

Notes of Sermons Preached by Pastor Henry Haddow at Brockham Green
on Lord's day December 18th 1910

Morning Sermon

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. (1 Peter 5:10)

When we read these words by way of text last Lord's Day, we little thought that we should read them again this morning. We live to prove that our thoughts are not God's thoughts. It is His to favour us in our meditation, and to lead us by His good Spirit into the things of God. Every soul that is taught of God knows what it is to look to the Lord for light, and life, and understanding. And Christ becomes exceedingly precious to the soul, when led to meditate upon His love in giving Himself a ransom for such a guilty sinner, and it humbles him at the footstool of divine mercy.

There may be some here this morning that God has loved in the Person of His dear Son, but you have never had any feeling that you are a child of God. You can never point to the vilest man out of hell and say that that man is lost. The apostle says: *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified. (1 Corinthians 6:11)*

Last Lord's Day we took a little notice of the persons mentioned in our text. The apostle goes to the God of all grace, and bears these persons before Him, that were called into His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Having spoken of this calling and the persons mentioned, we went on to notice that the apostle addressed God as *the God of all grace*. What have you known of the God of grace during the past week? What have been the mercies of your soul in connection with the words we drew your attention to? It is a solemn question. If you have grace you need *the God of all grace*. I do want you to have a right religion. I have found that each one of you who attend here regularly have been upon my mind during the last week. I have prayed for you. Do you pray for me? I need your prayers as much as you need mine – perhaps more. I often feel myself a base sinner. I beseech you to pray for me.

*While Moses stood with arms spread wide,
Success was found on Israel's side;
But when, through weariness, they failed,
That moment Amalek prevailed. (William Cowper)*

There are no people to preach to like a praying people. I once heard a minister say in the pulpit that, if he had to preach much to a certain people, they would kill him, because he found his heart so much enlarged when he came before them.

*Wrestling prayer can wonders do;
Bring relief in deepest straits!
Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates. (John Newton)*

Let us (go) boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16) God is *the God of all grace* – electing grace, glorifying grace, reigning grace, grace to help in every condition, however trying the path may be that you are called to tread. God is none the poorer for giving to you, though you are all the richer for it.

*Thou art coming to a King;
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much. (John Newton)*

God's goodness emboldens you to open your mouth wide. You honour God when you ask great things of Him. The hearts of all men are in His hand. He is able to open His hand *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or (even to) think.* (Ephesians 3:20) Fit me and fashion me for all Thy holy will.

If you are on the way to glory you will know something of what it is to suffer. The apostle prayed that these people – *after that they had suffered awhile* – I wish to direct your attention particularly to this. Suffering is as much the gift of God as faith. The apostle says: *Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.* (Philippians 1:29) You look at it for a moment. He will not give you more suffering than is really needful. The apostle says: *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* (1 Peter 4:19)

When the Lord struck down Saul of Tarsus, He said: *I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake.* (Acts 9:16) From the very moment God strikes a man down, to the very moment he resigns himself into the hands of God, he will know what it is to suffer. O my friends, what has sin done! Do you know what it is to be called to suffer according to the will of God, and to be led to meditate upon what sin has done, and as to what you have deserved? When I have been brought low, I have been ready to say: *All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.* (Psalm 42:7) Then I have been led to meditate upon what I have rightly deserved at God's hand. How light compared to what my sins deserve! I do seek grace to be willing to suffer, and to go to that eternal rest which remains for the people of God.

Do you wonder that Moses used such language when he said he would rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season? (Hebrews 11:25) The scriptures are written for our learning and comfort. As I told you last Lord's Day, it must be through suffering that you come into deeper discoveries of the Person of the Son of God, to know something of being *stablished, strengthened, settled.* All men suffer, but all men have not faith, and all men do not suffer as God's people are called to suffer. It is not to say that because a man suffers here, then he will not suffer hereafter. But God's people *suffer awhile*, only a little while. God's people know what it is to groan being tempted, but not beyond what they are able to bear. When I have seen some suffer, I have wondered if ever I should be so patient if called upon to suffer as they have suffered.

