

## **The Heart Perfumed**

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"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given unto us." [Romans 5:5](#).

As one reads the opening verses of this Chapter, one cannot help saying, "What marvellous treasures are those which belong to the people of God!" Hezekiah took the Babylonian ambassadors through all his varied treasure houses and herein he did evil—but if you can conduct your mind through the spiritual treasure houses and the minds of your friends in the same direction, you will do well. What is the wealth of God's people? Who can count it? It is wondrous and beyond conception! The Apostle seems to have taken up a whole handful of brilliants in the first verses of this Chapter and he now holds them up, one by one, and lets them glitter in the light, no not merely a handful plucked at random, but they seem to be striving together, for one follows on after the other! "Therefore" is the link which connects justification with "peace," and then there is a connection between this "peace" and "access," and from this "access" to God we go on to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." And when we have got as far as this string of pearls, the Apostle adds, "And not only so," and then he holds up a cluster—and when he has spoken of them he adds that "tribulation works patience, and patience experience, and"—another, "and"—"experience hope," and then another, "and"—"and hope makes not ashamed." And then at the end of this string of jewels he brings up the language of the text—"Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given unto us."

I suppose the allusion in the text is to the pouring out of water—the love of God being to us like a spring shut up, a fountain sealed until the Holy Spirit comes—and then the love of God flows in, a pure and crystal stream being shed abroad in our hearts!

But perhaps another figure may suit us as well tonight. The love of God is comparable to precious spikenard, but it is in the alabaster box. The Holy Spirit opens that box and then the sweet perfume is "shed abroad" in our hearts, not merely "shed," but, "shed abroad." Not only poured out as the oil was on Aaron's head, but running down to the skirts of his garments and perfuming all the room, just as it did in his case.

Now observe, to some extent we can shed abroad the love of God in this house. While the preacher is preaching of it, there will be a sweet savor Christ. There is, as it were, a spiritual perfume in the assembly of the righteous whenever Jesus Christ is spoken of, for, "Your name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love You." But the text

means something more than this. It is the love of God shed abroad, not in the assembly, but in the heart. The one is the aggregate, but this is the individual and personal sense of it—not in the house, I say, but in the heart! The preacher sheds abroad this love when he preaches of Christ, but he cannot shed it abroad in the heart. He can only speak of it. He cannot bring it home to your own personal realization. It must be shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit, but if it once gets there, the sweet perfume of it is always recognized by your inner man. It is not the preacher—neither is it the letter of this Book—it is the Holy Spirit who most graciously comes there to shed abroad the love of God in your heart! Oh, see, then, how much we are indebted to the third Person of the blessed Trinity! With what reverence should we always speak of Him! With what rapture should we love Him! With what devotion should we adore Him! The love of God, itself, is, even to us, as spikenard unperceived until He brings it to the spiritual senses and makes it sweet to us! The love of God is like light to a blind eye until the Holy Spirit opens that eye! It is like food and raiment to a dead man until the Holy One of Israel comes and gives us life to enjoy these mercies. Oh, then, may the Holy Spirit now be here in each one of us, to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts!

I shall first, then, and for a very little time, speak of the precious ointment which is here said to be shed abroad, namely, the love of God. Secondly, upon the shedding of it abroad. Thirdly, upon the blessed results of its being shed abroad in the heart and then, fourthly, upon some matters which tend to hinder our enjoyment of the shedding abroad of this love in our hearts. First, let us speak of—

I. THE PRECIOUS OINTMENT WHICH IS HERE SPOKEN OF—"the love of God." Now, although I have to speak of this, yet it is a thing which, as to its essence, is not to be spoken of. It is to be enjoyed and to be felt, but no words can convey its unmistakable sweetness!—

"The love of Jesus, what it is None but His loved ones know." No words, either of the pen or the tongue will ever be able to convey it either to hearer or reader. We receive the love of God doctrinally and I think we do well to do so. We may speak of it in various theological senses. We may declare the love of God to be in some respects universal—for, "His tender mercies are over all His works" and, "the Lord is good to all."

But we may delight most of all to speak of it in its discriminating and distinguishing character, as revealing itself in the full blaze of its splendor to those whom He has chosen unto Himself.

