

THE
A M E R I C A N
NATIONAL PREACHER.

A
REPOSITORY OF ORIGINAL SERMONS,

FROM
LIVING MINISTERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

EDITED BY REV. F. C. WOODWORTH.

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• Corresponding with previous volumes.

THE
NATIONAL PREACHER.

I.

GOD'S MORAL SYSTEM, SUPERIOR TO THE MATERIAL.

BY REV. R. S. STORRS, JR.,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

“And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fall.”—LUKE xvi. 17.

THE conception of the Material System is naturally accompanied in the mind by the impression of its permanence. Even the child perceives the solidity and hardness of the objects that surround him; and their power at once so absolutely to uphold and to restrict him, may well seem the evidence of their necessary duration. And as he comes to understand more fully the extent, and structure, and the history of the system, this first impression is naturally confirmed. As he learns how vast the Earth is,—not bounded by the horizon as he supposed, but bearing upon its mighty bosom islands, and realms, and empires, and continents even, with fathomless oceans poured round them as their drapery; as he examines the physical structure of the earth, and drives his drill into the granite bars that lock and interlock beneath its surface, or traces the ridges of rock and iron that stretch across it as its ribs of strength; as he follows backward the many generations that in succession have lived and labored upon its globe, and feels how changeless it has been through all their changes,—how absolutely it is now the same as when the Roman eagles traversed its surface, as when the temple of the Sun was standing in Palmyra, as when the hundred-gated Thebes stretched its stupendous front along the Nile; nay, as passing backward from even this computation he learns through what vast cycles and periods, and into what remote, impenetrable abysses, the researches of the naturalist seem to carry its duration:—and most of all, as rising from this view of the Earth, he learns to comprehend in some degree the magnitude of the System in which it is but part,

V.

THE SCRIPTURAL ESTIMATE OF PHILOSOPHY.

BY REV. GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE PURITANS, NEW YORK.

* Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."—COL. II. 8.

THE glorious richness of the epistle of Paul to the Colossians is all owing to the fulness and vastness of its presentation of Christ. The glory of Christ there rises like a sea of light, and swallows up everything else in its bosom, and on its waves the soul is borne onward, entranced, itself, in glory. And as this epistle begins with the supremacy, the infinite pre-eminence, the all-in-all-ness of Christ, in all worlds, all beings, and all things, in all God's universe, and then applies, out of this infinitude of glory and absoluteness of reign, the consequent rule of perfection and obedience for believers in Christ, so the first thing we are to consider, prior to opening the leaves of this text, is the completeness of the Christian in Christ, and the all-in-all-ness of Christ to the Christian.

"*Ye are complete in him.*" All your real need is to be in Christ, and all your anxiety should be, to be rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith in him, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning of grace, and the completion of glory. All that we need, for time and eternity, we find in him; and he is made unto us, of God, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. This secures our independence of all mere human wisdom. You are entirely superior to that, you have no need of that, just in proportion as you are rooted and grounded in Christ, and have access, by faith in him, through the ministration of the Spirit, to the unsearchable riches of his Word, and all God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge. *Ye are complete in him*; and therefore, when men come to you in all the puffing majesty and parade of human science and speculation, beguiling you with enticing words, and assuring you that this or that philosophy or speculation must be mastered by you, before you will comprehend the genius of Christianity, or that it is only through this or that ingenious theory, as through a new-constructed telescope, that you can see Christ Jesus as he is, or the wonders of

the Word aright, or can arrive at the completeness of Christian knowledge and character, remember that you are complete in him; and that too, not according to men's philosophies, nor by their assistance, but just according to God's Word, and by the teaching of God's Spirit. And since in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him, as you have been taught, in the Word, and by the Spirit, beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