Last Monday, about 9.30, my wife was taken with heart failure, and it seemed as though every moment must be her last. There was the suffering, but there was this thought: If it ends there will be no more suffering. Rutherford said: "I shall soon give my last groan, but the wicked have no last groan." If this were your last hour, would you give your last groan? Jesus Christ suffered awhile. His people suffer awhile. It is impossible for any to suffer as Christ suffered. He suffered all the wrath of God due to sin. I was thinking on Friday of the sufferings of Christ, and of the sufferings of His people. Do they hunger, and are they poor, and despised, and rejected of men, and tempted of the devil? So was He. You look at these things, and think of what is recorded in the Word of God: through suffering He reigns in heaven. Paul says: *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* (Romans 8:18)

After ye have suffered awhile. There is something very blessed to my soul in this. For a little while they suffer. It will all come to an end. This is the last Sunday I shall see you in this year – it may be the last time. The last time, the last moment, must come. Ah, there is something very solemn in this.

*A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land (you) on fair Canaan's coast,
Where (you) shall sing the song of grace,
And see (your) glorious Hiding-place. (Jehoida Brewer)*

Your last days will be your best. It did me good to read a letter from a widow last week, how the Lord magnified His grace in her husband. He had been a minister for years. He proved the Lord to be his all and in all, when he came to the end.

*O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near, and like my God! (Isaac Watts)*

Afternoon Sermon

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. (1 Peter 5:10)

We have noticed the apostle addresses the God of all grace on behalf of those He had called unto His eternal glory. He is, friends, the God of all grace – all the grace you stand in need of. This afternoon, I need grace to minister unto you, and you need grace to hear the Word of God's grace. I never enter the pulpit but what I feel to need grace from the God of all grace to minister in holy things. Men can enter the pulpit, I allow, without feeling this need of ministerial grace, but they are destitute of grace. I want to be approved of God. I do not despise the approbation of the godly, but I do want God's approbation, as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. I have never been satisfied yet with a sermon I have preached. But the desire of my heart is not to be ashamed, and to have grace rightly to divide the Word of truth. If God gives me grace to minister to you, and gives you grace to hear, it will be to our mutual profit. I would that my hearers would not be forgetful hearers of the Word, but doers of it.

If a man is called by grace, he is called to suffer. It is through suffering we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. If you have one grain of grace you will say: "Let me suffer that I may come into the things of God." I would rather suffer with God's people than to be a stranger to the things of God. When I come to die, I want to feel I can die by the truth I have preached, that these truths are the stay of my soul. And I want you, my dear hearers, to feel the same.

Well, the suffering is only for a while. Sometimes it is just as much as we can bear, but God does not lay on you more than you are able to bear. There are things we must suffer for Christ's sake. If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. (*see 2 Timothy 3:12*) Let me ask you: Are you willing to suffer? *After ye have suffered a while, make you perfect* – give you a more perfect knowledge of the Son of God. It is a mercy to be rightly instructed. This word *perfect* means *upright*. It does not mean, as some would tell you, to be perfect in the flesh. We are living in days when, I was going to say, this damnable doctrine is taught. I challenge any man to find it in the Word of God. You look in the book of Genesis. You will see that God appeared to Abram when he was ninety-nine years of age, and said: *I am the Almighty God: walk before Me, and be thou perfect. (Genesis 17:1)* In the margin it is: *upright, sincere*. A perfect man is an upright man, a sincere man.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8,9) The prayer of the upright is God's delight. The word *perfect* in the Word of God oftentimes means *sincere*. You look at a man, and you say you do not like that man's religion. But he seeks to walk according to his profession. He is perfect in that sense that God has made him honest. Who would not go through suffering to obtain a more perfect knowledge of Christ? You do not want to be a child all your days, do you? You want to come to a saving knowledge, I hope. Perhaps you do not make much progress, like the poor man in the pulpit, in the things of God. But you are stretching after it.

