

“BARNABAS,

A GOOD MAN, AND FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST  
AND OF FAITH;”

A S E R M O N ,

PREACHED IN THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON  
OF SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1847,

In Saint Clement's Church, Ipswich,

Upon the occasion of the death of the

REV. J. T. NOTTIDGE,

*Rector of St. Clement's and St. Helen's, Ipswich.*

BY THE

REV. W. W. WOODHOUSE, M. A.

CURATE OF ST. CLEMENT'S.

—  
**SIXPENCE.**  
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*The profits of the sale of this Sermon will be applied to the funds of  
St. Clement's District Visiting Society.*

This Sermon was composed with no view to publication, but the strongly expressed wishes of many of the parishioners that it might be published, in order that they might possess some details of the last moments of one who so long held forth to them the word of life, led to its appearance, and in a cheap form to be within reach of the many.



# S E R M O N .

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HE WAS A GOOD MAN, AND FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST  
AND OF FAITH.--Acts xi. 24.

My mind has been led to various portions of holy writ, as appropriate for improving the death of our honoured father in Christ, whom we have lately followed to the grave. His ministerial character, and the blank which his death has caused among us, has brought to my mind the notice which God took of the death of Moses, "Moses, my servant is dead." The eminency of his character as a friend has made me think of Elisha's lamentation for Elijah's departure, which I, for one, might well take up,— "My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." His remarkably holy and his extraordinary useful life, pointed to the character which our Lord gave to John, "He was a bright and shining light." Whilst his hoary head, which was a crown of glory to himself, and a diadem of beauty to his friends; together with his years, which spoke so well, and the multitude of his years, which taught so much wisdom, made me feel that it would have been no unmeaning language to have applied to ourselves at such a season as this, the lamentation of the prophet, "The crown is fallen from our heads, woe unto us, for we have sinned."

But desiring, dearly beloved, above all things, God's glory and your edification, no words have so commended themselves to my judgment as those contained in the text,

“He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith,” for as much as they will not only afford me an opportunity of speaking of his excellency, but of tracing that excellency to its source.

“Barnabas,” saith inspiration, “was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” Here are three truths:—

- I. *He was a good man,*
- II. *Full of the Holy Ghost*
- III. *And of faith.*

And may they be spiritually applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit Himself.

I. Barnabas was a good man, not naturally, for we are all “born in sin and shapen in iniquity.” “There is none good, no not one.” Man is a fallen creature—fallen from God, from holiness, from rectitude, and from every thing that is good, and naturally disposed to every thing that is evil, “For out of the heart (says the highest authority,) proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witnesses, blasphemies.” These are the natural, spontaneous productions of man’s fallen, depraved, unregenerated heart—so far is he from being naturally good.

Much less was Barnabas absolutely good. God alone is good in this respect. The most perfect of men, when tested by the requirements of the holy law of God, must be found wanting. To deny this, is to assert that fallen man can give a perfect, complete, undeviating obedience to God’s holy law. But if we understand the spirituality of the law aright, we shall discover that a single failing, blemish, or imperfection in our obedience, is fatal to our goodness in God’s sight and to our salvation by the law of works, “For he that breaketh the law in one point, is guilty of the whole law,” and “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” It is perfect goodness which the law requires, it is perfect goodness which a perfectly holy God alone can accept. But where

can such a goodness be found? it is not pharisaical, but actual goodness. The man who is thus good is a righteous man, resembles God in all his holy perfections, has loved God perfectly, supremely, and unceasingly; never has sinned against God or man in thought, word, or deed; has fulfilled all righteousness and is without spot, taint, or blemish; in a word, is a perfect man. But is there such an one? What saith the Scripture? "There is none good, no not one," *i. e.* there is none absolutely good. It was by the grace of God that Barnabas was a good man. He originally possessed no better nature than others, his heart was equally deceitful, his will equally stubborn, his affections equally dead, and his actions equally wicked. But when the grace of God penetrated and pervaded his heart, then the fruits and graces of the Spirit appeared in his life and conversation in all goodness. Thus, in the 4th of Acts and 36th and 37th verses, we read that he sold his land and laid the price of it at the Apostle's feet. And in the verse preceding the text, we find that his heart was gladdened with the sight of the grace of God taking root in the hearts of others, and that he exhorted the newly converted disciples to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. He knew the power and sweetness of God's grace, the wretched thralldom from which it had delivered him, and the blessed prospects which it had opened up to him, and he, as a good man, was glad when he saw the same effects being produced in others, by the same instrumentality.

