

The New Park Street Pulpit.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN'S BLESSEDNESS.

A Sermon

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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Romans viii. 28.

I. WE have here the description of a true Christian, and a declaration of that Christian's blessedness. We have him first very succinctly, but very fully described in these words—"Them that love God, them who are the called according to his purpose." These two expressions are the great distinguishing marks whereby we are able to separate the precious from the vile, by discovering to us who are the children of God.

The first contains an outward manifestation of the second—"Them that love God." Now, there are many things in which the worldly and the godly do agree; but on this point there is a vital difference. No ungodly man loves God—at least not in the Bible sense of the term. An unconverted man may love a God, as, for instance, the God of nature, and the God of the imagination; but the God of revelation no man can love, unless grace has been poured into his heart, to turn him from that natural enmity of the heart towards God, in which all of us are born. And there may be many differences between godly men, as there undoubtedly are; they may belong to different sects, they may hold very opposite opinions, but all godly men agree in this, that they love God. Whosoever loveth God, without doubt, is a Christian; and whosoever loveth him not, however high may be his pretensions, however boastful his professions, hath not seen God, neither known him, for "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." True believers love God as their *Father*; they have "the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father." They love him as their *King*; they are willing to obey him, to walk in his commands is their delight; no path is so soft to their feet as the path of God's precepts, the way of obedience thereunto. They love God also as their *Portion*, for in him they live and move and have their being; God is their all, without him they have nothing, but possessing him, however little they may have of outward good, they feel that they are rich to all the intents of bliss. They love God as their future *Inheritance*; they believe that when days and years are past they shall enter into the bosom of God; and their highest joy and delight is the full conviction and belief, that one day they shall dwell for ever near his throne, be hidden in the brightness of his glory, and enjoy his everlasting favour. Dost thou love God, not with lip-language, but with heart-service? Dost thou love to pay him homage? Dost thou love to hold communion with him? Dost thou frequent his mercy-seat? Dost thou abide in his commandments, and desire to be conformed unto his image? If so, then the sweet things which we shall have to say this morning are thine. But if thou art no lover of God, but a stranger to him, I beseech thee do not pilfer to-day and steal a comfort that was not intended for thee. "All things work together for good," but not to all men; they only work together for the good of "them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Note the second phrase, which contains also a description of the Christian—"the called according to his purpose." However much the Arminian may try to fritter away the meaning of this 8th chapter of the Romans we are obliged as

long as we use terms and words to say, that the 8th chapter of the Romans and the 9th, are the very pillars of that Gospel which men now call Calvinism. No man after having read these chapters attentively, and having understood them, can deny that the doctrines of sovereign, distinguishing grace, are the sum and substance of the teaching of the Bible. I do not believe that the Bible is to be understood except by receiving these doctrines as true. The apostle says that those who love God are "the called according to his purpose;" by which he means to say two things—first, that all who love God love him because he called them to love him. *He* called them, mark you. All men are called by the ministry, by the Word, by daily providence, to love God; there is a common call always given to men to come to Christ, the great bell of the gospel rings a universal welcome to every living soul that breathes; but alas! though that bell hath the very sound of heaven, and though all men do in a measure hear it, for "their line is gone out into all the earth and their Word unto the end of the world," yet there was never an instance of any man having been brought to God simply by that sound. All these things are insufficient for the salvation of any man; there must be superadded the special call, the call which man cannot resist, the call of efficacious grace, working in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure. Now, all them that love God love him because they have had a special, irresistible, supernatural call. Ask them whether they would have loved God if left to themselves, and to a man, whatever their doctrines. they will confess—

"Grace taught my soul to pray,
Grace made my eyes o'erflow,
'Tis grace that kept me to this day
And will not let me go."

I never heard a Christian yet who said that he came to God of himself, left to his own free-will. Free-will may look very pretty in theory, but I never yet met any one who found it work well in practice. We all confess that if we are brought to the marriage-banquet—

" 'Twas the same love that spread the feast
That gently forced us in,
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin."

