New Testament were obliged to coin a new word to express it. In that copious, classic, and courtly Greek from which the evangelists and apostles; though Hebrews, drew the main stock of their words,

there was no term to convey this idea of a universal and equal love toward man as man, because that idea had never entered the mind of even the most liberal and cultivated pagan. The feelings of race, of nationality, of nativity, of religion, all found expression; but in a period when each nation regarded itself as of distinct and divine origin, and looked upon foreigners with suspicion or jealousy, there was no sentiment of universal brotherhood in man, and therefore no word to express that sentiment. This need not much surprise us. When the great Hungarian orator sought to apply the principles of Christianity to international law, he found that even the English-speaking nations were not far enough advanced in the practice of Christianity to have formed a word for that idea. He wished to express the mutual obligation of nations for each other's welfare: and he had to coin for this a word which for a long time sounded strangely in our ears. He took a technical legal term which denotes the strongest form of contract—in which all the contracting parties are bound together, and each is bound for

all—and then to the shame of our defective Christianity and our selfish nationalism, he enlightened us in that *solidarity* of nations which is so much higher and nobler than the spirit of national exclusiveness.

Even so when the first expounders of Christianity would express the great idea of goodwill toward mankind universally, they could find no word which would adequately convey that idea. And in their adopted Greek—then the universal language—there was no word to express Love, which had not been so perverted to unworthy uses as to unfit it for the chaste and pure spirit of the Gospel of Christ. As a fine scholar and critic expresses it, “those words by the corrupt use of the world had become so steeped in earthly sensual passion, carried such an atmosphere of this about them, that the truth of God abstained from the defiling contact with them; yea, found out a new word for itself rather than betake itself to one of these:—for the substantive *ἀγάπη*—here translated charity or Love—is purely a Christian word, no example of its use occurring in any heathen writer

whatever.”\* The origin of this word is in a purely Christian idea. It is Love, not as a passion but as an *affection*; and this refined from all taint of self-interest, and bestowed intelligently, impartially, and from a deep abiding religious principle, upon all men as the children of one Father, partakers of a

\* Dean Trench, “Synonyms of the New Testament,” p. 70. Lexicographers confirm what Trench here says. A few examples will suffice. *Αγαπη* (*agape*). “This word occurs only in the Bible and in Christian writers.” (Rost und Palm.) The verb *ἀγαπάω*, frequent in classic writers, differs from *φιλεῖν* “as implying *regard* or *affection* rather than *passion*, and is rarely used of sexual love.” (Liddell and Scott.) Xenophon in his “Memorabilia” makes Socrates advise Aristarchus upon the treatment of poor relatives: “If you take them under your direction, so that they may be employed, you will *love* them, when you see that they are serviceable to you, and they will grow attached to you, when they find that you feel satisfaction in their society.” (Mem. 2, 7, 9.) When Aristarchus had given to his female relations honorable and becoming employments in his household, Xenophon adds, “they loved Aristarchus as their protector, and he loved them as being of use to him.” (Mem. 2, 12.) This chaste affection or mutual regard as distinguished from a merely amorous or dishonorable attachment, was expressed by the verb *ἀγαπάω*; but there was no corresponding *substantive* in classic Greek.

common nature, and subjects of one redemption through Jesus Christ. Brotherly-Love is the love of complacency toward those who bear the image of Christ—binding us to them to the utmost extent of self-sacrifice. Charity is the love of good-will toward all mankind;—the consequence of love to God and a love *from* God shed abroad in the hearts of his people.

A full analysis of this affection requires that we consider,

I. ITS ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS AND CONDITIONS.

II. ITS PRACTICAL SPHERE AND EFFECTS.

III. THE HINDRANCES TO ITS EXPRESSION.

IV. THE METHODS FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT.

1. As an essential element of this Love there must be *the full recognition of a common humanity in all men, whatever their country, their color, their language, their birth, or their condition.* Whatever the present types of mankind, however degenerated in physical appearance, rude in dialect, degraded in manners, however ignorant, brutal, vile, we must be able to look upon each and



all, and recognize above these accidental differences the common and permanent type of our humanity. We must be able to sit down with Kane among the Esquimaux, and say, these, stunted creatures, matted over with filth, gorging themselves with oil, dividing life between sleeping and the hunt—these are *men* like to ourselves; and then we must go with Livingstone among the *krāals* of the Hottentots, and overcoming our disgust for their persons and their habits, must say, these, too, are men like ourselves; and then we must go among the islands of the South Pacific, whose native population shock every taste and habit of civilized life, and say, even these are men of like passions with ourselves;—*such* barbarians were those among whom Paul was shipwrecked at Malta, and to whom he preached the Gospel; such barbarians were our ancestors in Britain—painted savages of the wood,—when the Romans conquered them and despised them even for slaves;—such were that Saxon Race from whose loins we more directly spring, when nearly six hundred years after Christianity

appeared, the great and good Gregory compassionating the barbarism of those pirate islanders, sent his chosen missionaries to seek their conversion. It was a more brave and desperate thing, twelve hundred years ago, for the monk Augustine to go and plant himself upon the island of Britain, than it is for our brethren Gulick and Bingham, to take the risk of living alone among the warlike pagans of Micronesia. And when we look upon "the dark places of the earth filled with the habitations of cruelty," we should remember "the rock whence we are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we are digged," and consider that these are our brethren, like to our very fathers, and that in a hundred years they of the Pacific islands may become what a thousand years have made of the British isles.

When Paul stood up in the midst of Mars Hill, and declared that "God had made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," he conquered his own prejudices as a Jew, and faced the deepest prejudices of the Greek. He, a Hebrew of the

Hebrews, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, trained in that peculiar pride which the Jew kept up through all the changes of political fortune to his race—whether amid the glories of Solomon, or in exile by the rivers of Babylon, whether in the brief independence won by the patriotism and heroism of the Maccabees, or under the galling yoke of the Roman conquerer—that pride of birth and nation as the elect of God which was the inextinguishable possession of the Jew; Paul, nursed in this upon his mother's knee, confirmed in this in the school of Gamaliel, now casts it all away and sees in every man a brother, saying, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and the unwise." And to the artistic and cultivated Greek, proud of his soil, his ancestry, his arts, his civilization, and looking upon other men as barbarians, this Jew declares that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men." There is the starting-point in this Christian doctrine of *Love*.

2. But the doctrine goes farther; and recognizes in all mankind not only the brotherhood of a common physical descent and of like phy-

sical characteristics, but a *higher relationship as the common offspring of God*. Almost every pagan nation of antiquity believed itself to be descended from the gods. In all early history you find a mythical period, during which gods and demigods appearing upon the favored soil, of Egypt, of Greece, of Assyria, of Rome, prepared the germ of a great nation, to be fostered and protected by these divinities. But *this* doctrine of man's descent from the gods fostered the feeling of national pride and exclusiveness. The pagan religions had gods many, and of different ranks and powers, and hence each nation conceived of its own gods as the highest, and made its heaven-sprung ancestry a special boast as against other nations. But Paul's doctrine, the doctrine of the New Testament is, that the ONE true and living God has made *all* men; and that in their spiritual constitution as living souls, they are all alike the offspring of God, and in this respect are as truly made in his image as was Adam in the beginning. Thus the earthly tie of brotherhood, the tie of blood and of descent, is made sublime and

spiritual through our equal relations to one Father.\*.

3. And hence again, this Love for man which the Gospel enjoins, *must flow primarily from love to God*. Not the mere feeling

\* The expression "made of one blood" used by Paul in his discourse at Athens (Acts xvii. 26), has given rise to much critical discussion. Some manuscripts and some of the fathers read for "one blood," of "one nation," others "of one man," etc. Tischendorf, in his seventh critical edition of the Greek Testament (Leipsic, 1859) retains *αἵματος*, "blood," in the text. Alford regards the verb "made" as directly governing the infinitive "to dwell," and thus derives from the passage a still stronger affirmation. The unity of the race being already taught in the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul assumes or postulates this, and then affirms that the *geographical distribution* of mankind, originally of one stock, was also of divine appointment. "He hath *caused* every nation of men (sprung) of one blood *to dwell* on all the face of the earth." In opposition to the polytheistic doctrine of the distinct origin of different nationalities, under the tutelage of different divinities, Paul affirms that all nations being of one origin, the offspring of one God, *He* ordered their several habitations—their migrations and their abodes, according to his own plan. Prof. Agassiz himself, while aiming at a new scientific classification of species, would not be understood to deny the brotherhood of the whole human family.

of community of origin, not a general family resemblance in features and in character, not the experience of common wants, and perils, and griefs, not the burdens, the fears and the hopes of a common destiny, none of all these will suffice to produce and maintain this universal love of man; but the love of God as our Father will produce this love as its fruit. "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." The two great commandments require but one and the same thing, viz. Love; love to God is the root of true holiness, love to man its outward manifestation. Loving God as the Father of all, we must feel something of his love toward all. Loving Christ, God in human flesh, we must love also the whole race whose nature he took, whose sins he bore. Wherefore this Love is *added* to Faith and Godliness.