And now were I disposed to speak of the goodness of your late minister, a wide field is before me. I might apply to him what the Jews said of the Centurion, "He loved our country, and hath built us a Synagogue;" I might point out how exactly the character of Cornelius was applicable to him, "for he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always;" I might compare him to Enoch, who "walked with God, and was not, for God took him."

But I would not spend my time in eulogizing the creature, I would much rather direct your minds to the source from whence all his goodness proceeded. And indeed it is not wanted, for as he cared not for a trumpet to be sounded before him in his life, so it is not necessary that one should be sounded for him after his death. "His works still praise him in the gates."

It would be an impertinence to his memory in this place, at least, to speak of his goodness. "He being dead, yet speaketh," and will speak for many a year to come. He has left a savour behind him in this church, parish, town, and neighbourhood, which will either be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, to many immortal souls.

If, then, I proceed to speak of his goodness, it will not be to eulogize it, but that you may glorify God on his behalf; and this I feel at liberty to do, for though I may not praise him, I may and I trust I shall set you upon praising God for the goodness which was wrought in him.

*He was a man of remarkable sanctity.* "You will find your Rector a holy man," said my friend, as I took my leave of him to come to Ipswich, for the first time. "Oh!" (said another) "he is such a holy man." A high and heavenly character for a fallen and fallible creature to sustain, and yet I can truly affirm, that during the five and a half years that it was my inexpressible privilege to be intimately acquainted with him, that I never saw a single action, or discovered a single motive, which did not fully accord with it. Some Christians glitter much in society, only to disappoint when followed to their homes, but it was in the house of your late minister that his goodness was most conspicuously seen. No one with a spiritual perception could live a single day in his house, without discovering that he was dwelling in a holy place, and that all the arrangements of that house were made in the Spirit of Zech. xiv. 20, 21., "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house

shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts."

*He was of a very prayerful Spirit.* In every thing by prayer and supplication he made known his requests unto God, and especially by ejaculatory petitions. Thus, whenever I informed him of any trial, trouble, or loss, befalling any of his flock, then at once the short but fervent prayer went up, "Lord help them," "The Lord bless and support them."

*In the same manner he gave thanks.* He was indeed a good man in the very respect that Barnabas was, for his own heart was gladdened, his own spirit cheered, and his own sorrows forgotten, whenever he saw or heard of the grace of God taking root in others, and immediately the aspiration of praise ascended. "The Lord be praised, to his name be all the glory." Many a time have I found him depressed with the infirmities of a body fast tending to dissolution, and have left him cheered and comforted, by being able to report favourably of the spiritual state of his people. The appearance of the least growth in grace, of the least shaking among the dry bones, the faintest hopes that any were beginning to seek the Lord in earnest was sufficient to make him forget his own pains, in the joy that he felt in the spiritual prosperity of those who were so dear unto him.

*He was very diligent in reading the Scriptures.* "The word of God dwelt in him richly," and was the very joy and rejoicing of his heart. It was his every-day custom to read several chapters in company with some other person, and thus he seldom refreshed his body with earthly, without afterwards refreshing his soul with spiritual food. It was only a few weeks before his death that a friend spent two days with him, and in that short time they read together no less than forty-seven chapters: so truly was "his delight in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night." No marvel, my brethren, that one who so

diligently fed upon the word, and drank in so copiously from the fountain of life, should flourish like the palm tree, and should grow like the cedar in Lebanon; should bring forth fruit in old age, and be fat and flourishing.

*His meekness and humility, his gentleness and disinterestedness, were very remarkable.* He was indeed a beautiful instance of "being all things to all men, to gain some." No sacrifice, but that of principle, was too great for him to make for the Gospel's sake. "In meekness ever instructing those who opposed themselves." What Paul said of himself and others, may be truly said of him, "He was gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children," so being affectionately desirous of you, he was willing to have imparted not the Gospel of God only, but also his own soul, because ye were dear unto him. "His eye was single, and his whole body was full of light." God's glory, and man's good, were the great objects of his life, and he appeared to have no other. So long as these great objects were attained he was satisfied, though others were the instruments, and he the looker on. As Barnabas proved his goodness by taking Paul by the hand, and bringing him out of obscurity to let him speak, whilst he himself was but a listener, so your late minister was ever ready to put others forward and to keep himself in the back ground.