And here is the first thing to be considered in the warning of this text, as a contrasted point of truth and duty, in opposition to the babblings of science falsely so called; namely, the supremacy and independence of God's Word, and of the Christian in it, under the guidance of the divine Spirit; and the fact that faith in God's Word, and in Christ Jesus as presented there, is the only perfection of human reason, the only true philosophy and science. The bringing of the Word of God to the bar of human reason, and the throwing of it upon mere external evidence and philosophy for its support and understanding, were a portion of that leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, against which our blessed Lord cautioned his disciples. But you can neither believe God's Word, nor have any understanding of it, according to the mere traditions and philosophies of men. You are thrown upon God's Spirit, and if you have not got your theology there, philosophy can never let in one ray of spiritual light upon your soul. You cannot know God's Word, but by the Spirit of God. If the Holy Spirit be in your soul, guiding you into the truth, as the truth's living Interpreter, then you will see and know it; but not otherwise. All true faith is life, not the movement of the understanding merely, but of the heart. Belief in God's Word is life, a thing dependent not upon evidence, but upon the living Spirit. And evidence itself can never be rightly seen and felt, without this life. All living theology, and all power to teach it; all true knowledge of God's Word, and all power in the use of such knowledge, are dependent on God's Spirit, and without the Holy Spirit as the guide and teacher of the soul, philosophy and speculation can do nothing for its light.

Now, divine revelation itself informs us, that this living Spirit and Interpreter of God's Word, even the Spirit of Truth, is a Being whom the world cannot receive (that is, the world unhumbled, unregenerate, unconverted,) because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. The very pride of men's hearts, in the ignorance and darkness of self-will, prevents their receiving him. And furthermore, the same divine Word informs us, that the natural man receiveth not the *things* of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. He must come humbly to God, and beg to be enlightened. In the neglect of that divine Spirit, without his teachings, and without that constant, earnest prayer, which is a habit of life and faith,

into which the Holy Spirit always leads the heaven-taught soul, it is impossible to arrive at the truth; and all the knowledge a man boasts in such a case, and all the perfection of philosophy, and all the lights of science and speculation, are but miserable presumption. The soul, in the neglect of prayer, and of God's Spirit, cannot but go astray.

And while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,
 She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives.
 Her utmost reach, historical assent,
 The doctrines warped to what they never meant.
 The truth itself is in her head as dull
 And useless as a candle in a skull.

Hence, it is no wonder that Paul cautioned the world of believers in Christ against pretended philosophic instruction from such sources. Beware lest any man spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. The moment a man, be he a minister of the Word, or a private Christian, begins to mind tradition and philosophy, instead of Christ, or to mingle up tradition and philosophy as parts of his Christianity, that moment he begins to be spoiled. And when a man undertakes to teach and feed others with philosophy and tradition, instead of the pure milk of the Word in Christ and him crucified, he is not only securing his own starvation, but he is starving others. He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside; and curious it is to see how a man, by eating ashes himself, can persuade others also that ashes are good food. This mixture of philosophy with the bread of life, and the strong and frequent warnings against it in God's Word, remind us of the descriptions of a worthless piety in the minor prophets. "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned." Paganism and Christianity together, and even that mixture half-baked, have generally constituted the piety of the so-called philosophers of this world. And the great work of philosophy in all ages has been, to *spoil* the truth. And this, not always because of the badness of the philosophy, or its error, but because of setting it upon the throne, appointing it as judge. But God has determined that there shall nothing occupy the throne of God and reason in man, save only the Lamb that was slain. There shall be a simple faith in him, casting down imaginations, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Philosophy must ever be the handmaid, not the mistress nor the judge.

And as to progress in theology, there can be no such thing but by experience. Theology itself is a production of life, of the Spirit with the Word, in hearts quickened out of the death of trespasses and sins, and new created in Christ Jesus. And all *progress* in theology must be the product of life, not of mere learning; for without the inward teachings and life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, men are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth—a phenomenon in modern times most remarkably mani-

fested, since the passing away of the first power of the Reformation, in Germany. One such theologian as Martin Luther, with the heart in a flame towards God by the divine Spirit, one such living theologian as Jonathan Edwards or John Howe, would be worth all the theological learning and learned men of modern Germany put together.