Many men cavil at election; the very word with some is a great bugbear; they no sooner hear it than they turn upon their heel indignantly. But this know, O man, whatever thou sayest of this doctrine, it is a stone upon which, if any man fall, he shall suffer loss, but if it fall upon him it shall grind him to powder. Not all the sophisms of the learned, nor all the legerdemain of the cunning, will ever be able to sweep the doctrine of election out of Holy Scripture. Let any man hear and judge. Hearken ye to this passage in the 9th of Romans! "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid! For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour! What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." These are God's words; if any man doth cavil at them, let him cavil; he rejecteth the testimony of God against himself. If I promulgated

the doctrine on my own authority, I could not blame you if you should turn against me, and reject it; but when, on the authority of Holy Scripture, I propound it, God forbid that any man should quarrel therewith.

I have affirmed, and I am sure most Christians will bear witness, that what I said was the truth, that if any man loveth God he loves him because God gave him grace to love him. Now, suppose I should put the following question to any converted man in this hall. *Side by side with you there sits an ungodly person; you two have been brought up together; you have lived in the same house; you have enjoyed the same means of grace; you are converted, he is not; will you please to tell me what has made the difference?* Without a solitary exception the answer would be this—"If I am a Christian and he is not, unto God be the honour." Do you suppose for a moment that this is any injustice in God in having given you grace which he did not give to another? I suppose you say "Injustice, no; God has a right to do as he wills with his own; I could not claim grace, nor could my companions; God chose to give it to me; the other has rejected grace wilfully to his own fault, and I should have done the same, but that he gave 'more grace,' whereby my will was constrained." Now, sir, if it is not wrong for God to do the thing, how can it be wrong for God to purpose to do the thing? and what is election, but God's purpose to do what he does do? It is a fact which any man must be a fool who would dare to deny that God does give to one man more grace than to another; we cannot account for the salvation of one and the non-salvation of another but by believing, that God has worked more effectually in one man's heart than another's—unless you choose to give the honour to man, and say it consists in one man's being better than another, and if so I will have no argument with you, because you do not know the gospel at all, or you would know that salvation is not of works but of grace. If, then, you give the honour to God, you are bound to confess that God has done more for the man that is saved than for the man that is not saved. How, then, can election be unjust, if its effect is not unjust? However, just or unjust as man may choose to think it, God has done it, and the fact stands in man's face, let him reject it as he pleases. God's people are known by their outward mark: they love God, and the secret cause of their loving God is this—God chose them from before the foundation of the world that they should love him, and he sent forth the call of his grace, so that they were called according to his purpose, and were led by grace to love and to fear him. If that is not the meaning of the text I do not understand the English language. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Now, my hearers, before I proceed to enter into the text, let the question go round. Do I love God? Have I any reason to believe that I have been called according to his purpose? Have I been born again from above? Has the Spirit operated in my heart in a manner to which flesh and blood never can attain? Have I passed from death unto life by the quickening agency of the Holy Ghost? If I have, then God purposed that I should do so, and the whole of this great promise is mine.

II. We shall take the words one by one, and try to explain them.

1. Let us begin with the word "work." "We know that all things work." Look around, above, beneath, and all things work. They work, in opposition to idleness. The idle man that folds his arms or lies upon the bed of sloth is an exception to God's rule; for except himself all things work. There is not a star, though it seemeth to sleep in the deep blue firmament, which doth not travel its myriads of miles and work; there is not an ocean, or a river, which is not ever working, either clapping its thousand hands with storms, or bearing on its bosom the freight of nations. There is not a silent nook within the deepest forest glade where work is not going on. Nothing is idle. The world is a great machine, but it is never standing still: silently all through the watches of the night, and through the hours of day, the earth revolveth on its axis, and works out its predestinated course. Silently the forest groweth, anon it is felled; but all the while between its growing and felling it is at work. Everywhere the earth works; mountains work; nature in its inmost bowels is at work; even the centre of the great heart of the world is ever beating; some-

times we discover its working in the volcano and the earthquake, but even when most still all things are ever working.