Littleness of mind, selfishness and self-pleasing, there appeared absolutely to be none, and the secret of this great humility doubtless was, that he had learnt to prefer God's honor to his own, and that he was so intent upon pleasing God, that he cared but little about the honour which cometh from man. He acted as one who knew that it was not man's praise, but Christ's "well done," which will at last lead to true honour, and conduct to life and immortality.

*Your Minister was a decided Christian.* There was a seriousness, a decision in all he said and did, which told you at once what he meant and to whom he belonged. His whole conversation was seasoned with salt, and administered



grace and edification to his hearers. Not that he could not speak about other things than religion, few men could speak better upon general topics of conversation, few men's minds were better stored with the riches of ancient and modern learning than his,—but when he spoke of them it was as a Christian, all his learning was consecrated to the service of his Master. There was no lightness, no vain talking or jesting, which are not convenient; no insipid, vapid conversation, in which professing Christians so much indulge; he spoke as one who must give an account for every word, as well as every action, at the judgment bar of Christ. Yes, my Brethren, your Pastor was a decided Christian, and the secret of his great decision was, that his hopes, desires, affections were in heaven, he was but a stranger and pilgrim upon earth.

*He was a man of great self-denying liberality.* “He was rich and ought to give,” say some, forgetting that his charity was of such a nature, to such an extent, as to cost him the greatest self-denial. He gave till he made himself comparatively poor. His benevolence was a costly benevolence. He denied himself of things which there is scarcely a tradesman in this parish would not think necessary to his comfort and respectability.

In this respect he quite came up to the Psalmist's description of a good man, “A good man sheweth favour and lendeth; he hath dispersed and given to the poor.” It was said of Calvin, and it may with equal truth be said of your late Minister, “that he had no way of laying up what he had, but by laying it out in works of charity,” and surely this is the best way of laying up a good foundation, security, pawn, or pledge, as some read it, for the time to come, and so lay hold on eternal life.

How eminent was he in this as in every other good work. How many widows, how many orphans, how many afflicted, how many desolate have received, unsolicited, from his hands, those things which they durst not have asked

from their most intimate friends. His charity was not confined to sects or parties, he gave to all, for Christ's sake alone. The memory of the just is blessed, and surely his memory is embalmed in many a widow's heart, and his name pronounced blessed by many an orphan's lips. For, "when the ear heard him, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness to him: because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of them that were ready to perish came upon him: and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

This is but a very imperfect sketch of the goodness of his character, but I must at once proceed to mark the source of it: which leads me,

II. To observe that, Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost." Barnabas was a good man; he sold all that he had; he rejoiced greatly when he saw the grace of God taking root in others; he earnestly exhorted the newly-made converts to cleave fast to the Lord. But the spring of all his disinterestedness, zeal, and love—the lever which set all his powers in movement in so happy a direction—was the Holy Ghost, which filled, constrained, energized his soul. A Christian is the workmanship of God the Holy Spirit; and had not the Spirit worked in him he must have remained a stranger to God's grace, and could have had no part in the blessings of the Redeemer's kingdom.

We have said much of the goodness of your late minister, but since he was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, the child of wrath, even as others; and since by practice he was once the servant of sin, the slave of satan, taken captive by him at his will: we must not forget that for all he was in life, no less than for all he is now in glory, he is a debtor to God the Spirit, who is the Lord and giver of life.

We are apt when we behold a very exalted Christian, who has approached more nearly to the full stature of a

man in Christ Jesus, and who has more of Christ's image visible in his life and conversation than others, to look upon such a one as a strange phenomenon, the effect of chance or of favourable circumstances, and not at once to give God's grace all the glory. But such a view of the excellent of the earth is very dishonouring to the Holy Ghost, for whatever such brilliant Christians may now be, they were once as dead, and as sensual and as worldly as others, and that they differ from the vilest is entirely owing to the sovereign grace of God, regenerating, purifying, and sanctifying them by His Spirit.