Philosophy may possibly correct philosophy, but it cannot teach theology. It may grub up stumps, but it can never sow the seed of the Gospel. Philosophy may preoccupy the mind with such error, that all the power even of a living theology can hardly expel it. But if a nation's theology is made up not out of experience in God's Word by God's Spirit, but mainly out of theory and speculation, if it has been the work of acute intellects without faith, without regeneration, or if such minds have been the main sources of it, it can be worth little or nothing either to teach the truth or contend against error. A vast proportion of what has been called theology in our world has been thus spoiled.

The time consumed in the vanities of mere philosophy, had it been given to spiritual discipline, and to the study of God's Word in God's light, would have made great deeps of living theology for a world to draw upon. But men have often done with God's Word, as foolishly as a band of miners would do before a mountain of gold, if instead of going down into the mines and working, they should speculate at the surface, about the abstract properties and purities of ore, the probable extent of seams, and the geological structure of creation. Just so, men work upon speculative difficulties in God's Word, instead of digging out the gold and using it. Instead of delving in the unsearchable riches of Christ, and coming to him to get rid of sin, they speculate about the origin of sin. Instead of coming to him to see more of his glory, and feel more of the power of his cross, they set up the speculation whether that glory, and the cross itself, be not, simply and merely, a grand, effective, passionate work of art!

Men are often exceedingly hampered by their philosophy, made hesitating, fearful, and incredulous. And the importance of a right mental philosophy, a mental philosophy of spiritual and not materializing tendencies, can hardly be overrated. A false philosophy may come, telling you that you can have no idea of eternity, but that of time multiplied, and no idea of God, but that of an infinitely enlarged man, and no idea of duty, but that of expediency; and if you should set up this philosophy, as your guide or judge in the application of divine truth, you would be mightily weakened in the presentation of eternity, of God, and of duty to the mind. Your only philosophy in such a case, even supposing you know no other system of human philosophy than the one thus palmed upon you, ought to be that of faith in God, and in God's Word. That, and that alone, carries you high and dry over all conflicting systems of philosophy and science, the Word of God being addressed directly

to the human conscience in precisely the same way, whether that conscience lie in the bosom of the philosopher or the fool.

But indeed we are all fools until the Word of God, by the Spirit of God, humbles us, and makes us wise. That is for us the real philosophy of heaven, the highest wisdom of earth, the profoundest exercise of the human intellect, to bow in self-denial and humility before God. If any man among you will be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

A man educated in a false philosophy in regard to the will, or any part of our spiritual being, if he sets up that philosophy as his judge of divine truth is sure to go wrong. Some of the greatest minds ever created in our world have stumbled in God's Word over the logs laid down by such a false philosophy, at the threshold of some of the clearest truths revealed for our guidance. Nor can this evil be cured by the conflict of an opposite philosophy, but only by compelling philosophy to take its place as the servant and not the master, the learner, and not the judge. A good philosophy as well as a bad one may lead the mind astray, may cause the soul to stumble, if it set up to be the judge, either of the truths of God's Word, or the workings of God's Spirit. Your philosophies and your speculations must be put by themselves, whatever question you are raising, when you come to ask, what does God tell you in the Scriptures? But speculative men are unwilling to put their own theories and philosophical speculations at the feet of Christ. Men often use their systems of philosophy, just as we use blinders on our horses, so that they may see only straight forward. They put on their philosophy, tighten the reins, crack the whip, and away; and no side view or object is noticed, or permitted to interfere. Their philosophy, like a dark lantern, permits them to see only what is straight before it, only what they please to have it shine upon.

Now all regard to philosophy, in the application of God's Word, is injurious, and very likely to weaken the power of it. It ought to come, just what it is, supreme from God, sharper than any two-edged sword, sweeping all before it. You have no questions to ask of philosophy, and if philosophy puts questions to you, and you have a passage from God's Word that answers them, *that* decides the matter; if not, the difficulties raised by philosophy have no more to do with your application of God's Word, than the question how the meat got into a walnut-shell has to do with your eating it. In the use of the Scriptures, you are to have no philosophy but faith, and with that you are to apply God's Word to the conscience, without any care for philosophy, be it what it may.