They are ever working too, *in opposition to the word play*. Not only are they ceaselessly active, but they are active for a purpose. We are apt to think that the motion of the world and the different evolutions of the stars are but like the turning round of a child's windmill; they produce nothing. That old preacher Solomon once said as much as that. He said—"The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits." But Solomon did not add, that things are not what they seem. The world is not at play; it hath an object in its wildest movement. Avalanche, hurricane, earthquake, are but order in an unusual form; destruction and death are but progress in veiled attire. Everything that is and is done, worketh out some great end and purpose. The great machine of this world is not only in motion, but there is something weaving in it, which as yet mortal eye hath not fully seen, which our text hinteth at when it says, It is working out good for God's people.

And once again, all things work *in opposition to Sabbath*. We morally speak of work, especially on this day, as being the opposite of sacred rest and worship. Now, at the present moment all things work. Since the day when Adam fell all things have had to toil and labour. Before Adam's fall the world kept high and perpetual holiday; but now the world has come to its work-days, now it hath to toil. When Adam was in the garden the world had its Sabbath: and it shall never have another Sabbath till the Millennium shall dawn, and then when all things have ceased to work, and the kingdoms shall be given up to God, even the Father, then shall the world have her Sabbath, and shall rest; but at present all things do work.

Dear brethren, let us not wonder if we have to work too. If we have to toil, let us remember, this is the world's week of toil. The 6,000 years of continual labour, and toil, and travail, have happened not to us alone, but to the whole of God's great universe; the whole world is groaning, and travailling. Let us not be backward in doing our work. If all things are working, let us work too—"work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work." And let the idle and slothful remember that they are a great anomaly: they are blots in the great work-writing of God; they mean nothing: in all the book of letters with which God has written out the great word "work," they are nothing at all. But let the man that worketh, though it be with the sweat of his brow and with aching hands, remember that he, if he is seeking to bless the Lord's people, is in sympathy with all things—not only in sympathy with their work, but in sympathy with their aim.

2. Now, the next word, "All things work *together*." That is *in opposition to their apparent confliction*. Looking upon the world with the mere eye of sense and reason, we say, "Yes, all things work, but they work contrary to one another. There are opposite currents; the wind bloweth to the north and to the south. The world's barque, it is true, is always tossed with waves, but these waves toss her first to the right and then to the left; they do not steadily bear her onward to her desired haven. It is true the world is always active, but it is with the activity of the battle-field, wherein hosts encounter hosts and the weaker are overcome." Be not deceived; it is not so; things are not what they seem; "all things work *together*." There is no opposition in God's providence; the raven wing of war is co-worker with the dove of peace. The tempest strives not with the peaceful calm—they are linked together and work together, although they seem to be in opposition. Look at our history. How many an event has seemed to be conflicting in its day, that has worked out good for us! The strifes of barons and kings for mastery might have been thought to be likely to tread out the last spark of British liberty; but they did rather kindle the pile. The various rebellions of nations, the heavings of society, the strife of anarchy, the tumults of war—all, all these things, overruled by God, have but made the chariot of the church progress more mightily; they have not failed of their predestinated purpose—"good for the people of

God." I know my brethren, it is very hard for you to believe this. "What! say you? "I have been sick for many a day, and wife and children, dependent on my daily labour, are crying for food: will this work together for my good?" So saith the word, my brother, and so shalt thou find it ere long. "I have been in trade," says another, "and this commercial pressure has brought me exceedingly low, and distressed me: is it for my good?" My brother, thou art a Christian. I know thou dost not seriously ask the question, for thou knowest the answer of it. He who said, "all things work together," will soon prove to you that there is a harmony in the most discordant parts of your life. You shall find, when your biography is written, that the black page did but harmonize with the bright one—that the dark and cloudy day was but a glorious foil to set forth the brighter noon-tide of your joy. "All things work together." There is never a clash in the world: men think so, but it never is so. The charioteers of the Roman circus might with much cleverness and art, with glowing wheels, avoid each other; but God, with skill infinitely consummate, guides the fiery coursers of man's passion, yokes the storm, bits the tempest, and keeping each clear of the other from seeming evil still enduceth good, and better still; and better still in infinite progression.