I believe the preacher does well who descants upon this love of God in its eternity, who says of it that it is an ancient thing, more ancient than the hoary mountains, or the aged sea, who speaks of it as an unchangeable and inimitable thing, abiding forever fast to those chosen ones who possess it. He does well, I believe, who speaks of it as being without an end, who shall declare in God's name that Christ, having loved His own who were in the

world, loves them to the end and that this is but a picture of the great love which is in God our Father towards us—that having loved us once, He will never cease to love us, but we shall always be the object of His heart's affection. But, Brothers, it is very easy to talk doctrinally about the love of God, but you may not know anything about the love of God when you know all that! If I were to give a description of a father's love to some poor orphan, here, I dare say I might make him feel envious. I might make him desirous to have something of the kind, but it would be quite impossible by any mere words to tell him what a father's love really is if he had never known it. It would be something like showing a skeleton to an angel who wished to see a man. A man is something more than a set of bones, nerves, muscles and ligatures—you cannot present the man by any description that you may give, however anatomically correct! Neither can you describe the love of God by merely doctrinally giving an outline of it, as the theologian would do, for there is vastly more there than the mere theologian has ever learned! You know some people have a herbarium in which they preserve specimens of various plants. Among the Alps you are asked by persons to buy collections of the flora of such-and-such districts. Well, you may buy them, and you will be interested in them when you get them home, but when you turn over the leaves and find the plants dried between the papers, they are nothing at all like what they are as they bloom on the Alps! The gentian has not the marvelous yellow blooms which startles you as you find it on the side of the glaciers. It is a dry, dead thing now—you cannot convey to your friends what the flower is really like when at home—to know that fully you must take them to see it! So is it with theology—it is easy to preserve the living things of the Truth of God in a dry form, but you have not really understood them until you have seen them in life and known them by experience!

Again, you may think about the love of God historically and what a wonderful topic is here! Begin—where? Well, since there is no beginning, begin where you will. Begin with the council chambers of eternity! Begin with the purpose, the election, the Covenant, the suretyship engagement. Then go on to the love revealing itself in the first promise—love sparing guilty man, love manifesting itself by slow degrees through the mist and smoke of the Mosaic ritual and, at last, bursting into its full splendor upon the Cross in the Person of the dying Savior! Then go on to love developing itself in our experience, beginning by convincing us of our folly and our danger and proceeding until it takes us into the arms of God, and puts us there forever in the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision! But, my dear Friends, you know reading the story of a battle cannot give you any idea of the battle itself! Every man who has heard the sound of the cannon and has marked the pain and misery of those who fall beneath the sword of war will tell you that no description, however graphic, can ever make you feel what a battle is. So with regard to the love of God. You may give the history of it with the greatest accuracy, but when you have given it all, you do not know what it is unless you have really tasted and handled it in your

own soul's experience! So that if I am to speak of this ointment, I know not where I shall find words. I must rather ask that you may have it shed abroad in your hearts.

I think there is a way, too, of speaking of the love of God in such a manner as to get none of it I think that arguing over practical Gospel Truths is about the surest way of depriving you of the unction and the savor of them. I think we ought to treat Divine Truth very much as the true mother treated her child when they were before Solomon. Let us not rend it. But there are some who rend it anyway, as long as they can keep their share of it. Oh, yes, for a hair's breadth of a doctrine, for some infinitesimal point, for one Greek article, or a half a word, some men would mar the fellowship of the saints and drive away some of the best-beloved of God out of their communion! They are like the simpletons who, to find out who shall drink a jug of milk, spill it altogether and neither of them get a drop of it. They have some choice of rare fruit, but they trample it under their feet in a strife as to who should eat it! Let us beware of so doing with the love of God—and yet we have sometimes felt that we have handled themes connected with the love of God in such a controversial spirit as to take the bloom from the surface and the very juice from the grape.