4. *The Scriptures always trace this Love to a renovated heart.* There are charitable associations whose members pledge themselves together for mutual offices of kindness; they agree to assist one another in business, and so far as possible, in political relations; they

watch with one another in sickness, or provide nurses at the expense of the order; they make a weekly allowance to the sick and the unemployed, and in the event of death they defray the funeral expenses, and assist the bereaved family. Such associations may engender good will and promote kindly offices in society; but after all they are but a kind of insurance company upon the mutual basis, and may rest at bottom upon *self-interest* in each individual member, and not upon a spontaneous and cherished good-will *in each for all*. Though bearing the name of charitable, and often dispensing funds in charity, they are not guided by the spirit of impartial love, but are managed as financial institutions, for the exclusive benefit of their own subscribers. But this Love inculcated by the Gospel does not originate in any compact between individuals or classes; it is not a thing prescribed by a constitution, which men set out to learn and to practise; it flows from the heart, outward. "The end of the commandment," the grand result at which the law of God aims, "is Charity out of a *pure* heart," *i. e.* a heart

pure from all selfish views and leanings, "and a good conscience," a conscience honest toward God and man, "and faith unfeigned," sincere belief in Christ and his Gospel. This state of the heart and conscience toward God and Christ will issue in true love to man. As the apostle writes to Timothy, "Follow righteousness, faith, Charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Those whose hearts are sincerely turned to God—who know what it is to give themselves to Him in prayer and love, will follow Charity in their intercourse with men.

From this analysis of Charity we pass to consider,

## II. ITS PRACTICAL SPHERE AND EFFECTS.

1. We may trace the practical working of this spirit, in *Charity for the opinions of others in matters of religion*. The religious opinions of men are often the result of early education, of the circumstances which surround them, or of some bias or prejudice taken up without due reflection. Sometimes they are the result of severe thought and pro-



longed mental struggles without proper helps to truth. In the whole sphere of mind there is hardly a spectacle so thrilling as that of a great intellect honestly intent upon the discovery of truth, groping blindly among the pillars of her temple, and at last like Samson, mocked and baffled, pulling them down upon itself. Could we give sight to those eyes, could we guide those faltering steps and plant them upon the rock of truth, what joy should we bring to that soul, and what honor to the truth! Did we know more of the early education of others, of their mental habits, of their inward struggles, we should be more charitable toward them in their errors; remembering the counsel of Paul to Timothy: "Be gentle to all men, apt. to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

But while I thus plead for Charity toward those in error, I do not plead for that false liberality which is indifferent to truth. The distinction between the two is finely

drawn by a recent writer.\* “Charity holds fast the minutest atoms of truth, as being precious and divine, offended by even so much as a thought of laxity. Liberality loosens the terms of truth; permitting easily and with careless magnanimity variations from it; consenting, as it were, in its own sovereignty, to overlook or allow them; and subsiding thus ere long into a licentious indifference to all truth, and a general defect of responsibility in regard to it. Charity extends allowance to men; liberality to falsities themselves. Charity takes the truth to be sacred and immovable; liberality allows it to be marred and maimed at pleasure.” While therefore our Charity should lead us to be kind and gentle toward those in error, we should remember with Paul, that as the friends of Christ, “we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.”

2. Another application of this law of Love is *to the faults of others*. “Charity shall cover the multitude of sins,” not however, in the Papal sense, that alms-giving pays for

\* Dr. H. Bushnell.

indulgences—that one can buy license to sin against God by doing some petty favor to man. The Charity here spoken of is not alms to men, but the spirit of Love in the heart; and the sins which it covers are not those of him who loves, but those of the *object* of that love. Charity does not ignore sins, nor connive at them, nor make light of them as against God, but it passes by offences against itself, and does not suffer these to deter it from doing another good. Though the raving inebriate should mock and curse you, yet should you cover his nakedness, and minister to his wants. The rule of Christian forbearance and good-will has a wider sphere than the Church of Christ. “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” “Charity suffereth long and is kind;” Love is not hindered in its work by opposition, injury, ingratitude; “Charity envieth not,” but rejoices in the *prosperity* of others, though less favored itself; “Love seeketh not *her own*”—what an absolute negation of selfishness!—“is not easily provoked;”

but instead of hastily charging a fault, or harboring a suspicion, puts the most favorable construction upon the conduct of others; and "thinketh no evil;" "Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity," is never pleased that even an enemy has fallen into sin; never delights to publish a fault; "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

3. This spirit of Love should be viewed in its application *to the necessities of our fellow-men*. This is the more common use of the term Charity; and surely this form of the grace is most abundantly emphasized in the Gospel. To the Pharisees, who sought to purify themselves by ceremonies, Jesus said, "Rather give alms of such things as ye have; and behold, all things are clean unto you." And to his own disciples in their poverty he said, "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not."

The apostle John makes this form of Charity a test of love to God. Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need,

and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him." The actual *necessity* of another brought to our notice, and our present *ability* to relieve that necessity, these two facts concurring, create an *obligation* to Charity which is a test of our love, to God. Love to God abiding in us would cause us to imitate the perfection of his love, which is that "He doeth *good* even to the evil and the unthankful." But there is a charity in *sympathy* as well as in alms-giving. When James with his strong practical mode of speech would present the whole Gospel before us in a living activity, he says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Many a one who has little to bestow in the way of alms, has a wealth of affection sufficient to enrich the world. Many a tract visitor with little earthly comfort to bestow, carries to the hearts of the poor the rare joy of sympathy. Jesus had no money to give;—but how he blessed men with his words. And when he wrought mira-

cles of healing, he enriched them with the sympathies of his heart. He had compassion on the suffering. He wept at the grave of Lazarus, and the Jews said, "Behold how he *loved* him."

Sir *Philip Sidney*, the Christian gentleman, secretary of Queen Elizabeth and a knight champion of the Protestant cause, was a model of every form of this heavenly Charity. But its crowning beauty was evinced in his death. Wounded in battle, "as he was borne from the field of action, faint, pallid, and parched with the thirst that attends excessive loss of blood, Sidney asked for water. It was obtained with difficulty and in scant supply. With trembling hand he raised the cup to his lips, when his eye was arrested by the gaze of a dying soldier, longingly fixed upon the precious draught. Without tasting, he instantly handed it to the sufferer, saying, *Thy necessity is greater than mine.*" We do not wonder that when, soon after, he found himself dying, this man of faith and prayer and charity, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said "All things in my life have been vain, vain, vain, but

I would not give the joy I have in Christ for the empire of the world."

4. This spirit of Love *will prompt also to all wise and beneficent measures of philanthropy and reform.* It is of purpose that I use these qualifying words; for even when a *reform* itself is needed, and promises most beneficent results to man, not all the *measures* used for that reform are wise and beneficent. But the spirit of Love does not oppose itself to the reform, because certain *measures* of reform are evil. If a Fourierite, or a disciple of Robert Owen, insists that the poor ought to have better homes, an enlightened Charity may not approve of their plan of Association, but it will not content itself with crying "infidelity," "Fourierism," and leaving the poor to die in crowded garrets and noisome cellars. If the infidel and the disunionist declare that men ought not to be held as chattels in a Christian land, Charity does not lift up her hands in holy horror and cry "infidelity," "treason," and leave the evil untouched; but while disapproving and disavowing a fiery and denunciatory fanati-

cism, Love remembers them that are in bonds, "as bound with them." "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself *unseemly*." The spirit of Charity in society is an infusion of the leaven of Christianity. What led Howard to visit prisons and hospitals, braving their filth and infection? What led Brainard to exhale his rare intellect and piety among the Indians? This heavenly Charity will live in every clime, where it can do good to man. The ice of the Arctic cannot freeze it, the heat of the desert cannot wither it. But this spirit of Love, which would fain reform and bless the world, finds

### III. HINDRANCES TO ITS EXPRESSION.

1. These hindrances lie *in the want of consideration*. We judge harshly of the motives of others because we do not well consider all the reasons of their action; we speak unkindly, because we do not consider what is due to the sensibilities of others; we are censorious in our judgment of faults, because we do not consider well the circumstances of our



neighbors; we are severe upon opinions, because we do not inquire into their origin and grounds. A candid allowance for the circumstances of others would almost always mitigate that severity of judgment which fastens upon the outward act, or makes one an offender for a word.