We must understand the word "together," also in another sense. "All things work together for good:" that is to say, *none of them work separately*. I remember an old divine using a very pithy and homely metaphor, which I shall borrow to-day. Said he, "All things work together for good; but perhaps, any one of those 'all things' might destroy us if taken alone. The physician," says he, "prescribes medicine; you go to the chemist, and he makes it up; there is something taken from this drawer, something from that phial, something from that shelf: any one of those ingredients, it is very possible, would be a deadly poison, and kill you outright, if you should take it separately; but he puts one into the mortar, and then another, and then another, and when he has worked them all up with his pestle, and has made a compound, he gives them all to you as a whole, and together they work for your good, but any one of the ingredients might either have operated fatally, or in a manner detrimental to your health." Learn, then, that it is wrong to ask, concerning any particular act of providence; is this for my good? Remember, it is not the one thing alone that is for your good; it is the one thing put with another thing, and that with a third, and that with a fourth, and all these mixed together, that work for your good. Your being sick very probably might not be for your good, only God has something to follow your sickness, some blessed deliverance to follow your poverty, and he knows that when he has mixed the different experiences of your life together, they shall produce good for your soul and eternal good for your spirit. We know right well that there are many things that happen to us in our lives that would be the ruin of us if we were always to continue in the same condition. Too much joy would intoxicate us, too much misery would drive us to despair: but the joy and the misery, the battle and the victory, the storm and the calm, all these compounded make that sacred elixir whereby God maketh all his people perfect through suffering, and leadeth them to ultimate happiness. "All things work together for good."

3. Now we must take the next words. "All things work together for good." Upon these two words the meaning of my text will hinge. There are different senses to the word "good." There is the *worldling's sense*: "Who will show us any good?"—by which he means *transient good*, the good of the moment. "Who will put honey into my mouth? Who will feed my belly with hid treasures? Who will garnish my back with purple, and make my table groan with plenty?" That is "good,"—the vat bursting with wine, the barn full of corn! Now God has never promised that "all things shall work together" for such good as that to his people. Very likely all things will work together in a clean contrary way to that. Expect not, O Christian, that all things will work together to make thee rich; it is just possible they may all work to make thee poor. It may be that all the different providences that shall happen to thee will come wave upon wave, washing thy fortune upon the rocks, till it shall be wrecked, and then waves shall break o'er thee, till in that poor boat, the humble remnant of thy fortune thou shalt be out on the wide sea, with none to help thee but

God the Omnipotent. Expect not, then, that all things shall work together $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ for thy good.

The Christian understands the word "good" in another sense. By "good," he understands *spiritual good*. "Ah!" saith he, "I do not call gold good, but I call faith good! I do not think it always for my good to increase in treasure, but I know it is good to grow in grace. I do not know that it is for my good that I should be respectable and walk in good society; but I know that it is for my good that I should walk humbly with my God. I do not know that it is for my good that my children should be about me, like olive branches round my table, but I know that it is for my good that I should flourish in the courts of my God, and that I should be the means of winning souls from going down into the pit. I am not certain that it is altogether for my good to have kind and generous friends, with whom I may hold fellowship; but I know that it is for my good that I should hold fellowship with Christ, that I should have communion with him, even though it should be in his sufferings. I know it is good for me that my faith, my love, my every grace should grow and increase, and that I should be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ my blessed Lord and Master." Well, Christian, thou hast got upon the meaning of the text, then. "All things work together," for that kind of good to God's people. "Well!" says one, "I don't think anything of that, then." No, perhaps thou dost not; it is not very likely swine should ever lift their heads from their troughs to think aught of stars. I do not much wonder that thou shouldst despise spiritual good, for thou art yet "in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity;" a stranger to spiritual things, and let thy despising of spiritual things teach thee that thou art not spiritual, and therefore thou canst not understand the spiritual, because it must be spiritually discerned. To the Christian, however, the highest good he can receive on earth is to grow in grace. "There!" he says, "I had rather be a bankrupt in business than I would be a bankrupt in grace; let my fortune be decreased—better that, than that I should backslide; there! let thy waves and thy billows roll over me—better an ocean of trouble than a drop of sin; I would rather have thy rod a thousand times upon my shoulders, O my God, than I would once put out my hand to touch that which is forbidden, or allow my foot to run in the way of gainsayers." The highest good a Christian has here, is good spiritual.