There is nothing further to be said where God has spoken. If you believe in the law of God as his Word, it is to you supreme, decisive, whoever, or whatever may be brought against it. If you *do not* believe in God's Word, it is to you as worthless as philosophy itself; nay, it is to you the greatest lie the universe ever be-

held. But, indeed, if you *do not* believe in God's Word, you fling yourself the lie in the face of your Maker; for he has declared that whoever believeth not the record God hath given us of his Son, hath made God a liar. So decisive and despotical is the obligation of belief, when God has spoken; and so independent and self-evidenced is God's Word, like his own attribute of self-existence.

Therefore, you are to run careering through all men's opinions, with God's Word, no matter what you go over. In executing God's commission in the application of divine truth, you need take no more notice of the panoply of philosophy, with which men may have armed themselves, than the chariot of paternal Deity took notice of the shields and helms, and helmed heads, over which it rode in victory. God's Word has God's authority, not yours, nor philosophy's, nor is it to be put under philosophy's jurisdiction, nor cut, nor squared, nor quartered, according to philosophy's measurement, nor graduated according to philosophy's fluctuating vagaries or imagined discoveries.

You are to preach God's Word with God's authority. If you do, from the heart, in simple faith, God will honor you. If you do not, but are afraid, and think you must first consult philosophy, whether what God says is to be plainly spoken and admitted, then philosophy itself, in the end, will dishonor you. He that exalts God's Word, God's Word will exalt him. And no matter whom you have to deal with, be it a body of philosophers themselves, fresh from the cobwebs of their chambers, or be it the mass of common minds; the Word of God is the same thing for all, and nothing else will have power. The foolishness of preaching pleases God, and whether it pleases men or not, nothing else will move them. will conquer them. A man like John Bunyan, preaching God's Word, without any philosophy, or knowledge of any, nay, perhaps not knowing the meaning of the word philosophy; a man preaching thus, from deep, powerful, all-quickening, all-mastering experience, even among the Germans themselves, would have mighty power. There might be those so entrenched behind their atheistic philosophic systems, or so entangled in them, that there would be no breaking through; but over multitudes such preaching would have irresistible power. And such a preacher would have no *more* power, nor so much, over the philosophers, even if he could attack them on their own chosen ground, with the clashings of the newest, truest, and best philosophies in existence. So Paul preached among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, utterly heedless of their many-colored, manifold, and many-armed philosophies, whatever they might be. What did he care for them? Had he wished, or had he chosen, or had God so chosen for him, he could have made as great and learned a hubbub as any of them, with Greek, Roman, Jewish, and Oriental philosophies. But he went at them with only the story of the cross, Jesus Christ and him crucified, simply that; nothing else. It was the story of the cross, not of the man without

the cross; not Christ the glorious being of godlike life and character, of pure and lofty teaching, philosophy, and example; nor Christ the manifestation of Divine Love in humanity; that would have pleased both Jews and Greeks; they would have hailed that, as glorious. God Incarnate, let alone the humiliating features of the Gospel, would have been a theme for an exceedingly popular philosophy and eloquence. But Christ crucified, Christ dying on the cross between two thieves, presented a theme of mere ridicule and scorn to all the world; to all, whose hearts were not beginning to be touched and troubled by the Spirit of the Saviour. Yet Paul drove on, in his exclusiveness, with nothing but Christ and *him crucified*, to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness. He made that very foolishness the beginning and end of his earnestness, the sum and substance of his argument, albeit he were addressing Greeks, Jews, or Romans. He rode in upon them with God's Word; he rolled over them with the chariot of the Gospel. Sometimes they stood up again after the incursions of this strange and fiery eloquence, merely astounded for the moment, to perish in their mockery; but many were discomfited, conquered, and brought to their senses, who had been all their life-long insane in philosophy and sin. Paul kept up, through his whole life, this freshness of preaching Christ from the heart. He urged the same upon his fellow-christians; he bequeathed the same, as his dying legacy, to Timothy.