2. *In the want of intercourse.* If travel enlarges the mind, it expands the heart also to a kindlier judgment of men, and sympathy toward them. The monk in his convent seems to you but a lazy hireling of the church; the Arab in his tent seems but a roving plunderer, an Ishmaelite with his hand against every man; but when you partake of their humble lot you find them *men* of a common nature. There is a key to every man's heart—though some have combination locks, and it requires both skill and patience to open them. Yet in every man's heart—as in that tiny mechanism of Swiss invention—there sleeps a little bird of song, which, can you but learn how to wind it aright, will start up at your call and imitate the notes of love that you have been taught of God. It is worth

years of toil to teach that bird the song of heavenly love.

3. *In some lurking selfishness, which invents excuses for not loving others.* “All the little mean work of our nature,” says a lady novelist,\* applying to the heart a figure from housekeeping, “all the little mean work of our nature is generally done in a small, dark closet just a little back” of the subject in which we profess to be interested. We do not suffer our meanness to come to the light even of our own consciousness—if we can help that. But when we find ourselves parrying off some appeal for kindness, giving way to some prejudice against others, inventing excuses for disregarding them—however plausible all this may seem to us—it is a most unhappy frame of mind; this is not *love* at work,—but some lurking selfishness, in the dark closet, is pulling the wires, confounding moral distinctions and perverting all good and generous affections.

To guard against and overcome these hin-

\* Mrs. H. B. Stowe, “The Minister’s Wooing.”

drances to the expression of Love, we should study

#### IV. THE METHODS OF DEVELOPING THIS AFFECTION.

1. *By rightly estimating its power.* Power does not lie in noisy demonstration or in visible force. The puffing of the steam-engine, the screech of the locomotive, are not the motive power; the steam that moves the engine steals quietly into the cylinder through a yielding valve, and works by pressure, not by noise. The power that locks up the streams and converts the rolling waves into a pavement of solid crystal—you cannot hear it any more than you can hear the motion of the planets. The power that again melts down these barriers and unlocks the frozen earth, can you hear that, though it makes the trees clap their hands and wakes all the birds to song? And can you hear *Love*; or weigh it, or measure it? But in that little word lies a power greater than philosophy, diplomacy, or arms, to rule and mold the world. When Napoleon on

St. Helena contemplated the wreck of his own empire, he was filled with awe of this mysterious power of Christ. "With all my power," said he, "I have only made men fear me; but this carpenter, without an army, has made men love him for eighteen hundred years.

"I have so inspired multitudes that they would die for me. God forbid that I should form any comparison between the enthusiasm of the soldier and Christian charity, which are as unlike as their cause. But after all, my presence was necessary; the lightning of my eye, my voice, a word from me, then the sacred fire was kindled in their hearts. I do, indeed, possess the secret of this magical power, which lifts the soul, but I could never impart it to any one. None of my generals ever learned it from me; nor have I the means of perpetuating my name, and love for me, in the hearts of men, and to effect these things without physical means. Now that I am at St. Helena, now that I am alone, chained upon this rock, who fights and wins empires for me? who are the courtiers of my misfortune? who thinks of me? who

makes efforts for me in Europe? Where are my friends?

“*Christ* speaks, and at once generations become his by stricter, closer ties than those of blood—by the most sacred, the most indissoluble of all unions. He lights up the flame of a love which consumes self-love, which prevails over every other love. The founders of other religions never conceived of this mystical love, which is the essence of Christianity, and is beautifully called Charity. In every attempt to effect this thing, namely, *to make himself beloved*, man deeply feels his own impotence. So that Christ’s greatest miracle undoubtedly is the reign of Charity.”

Only a few shepherds heard the heavenly voices breaking on the still night—but that sweet refrain, “Peace on earth, good will to men,” chimes on through the ages and rolls round with the world. Wherever that spirit enters, darkness and guilt and sighing flee away, the night becomes radiant with angelic presence,

—“And Heaven as at some festival,  
Doth open wide the gates of her high palace-hall.”

2. *By the constant and studious practice of Love.* We must give diligence to cultivate this grace;—improve every opportunity for the exercise of love and even for the expression of it. If this does no good to others, it will bless our own hearts.

This applies especially to giving of our substance. Dr. Shepard, in his sermon before the American Board, at Detroit, has set this out with great truth and power. He describes the giving of many men as compared with their means, as “but *shelling off some of the loose outer scales of a leviathan of wealth.*” In contrast with this, he presents the man who really believes that it is more blessed to give than to receive. “He welcomes every authentic application; even searches for the opportunity, and blesses the man who furnishes him with one.” Then to all who have the habit of giving leanly and grudgingly, he says, “Arise and give—give bountifully—give heartily—give willfully—just because something within resists and says ‘I won’t’—give the more and still more, from the very teeth and grip of the old retaining passion—

give with the measure and intent to crucify avarice—that hundred the nail, that thousand the spike, that ten thousand the spear, and so proceed and persist till the base and slimy thing is wholly dead.” No mere tithing borrowed from the state religion of the Jews can meet the requirements of Christian Love. “The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.”—But more than all, this spirit is to be cherished,

3, *By elevated communion with God.* “God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” If our souls are filled with the love of God, that love will outflow toward all mankind. The higher we rise in fellowship with him who is the fountain of all Love, the more rich and full and free will be the streams of Love issuing from our hearts to cheer and bless the world. Love to God implies the negation of all selfishness; and the perfection of divine Love which we are called to imitate, is that it doth good to all, even to the evil and the unthankful.

And so we are urged to cultivate this Love,

4, *By its own dignity and blessedness.*

The Scriptures place Love before all things, in the enumeration of Christian graces. "Charity never faileth. Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. But now abideth faith, hope, charity—these three—but the greatest of these is charity." Love never wearies by its own exercise, never exhausts its own power. He who shall possess this divine charity shall rise to the dignity of angels, and shall carry in his own soul the peace and blessedness of heaven. Then let me dwell in Love, that I may dwell in God.

"And when within that lovely Paradise  
At last I safely dwell,  
From out my blissful soul what songs shall rise,  
What joy my lips shall tell.

"While holy saints are singing  
Hosannas o'er and o'er,  
Pure Hallelujahs ringing  
Around me evermore.

"Innumerable choirs before the shining throne  
Their joyful anthems raise,  
Till Heaven's glad walls are echoing with the tone  
Of that great hymn of praise.




“And all its host rejoices,  
And all its blessed throng  
Unite their myriad voices  
In one eternal song.”

## LECTURE VIII.

### THE CHOIR OF GRACES.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they will make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.—2 PETER, i. 8, 9.

HE graces enumerated in the preceding verses, and which we have now considered in their individuality, should be viewed also in their harmonious connection—a connection indispensable to completeness of Christian character. Not to be over nice in the criticism of words, let me remind you of the figure which I have before spoken of as concealed behind the little word *add*, in our English version, and which gives a peculiar beauty to the exhortation.

In ancient Athens there was a class of officers called chorus-leaders, who repre-

sented the various tribes, and at public festivals or religious rejoicings for a victory, brought out a chorus to lead the songs of the people. These leaders were not always singers or practical musicians, but they equipped the chorus and paid the cost of marshalling it upon public occasions.\* Hence the term which denoted their office came to mean in general, "one who provides supplies;" and therefore, as in the text, add to, or *supply* to faith, virtue, and the whole train of graces.

\* The χορηγός (*Choregos*) procured the chorus, and at his own expense provided it with instruction and equipments. He was the Musical 'Manager for public occasions (See in *Schneider*; also Böckh, Sub. *Æcon. of Athens*, 1,487. Also in Rost und Palm.) Demosthenes and Æschines speak of chorus-managers as appointed by each tribe, for festive ceremonies. Socrates, in extolling the executive ability of Antisthenes, whom the Athenians had chosen general, says that as chorus-manager, "though neither skilled in music nor in teaching a chorus, he was able to find out the best masters in those departments. . . . and it is likely that he will be more willing to spend money for a victory in war on behalf of the whole state, than for a victory with a chorus in behalf of his single tribe." This statement clearly defines the nature and functions of the office.