And we may add, the text also means *good eternal*, lasting good. All things work together for a Christian's lasting good. They all work to bring him to Paradise—all work to bring him to the Saviour's feet. "So he bringeth them to their desired haven," said the Psalmist—by storm and tempest, flood and hurricane. All the troubles of a Christian do but wash him nearer heaven; the rough winds do but hurry his passage across the straits of this life to the port of eternal peace. All things work together for the Christian's eternal and spiritual good.

And yet I must say here, that sometimes all things work together for the Christian's *temporal good*. You know the story of old Jacob. "Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and now ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me," said the old Patriarch. But if he could have read God's secrets, he might have found that Simeon was not lost, for he was retained as a hostage—that Joseph was not lost, but gone before to smooth the passage of his grey hairs into the grave, and that even Benjamin was to be taken away by Joseph in love to his brother. So that what seemed to be against him, even in temporal matters, was for him. You may have heard also the story of that eminent martyr who was wont always to say, "All things work together for good." When he was seized by the officers of Queen Mary, to be taken to the stake to be burned, he was treated so roughly on the road that he broke his leg; and they jeeringly said, "All things work together for good, do they? How will your broken leg work for your good?" "I don't know," said he, "how it will, but for my good I know it will work, and you shall see it so." Strange to say, it proved true that it was for his good; for being delayed a day or so on the road through his lameness, he just arrived in London in time enough to hear that Elizabeth was proclaimed queen, and so he escaped the stake by his broken leg. He turned round upon the men who carried him, as

they thought, to his death, and said to them, "Now will you believe that all things work together for God?" So that though I said the drift of the text was spiritual good, yet sometimes in the main current there may be carried some rich and rare temporal benefits for God's children, as well as the richer spiritual blessings.

4. I am treating the text as you see, verbally. And now I must return to the word "work"—to notice the tense of it. "All things *work* together for good." It does not say that they *shall* work, or that they *have* worked; both of these are implied; but it says that they do work now. All things at this present moment are working together for the believer's good. I find it extremely easy to believe that all things *have* worked together for my good. I can look back at the past, and wonder at all the way whereby the Lord hath led me. If ever there lived a man who has reason to be grateful to Almighty God, I think I am that man. I can see black storms that have lowered o'er my head, and torrents of opposition that have run across my path; but I can thank God for every incident that ever occurred to me from my cradle up to now, and do not desire a better pilot for the rest of my days, than he who has steered me from obscurity and scorn, to this place to preach his word and feed this great congregation. And I doubt not that each of you, in looking back upon your past experience as Christians, could say very much the same. Through many troubles you have passed, but you can say, they have all been for your good. And somehow or other you have an equal faith for the future. You believe that all things will in the end work for your good. The pinch of faith always lies in the present tense. I can always believe the past, and always believe the future; but the present, the present, the present, that is what staggers faith. Now, please to notice that my text is in the present tense. "All things *work*," at this very instant and second of time. However troubled, downcast, depressed, and despairing, the Christian may be, all things are working now for his good; and though like Jonah he is brought to the bottom of the mountains, and he thinks the earth with her bars is about him for ever, and the weeds of despair are wrapped about his head, even in the uttermost depths all things are now working for his good. Here, I say again, is the pinch of faith. As an old countryman once said to me, from whom I gained many a pithy saying—"Ah! sir, I could always do wonders when there were no wonders to do. I feel, sir, that I could believe God; but then at the time I feel so there is not much to believe." And he just paraphrased it in his own dialect like this—"My arm is always strong, and my sickle always sharp, when there is no harvest, and I think I could mow many an acre when there is no grass; but when the harvest is on I am weak, and when the grass groweth then my scythe is blunt." Have not you found it so too? You think you can do wondrous things; you say,

"Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurled,
Now I can smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world."

And now a little capful of wind blows on you and the tears run down your cheeks, and you say, "Lord, let me die; I am no better than my fathers." You, that were going to thrash mountains, find that molehills cast you down.

