

SERMONS AND ESSAYS

BY THE

TENNENTS

AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES,

COMPILED FOR THE BOARD.

by S. D. Alexander.

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SERMON III.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

BY THE REV. GILBERT TENNENT.

“And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering.—EXODUS xxxiv. 6.

THE next divine attribute that comes now, according to the order of our text, to be considered, is the *grace of God*. “The Lord is merciful and gracious.”

There is nothing more frequently mentioned in Scripture, than the grace of God. I shall mention but a few passages, for if I should take notice of all, I must transcribe a great part of the Bible. “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.” Eph. i. 6. “He is gracious and full of compassion.” Ps. cxii. 14. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, be with you all.” 2 Cor. xiii. 14. In speaking upon this subject, I purpose

I. To explain its *nature*.

II. Show its *kinds*.

III. Mention some considerations, serving to manifest its *sovereignty* and *glory*.

IV. Consider what is really and seemingly *opposed* thereto, and then proceed to some improvement.

I. I return to consider the first proposed, which was to explain the nature of the grace of God. Now, the word *grace* signifies something that is free, as was observed in the preceding sermon, and it is taken two ways, either for an attribute of God, which is in God, or for the gift of God, which is from God. In the first sense, the grace of God signifies his free and sovereign benevolence, by which he peculiarly favours and doth good to his creatures, whence God is called gracious, as in our text, *i. e.* endued with grace; as from his goodness he is called good, and from his justice, just. The gifts of God, which are the effects of the grace that is in him, are metonymically called grace, especially such of them as are peculiar and special, *i. e.* such as are conferred upon some, rather than others. Hence, some divines observe, that the word grace intends either, 1. The grace freely *giving* (Mat. xi. 26), which they term (*gratiam gratis dantem*), or the free favour of God; or the grace freely *given*, which they call (*gratiam gratis datam*). And this imports any kind of benefits which the Almighty confers upon his creatures, whether good or bad, which makes them not in the least the more acceptable to God; or, 3. The grace which makes acceptable, which they term (*gratiam gratum facientem*), viz: all the saving gifts of God, faith, hope, charity, by which we please him.

Now, the grace of God may be thus described, viz: that it is a property of the Deity, whereby he is inclined to

dispense undeserved kindnesses upon his creatures freely, and in a sovereign way. The dispensations of grace have no dependence upon any dignity or merit of creatures, upon whom benefits are conferred (Rom. xi. 6.); but the whole reason thereof is the good pleasure of God's will, (Matt. xi. 26,) which respects all creatures, even to the noblest angels. Whatever any of these enjoy, they have it of grace; for who, among all created beings, has first given to God, "and it shall be recompensed to him again?" Rom. xi. 35. In the meantime, these things are more properly and peculiarly ascribed to grace, which are different from nature. Nature and grace should not be confounded: such things as by the kind constitution of God, belong to every creature, according to their different kinds, are not usually called grace, because, though they be undue, yet they belong to nature. But to make this more plain, let us consider

II. The kinds of grace: and here it may be observed, that grace is three-fold, viz: universal, common, and saving. And

1. Universal grace is that, whereby Jehovah dispenses natural things upon all his creatures. And hence he is called the "Saviour of men." 1 Tim. iv. 10. And is said to "preserve man and beast." Ps. xxxvi. 6. He causes his sun to rise upon the fields of the evil and the good, and sends his rain upon the just and unjust. He gives to man life, health, strength, and all the supports he enjoys therein, all which, being undeserved, may be called grace:

but according to the usage of scripture and antiquity, they seldom and less properly bear that name.

2. Common grace consists in the communication of moral good things upon men promiscuously, whether they be good or bad, elect or not elect; such as natural wisdom and prudence, and all the train of moral virtues, in which even some pagans have excelled. And to these we may add, all outward religious privileges and means of grace; together with those transient effects which are sometimes produced by them upon the unregenerate, such as some kind of illumination, and stirrings of religious affections. In a word, all those common operations of the Holy Spirit which are not followed by an habitual and saving change, must be ascribed hereto. Of these mention is made in Heb. vi. 4—6, and also in the parable of the sower: "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Matt. xiii. 20, 21. But

3. Saving grace is that undue or undeserved love of God, whereby he confers upon the elect only, saving benefits, of his own mere good pleasure. Here observe

First. That it is love, or the kind inclination or pro-pension of God's will, to communicate good to his elect.