Faith is the leader of this choir; Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly-Love and Charity, are marshalled under Faith as their leader, to swell the praises of Christ, from an obedient and loving soul. Faith is the *clef* which gives the key in which these seven notes of the perfect scale are sounded. Faith organizes and sustains the chorus, and has a place for each in its well-trained band. When all are assembled, Faith drills them into harmony. But if any one be wanting, Faith itself appears defective, and the soul is out of tune. It is as if the first violin were wanting at a Philharmonic Concert, or the trumpet obligato should fail to sound in the resurrection scene of Handel's Messiah. Therefore these virtues are graduated to each other, and linked together as one. As an old writer\* observes, "Each several degree induces and facilitates that which immediately follows it; each following one, attempts and perfects that which has preceded it." Upon this hint we may run over

\* Bengel *in loc.*

the scale thus: *Virtue* a strenuous, vigorous tone of mind for the defence of truth, is the offspring of Faith; this *Virtue* makes us active, watchful, circumspect, and so leads us to cultivate *Knowledge*—that discerning spirit which comes from communion with Christ; this *Knowledge*, by distinguishing evil from good, at their very source, leads to *Temperance* or self-control; he who governs himself gains the strength of *Patience* or endurance; he who cultivates *Patience* will feel as the highest motive and strength for this, his need of that reverential regard for his Maker which is true *Godliness*; he whose heart is sanctified toward God, will *love his Brethren*; and he who has right *Brotherly Affection* will feel his *Charity* overflowing toward all men—even to his enemies; and this *Love* completing the circle, brings him back again to Faith in the redeeming and renovating love of Christ as its own source and strength. Reversing the scale and playing it downward, we find the notes equally perfect and harmonious. . . “He who has true *Charity* will exercise *Brotherly-Love* without particularity;

he who has *Brotherly-Love* will perceive clearly that *Godliness* is necessary; the *godly* will not alloy his *Patience* with a stoical apathy; to the *patient* man, *Temperance*, or self-moderation is easy; the *temperate*, self-regulated mind weighs all things with calmness and clearness, and thus gathers *Knowledge*; and *Knowledge* keeping the mind in sympathy with the will of God, and discriminating as to times and seasons, guards the Christian energy of the mind, which is its *Virtue*, from being hurried by impulse into a headlong zeal.\* And when we have thus sounded each separate note, and tested the chords of the scale, the Spirit of inspiration breathes upon this seven-stringed harp, and utters this symphony of the perfect Christian character:—"if these things be in you, and abound, ye shall be neither slothful nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

To have and to give satisfactory evidence of union with Christ by a living faith, we

\* Bengel.

must have these several graces in a high and proportionate state of cultivation : they must be in us and abound.

The proper development of these graces will cause us to be neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ ; but the want of these graces will prove us to be blind as to the nature and design of the Gospel, and indifferent to that grace which would purge away our sins.

Such is a fair paraphrase of the text. But to analyze it more particularly with a view to our own profit, we should take note,

1. *That one who is wanting in these graces, and takes no pains to cultivate them, has no warrant to believe himself a Christian.*

Though he may call himself a follower of Christ, and be a member of a church of Christ, he does not rightly apprehend the Gospel, and is unmindful alike of its grace and his own covenant. That he who lacks every one of these graces cannot be a Christian, need not be argued with those who regard Christianity as anything more than a system of doctrine and a form of wor-

ship. We have seen that every one of these virtues to be genuine, must have its seat in the soul, must constitute a state of the mind itself, and proceed from within outwards in its effect upon the conduct. *Virtue* is a manly vigor and earnestness for truth and duty, which only a firm belief and ardent love of truth can inspire. *Knowledge* is that heart-acquaintance with Christ which forms the judgment and guides the will according to Christ's spirit and law. *Temperance* is not mere abstinence from outward forms of evil, but the regulation of the desires of the mind through religious principle. *Patience* is fortitude under suffering, submission under calamity and injury, forbearance under wrong, grounded upon confidence in the government of God. *Godliness* is the inward reverence of the mind toward God, and its controlling consecration to his service. *Brotherly-Love and Charity* are affections of the soul, and can spring only from a mind purified from selfishness, and renovated by grace. Every one of these virtues being thus inward and spiritual, and having an intimate and



necessary relation to faith in Christ, where these are wanting there can be no living germinating faith. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being by itself." Even in Abraham the Father of the faithful, "faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect," or complete in its development.

The heart in which the renewing spirit of God has begun to operate, is like a bulbous root, in which, beneath the dead leaves and scales of its old selfish and formal life is now deposited a new life and nutrition as its most central force. This centre develops upward the stalk, leaves and flowers, and at the same time emits roots downward; and the growth of the roots always keeps pace with, and insures the development of the leaves and flowers; for the moisture which is exhaled by the evaporation of the leaves or consumed in growth, must be continually supplied through the tender absorbing tips and cells of the root, which are renewed and increased by the growth of root fibres. Faith quickened by the gracious Spirit which has

taken possession of the heart, shoots its fibres downward, and by a thousand rootlets fastens the heart to every truth and promise of God's word; and absorbing the water of life, conveys this upward to feed and stimulate the leaves and flowers that expand in the open air; so every visible growth in the graces of the Christian character marks an inward growth of faith, and every flower that breathes its fragrance on the outer world only exhales something of that spirit of life and love which faith has absorbed from the living spring. Could you hold your heart in a glass you would see that for every virtue and grace which it makes manifest, Faith has *roots* in the waters. If no leaves and flowers are put forth, be assured there are no roots beneath. If there are no visible graces, there is no living faith. If the heart does not open and expand with virtue, godliness and charity, it is not rooted in Christ, it does not drink in the spirit of Christ. It is nothing but a close, hard, thick mass of dry dead scales and leaves, without form or comeliness, without life or root. "Faith without works is dead,"

even as the body without the spirit. He who lacks all these vital graces of the Christian character, cannot be a Christian.

The text, using another figure, represents him as *blind*, blear-eyed, dim-sighted, not discerning the truth and glory of the Gospel in Christ; accepting Christianity just as a Greek would accept a new system of philosophy, as a mere speculative faith; or as the Jew regarded his forms, as a machinery of religious duty to work his passage to Heaven; thus making Christianity a thing external to himself instead of a power within himself, he is blind to the saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ. He has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. The ordinance of baptism, which as a new rite in its *Christian* significance had been administered to every convert, was a symbol of purification from sin—"by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The covenant with Christ was a covenant to renounce the lusts of the flesh and all ungodliness; the very object of the redemption by Christ was to deliver from sin, not only as a curse under the

law, but as a power of evil, working death in the soul. He therefore who calls himself a Christian, and has made this sacred covenant of faith, if he does not grow in grace, and bring forth the fruits of holiness in his life, shows clearly that he has departed from the whole design of the Gospel as a system of regeneration, sanctification, and spiritual life, and has forsaken his own vow to follow Christ and to become like him. There can be no such thing as a true experience of Christianity, a living faith in Christ, a genuine hearty consecration to Him, where these seven essential virtues of a Christian character do not appear in the life.

But must we not go further, and admit as the true teaching of the text, that if a person is entirely deficient as to *any one* of these graces, neither having it, nor seeking to cultivate it, he cannot be regarded as a Christian? I do not understand the apostle to teach that completeness in each of these virtues, and the exact proportion and harmony of the whole, are essential to a Christian character; but are not these graces themselves, each and all of

them, *so* essential to that character that if any one of them is *wholly* wanting, neither possessed nor sought after, he who is thus deficient is blind and destitute as to the Christian character and life? A true Christian may betray a lack of moral courage in certain emergencies, as did Peter after the arrest of Jesus. The repentance and subsequent devotion of Peter prove that he had a true love for Christ in his heart. But suppose Peter had continued to deny Christ at every approach of danger, should we not have classed him with the apostate Judas? Can a man be a Christian who *never* stands up for Jesus?

Cranmer signed six successive recantations, through nervous apprehension of the stake; but we forgive them all when we see him bound to the stake at last, holding his right hand in the midst of the flame and saying, "This hand offended, this hand shall suffer, this unworthy hand." But what if he had vacillated unto the end, and had died recanting?

One may be a true Christian whose knowledge of Christian doctrine is meagre, and

who makes frequent mistakes in practice. But if after five, ten, twenty years, one knows no more of the Bible, and has no more heart-knowledge of Christ, shall we continue to regard his experience of conversion as genuine?

A good man like Noah, may drink too much of the fruit of his vineyard, and may lie exposed to the shame even of his own children. But if Noah had omitted to profit by this warning, and had yielded to the love of wine, could we revere him as a godly man? If David, instead of repenting of his crime, had repeated it, could we have any more hope of him than we have of Solomon?

A true Christian may sometimes be impatient, fretful, peevish, angry; but if one is always complaining of God, and always irritable toward men, and is not studying to be patient, can we continue to regard him as a Christian, because he comes to the Lord's table, and prays in his family?

A true Christian may sometimes forget the presence of God, and may even turn away from God: but if one always disregards the

eye of God, and exhibits no godliness in heart and life, can he be a true child of God?