Whenever, therefore, you think of his goodness, think of the source of it. Think what he was by nature, an unregenerated, and by practice, an unconverted and worldly man. Think what made the difference, how it came to pass that one who by nature was so bad, became so exceedingly good. This will not only lead you to praise the grace of God which made him what he was, but will bring comforts unto your own souls. For if God's grace did so much for him, it can do as much for you : if it made him so illustrious an example of the power of his grace, it can change your heart, subdue your stubborn affections, and make you a Christian indeed. Then you would be a brand plucked from the burning, and he was nothing more. This may appear strong language to apply to one so excellent, so eminent, so holy, and yet were that bright spirit who is now before the throne, to come and take his stand once again within these walls, which have so often reverberated his much loved voice, sure I am that he would like well the text, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

I believe it was the very last time that your Rector was out of his house alive, that a Christian friend overtook him, and the conversation turned upon the blessedness of salvation, being all of God's sovereign grace and mercy. When the aged Saint, with some force, struck the ground with his stick, and said, "Aye Brother, if Salvation were

not all of grace, neither you nor I could be saved." And that this was no transitory feeling of the moment, but the settled conviction of his mind, all you who have been in the habit of hearing him preach, can testify.

Brethren, I dwell upon this, because I am jealous for the honor of my master,—lest you should ascribe that honor to the goodness of the creature, which belongs exclusively to the grace of the Creator. You all do honor to the man, you all bow down before the excellency of his character; I have only to assert, and each and all confess, that he was a good man, but it is only a few I fear who acknowledge the author of his goodness, God, the Holy Ghost.

Whilst then you acknowledge the image to be a faithful one, and the superscription true, mistake not the author, forget not the source of all his excellency, the sovereign grace of God.

Honor, cherish, love his memory as much as you will, but let God have all the glory. The sentiment ever uppermost on his mind when self was introduced, was, "by the grace of God, I am, what I am;" "I live, yet not I;" "I laboured, yet not I." "Blessed be God, to His name be all the praise."

If, therefore, you would wish to pay him that tribute of respect which would be really grateful to his feelings, could he be affected by earthly things, you must do honor to the grace of God, that grace which energized his frail frame and enabled him with such heroic devotion to pursue the path of self-denial, without ever once faltering, or growing weary.

We have seen the nature and source of his goodness, this brings me to speak,

III. Of the faith of Barnabas. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of Faith."

Nothing but strong faith could have induced Barnabas to part with his land, his comforts, his worldly enjoyments, for the trials, hardships, persecutions, and cruel death, which awaited the first preachers of the Gospel. But believing

that God was faithful who had promised, that this world was only a passing scene, but the foreground to immortality, the time of probation for eternity,—he willingly sacrificed every thing, to secure those soul-satisfying pleasures which God has prepared for those who love him, and wait for his appearing. And faith has been the principle upon which all God's people have acted in every age of the world. It was faith which made Abraham forsake his father's house and father's land, for a country which he knew not of; it was faith which drew Moses from the luxuries of the court, to encounter the hardships of the desert; it was faith which caused Paul to desert Gamaliel's feet, and the society of the learned at Jerusalem, to join the despised sect of the Nazarenes; and it was faith which enabled your late Pastor to resist, at an age when the world appears most charming, all its false delights, and to commence a path of every day self-denial, which was to end only with his life.

You all know how untiringly, though not untired, he visited the sick, and that he never shunned the place of danger, though the pestilence was scattering death around him. You all can bear witness, that early and late, sometimes before the sun was up, and at other times long after the sun had gone down, he has been seen as an angel of mercy wending his way to scenes of misery, wretchedness, and death.

Strong must have been his faith, firm his belief in the promises, to have induced him to forsake employments for which he had a peculiar relish; being a man of remarkable fine taste, and fond of literary pursuits, and with abundant means at his command for indulging them; to enter upon and to follow with such industry, duties which required daily self-denial. Had he consulted his own ease and interest, instead of God's glory, and your good, he might have gone the round of pleasure and dissipation, have visited the great and the noble, have amassed immense wealth, and possessed numberless estates; but the life he lived here in

the flesh, he lived by faith upon the Son of God—he preferred being rich in faith and good works, to this world's profit and advantage; and since they are wise who win souls, and they that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever, eternity alone can declare how wise, as well as good, he was.

My brethren, it is well to look at actions in the light of eternity, to anticipate what our estimate of them will be when we stand naked and defenceless before the judgment seat of Christ, in fact to learn to look at actions now just as we shall look upon them for ever. Say then, my brethren, you that to this moment have counted your late minister an enthusiast, because he kept his eye steadily fixed upon the crown of glory which Christ held out for his encouragement, say now whether, with all his self-denial, with all his sacrifices, with all his losses, he was not wise? Whether he did not act the part of a rational creature in denying himself for a little moment, that he might be blessed for evermore? I know your answer, but will you go and do likewise?