Secondly. It is undue, undeserved love. The objects of this love, considered as creatures, can merit no good at the hand of God. Seeing they have received their all from him, surely they cannot put the Almighty in their debt,

by giving him what is his own ; and considered as sinners, who, by their voluntary transgression, have fallen short of his glory, they deserve his high and dreadful displeasure.

Thirdly. It is distinguishing love, manifested to the elect in a sovereign way, according to the good pleasure of God's will. Eph. i. 9. That is given to one which is denied to another, and only because it is God's pleasure ; hence is that query of one of Christ's disciples, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world ?" John xiv. 22. And does not our Lord himself thank his eternal Father for the displays of his sovereignty in this respect ? "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. xi. 25, 26. It is but a few, a remnant of the fallen race of mankind, upon whom God is pleased to vouchsafe, and in whom he is pleased to glorify, his special grace. Luke xiii. 24. Rom. ix. 2, 7. "Esaias crieth also concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."

Fourthly. It is efficacious love, which confers saving benefits ; hence it is called, "the grace of God, which bringeth salvation." Tit. ii. 11. And the blessings it vouchsafes, are termed "things that accompany salvation." Heb. vi. 9. And hence the Psalmist prays, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. O visit me with thy salvation ; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the glad-

ness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." Ps. cvi. 4. And here it may be necessary to observe particularly, that divine love confers freely upon the elect, or concert for them, the following important benefits, viz :

1. Election ; this is free and gracious, without faith or works foreseen. "Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. xi. 5. "Having predestinated us, unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. i. 5. "If by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace, * * and work is no more work." Rom. xi. 6. To the same effect the apostle elsewhere observes, that "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Rom. ix. 16. It is inconsistent with the independency and immutability of God, to suppose that anything without him should alter or incline his will.

2. Redemption is likewise of free grace. The contrivance of this scheme of happiness, as well as the sending of the blessed Son of God to effect it, by his obedience and sufferings, were marvellous displays of the Father's pure affection to a miserable world. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John vi. 10. And to what else than free grace can we ascribe God the Father's acceptance of the suretiship of Christ in the sinner's room and place? Strict justice certainly demands

personal satisfaction; and does not the love of Christ pass knowledge, in that he who is over all, God blessed for ever, came into a state of the worst abasement, voluntarily to save worthless dust from perpetual ruin? How sweetly does the Apostle Paul speak to this effect: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich!" 2 Cor. viii. 9. Besides, it may be here observed, that redemption by the satisfaction of Christ is frequently, in Scripture, restrained to a certain number, who are called the *people* of God, the *sheep* of Christ, and such as were given him by his Father. Matt. i. 21. John x. 15; xvii. 9.

Albeit the blood of the Son of God be of infinite value, and, therefore, the satisfaction made by it may, in this respect, be said to be universal; yet, inasmuch as it was neither the design of the Father, nor the Son, that it should be spent for all, so as to be saved by it, it is, therefore, to be referred to singular grace. Moreover,

3. The application of redemption in all its branches, is of free grace, as may appear by the following induction of particulars, viz:

Effectual calling is said to be according to God's purpose. Rom. viii. 29.

Faith is called the gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Eph. ii. 8.

Conversion is not of flesh nor blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. None of these graces which I have

mentioned, are the fruits of free will; "for we are not sufficient to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." 2 Cor. iii. 5. No, they are all the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22), who produces them not by moral suasion, like poor creatures, but by an almighty, creating power, taking away the stony heart, and giving a heart of flesh. 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6. Ps. li. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. And

Justification, whereby an elect sinner is freed from the guilt of sin and hath a right to eternal happiness, is of free grace. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 24. It is entirely without works. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ—for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. ii. 16.

Our *adoption*, or right, to the important privileges of children, and joint heirship with Christ, is also of pure grace. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. i. 5, 6.

Our *salvation*, in regard to the right thereto, is of grace. And, hence, eternal life is said to be "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23. And, elsewhere, we are said expressly to be "saved by grace," Eph. ii. 8. In the meantime it should be remembered, that good works are the way to the kingdom, though they

be not the cause of our reigning, as Barnard of old observed, "Though our right to happiness is of grace, as was before observed, yet the Almighty hath, by his gracious constitution, so ordered the matter, that good works are necessary to the possession of it." Matt. xxv. 21, 34, 35. I proceed

III. To mention some considerations serving to manifest the sovereignty and glory of God's grace. And 1. Methinks the glory of divine grace appears by considering the author of it, who is a being infinitely and invariably happy in himself, as well as essentially and eternally glorious; and so neither needs the services of creatures, nor can be benefitted by them. Our goodness extends not to him, neither is it any gain to the Almighty, that we are righteous. To acknowledge God's glory, adds no more to its lustre, than speaking well of the natural sun adds to its beauty.