A true Christian may sometimes be angry with a brother; uncharitable, censorious; but if when shown his faults he does not make amends, and seek to cultivate and manifest brotherly love, can he belong to the family of Christ?

A Christian may sometimes neglect a call of charity, or set aside a real claim upon his love. But if he never heeds such a call, never seeks to do good, locks up his heart in selfish exclusiveness, can he be a child of our Father in heaven?

Moreover, since all these graces may be imitated, the positive and entire lack of one proves the rest to be counterfeit or superficial.

2. *A full and symmetrical development of these graces is the most satisfactory evidence and the most beautiful exhibition of Christian faith.* The mind delights in symmetry. The symmetrical development of the human form, in which each member and feature, perfect in

itself, is well proportioned to every other—so that the impression you receive is not that of a fine eye, a well-turned lip, a noble brow, a good figure, but of a *complete* man—this is our ideal of beauty. This symmetry of form and feature, extending to every line of the countenance and every muscle of the anatomy, is the life-like perfection of the statue; proportion is indispensable to beauty in architecture; symmetry and perspective to the harmony of colors, to the effect of painting; chord and harmonies, preserved even in the most difficult combinations of sound, are the highest charm of music; rhythm, the measured and regular succession of sounds, is essential to good poetry; the proportion of numbers and of mathematical laws enters into every science which aims at completeness; and the soul of man has even transferred its own feeling of harmony to the inaudible movements of the planets, under the poetic fiction of “the music of the spheres.”

Thus Milton, in his rapturous hymn for the birth of Christ, invokes this celestial music:



“Ring out, ye crystal spheres,  
Once bless our human ears  
(If ye have power to touch our senses so);  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;  
And let the base of Heaven’s deep organ blow;  
And with your ninefold harmony,  
Make up full concert to th’ angelic symphony.”

Shakspeare had anticipated this sentiment:

“There’s not the smallest orb which thou behold’st,  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.”

And Tennyson represents the poor crazed lover of Maud as finding his heart tuned with the “noiseless music of the night.”

“Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell.”

But in nothing is this symmetry so strenuously insisted upon as in moral character. The sharp and sometimes carping criticism of men of the world upon the faults and even the peccadilloes of professed Christians, shows the demand of conscience for *completeness* of character, and does homage to Christianity

itself as a complete system of morality ; for, to charge the least fault upon a Christian as an *inconsistency*, is to admit that Christianity requires, and is fitted to produce moral perfection ; and the quickness of a non-professor to expose the deficiencies of a professor, shows that his own moral sense demands completeness of moral character as truly as his eye demands the beauty of proportion. No declaration of a personal faith in Christ, no theological knowledge, no experimental frames, no charitable deeds, can give so strong and satisfactory evidence of Christian character as does the full and symmetrical development of these graces. These are the fruits of the Spirit, the outgrowth of faith ; and in proportion to the completeness of their development, is the evidence of a living faith and the living energy of the Spirit within the soul.

Hence the New Testament lays much stress upon *completeness* of Christian character ; for the word "perfection" signifies not so much the absolute sinlessness of a sanctified nature, as the completeness, the full symmetrical

development of the renewed man in all the graces of the Christian life. "This also we wish, even your perfection;—night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect—*i. e. complete*—that which is lacking in your faith. . . . laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." "The God of peace make you *perfect* in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, *wanting nothing.*" The "perfect" man is one who with respect to moral principle has reached his completed growth; in whom the graces of the Christian character are no longer in the feebleness of infancy, but have attained to order, strength and maturity.

This conscious, steady, visible growth in *all* the graces is the best evidence of a renewed heart. He who does not find his interest in and his courage for the truth strengthening with new demands upon his faith; who does

not gain a clearer knowledge of the Scriptures and a fuller heart-knowledge of Christ; who does not increase in his power of self-control and of endurance under trial; who does not grow in the spirit of reverence and obedience toward God; who does not feel more and more the spirit of love;—can the faith which such a one professes, unattested by these fruits, save him? But where such fruits exist there is the constant evidence of saving faith. Therefore should we give all diligence not only that these things shall be *in* us, each and all of them, but also that they shall *abound*, be more and more developed and exemplified. This is the summing up of the apostle's exhortation. The apostles did not think it enough to get one within the pale of the Church of Christ. They did not rest upon the simple fact of conversion as sealing one infallibly for heaven; but regarded this as only the beginning of a new life to be assiduously cultivated. The epistles of the New Testament are almost exclusively a doctrinal and practical manual for the improvement of *Christians*.

This full and symmetrical development of the Christian graces makes to the world a most beautiful and convincing exhibition of the Christian faith. The *completeness* of the moral system propounded by Christ is an element of its perfection, and a mark of its divinity. A profound thinker has well said, "Almost every excellence in the science of morals has been attained by sages, except completeness and consistency; the completeness and consistency of its morality is the peculiar praise of the ethics which the Bible has taught. Often, if we might so speak, the strength of the materials of six parts of morality have been brought together, wherewith to construct a seventh part; and so much of magnificence and elevation has by this means been obtained for the single virtue, whether it were fortitude, courage, patriotism, or beneficence, that mankind, in their admiration, have forgotten the cost at which it has been produced."\* The same writer regards this passage in Peter as a condensed but comprehensive caution against each of the prominent

\* Isaac Taylor.

corruptions that have developed themselves in the church. In some periods of her history the church has been marked by a "pusillanimous or inert faith;" again, in other periods by "the licentious abuse of the Gospel; a fanatical subjugation of animal desires; monkish pietism; sectarian and factious sociality." Our degenerate Christianity is always one-sided, or vibrating from one extreme to another.

A perfect Christian character is one in enumerating whose graces you can always say *and*, and never interpose a *but*. The average Christian character is sadly marred by that little disjunctive conjunction;—He is a very good man—*but*; He is kind and charitable at heart—*but* rough and irritable in manner; He is temperate and patient—*but* lacking charity; He is reverent and devout—*but* lacks moral courage. But the apostle bids us grow by additions—to Faith Virtue, *and* Knowledge, *and* Temperance, *and* Patience, *and* Godliness, *and* Brotherly-Kindness, *and* Charity.

3. *The abounding of these graces in the soul*

*will make it fruitful in the knowledge of Christ—will insure for it a progressive and rewarding piety.* He who makes a profession of his faith, and then looks to that act or to his church covenant to give him the fruit and the joy of the Christian, he who thus relies upon a naked system of doctrine, or a mere form of worship, will surely fail; for he takes an empty husk of religion and gets nothing of the meat of the word. The relation of heart-culture to the enjoyment of religion, is like that of good agriculture to a good crop.

You cannot have a garden by merely purchasing a place. The soil may be of excellent quality, and the situation most favorable; the title may be well secured, and the party of whom you buy may make most abundant promises as to the fertility and beauty of the ground; but unless you give all diligence to *make* and stock the garden, unless you dig and plant, and weed and trim, your title, deed, and promises will not give you a single shrub or flower. If you would know the fruitfulness of your estate, and thus become yourself fruitful in the knowledge of its quali-

ties and the enjoyment of its products, you must not sit in your library and study the plan and deeds of your grounds, and read books of horticulture and hear lectures on gardening, but you must take pains to bring forth each fruit and plant in its season, and the ordered-beauty of the whole. If well selected fruits and flowers are *in* your garden and abound, they will make you fruitful in the knowledge of its capacities and in the enjoyment of its pleasures. Thus and thus only can the heart delight in the service of God—when all Christian graces are in it and abound.

Two reflections are obvious here :

1. *If Christians find no enjoyment in religion, it is because they have failed to cultivate its particular and combined graces.* The comforts and pleasures of religion do not come to us when made the specific objects of our seeking. He who hunts after a hope seldom finds it. It is like trying to catch the rainbow. But the moment he comes to Christ in the spirit of trust and love and obedience, the grace of Jesus smiling upon his tears of penitence, makes a rainbow in his soul. He who



hunts after the comforts and joys which the Gospel promises, may not find them for all his seeking; but if he will follow the Gospel with his whole heart, seeking to form his character to it, not as by square and rule, but in the spirit of love, he is entitled to comfort and joy, and should make all the promises his own. The dyspeptic who sits in the house watching the effect of his diet, and noting every symptom, will find little improvement in health. Persuade him into the garden, get him at work among the flowers, and he will breathe another air, and feel a strange vigor and joy tingling in his veins. Unhappy Christians are for the most part graceless Christians.