After all, dear Friends, the best we can say of the love of God is just this—you must know it and feel it for yourselves. But oh, the wondrous love! Angels marvel at it! To think that God should love His sinful creatures! You will marvel at it, even in Heaven! When you shall have grown accustomed to wonders, this will still strike you as being a great marvel. I believe you will—

"Sing with rapture and surprise His loving kindness in the skies"

and that when you have dived into the greatest deeps that your intellect can bear, you will find the wondrous depth of love both beneath and above you! When your faculties shall have been expanded to the heavenly size and you shall be elevated to become the peer of the angelic host, even then you shall feel that the love of God surpasses your powers of knowledge and comprehension!

This, then, is all we will say concerning it, that the love of God is the precious ointment. But secondly, the text says—

## II. THIS LOVE OF GOD IS "SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS."

What does this mean? Does it mean our merely knowing that God is Love? We must know that as a preliminary step, but oh, the shedding abroad of the love of God is vastly more than that! It does not mean merely prizing that love, the coming into a state of desiring after it. When we feel that it must be a precious thing to be beloved of God. That is a very proper state of mind, but it is not what is meant here. It is not even believing in the love of God. That is the Christian's privilege and should be his constant position—believing that God loves him, resting confident that even under affliction's cross the love of God is still the same—and that if God should hide His face, yet His heart is not changed. But the love of God shed abroad is more than that. It is not even the waiting for visits from God's face.

It is a sweet thing to sit at Christ's door and wait until He comes to us. If I may not feast at the table, I may be grateful to be allowed to hunger and thirst to do it! Next to having Christ, a real longing after Him is one of the most precious gifts of the Holy Spirit. But still, a great deal more than this is meant here. It is not even remembering former love-visits. That is often very consolatory—

"Our former favors we recount When with Him on the holy mount."

And we sometimes think on the Hermonites and the hill Mizar, and find great comfort in the thought that He did once shine upon us—He did once show His love to us and we rejoice greatly. But the shedding abroad of His love is more than this. It is not the remembrance of a thing, however precious, that is past and gone, but the deep enjoyment of something that is now present!

What is it, then? Well, is it not just this? When the Holy Spirit brings home to our souls a sense of the love of God, we no longer entertain the slightest doubt—we are assured of God's love to us. We are now far past the range of questioning. It is no longer with us—

"'Tis a point I long to know Oft it causes anxious thought."

It is there and we know it is there! I called today upon a friend whose business calls him to the use of many perfumes. And I was shown into his little room where there were various articles with which the perfumes were made. Now, I can suppose him to lose one of those pots of perfume, but I cannot suppose him to lose it and not know where it is when it is shed abroad, for then he cannot help smelling it and perceiving it—and then he says, "Why, here it is—the room is filled with it." So when the love of God is shed abroad, you do not ask where it is! Your heart is filled with it. All your passions and powers are flavored and scented with it. It is not, "Where is it?" but, "Here it is!" Oh, the joy of saying, "Here it is!" If all the powers of earth and Hell combined say that God does not love me, I can deny and refute them all, for I feel that love shed abroad in my heart! It is a clear perception of the fact that God loves me as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ! It is a persuasion of the Presence of the Holy Spirit, of the sealing of the Spirit, of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are born of God!

And even more than that. It is a thing that we hardly need a witness about. It is a consciousness, a perception, of the love of God as it is shed abroad in our soul, so that this love of God being shed abroad seems to us to mean that it is deeply and intensely enjoyed. Treasure it up in the bottle and you do not enjoy the perfume—shed it abroad and then all the fragrance fills the room and every nostril is regaled. Oh, there are times when we are as full of Heaven as we can hold this side of the Jordan! And when we know Christ's love because He kisses us "with the kisses of His mouth" and we drink deep draughts of His love, it is better than wine! We do not look on at the feast—we feed! We do not admire the rich clusters—we take them and drink the nectar thereof! We do not look from Pisgah's brow, as did Moses, with the eyes of faith—we come to the woods that drop with honey and, like

Jonathan, we dip our spear into it and feel that our eyes are enlightened as doves' eyes. Oh, Christian! You know what this means! You have had it in the prayer chamber when you have been alone with God! You have had it in the depth of trouble—some of you have had it on a sick bed, some in the furnace—and yet so manifestly was Christ with you there that the furnace glowed with joy as with the pain you felt! You rejoiced in Christ Jesus and as your tribulations abounded, so your consolations also abounded. The love of God was enjoyed by you—you felt it, you were ravished with it!