It may be here also observed, that Jehovah would have had millions of angels to celebrate his praise and execute his pleasure, although he had made his justice triumph in the ruin of the whole human race, which, certainly, he might have done. Or, he could have formed innumerable creatures of a more noble order than any of the creation to celebrate the glory of his attributes, if it had so pleased his Majesty: for he is almighty in power, hath the residue of the Spirit, and can raise up children even out of the stones to Abraham. But

2. Let us consider the object upon which this divine grace is conferred, and we shall find

First. That it is man, not angels. Our Saviour took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; because he designed to save the one, and to reserve those that fell of the other, in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. What is man but dust and ashes? A worm that is crushed before the moth, altogether unworthy of the kind notice of the great and glorious God. How amazing is the distinguishing grace of God in passing by creatures of a higher order, and fixing his love upon man!

Secondly. It is sinners upon whom divine grace is conferred. Man, by creation, was but dust, but by sin he is become polluted dust, and so odious and loathsome, as well as wretched and miserable. And this doleful state he has wilfully brought himself into, and wilfully continues in, against all the remonstrances of conscience, against all the kind importunities of a condescending God and Saviour. Man by sin has brought this twofold misery upon himself: 1. That he deserves no good, and, 2. That he deserves all evil. How can these deserve good at the hand of God, whose persons and performances are covered with deformity and pollution? Indeed, we deserve not the least common mercy, how much less, then, can we merit special benefits? "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, thou hast showed unto thy servant." Gen. xxxii. 10. Men in a state of nature are unprofitable creatures, they are neither prepared to receive benefits, nor able to prepare themselves, seeing they are dead in sins and trespasses. And by their multi-

plied impieties they deserve the divine displeasure, and provoke him to inflict it. As they are children of wrath by nature, so they weary the Almighty by continued iniquities in practice. Eph. ii. 3. Isa. xliii. 24. And

Thirdly. The persons to whom divine grace is given, are enemies to God, both in their minds and lives. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. Now, enmity imports a high degree of fixed and implacable spite. O dreadful state! This inward enmity unregenerate sinners bewray by their rebellion against God in practice, and cruel confederacies with his declared enemies. "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Col. i. 21.

Fourthly. It is generally the poorer and meaner sort of men, that are favoured with divine grace, while the rich, honourable, and great are passed by. Many who make a considerable figure in the world, by the keenness of their natural and acquired endowments, and by the splendour of their outward circumstances, are entirely destitute of special grace, while others, who are poor and despised, are favoured therewith. This subject the apostle Paul discourses largely upon. "Not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things

that are not, to bring to nought things that are." 1 Cor. i. 26—28.

Fifthly. Many of those to whom divine grace is given were, before conversion, notorious sinners, some blasphemers, persecutors and injurious. These things the apostle Paul ascribes to himself; he shut up many of the saints in prison, consented to their death, punished them in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceeding mad against them, he persecuted them to strange cities. Acts xxvi. 10, 11. 1 Tim. i. 13, 15. Some, before conversion, have been idolators, as the Ephesians. Some, fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners. Such were some of the Corinthians, and yet they were washed, sanctified, justified. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 11. O rich and glorious grace! How admirable is the grace of God, in the instance of Manasseh's conversion! who, though a conjurer, a murderer, and one who despised God, and bid defiance to heaven in prosperity, yet when, in adversity, he humbled himself and made supplication to Jehovah, was graciously heard and accepted. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9, 12, 13. I shall only add the famous instance of Mary Magdalene, who was a notorious sinner. This poor woman loved much, because much was forgiven her; her heart was so melted with a sense of divine goodness, that she could wash our Lord's feet with her tears. Luke vii.