And it was because it came from the heart, that it never lost its freshness and its power. You might have heard Paul, the first year of his preaching after the journey to Damascus, and you would have heard of Christ and him crucified; and if you heard him thirty years after that, it would still be the same ever-glorious, everlasting theme, and none other—Christ and him crucified; and as fresh the thirtieth year, or the five hundredth year, if Paul could have lived so long, as when he first began to say of Christ, "Who loved me and gave himself for me." It was because along with the intrinsic and amazing greatness and comprehensiveness of the theme, in Paul's inspired vision, it was ever the fresh outpouring of a grateful, loving heart. And what must have been the sermons of the man, who could write such vast and glorious descriptions and appeals, as are contained in the epistle from which our text is drawn! It was the obligation of such preaching that he enjoined on all others; it was the legacy of such preaching, and the mantle of such power, that he left, I say, to Timothy, charging him by the Lord his Redeemer, that he never should be striving about words to no profit, but that he should preach **THE WORD**, in season and out of season. He could not endure to have anything presented as Christian truth in the place of Christ and him crucified. Beware lest any man spoil you, by preaching which is *not after Christ*.

Another of Paul's rules, intimately connected with the text, and serving as a guide and safeguard against the danger marked in it,

was this, namely, that Christians should never handle the Word of God deceitfully, *but by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Paul's object was to manifest the truth, to open it, to make all wonder at its exceeding riches. He would not change it, nor restrict, nor conceal it, through philosophy and vain deceit, nor put tradition in its place, nor any of man's rudiments. Some commentators and preachers work hard to *keep the meaning in*, cut it down, restrain it, keep it from shining, make you see just as little in it as possible. Then instead of it, they bring up the great loads of their philosophy and learning. Or rather, they spike the guns of God's Word, and then roll forward their tumbrils of philosophy, and baggage wagons of erudition, as if the battle were to be gained by those, and not by God's artillery.

Others there are again, who handle the Word of God deceitfully, by not rightly dividing it, by cutting off perhaps half of a truth, and throwing it away, or suffocating it with philosophical speculations. Some treat the very *centrality* of the Gospel, Christ and him crucified, in this manner. Some will take the great, beaming, radiant doctrine of the atonement by the sufferings and death of Christ, and cutting off the whole matter of sufferings and death, and the whole amazing manifestation of God's righteousness and justice in the pardon of the believer, as displayed in that propitiatory sacrifice, or resolving it into the play of a dramatic exhibition, dwell only on the character and life of Christ, and make the incarnation a manifestation merely of love, and not what God affirms it to be, a propitiation, that he might be just, and yet justify the guilty and the lost. Thus, while Christ is apparently brought forward, Christ crucified is quite put in the background, and the cross and death of Christ, instead of being the grand reality in that amazing scene and system of redemption, and the power of God in arresting and saving the soul, dwindles to a mere circumstance, a mere adjunct, taken up by the way. Now by whatever words or theories such a treatment of God's Word is covered, it is handling the Word of God deceitfully, and not by manifestation of the truth, but concealment of it, by philosophy and vain deceit. Beware lest any man so spoil you, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and *not after Christ.*

Others again, instead of Christ and him crucified, present, as the main burthen and intent of the Gospel, the church and its ordinances, after the tradition of men. Some go so far, even in the Protestant communion, as to adopt the antichristian and Papal maxim, that it is through the church that we come to Christ, and not through Christ only that we come into the church. This is a dogma which has been the perdition of thousands upon thousands, and will be of thousands more. It is a word which eateth as doth a canker. It eats into the heart of the church of Christ, and devours all true piety, where it prevails, while at the same time it makes