Where the love of God is shed abroad, it fills the whole man. There are some perfumes which if you once spill but a few drops of them, you would not only know it yourself, but everybody else would know it, too. "Gently," said my friend, when he was showing me a certain perfume and I was going to pour out a drop, "if you do not want to smell of that for a month, do not do that," and as I did not particularly desire to smell of anything for so long a time as that, I kept my fingers off! If you could once get the love of God shed abroad in your heart, you would be flavored by it—and when it is once shed abroad, there, it will be there to all eternity! There will be no fear of its being taken away from us when it is once fully poured out in all its glorious efficacy into our hearts. You must have felt it, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, when from morning till night the whole day was full of the love of God! When you woke, you did not know how it was, but instead of a care and a fear about the day, you woke with a hymn, a verse, a comfortable promise, as though you had put a wafer made with honey between your lips when you went to sleep and it had been melting there till it had sweetened your mouth and your whole soul! And when you went downstairs, it did not matter whether things went cross or not—they seemed to you to go well all the day, for your will was, through this love of God, brought to His will—and that pleased you which pleased Him!

You were very rich, today, not that you had more than formerly, but you had the love of God to sweeten all! You were today kept from using the tongue too freely—you did not need to speak about the great many things which once had engrossed your conversation because your meditation of Him was sweet and you wanted to speak with Him. That day persons noticed you—they could not help it. If your face did not shine, your conversation did! And if you met with any of God's people who had a spiritual taste to appreciate your conversation, they remembered that you dropped pearls of soul-enriching from your mouth, for you spoke as one who had "been with Jesus and learned of Him."

Do you remember, too, locking up your heart at night and giving God the key? And then when you woke up remembering David's words, "When I wake I am still with You"? Perhaps you did not remain with Him long, but, whether longer or shorter, it was the best exposition that could have been given you of the meaning of our text, "The love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit."

I know this, dear Friend, if you have ever known this, you will thirst and hunger after it again! This wine of Heaven is such that if a man drinks of it, the more he drinks, the more he needs. If you have ever eaten the Bread of Heaven, the

bread of earth will never satisfy you! If you have ever eaten of the bread which drops from Heaven, and on which angels feed, the food of common mortals will have lost its sweetness for you! You have been made to feast at the "feast of fat things, full of marrow, and of wines on the lees well-refined"—you have been taken up from where men grovel and where you are, yourself, now groveling—and on the wings of eagles you have been made to mount into a clearer atmosphere! And you will feel heavily oppressed in the dense smoke of this world and you will be wanting to be away with Christ again. Perhaps you are singing—

"Ah, woe is me that I In Meshech sojourn long! That I in tents do dwell, To Kedar which belong!"

But it shall not always be so. You shall soon see His face if you seek after Him and again shall the "love of God be shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." And now, may God help us, while for a few minutes we go over what we have said, and ponder—

### III. THE RESULTS OF THIS LOVE BEING SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS.

I have anticipated some of these already, but we remind ourselves more definitely that the love of God in our hearts sweetens everything. It sweetens our duties and they become privileges—

"'Tis love that makes our willing feet In swift obedience move."

Oh, when you feel that God loves you, how you can watch and pray! Then you can fight and wrestle! "All things are possible to him that believes," and more than all is possible to him that loves! When the heart gets the love of God in it, it—

"Laughs at impossibilities, And cries, 'It shall be done!'"

A Believer may have the most desperate enterprises and they may involve the most serious self-denial, but they will be accomplished with readiness when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. It sweetens all our trials. Trials are scarcely trials when we see them coming from a Father's hand. The gardener wept, you know, when he found that his choicest rose had been cut. But when he knew that it was the Master who had taken it, he wept no more, for the Master had a right to it. There are no murmurings in the heart of him who can say, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And, Beloved, it sweetens, I am certain, all our pursuits. We are very apt to think that our engagements in the world are too humble, too obscure—and then they become a drudgery when we think so. Do you not know that Jesus counts the very hairs of your head and He seems to intimate by that, that your very humblest pursuits are the objects of His careful observation? He knows where you are, what you are and what you have to do—and He knows how to sweeten it all! But when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, how

cheerfully the poor woman, with her eyes all weary and red, plies her needle and how the hard-toiling man finds his load grow light! Poverty seems to grow rich and the hut and the hovel seem to grow into a mansion—and even rags seem to glisten like robes when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart! Have you never heard how the martyrs used to sing at the stakes? Why was it? Not because the fire was made of roses—they did not find the firewood to be less hot to them than they would have been to others—but it was because the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts and, therefore, they could endure all things for Christ's sake, seeing that love was theirs. It sweetens all.