It behoveth each of us, then, to comfort and establish our hearts upon this word "work." "All things work." Merchant; though you have been sore pressed this week, and it is highly probable that next week will be worse still for you; believe that all things even then are working for your good. It will cost you many a pang to keep that confidence; but oh! for thy Master's honour, and for thine own comfort, retain that consolation. Should thine house of business threaten to tumble about thine ears, so long as thou hast acted honourably, still bear thy cross. It shall work, it is working for thy good. This week, mother, thou mayest see thy first-born carried to the tomb. That bereavement is working for thy good. O man, within a few days, he that hath eaten bread with thee may lift up his heel against thee. It shall work for thy

good. O thou that art high in spirits to-day, thou with the flashing eye and joyous countenance, ere the sun doth set some evil shall befall thee, and thou shalt be sad. Believe then that all things work together for thy good; if thou lovest God, and art called according to his purpose.

5. And now we close by noticing *the confidence* with which the apostle speaks. "A fiction!" says one; "a pleasant fiction, sir!" "Sentimentalism!" says another; "a mere poetic sentimentalism." "Ah!" cries a third; "a downright lie." "No," says another, "there is some truth in it, certainly; men do get bettered by their afflictions, but it is a truth that is not valuable to me, for I do not realize the good that these things bring." Gentlemen, the apostle Paul was well aware of your objections; and therefore mark how confidently he asserts the doctrine. He does not say, "I am persuaded;" he does not say, "I believe;" but with unblushing confidence he appears before you and says, "*We*" (I have many witnesses) *we know* that all things work together." What Paul, are you at? So strange and startling a doctrine as this asserted with such dogmatic impudence? What can you be at? Hear his reply! "*We know*;" In the mouth of two or three witnesses it shall all be established; but I have tens of thousands of witnesses." "*We know*," and the apostle lifts his hand to where the white-robed hosts are praising God for ever.—"These," says he, "passed through great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: ask them!" And with united breath they reply, "*We know* that all things work together for good to them that love God." Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Daniel, all the mighty ones that have gone before, tell out the tale of their history, write their autobiography, and they say, "*We!*" It is proven to a demonstration in our own lives; it is a fact which runs like a golden clue through all the labyrinth of our history—"All things work together for good to them that love God." "*We*," says the apostle again—and he puts his hand upon his poor distressed brethren—he looks at his companions in the prison-house at Rome; he looks at that humble band of teachers in Rome, in Philippi, in all the different parts of Asia, and he says, "*We!*" "*We know* it. It is not with us a matter of doubt; we have tried it, we have proved it. Not only does faith believe it, but our own history convinces us of the truth of it." I might appeal to scores and hundreds here, and I might say, brethren, you with grey heads, rise up and speak. Is this true or not? I see the reverend man rise, leaning on his staff, and with the tears guttering his old cheeks, he says, "Young man it is true; I have proved it; even down to grey hairs I have proved it; he made, and he will carry; he will not desert his own!" Veteran! you have had many troubles, have you not? He replies, "Youth! troubles? I have had many troubles that thou reckest not of; I have buried all my kindred, and I am like the last oak of the forest; all my friends have been felled by death long ago. Yet I have been upheld till now; who could hold me up but my God!" Ask him whether God has been once untrue to him, and he will say, "No; not one good thing hath failed of all that the Lord God hath promised; all hath come to pass!" Brethren, we can confidently say, then, hearing such a testimony as that, "*We know* that all things work." Besides, there are you of middle age, and even those of us who are young: the winter has not spared our branches, nor the lightning ceased to scathe our trunk; yet here we stand; preserved by conquering grace. Hallelujah to the grace that makes all things work together for good!

O my hearer, art thou a believer in Christ? If not, I beseech thee, stop and consider! Pause and think of thy state; and if thou knowest thine own sinfulness this day, believe on Christ, who came to save sinners, and that done, all things shall work for thee; the tumbling avalanche, the rumbling earthquake, the tottering pillars of heaven, all, when they fall or shake, shall not hurt thee; they shall still work out thy good. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized, and thou shalt be saved," for so runneth the gospel. The Lord bless you! Amen.