2. *The highest fruitfulness of a church is to be secured by the perfecting of personal character in its members.* It has become a chronic error with Christians to look to organic arrangements and demonstrative measures for increasing the power of "the Church," whereas the one thing needed is the vital power of godliness in individual Christians. When you hear a symphony of Bee-

thoven, or a concerto or overture of Mendelssohn fitly rendered, you do not care to see the mechanism of the performance; and it would mar the effect if the conductor should grow boisterous, or if any one performer, by his manners, should make himself conspicuous. You would rather close your eyes and drink in the sweet and grand concord of sound—as violin and violoncello, trumpet and bassoon, flute and oboë, cymbal and trombone, all fulfill their parts, merging in faultless harmony. But in order to this perfection, each separate player and instrument must be drilled in time, accent, and style; if the horn has but one bar in an entire overture, *that* must be played just at the noted instant; if the drum is to beat but once, it must beat *that* once and upon the instant. As the musical conductor arranges his orchestra, by first stationing his violins, and adding to these his basses, and adding to these his wind instruments, all nicely balanced, and adding to these his cymbals and drums; so should a church marshal its strength by bringing out the quality of each individual member and effectually combining the whole.

No gaudy decorations of the concert hall, no flaming advertisements, no skill of the conductor, can be a substitute for the full-toned symphony. A Church of Christ can live only by the living graces of its members. Wherefore, "let these things *be in you and abound.*"

## LECTURE IX.

### FROM GRACE TO GLORY.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—2 PETER, i. 10, 11.

**B**UT do not our calling and election proceed from God? Are they not his spontaneous act, resting in and resulting from his original, independent, and eternal purpose of grace? How then can these be made sure by any action of ours? Can we add anything to the original ground of certainty touching any event in the mind and plan of God? Can we confirm Jehovah himself in his purpose, or bring confirmation to any of his promises? Nay, "He is in one mind and who can turn Him?" "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the

earth.” “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are His.” And can we make that *more* sure? Can any diligence of ours strengthen and establish the foundation of God’s eternal knowledge and electing love? And yet the apostle Peter, who addresses his fellow-disciples as “*elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,” exhorts them “to give diligence to make their calling and election sure.”

The sureness to be attained is the sureness of *evidence* concerning a fact which God does not reveal to individuals, or make known by miraculous signs, but which is certified to exist by evidences which men themselves can bring out, take note of, and increase beyond the possibility of a question. Christ, in that New Testament which he sealed with his blood, left for us exceeding great and precious promises. But do not presume upon your expectations,—like some graceless heir upon an estate which he counts as already his own, and mortgages and squanders before it comes into his hands,—do not rest in carnal ease and se-

curity, as if you had only to await a summons from the Court of Heaven to enter into the enjoyment of your inheritance. Go early and earnestly to the Court of Probate, and make sure that your name is found in the will, comply with every technicality, fulfill every condition, and thus make sure your part in the inheritance.

God the Father has a covenant of redemption with his Son, which the Saviour thus refers to in his prayer before the crucifixion. "Glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee, as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me." But while this covenant of the Father with the Son—designed not as *against* men, to shut them out from the benefits of Christ's death; but *for* men, to insure the acceptance of Christ by so many that he shall not have died in vain;—while this covenant of the Father with the Son does make sure a godly seed, the Son also has a covenant with *men* declaring that "he that

believeth shall be saved," and the names of all true believers are registered in his book—the Lamb's Book of Life—as the heirs of that redemption promised by the Father; so that it stands thus: the Father hath covenanted to give to his Son a godly seed; *who* these are appears, as the names of believers are successively registered in the Lamb's Book of Life, *to wit*: Paul, Peter, James, John, Matthew, Mark, Luke, Jude, Barnabas, Apollos, Martha, Mary, Elizabeth, Phœbe, Priscilla, Lydia, Eunice, and "all that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." Make sure that your name is on that register, and you will have made "your calling and election sure"—have become certified of it, as if a voice from heaven had said, "This is my beloved Son."

I. THE TEXT PRESENTS GOD'S CALLING AND ELECTION OF HIS PEOPLE AS A MOTIVE TO DILIGENCE ON THEIR PART IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

II. THE VIRTUES AND GRACES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IN FULL AND SYMMETRICAL DEVELOP-

MENT, GIVE TO THEIR POSSESSOR THE ASSURANCE OF HIS PERSONAL CALL AND ELECTION.

III. THIS COMPLETE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER ATTAINED IN LIFE, ASSURES PEACE AND TRIUMPH IN DEATH, AND A JOYFUL ENTRANCE INTO ETERNAL LIFE.

“ Wherefore, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

1. *The text presents God's calling and election of his people as a motive to diligence on their part in the Christian life.* The Bible never represents the fact that all believers are called of God by his Spirit as superseding in the least the necessity of personal effort for the attainment of holiness; but makes this fact a ground of exhortation to diligence and perseverance. Let it be fixed in our minds as the Bible doctrine upon this subject, that God's purposes of grace hinder the salvation of no man, but are the crowning help and encouragement of every earnest seeker of salvation.



The reason why many regard the purposes of God, even in the application of his grace, as in some way a barrier to their own effort, is that they conceive of all God's purposes as being executed by physical and irresistible force. But a little reflection will show that this objection does not lie, and in fact that it is contradicted by our own consciousness. If the purpose of God's grace in our salvation is a barrier to our effort for salvation, it must be so not merely because of its *existence* as a purpose in the mind of God, but because of the mode of its *execution*. If God at any point comes in conflict with our free agency, it must be in carrying out his purpose, and not simply in having a purpose. For example: You have purposed to send your son to college, and to educate him for the ministry; and with a view to this you have already placed him at a preparatory school. He is well enough pleased with his school, but does not care for a liberal and professional education; and therefore has not set his own mind upon a student-life. Now your mere *purpose* to send him to college, while it lies in your

own mind simply as a purpose, does not affect his choice. He may know nothing of your purpose in the matter, and of course he cannot be in the least disabled by it in his own preferences. Besides, your purpose does not include the intention to *coerce* him to go to college against his will, but only in due time to use such rational and moral influences as shall secure that result. Now, since the purpose in action is not to be enforced by physical coercion, the bare existence of the purpose in your mind cannot coerce your child, though it should lie in your mind for ten years, and all that time unconsciously to him, should shape the course of his studies with a view to your object. By and by, when through this quiet ordering of things according to your purpose, he has acquired a taste for study, and has gained some maturity of judgment, you broach to him the cherished purpose of your heart. But as you do not attempt to *coerce* him into your way of thinking, the fact that you have had such a purpose for ten years, no more impairs his liberty of action than if it were with you a sudden

thought. Yet this purpose of yours, while not coercive, and therefore not a hindrance to his freedom, may prove persuasive, and be the crowning argument and influence that leads to its own accomplishment. You set before him the advantages of the course of life you have marked out for him; and you say to him, "My son, this has been the cherished purpose of my heart for ten years; and with a view to it I have given you a preparatory education, and have yearly laid by a sum of money at interest for your support in college." Might not the evidence of such a purpose on your part determine him to do your choice, and spur him on to give all diligence to make his education sure. Where there is no force in the execution of a purpose, the existence of the purpose can no more impair or restrain liberty than the atmosphere of the earth can hinder the rising of the sun.

A young man in college was addressed by a brother-student with reference to his personal salvation. Yielding to argument and entreaty, he gave up his heart to Christ to be his servant, and at once resolved that he

would become a missionary. Just at this time he received from his mother, two hundred miles away, a letter urging him anew to give himself to Christ, and reminding him that in his infancy she had dedicated him to God to be a *missionary*. Now, did that mother's purpose at all restrain the freedom of her son? On the contrary, was it not an incentive and encouragement to him to carry out the choice to which he found his heart inclined?

Well, if God also had purposed that he should be a missionary, did this either supersede, hinder, or coerce his action in becoming a Christian? On the contrary, the evidence of the divine will in this regard became at length effective in making sure his calling and election to that work. For when after a time the zeal and warmth of his first purpose had somewhat abated, the fact that a missionary then in this country who chanced to hear him preach, singled him out as the man he needed as a helper, and other providential circumstances, shut him up to his original decision, made him feel that this was the will of God,

and led him to give all diligence to carry it into effect.