3. The glory of divine grace appears, not only from its author and object, but also from the *season* in which it is

vouchsafed. The Almighty bestows benefits upon his people, at such seasons when they are most suitable. In the mount of difficulty and distress the Lord is seen, yea, he is a very present help in trouble. When sinners have wearied themselves in the greatness of their way, and through a series of disappointments are brought to the last extremity, the blessed God manifests his grace and mercy. And thus when gracious persons are encircled with manifold miseries outward and inward, and their sorrowful hearts are ready to sink into despondency, with a long continued, oppressive weight of woe, from which they can hardly see any way of deliverance; when they are desolate and afflicted, their hearts almost overwhelmed, then Jehovah sends deliverance; "and they are as those that dreamed." Ps. xxv. 16, 17. When the compassionate Jehovah returns to his people, after their sinful wanderings from him, Oh! it makes them admire the pure and glorious riches of divine grace. And truly the Lord teaches his people more and more of this doctrine, namely, the freeness of his grace, while they are in the world.

4. The freeness of divine grace appears likewise from the *manner* in which divine benefits are conferred; e. g., we contribute nothing to the change wrought upon us by conversion. The natural bias of our wills is against it, and this reluctance and opposition remains, until it be overcome by the almighty power of God, who is hence said to make his people "a willing people in the day of his power." Ps. ciii. That alteration of dispositions which is implied in conversion, is not desired by the

sinner before it; though unregenerate sinners desire to be delivered from misery, yet they do not desire to be delivered from sin, the cause of it. For that is as their right eye, and right arm. Well then, seeing those benefits whereby the soul is sanctified are undeserved, undesired, yea, opposed by the unconverted, surely then they must be freely vouchsafed.

5. The riches of divine grace appear from the nature of the benefits conferred, which are attended with these two following properties, viz: freedom from the greatest evils, and a right to, and possession of, the greatest good. Sinners, while in a state of unregeneracy, are immersed in, and exposed to, the greatest evils, both moral and penal. They are under the dominion of sin, and all over tainted by it; and by reason thereof, they are exposed to the curse and wrath of God in this and the next world. They are in a dungeon of darkness and distress, in a pit in which there is no water; bound and shackled with the heavy curse of God, void of light and beauty, and covered with the basest deformity. Now the benefits of divine grace bring the sinner from this depth of woe, loose his shackles, and release him out of prison. Hereby he is freed from the guilt of sin, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and hereby he is freed from the dominion of it, through the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit; and as he is thus freed from the greatest evils by divine grace, so he is thereby entitled to, and made a possessor of, the greatest good, both physical and moral, being made a partaker of the divine love, and

beautified with the divine image, viz: holiness. By the former, he is refreshed, and by the latter adorned. And as he is under the unerring conduct and almighty protection of God here, so he is entitled to the perfect enjoyment of God hereafter; which is the greatest good, that it is possible for a creature to receive. I proceed to the

IV. Proposition, which was to consider what is really and seemingly opposed to the grace of God. Now, the things that are opposed really are these two, viz: *nature* and *merit*. And, 1. *Nature*. Hereby we are children of wrath, "being dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1, 3. By nature we have blind minds and stony hearts, neither discern the things that be of God, nor are willing to be subject thereto. "The natural man understands not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. Nature, in its present fallen and corrupt state, fights against the grace of God as long as it can; and, therefore, that citadel of man's heart must be taken by storm, if the King of glory takes possession of it. And, 2. The papal doctrine of the *merit of works*, in the business of justification, directly opposes the grace of God. For grace is undue and undeserved love, as was shown before. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. If it be of works, it is no more of grace, otherwise work would be no more work, and grace would be no more grace." Rom. iii. 28. But to proceed,

3. The wrath of God is seemingly opposed to grace. Now, the wrath of God is no other than his vindictive justice, or disposition to punish the guilty, which includes three things:

First. A purpose of punishing the transgressor. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18.

Secondly. It includes the denunciation of the aforesaid purpose by threatenings. "God is angry with the wicked every day; if he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors." Ps. vii. 11—13.