And if he acted faith upon the promises of God in general, in an especial manner his faith rested upon those which hold out Salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. A great and willing Saviour, a great and free salvation, were the things which his faith fixed upon. A salvation without money and without price, was that "which" his soul delighted in, because he felt thoroughly persuaded that the best man that ever lived must be undone at the last, if salvation were in the smallest degree by the merit of works. He felt that he was lost, but for the grace of God in Christ, and that Christ and Christ alone could meet his case, supply his wants, and save his soul; and therefore it was that he rested so simply, in so childlike a spirit, upon the promises of God, looking for the mercy of God unto eternal life. And Brethren, what fervent love to Christ and desire after heaven was kindled by this faith in the breast of your late Minister. How did he love Christ, speak of Christ, extol Christ, breathe after

Christ, even to the very last, the oft repeated prayer upon his death-bed being, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly,"

And how did his faith soften, humble, sweeten, purify his heart, and make him fruitful, in every good word and work ?

*And as he lived, so he died in faith.* The longer I live, the less I care what men do or say upon their death beds. The question is, how men live, and not how they die. And it is very remarkable, that during the whole of his illness, few persons took the trouble to ask what he said, thought, or did. They knew his life, and that was enough, that he long had walked with God, that he had long been clad and equipped for his last journey, and come the message sooner or later, that an abundant entrance awaited him into the everlasting kingdom of God's dear Son.

But I may just say, that during the whole of his illness, not a single cloud ever came between the dying saint and the ever-living Saviour. He went over dryshod. His bodily sufferings were very great, but his consolations were still greater. When suffering more than usual, a friend said, "The Lord help thee," "I will help thee is the promise," he replied: "wonderfully, wonderfully, wonderfully, has he helped me."

The last night but one of his life, he repeated at least twenty times the words, "He hath done all things well." His soul must indeed have been near to heaven, which could find such perfect satisfaction and acquiescence in all God's dealings with him.

Again he said, "Jesus is waiting to receive me." "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." Again, he repeated with a firm voice, these blessed words, "The just shall live by faith." His happy soul was now pluming her wings, preparing to take its blessed flight into the regions of perfect light, he was on the very threshold of glory, but near as he was, and long and faithfully as he had served his Master, he could not afford to loose the comfort of that blessed doctrine that the

just, *i. e.* good people, praying people, holy people, no less than the very worst, must be saved by faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ. He had made his robes white in the blood of the lamb, and now that he was about to enter into the very presence of God, this was all his joy, and all his salvation.

Then after a long pause, and when no one had spoken to him for some time, he said, "Joyful, awful," doubtless referring to his death, and added, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Upon the words being repeated to him, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee," he answered, "Joyful faith, the Lord is faithful."

At another time he repeated these words, "Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

And again, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

"Present with the Lord." "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him."

On the day of his death, he asked what day it was, and upon being told that it was Thursday, he said, "Happy Thursday." Yes, my Brethren, it was a happy Thursday for him, the end of all his sorrows, the commencement of never-ending joys.

A friend repeating the words, "O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory?" he replied, "Amen, there is no sting, there is no sting; thanks, thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory."

Such are only a few of the many blessed things which he was enabled through grace to say and feel in his last hours, but surely they are enough to make the worldling exclaim "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his; and the believer with renewed



thankfulness to exclaim, "O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In conclusion, *the subject speaks words of warning to the careless.*

It reminds all of the greatness of our past privileges, and consequently of our present responsibility. It is no slight responsibility to hear the gospel preached from any man's lips, but to have been permitted to hear it from one who was so bright an example of faith, patience, and godliness, has greatly increased our responsibility.

Brethren, I count it one of the greatest blessings of our lives, that we have so long been privileged to hear so much from his lips, and to mark so much in his life, and we have all reason to be greatly humbled, (at least I can speak for myself) that our improvement has borne so little proportion to our privilege. His whole life was one great sermon, which every man and woman, in the parish, might read and understand. In him you have beheld Christianity embodied and alive, its principles in operation, its virtues in exercise. He was a living, a walking proof of the truth of Christianity, and of the power of divine grace. "His doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, and patience," you have fully known. How great then will your condemnation be, who have grown grey without profiting by the preaching and the life of such a man. It had been better for you never to have heard the gospel; it would have been well for you to have been born in the wilds of Paganism, than to have lived and died impenitent under such favourable circumstances for securing your salvation. O that his death may speak to some who have neglected to hear his voice in life. That they might consider that heaven is a place not only for holy ministers, but for all who love God and wait for the appearing of his Son Jesus Christ.