Every true Christian traces his present evidences of regeneration and his hope of final salvation to the grace of God working in him through the truth. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "Of his own will begat he us through the word of truth." But while every Christian thus traces his hope of renewal and salvation to the grace of God, no one will affirm that he was made a Christian *against his will*; and therefore, as before said, there being no coercion in the execution of the purpose, there can be no hindrance or restraint upon human freedom in that special calling and election of God which bring his truth and spirit to operate *effectually* upon the mind. Nay, this is rather an encouragement to diligent and earnest working. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

When Paul was about to be shipwrecked, an angel appeared to him and assured him that the vessel should be lost, but no life on board of her; soon after, the vessel struck, and the crew attempted to desert her; but Paul, perceiving their intention, called upon the soldiers to stop them, crying; "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Each declaration was absolute. Paul said to the captain, "there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, 'Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.' Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer—for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

Paul was a firm believer in divine sovereignty. Before this he had written his Epistle to the Romans, in which he insists upon that doctrine with the highest eloquence and earnestness. Why then did not Paul sit down at ease and say, "God will take care of us—I know his purpose is to save us?" Instead of

this, when he saw the sailors letting down the boat under pretence of fixing the anchor, but really to make their own escape, he called out, "Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved." God's purpose was to be made *sure* by the agency of men accustomed to manage a ship.

2. *The virtues and graces of the Christian character in a full and symmetrical development, give to their possessor the assurance of his personal call and election.* It is possible for the Christian, it is a privilege accorded to every Christian if he will but attain to it, to enjoy the full assurance of his personal acceptance in the Redeemer, and his heirship in the inheritance of the saints. "Being justified by faith we have *peace* with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and *rejoice* in hope of the glory of God." "We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "Let us not love in word, neither

in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." And this same apostle Peter, speaking of the love of Christians to the Saviour, says: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; *receiving* the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." This end of faith, this object of hope, is already appropriated and made sure to the believing, loving soul.

Now this peace, this joy, this strength, this confidence, are brought within the reach of every believer; and setting aside mere nervous and morbid frames which require healing rather than grace—by so much as any believer lacks of this peace and joy and inward confidence, is he wanting in evidence of his good estate. These are the blessings promised to a genuine faith and a Christian walk; and we can appropriate every one of them by a whole-hearted consecration to God, by an honest and consistent Christian life.

No amount of *technical knowledge* of re-



ligion can certify our personal interest in Christ. Judas, in common with the other apostles, heard every discourse uttered by our Lord; and no doubt when he went forth on missionary tours with his brother disciples, he proclaimed the truth just as he had heard it from Christ. Evidently, he was never suspected by his brethren. Yet all the while Judas carried not Christ but Satan in his soul. "He hath a *devil*."

No rapture of occasional *experience* can certify our calling and election. Peter was with Christ upon the mount of transfiguration, and beheld the inexpressible glory of the divine Word enveloping the human teacher, and in the rapture of that vision he cried, "Lord it is good to be here," and would fain have built tabernacles for the heavenly visitants, and have lived always in that Elysium; but when the Master said, Come down from these illuminated clouds and enter the shadow of Gethsemane and the gloom of the judgment-hall, and tell that maid what thou knowest of me, what thou carest for me, he trembles like an aspen leaf, and says, "I know not the man."

There stands the Master whom he had seen transformed into the glory of the celestial, whom Moses and Elias had worshipped on the Mount, when the voice of the Father parting the silver-cloud, had said, "This is my beloved Son, hear him;" there stands the same Jesus with whom he had desired to abide in his glory; but the brow, then radiant with heavenly light, is overshadowed with grief, and the shining raiment is exchanged for the garb of a criminal, and Peter declares, "I never saw the man." Ah! of what worth are rapturous visions of Christ upon the mountain-top when there is no spirit to confess Christ in the common walks of men? It is easy while with Moses, and Elias, and a choir of angels, to say, "How delightful, how glorious;" but what is it to stand amid buffetings and curses, when the rabble cry "Crucify?"

Peter, chastened, humbled, reprov'd, restored, now looks for other evidences of love to Christ. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure—for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." What bitter memories did that word *fall* awaken in his

own soul—a fall from such heights of rapture, from such boasting professions, to such depths of ignominy and sin. He would fain save his brethren from such sad experience; “if ye do these things ye shall *never fall*.” Do what things? Cultivate the graces which we have now discussed. Rest not in faith alone; rely not upon doctrine merely; seek not for visions and revelations, and vivid, rapturous experiences; if these come, appropriate them with humility, but gain the assurance of your calling by your own growth in grace; “*add* to your faith, Virtue; and to virtue, Knowledge; and to knowledge, Temperance; and to temperance, Patience; and to patience, Godliness; and to godliness, Brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, Charity—for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” “Do these,” not as the foundation upon which you stand, not as the meritorious ground of salvation; but *in doing them*, by having these graces in lively growth and exercise, you have the evidence of God’s calling and election which is your assurance of final perseverance and salvation.

Your hope of salvation rests in God's sovereign grace. Your evidence of a personal interest in that grace arises from the possession and development of these virtues; therefore give diligence to get your calling certified by the fruits of the Spirit in your life. With that certified check you can never fail. Every other security may prove worthless, but this never. With that certificate of Christ's work in you, you shall pass the scrutiny of the cherubim with flaming sword at the gate of heaven; the recording angel shall open the Lamb's Book of Life and find your name there registered; and the Master shall own it before his Father, saying, "This is my seal and promise; this is the fruit of my grace; this is my disciple;" and "so an entrance shall be ministered to you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

That which we are to seek after is not technically assurance, but virtues, graces, in the heart and life—these warrant the assurance, these certify the election. Assurance is not a something for which we are to watch, and

when we think we have it, to fold it to our hearts and rest content—that is enthusiasm, that is presumption. Assurance grows with the fruits of grace, is inseparable from these, is a dry branch without these. As an old divine expresses it, “Assurance makes us active and lively in God’s service; as diligence begets assurance, so assurance begets diligence. Assurance will not breed security in the soul, but industry. Assurance makes us mount up to heaven, as eagles, in holy duties; it is like the Spirit in Ezekiel’s wheels, that moved them, and lifted them up. Faith makes us walk, but assurance makes us run. Assurance is as wings to the bird: as weights to the clock, to set all the wheels of obedience a-running.”\*

You cannot have the *assurance* of grace unless you have the *grace* itself, and this you can test and know by its fruits. What you want is not more hope, more vision, but more practical virtue; more self-training.

3. *This complete Christian character at-*

\* Leighton.

*tained in life assures peace and triumph in death, and a joyful entrance into eternal life.* As good Dr. Doddridge interprets the text, carrying out the figure of a choir of graces before referred to, "if you will lead on the virtues and graces here enumerated in their beautiful order, those graces will attend you in a radiant train to the mansions of immortal glory and blessedness." An entrance into the everlasting kingdom, the New Jerusalem, the inheritance of the saints, the presence and glory of Christ and of the Father—this shall be ministered unto you—furnished by grace; and furnished richly, amply, with a free hand, with abundant measure.

At the convent of Mt. Sinai, the monks, ever watchful against their enemies, admit guests one by one, hoisting them by a basket into a lofty window through the wall; but when a visitor arrives with a special letter from the head of their order at Cairo, the huge gates of the convent are unbarred, and the cavalcade ride through the ample portal, and up the paved court where the monks are drawn up in order to welcome the guest,

who is conducted to the principal chamber, and attended with every mark of respect. So there are Christians, doubtless true believers, who are saved so as by fire; who are dragged as it were into the gate of heaven as Christina and Mercy were dragged in at the wicket-gate; who never cast off the fear of death till they have crossed the river; and who exhibit almost nothing of peace and hope, much less of triumph; but if we give diligence to make all virtues ours, this will give assurance, and assurance will give joy and triumph, for we are *confident*, saith Paul, "and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

He who matures these graces in life shall have victory over death. He shall not enter heaven by the *postern* gate; but the angels that minister around his dying bed shall attend his exultant soul, singing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and receive this trophy of the Saviour's love." To live well is to die happily. To have all graces in life is to insure all comforts in death. If for me to live is Christ, to die is gain.

And now, brethren, does not this exhortation of the apostle search us like a candle, pierce us like a sword; does it not *shame* us at the meanness of our attainments, the emptiness of our joys? Are you *sure* of your calling and election? Let us see your certificate. "I met with a change ten, twenty years ago—and had very peculiar feelings?" We do not wish to hear of that;—show us your present *certificate*. "Ah—my certificate—I joined the church in such a year." That is not to the point. Here are the items; Faith, Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly-kindness, Charity;—have you grown in these particular graces since you professed Christ? Have you any religion beyond family-prayers and church-going? Have you a Godliness that withstands temptation, that is sweet and patient and humble and kind in little things? Are you absorbed in Christ's work—so given to it, that you subordinate all things to this?