the church big in visibility, organization, ordinances, forms, and the pomp of circumstance and power. But why, says the Word of God, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men, as if the church were a mere worldly corporation? These are profane and vain babblings, that will increase unto more ungodliness. And certainly a church that undertakes to constitute itself in Christ, by virtue of its organization, as a church historically apostolic, and then sets up the dogma that men can be in Christ only by being in the church, is but a shadow cast by the true body of Christ; or rather, it is a merely fleshly body, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, the Lord Jesus, from whom all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. A church proclaiming that men must come to Christ by the church, increaseth with the increase of men, but not of God. Under such a sign and dogma of tradition and world rudiment, men that come into the church to get to Christ, stop *with* the church, and go no further, and are likely, under the anodynes of ordinances, never to gain Christ. For along with this error comes in that other deceivableness of unrighteousness and frustration of the grace of God, answering to the Jewish tenet of circumcision as the gate of heaven, against which Paul thundered such fiery anathemas—the tenet of baptismal regeneration—rendering the grace of God of none effect, and justification by faith a dead and useless doctrine. It may be laid down as a rule infallible, that whoever trusts in any church, or in any ordinance, or in any creature, to bring him to Christ, or to put him in Christ, will never find Christ, will never come to Christ. He never will, so long as this delusion lasts. And thus it was that Paul, by God's commission, launched the bolts of such a fiery vengeance against those who thus corrupted the church and the Word of the living God. I tell you, said he, that Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever ye be, that trust in such things; ye are fallen from grace. If you be baptismally regenerated, and trust in that, you will never be regenerated in any other way, and Christ can profit you nothing. If you trust to get to heaven, because you are the children of the church and of Abraham, God will sooner people heaven from the stones in the streets, than admit you there, by such contempt, nullification, and falsification of the cross of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward by such things. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they make much of such things, and glory in them. But God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Now, in one way and another, the world is full of these errors,

corrupting the truth, deluding the soul, and deadening the Word of God. Some of these errors are like a breastwork of cotton, before a beleaguered city, in which all the balls of an invading army may be buried, and never one reach the walls, or houses, or people of the city. Just so, the very arrows of God's truth fall blunted before hearts thus entrenched by the elastic rudiments of the world, by the traditions, and commandments, and doctrines of men. And therefore it was, and is, that our blessed Lord, in the New Testament and in the Old, always did, and still does, speak with such devouring indignation against those who make paths to heaven which he has not made, and set up gates and sign-boards to heaven, of their own construction, which are gates to hell; making the commandment of God of none effect, through their tradition. Ye hypocrites! in vain do ye worship me. Ye blind leaders of the blind! Ye that beguile, and they that are beguiled, shall both fall into the ditch. It was because these dogmas and ordinances of men are the source of fleshly arrogance, persecution, and pride, the denial of the cross, the destruction of faith, the perversion of the Word of God, the corruption of the church, the delusion and destruction of the soul!

Now our subject, and this text, out of which it has directly grown, shows you what you are to find in God's Word—Jesus Christ and him crucified; what constitutes the worth of God's Word—Jesus Christ and him crucified; for what you are to cherish, study, and prize God's Word—Jesus Christ and him crucified; and how you are to study God's Word—in Christ and him crucified, in the light of his cross, and by the teachings of his Spirit. If you do not find Christ in the Word, and life and immortality only through him, the Word, with all its glory, will be of no use or efficacy with you, save in your condemnation. And our blessed Lord himself has said, that the Word which he has given unto you, and spoken to you, *that* shall judge you at the last day.

But if you *do* find Christ in it, then you will ever value it in and for Christ. You will love it for its clear, decisive, glorious manifestation of Christ and him crucified. You will be watchful against all handling of the Word of God deceitfully, to mar the glory, beauty, and completeness of that doctrine. You will be jealous of all philosophy and vain deceit, and all the traditions of men, and all the rudiments of the world, and all the speculations of intruding fleshly minds, that would beguile you from the simplicity of your faith, and make you distrust or forget your completeness in Christ. You will be anxious to study the Word of God in God's light, by the guidance, interpretation, and indwelling life of God's Holy Spirit. It is he, the Spirit of Christ and of the Father, the Messenger of the Father and the Son, who is to lead you into all truth, to sanctify you by the truth, and in so doing, and in order so to do, taking of the things that are Christ's—not man's—and showing them to your souls. You will rely, not upon the enticing words of

man's wisdom, but upon the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. You will love Paul's exclusiveness—"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." And in proportion as you love and imitate that, because your love, like Paul's, is set only upon Christ, in that proportion will you also know and love the comprehensiveness and the glory of Paul's prayers; and the great strife of *your* prayers, the fire and life of your study of the Word, will be "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." And thus he will "grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. And unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."