It is true that you are not required to build churches, you

cannot give large amounts of money to the poor, but you can, and you must if you will be saved, follow your Minister in holiness of life, walk, and conversation.

And *careless sinners*, I speak it solemnly, though sorrowfully, that there is little probability, speaking after the manner of men, that you who have so long resisted the winning invitation, the melting intreaties of your late Pastor, will now at the eleventh hour, when your affections, memory, and bodies, are more than half dead, be won to Christ, by any other instrumentality.

*Aged sinners*, believe me when I say that I feel you to be in the most imminent danger, that there is but one step between you and death. Thirty long years have some of you listened to the gospel, hundreds if not thousands of sermons have you heard, and yet have not begun to pray, to read your Bibles, to forsake your sins, and to be in earnest about your souls. What but a miracle of grace can snatch you from destruction ?

*The subject addresses words of encouragement to seeking souls.* You have heard of the source of all man's goodness, and the Lord's hand is not shortened, his ear is not heavy, his mercies are not restrained. He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. The same to pardon, bless and save. There is therefore every encouragement for the seeking soul. Nay the immutable promise is, "Seek, and your soul shall live." If, therefore, you have the feeblest desire, do not despise, but cherish it.

I have frequently heard your Minister say, that when he first began to seek God, it was out of a principle of fear, because he durst not do otherwise, and that it was a very considerable time before he really felt interested in the things for which he prayed. He, of all men, was the last to discourage the faintest desire after a better state of things. He was no breaker of the bruised reed, he was no quencher of the smoking flax. It was a favourite saying of his, "a man cannot have one really good desire without the grace

of God; and having the grace of God in his heart, though it be no larger than a grain of mustard seed, all the powers of hell cannot prevail against it." If, then, dear Brethren, you have ever so small a desire to follow in the steps of your late Minister, as he followed in Christ's, be thankful for that desire, cherish it by prayer, meditation, reading of God's word, and by decision of conduct, before it grows cold.

Look upon it as an evidence of God's favour; you could not indeed have had it without His grace, and He that has given you it, can with it give you all things necessary to your salvation. May the Lord give every seeking soul grace to go on, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Ghrist, looking for the mercy of God, even unto eternal life.

Finally, *the subject addresses a word of exhortation to God's believing people.* "Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

We have seen that he was indebted to God's grace for all he was in life and death. But since in the kingdom of grace, no less than that of nature, God works by means: I shall not be detracting from grace in saying, that I believe that much of the eminency of your late Minister's character, is to be attributed to his great diligence in the use of all the appointed means of grace. For if it be true that "the soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing," it is also written, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich." As an instance of his perseverance and diligence in seeking spiritual improvement, I may mention a fact which escaped from his lips at the last teacher's meeting, which was held at his house. Speaking upon the great spiritual advantages arising from early rising, he said, "Many years since I prayerfully determined to make the attempt always to fix my thoughts upon God the very first thing in the morning, but it was some years before I succeeded to any thing like profit or regularity in the exercise;" and then he added, with a sweet thankful smile, "Oh how thankful I now am that I persevered in the

attempt." With such diligence and perseverance in seeking early communion with God, it is no wonder that his graces shone so brightly, and that he was so bright and shining a light in an evil and wicked generation.

Diligence and perseverance are necessary to excellency in any profession : they are especially so in the highest, the Christian. There is no making progress in the Divine life so long as we are content to remain in an idle, sleepy, sluggish frame of mind. If you desire to attain in any degree to that excellency to which, through grace, our dear friend attained, you must be up and doing ; you must " give all diligence to make your calling and election sure ;" you must be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ;" and beside this, giving all diligence, you must " 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 the promise is, " If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasures ; then thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. (Prov. ii. 3—5.)

Thus, my Brethren, by following the faith, diligence, and perseverance of your late Minister, by transcribing unto your own lives whatever was instructive or exemplary in his, he will not only still live among you, but death which has taken him from you, shall make you amends by taking you to him. And of you it shall be said, when you are laid asleep beside your Fathers, " He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of Faith."

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