Then again, it overpowers all other things. There are some perfumes that if they were let loose in a room, would overpower and kill all others. There may be other sweet scents in the chamber, but just unstop this bottle and now where are they? They are all swallowed up, as Aaron's rod swallowed up Egypt's rods! When the love of Jesus fills our souls we have love towards our dear friends and relatives—God forbid that we should not! But still, the love we have to Jesus seems to swallow them all up—His love towers above all other loves, like some mighty Alp above molehills! Best of all, when this love masters the soul, it kills all evil loves. During cholera times, people are very anxious to get something that will destroy all noxious vapors and bad smells. Ah, there is many a bad odor in our hearts! There is the old swamp of natural depravity which is capable of spreading death and destruction every time we encounter it. But when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, how effectually it kills this! Then the love of sin dies! The loving principle within subdues and

tramples underfoot all lusts and all corruption—and we rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ and are not daunted by the conflict we feel within. This love kills all evil. And how blessedly it destroys all doubt! As I have said, when you are smelling a perfume you cannot doubt but that it is there. If you go into a field at this time of the year, you might walk all down a path and not know that there was any game there, but as soon as ever the partridges begin to fly, or the hares begin to run, you know immediately that there is game there because you can see it. So when our graces are slumbering and we do not know that they are there, as soon as ever they get into active exercise, then we discover them and we are sure of them! So is it with the love of God. When it has been slumbering in our hearts, we have had some doubt—but when it is poured out and shed abroad—its fragrance fills the entire man and then doubts and fears are given to the winds!

And where this perfume is, once more, it is quite sure to communicate itself from the man, instrumentally, to his fellows. He who has been in beds of spices will smell, thereof, and they who sit with their Lord will bear away some tokens of His companionship. All the ways of the Lord Jesus are full of perfume, because "His garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia." And when your garments smell of the same, through having been with Him, you will communicate something of the savor, instrumentally, to those whom you meet. God grant you Grace to seek this as a holy ambition, that, having the love of God in your



hearts, it may be as when one has a candle lit and others bring their candles to his, and he imparts the light, for it makes him none the poorer, while they rejoice therein. And now, to conclude, I think we all who love the Lord desire to feel His love shed abroad in our hearts, but we sometimes mourn because we do not feel it. What, then, is

IV. THE REASON WHY WE DO NOT FEEL THE LOVE OF GOD SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS? May it not be, Brothers and Sisters, because we have restrained prayer? The common sin of God's people is slackness in prayer. If there is one sin that needs to be preached about more than another just now, it is the sin of the omission of secret dealings with God. This is the secret of our spiritual leanness, the secret of many of our trials, of our lack of joy, our loss of confidence in God.

Neglect the prayer chamber? Why, the merchant might as well neglect his office and counting house! This is the place where you will be impoverished if you neglect it. I am persuaded more and more the longer I observe myself, and certainly the longer I observe others, that when we grow weak on our knees, it is a sign of weakness throughout the entire man. How can you expect to know much of the love of God if you will not go with Him? If you give no time to meditation, if you have no season for searching the Scriptures, if you have no periods for communion with God, why wonder if you should miss enjoyment with Him?