John Adams in his old age, at Quincy, was visited by some distinguished foreigners, who called to pay their respects to the political

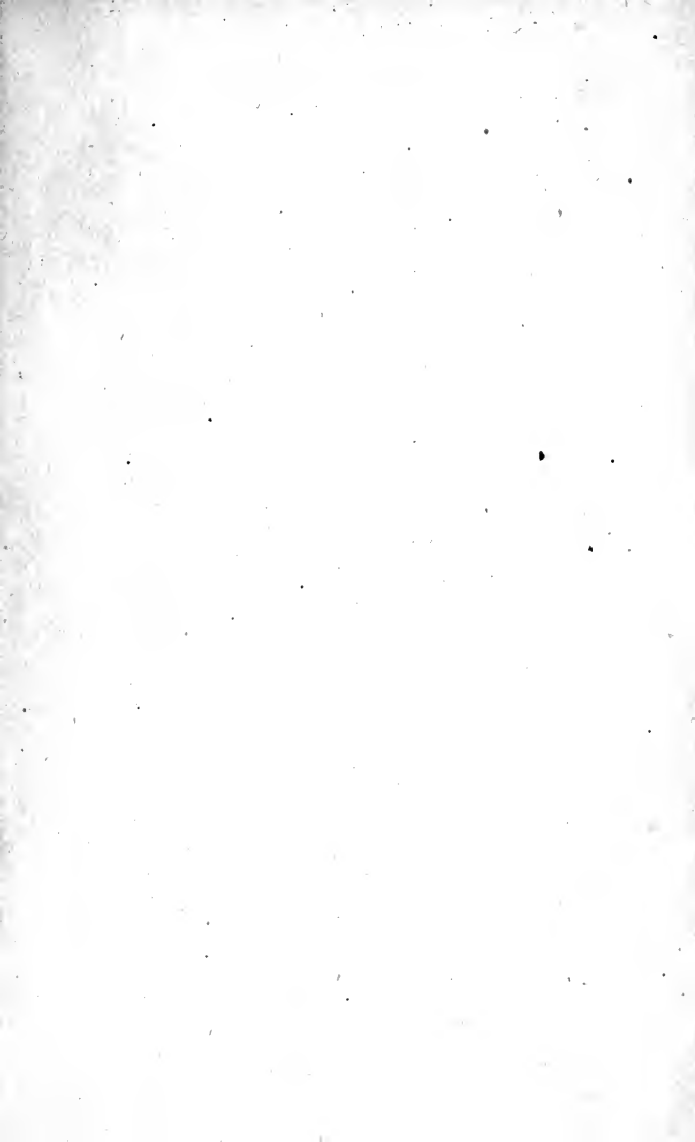


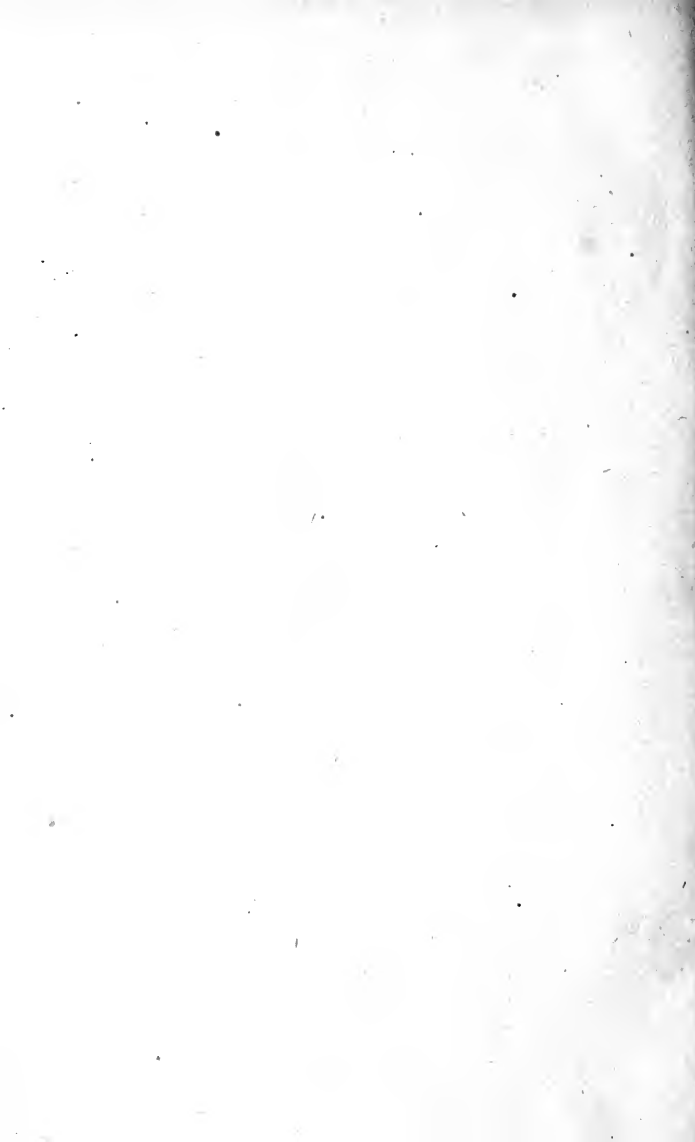
hero of the Revolution; they asked, "At the beginning of the fight did you think you should succeed?" "Yes; I knew the country would go through; but I expected nothing but ruin and death for my family and myself." There was patriotism sacrificing self for country. Are you *so* committed to Christ, that you feel and know his cause will succeed, and are determined to labor for that, though you and yours should perish in the work. If you are redeemed by Christ you are redeemed *from* the world. A quaint writer says: "As the birds, though they light upon the ground to pick up a little seed, yet immediately they take their wings and fly up to heaven again; so the redeemed of the Lord, though they use the world and take the lawful comforts of it, yet their hearts are presently off these things, and they ascend to heaven." Do you *so* live? Or do you prefer to abandon the free air of heaven and the trees of Paradise, to sit in a cage because this is made gaudy? Oh, soul redeemed, rise and soar up to thy Maker's glory, singing thy Redeemer's praise. Live not for this world, for "seeing that all

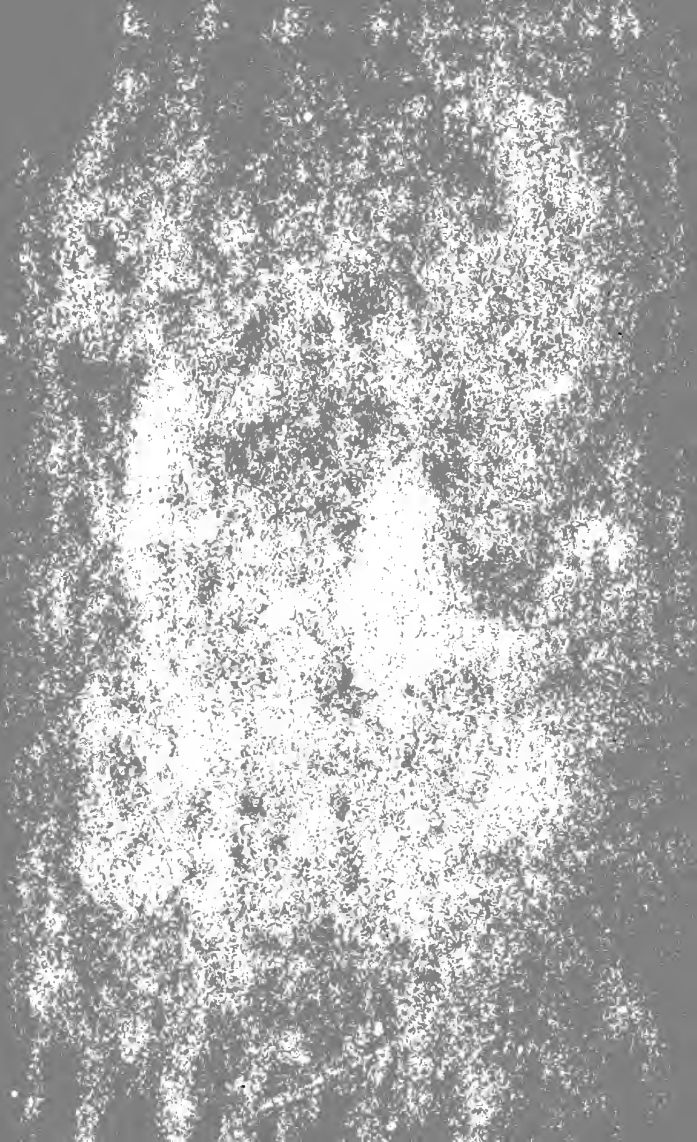
these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? BE DILIGENT THAT YE MAY BE FOUND OF HIM IN PEACE, WITHOUT SPOT AND BLAMELESS." AMEN.



FINIS.









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