You will have to pay the cost. *Choose Thou the way, but still lead on.* But we have to taste the cup. As you have been singing:

*Suffering Saviour, Lamb of God,
How hast Thou been used!
With the Almighty's wrathful rod
Soul and body bruised! (Joseph Hart)*

Would you not have fellowship with a suffering Saviour? *If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him. (2 Timothy 2:12)* The apostle, in writing to the *Hebrews*, says that some *have need of milk, and not of strong meat. (ch.5:12)* In this congregation we have lambs. If you see a lamb in the fold, you expect it one day to become a sheep. *Every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (v.13,14)* In the margin it is *perfect*. Some are more perfectly instructed in the things of God – they are fathers in Israel. You may have knowledge of a certain thing, but you want to be more perfectly instructed in this.

In the *Acts* you have an account of certain men that had bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they have killed Paul. (*ch.23:12*) They are seeking to know more perfectly of Paul, but they are not seeking honestly. I merely refer to this to show that some were seeking to have a more perfect knowledge of a certain thing. Would not you seek to know more of Christ? I do feel it most solemnly – I would pay the cost to know more of Him.

Stablish – that is, to make firm, to confirm. God has promised to do this. I would pass through suffering to know what it is to be made firm, to be confirmed. I believe in confirmation. Do you? I am not speaking of the confirmation of the pope of Rome, that man of sin, or the priest of Rome, or the clergy of the Church of England. I love the Lord Jesus Christ to confirm me. The psalmist pleads with the Lord to *Stablish Thy word unto Thy servant, who is devoted to Thy fear. (Psalm 119:38)* What a mercy to be devoted to the fear of the Lord, and to beg of the Lord to stablish you! If the Lord confirm you, you will never forget it.

As a young man I had a solemn experience of two young men in particular. One was in the booking office the same time as I was. We were companions together in sin. After he was confirmed we spent the evening in the public house. Another young man in the waterworks office in Sheffield, who I have seen led through the streets by an immoral woman. He said to me, “I am going into the church, I am going to college.” I said to him, “What?” He said, “I only get £80 a year now, and in the curacy I can get £120.” I dearly loved the clergyman that this young man sometimes heard – the Rev. Battersby of the Church of St. Simons. You may send young men to college, but unless the Lord confirms them, they are not called by ministerial grace. I do want confirmation of the Lord. Confirm my soul in faith, and fear.

Strengthen. Do you know what it is to be strengthened in your soul by God's might in the inner man? I would pass through suffering to know this. *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. (Isaiah 40:31)* Would you have the grace of the Spirit strengthen you? I would. Sometimes it is at a very low ebb. I would have my faith strengthened. I have sung, I trust, with heart and voice:

*Through the Redeemer's precious blood,
I feel the mighty power of God;
Through the rich aid divinely given,
I rise from earth, and soar to heaven. (Richard Burnham)*

The psalmist says: *I will go in the strength of the Lord God. (Psalm 71:16)* O to have that strength which remains when ready to die! God can give you strength to soar from earth and have eternal joys your own.

*Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But grace has set me free. (John Newton)*

Settle you. There is such a fulness in these two words: *settle you.* We might preach a sermon from them if the Lord had led us. You say sometimes concerning a building that we must have a settling day. *Settle* means to lay firmly. God does this; He lays the foundation, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. There He lays the soul, and settles the soul, firmly established, and can say: *On the Rock of Ages founded. He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. (Psalm 40:2)* *Settle you,* establish you in the things of the covenant of God, in the promise of God. There are some things that, after you have suffered a while, the Lord settles you in them. That is His unchangeable love, His power. You say, "I am settled here. He is of one mind, and none can turn Him. I am settled here. Without Christ I can do nothing, but I can do all things through Christ who settles me."

*In Thy presence I am happy;
In Thy presence I'm secure;
In Thy presence all afflictions
I can easily endure. (William Williams)*

The Lord add His blessing. Amen.