I am persuaded, too, that a great many of us lose a good deal through neglecting the means of Grace. I do not think that this applies to the most of you as a congregation. I believe there are none who frequent the assembling of themselves altogether as much as you do. I have no cause to complain. There are some of you who are always here as often as the doors are opened—and Prayer Meeting and Lecture Nights are no burden to you. You come with willing feet to meet with your God. But it is not so with some professors. Step into most of the places of worship in London and look at the weeknight service—and in some country places they have to give up theirs because there are not enough to come to make it worth their while to hold such meetings. There is a sad deficiency in some places of a love of the means of Grace. There are some professors who, when they get by the seaside, or a little away in the country, are always glad of an excuse not to go out to hear the Word of God. They know but little of the emotion of David when he counted that to be a dry and thirsty land when he could not go up to the public worship of God! Brothers and Sisters, we must use the means of Grace or else, as we despise them, we must not expect a blessing! We must dig the well when we go through the valley of Baca. We must not depend upon that well, for it does not, in this case, fill from the bottom—it is filled from above! But still, the well must be dug. There must be our gracious exertions and then there shall come the Divine blessing.

May we not also say that many Christians lose much joyous fellowship with Christ because of idleness? Christ is a worker. If we are idlers, we shall not have communion with

Him. "The Father," says He, "works hitherto, and I work." If your possessions are unconsecrated, if your talents are unused, if your time is misspent, you cannot wonder if the Lord Jesus Christ should give you the whip! The "whip is for the ass, and the rod for the fool's back." Idle Christians must expect to feel the whip or the rod, but if we will do what we may for Christ, we shall have sweet consolation in the doing of it, and the love of God shall be shed abroad in our hearts!

Worldliness, too, is a bar to the shedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts. Those who do as worldlings do, who can be amused and interested as they are, must not wonder if the love of God is not shed abroad in their hearts. I am very far from desiring to keep Christians from certain places of amusement where the amusement is simple, and only such as may be derived from social fellowship, science, music and so on. But I am satisfied that the frequenting of such places, even the very best, must be unfavorable to the piety of the very best Christian. You will gain but very little compared with the risk you run of losing very much! If these things charm you, it is not likely that Christ will charm you longer. If you get worldly, you cannot be spiritual at the same time.

Is it not, also, very probable that our little faith prevents this love of God from being shed abroad in our hearts? If we trusted Christ more and honored Him more by resting upon the faithful love of His Father, would we not find His love shed abroad in us?

And may it not also be our ingratitude as to past favors? We have not thanked God enough for the comfortable seasons that we have enjoyed and, therefore, He keeps us hungry until we thank Him for what He did in days gone by.

And, dear Friends, is it not because we do not sincerely seek conformity to the likeness of our Savior, that we have not, as we might, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts? It is even this, my Brothers and Sisters, it is even this! If you have ever known the sweetness of the love of Christ, you understand that I cannot exaggerate when I praise it. It is the sweetest, best and happiest thing of which a mortal can sing. It is a bliss which angels might envy—the sense of the love of God in a man or woman's heart! Then how is it that you and I can endure to be without it? The true wife would be grieved, indeed, if she had a doubt as to her husband's love—she could not be happy unless she could have an assurance of being its possessor. And oh, how is it that we can bear ourselves when we are saying, "Does He love me?" How is it we can endure, as some professors do, day after day, not to have a word from His lips, or a smile from His countenance? Do we really love Him, or is it all mere talk? Has our heart any deep affection for Him, or is it only formal profession? Have we caught it up from others? Have we stirred merely natural emotions in ourselves and then thought we loved Him? Oh, I do hope we may say, "It is not so, we do love Him! We would be very wretched if we did not. We might sooner wish to die than cease to love Him. He is the Chief among ten thousand to our hearts—we feel He is."

Oh, then, without making vows and resolutions which we shall soon break, let us pray, "Oh, Savior, shed abroad Your love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit! Oh, God the Father, reveal Yourself in all the fullness of Your love to us now and we may never lose a sense of it, but have it abiding with us forever!" What a Church would this be if we all had fellowship with Christ! Oh, how trivial would the world's troubles become! We would then go on serving the Master like seraphs. I think we would scarcely rest day nor night, but be always praising and blessing His dear name! This place would be a paradise! We would have to bless God so continually and our songs might rival those before the Throne of God! "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," but, "we have a High Priest who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities." Let us draw near to Him with confidence and let this be the burden of our prayer, "Abide with me! Continue with me, for Your love's sake, Amen."