Thirdly. It includes the execution of the threatenings, by all kinds of revenge and judgments. "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6.); that is, fruits and effects of wrath in divine judgments. Sin wrongs the Almighty by insulting his sovereignty and legislative authority, by contradicting his unspotted holiness, and by slighting the riches of his goodness. By sin God is wronged, and robbed of that tribute of honour and service which is due to him from all created beings, by the strongest claims of right, viz: creation, preservation, provision; and some are under the additional engagement of redeeming love. It is sin, therefore, that stirs up the divine wrath; and because there be various aggravations of sin, therefore,

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there are various degrees of wrath excited thereby and proportioned thereto. And hence, the Scriptures, speaking after the manner of men, make mention of God's hot displeasure, fury and rage. Ps. vi. 1. "Therefore, will I also deal in fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them." Ezek. viii. 18. "Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath." Job xl. 11. These expressions do not signify any tumult of passion in God, for he is incapable of passion, being simple, immutable and perfect. They serve, therefore, only to represent the great contrariety of the nature of God to sin, as well as the more dreadful effects of his wrath upon heinous transgressors. But in the meantime, it may be observed, that the wrath of God, in every instance of it, is terrible and irresistible, because it proceeds from an infinite and almighty God. And hence, it is compared to a "burning fire," and to a whirlwind that sweeps all before it. Zeph. i. And except repentance intervene, it will be continual and eternal.

Although the doctrine of free grace has been abused into licentiousness by some sordid spirits, which the apostle Paul mentions with great abhorrence, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid," (Rom. vi. 1, 2,) yet its design and tendency is to promote the contrary. And indeed nothing more powerfully incites an ingenuous mind to holiness than the consideration of God's free and distinguishing grace. And here it is to be noted, that though Almighty God gives his grace freely,

that so no creature should have occasion of boasting or glorying in his presence, yet, ordinarily, he vouchsafes it in the use of appointed means; that so there may be no umbrage for negligence, but, on the contrary, all that excitement to duty, which can consist with the divine sovereignty. These things are excellently represented in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, from the twenty-sixth to the thirty-seventh verse. Though the Almighty promises to confer saving benefits, yet he tells them, that for all these things he will be enquired of by them. But it is time to offer a word of improvement. And

1. From what has been said we may learn, that all those doctrines which ascribe any part of our salvation to our endeavours, as meritorious causes thereof, are very derogatory to the glory of God, and the design of his gospel; which is to magnify the exceeding riches of God's grace. Eph. i. Such who seek after righteousness, as it were, by the works of the law, are not like to attain it. Justification is not to be attained by a dependence upon our endeavours, we must come to God as beggars, and ask an alms of free grace, otherwise we shall be rejected.

2. We should examine ourselves, whether we are partakers of God's special grace, in the instances before mentioned, of effectual calling, faith, justification, conversion, adoption; have we by these things been brought, to a high prizing of Christ above all others, to a child-like familiarity with God, to an habitual, holy, humble, heavenly, and loving temper of mind, and course of behaviour? If so, let

us rejoice in Christ Jesus in all outward distresses, let us ever admire the sovereign and distinguishing grace of God, and give to God the glory of it in heart, speech and practice.

But such of you as have not found the aforesaid experiences, rejoice not for joy, as other people, for ye have gone a whoring from God. Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Cry frequently and earnestly to God for sovereign, saving grace, and rest in no duties or ordinances short of it.

Is the grace of God free? Then the greatest transgressors should not despair of God's mercy; though your iniquities rival the stars for multitude, and in their aggravations are red as crimson and scarlet, yet free grace can easily blot them out, as a thick cloud, and make them white as snow. Therefore let sensible sinners be encouraged to come to, and believe in, the God of grace, for where sin has abounded, there grace has much more abounded. The greater your transgressions are, the greater glory God will get to his grace in forgiving them. The Psalmist was aware of this, and therefore pled with God to pardon his iniquities, because they were exceeding great.

And methinks the doctrine of free grace should powerfully induce us to humility, seeing that it is God only who has made us to differ from others, and that we have nothing but what we have received. We are his debtors for all we have in hand or hope. The nature of grace supposes the object upon whom it is vouchsafed unworthy of it. A

continued, humbling sense of this would as much conduce to our benefit as ornament.

And, seeing the good God is pleased to heap many undeserved kindnesses freely upon us, why should we not imitate his grace by conferring benefits upon our fellow creatures, without any regard to dignity, or hopes of a reward from them? By this we should glorify God, and convince others that we are his children.

In fine, let me, in the name of the gracious God, my Lord and Master, earnestly beseech poor sinners of every order to hasten, as for their lives, to that fountain of grace that is in Christ. Think not to put the Almighty in your debt by your doings, for if grace be not free, it is not grace. Sinners, abuse not the grace of God by delays and other impieties, or expect his inflamed wrath to avenge the ingratitude. "Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto God, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

I add no more at present. May the almighty and gracious God bless his word that has been offered in his name to our special and enduring benefit! Amen.