

# To look on the things of others, a sermon preached on the Sunday after the funeral of John, lord Teignmouth Volume 1

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*Love, the apostle describes the sweet counsel and fellowship subsisting among those who are living together in the bonds of Christian harmony. But placed as the words are, between consolation in Christ, and fellowship of the Spirit, there would seem to be a more peculiar beauty and propriety in their use, if we should understand them as denoting the Love Op The Father. And this interpretation is supported by the benediction, at the close of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, in which St. Paul speaks, in the same order, of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and The Love Op God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.\* Viewing the clause in this light, we may consider the apostle as saying, in the above passage; "If there be any consolation in the mysterious self-abasement of the Eternal Word, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich ;f if there be any comfort in the love and compassion of the Father, who devised the scheme of redemption of mankind, when exposed to the danger of everlasting destruction ; if there be any fellowship of that Holy Spirit, who proceeded from the Father and the Son, and whose blessed communications purify the minds and hearts of believers, preparing*

them for their &#8226; 2 Cor. xiii. 14. f 2 Cor. viii. 9.

eternal home; and if, as the fruit of such glorious privileges, there be *any bowels and mercies*; that is, any feeling of tenderness among yourselves, one towards another, and especially towards myself, who have made known unto you *the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds*; \* *fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* I have interpreted the last clause of the first verse, *if there be any bowels and mercies*, as referring more particularly to the apostle, because it is followed immediately by the words, *fulfil ye my joy*. For it is manifest that, in these words, the apostle appeals to the Philippians on the ground of their affection towards himself. And, surely, there is something peculiarly touching in the manner in which he thus reminds them of their obligation to their spiritual father; to one, who *in Christ Jesus had begotten them through the gospel*; by whose ministry they had been made acquainted with all its hopes and consolations; and who was now lying in bonds for its *defence and confirmation*. % Not content with exhorting them, on the ground of their common privileges, to live together, as members of one body, animated by one soul, he declares this union of thought and affection, to be the height and fulness of his own joy. *Fulfil Ye My Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* \* Eph. vi. 19, 20. f 1 Cor. iv 15. J See Phil. i. 7 & 17. &#39;

Had St Paul's exhortation terminated here, there would have been an apparent tautology in the clauses of the second verse. But the very correspondence of the phrases, *like-minded* and *of one mind*, gives an emphasis and an energy to the apostle's language, when viewed in connexion with the words of the following verse, *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves*. \* For it is as if he had said; "Do not suppose that in thus reiterating my exhortation to oneness of mind, I am employing a vain and unmeaning repetition: on the contrary, by repeating nearly the same words, f I desire to impress upon your minds the importance of this unity of sentiment, and, at the same time, to put you upon your guard against those unruly wills and affections, which always, create divisions in the body of Christ. I would urge you, therefore, again and again, to be *like-minded*, and to be *of one mind*, because I feel that so only, through divine grace, will you be prepared not to do any thing *through strife or* \* Phil. ii. 3. + See Phil. iii. 1.

*vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, each to esteem other better than themselves.*" Now it is that the apostle says, in the words of our text, *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others*. When taken in connexion with the preceding verse, these words admit of the following interpretation; "Look not, every one of you, on your own particular gifts and graces, but look rather on the attainments of those around you. And while the infirmities of *others* are hidden from your view, let the intimate acquaintance which you are, each of you, daily and hourly forming with the sins and infirmities of your *own* deceitful hearts, serve to humble you to the dust." The above interpretation is suggested by the words immediately preceding. But we are not yet arrived at the full scope of the exhortation contained in the text. For, when taken in its widest acceptation, it manifestly relates, not only to *lowliness of mind*, but to that, also, by which true humility will ever be accompanied; I mean, the unintermitted exercise of self-denying Love. In exhorting the Philippians, therefore, to *look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others*, St. Paul would remind them, not only that *in lowliness of mind each should esteem other better than themselves*; but also that in humble, self-denying love, each of them should be prepared to recede from every personal consideration, for the good of others, *no man seeking his own, but every man another's wealth*. \*

And that such is, in truth, the pregnant meaning of the words contained in the text, St

Paul himself declares to us, by proceeding to speak, in the most glowing and elevated language, of that unutterable Love, which has been exhibited to the world, in the work of man's redemption. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* My brethren, I have chosen this scripture as the subject of our meditation this morning, be\* 1 Cor. x. 24.

cause it is a scripture which cheered the faith, and animated the hope, of a dear and honoured servant of God, whose last days I have been permitted to witness, and over whose mortal remains I have lately been reading the solemn service of our Church. The whole of the above scripture was read to him by his son, at his own particular request, the last time that he was able to listen to the word of God; and the more I dwell upon the passage, the more I perceive how exactly it describes the graces which adorned his character. It was eminently true of our departed father, that *nothing was done by him through strife or vain glory; but that in lowliness of mind he esteemed others better than himself; and that, in the largest acceptation of the words, he looked not on his own things only, but also on the things of others.* And it may well be believed that such a spirit of Christian humility and Christian love, Must have been the fruit of a True And Lively Faith, cherished and supported by FERVENT AND PERSEVERING PRAYER. I will speak, in the first place, of the Holy Fervour And Importunity, with which he offered up his Prayers at the throne of grace. For many years of his life, he was engaged three hours every day in the exercise of private prayer. And it was his custom to retire for his evening devotions at five o'clock in the afternoon, in order that he might perform these holy exercises, before a sense of weariness or fatigue should oppress his bodily powers, and thus impede the aspirations of his soul towards the gates of heaven. From these secret communings with God, he always came forth into his family, like the Jewish lawgiver of old,\* with brightness in his face, as well as with the law of God in his heart, and showing, by that Heavenly-mindedness which marked his whole conversation, how earnest had been his prayer that the same *mind might be in him, which was also in Christ Jesus.*

And this leads me to speak, in the next place, Of that LIVELY FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, which formed the groundwork of his obedience, and which he laboured to cherish, by such earnest, persevering prayer. It was on the second day after my arrival at his house, that, in the course of a long conversation which I enjoyed with him, at the close of his morning devotions, he expressed some apprehensions as to the reality of his faith, because he was unable to perform his devotions with that entire collectedness of mind, and that sustained attention, which it had been his privilege formerly to enjoy. I immediately observed to him, that the feeble state of his bodily frame was obviously unequal to that in , Sec Exodus xxxiv. 29&#8212;35.

tense exertion, both of mind and body, which his devotional exercises demanded. And then, with the view of enabling him to judge, for himself, whether the distraction of which he complained arose from weakness of faith, or only from languor and debility of body, I intreated him to consider what was the view which he habitually entertained of his own natural condition, of the divine holiness, and of the grand mystery of redeeming love. In reply to these questions, he spoke, with an energy and an earnestness which I shall never forget, of his deep and abiding conviction of the utter misery of our fallen state, and of the

strength of indwelling sin in his own heart. He then described his ardent longings after higher degrees of that holiness, which is only another name for true happiness. And he said, in conclusion, with solemn emphasis; "It is my continual prayer, that I may always be looking to Him, who of God is made unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; and that, delivered from the guilt of sin by his atoning blood, clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and partaking of the blessed and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, I may be permitted to join hereafter with angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, in lauding and magnifying God's holy name, evermore praising him, and

saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven, and earth are full of thy glory: glory be to thee, O Lord most high." He said to me, a few days afterwards, "I loathe and detest every species and every degree of sin, as the transgression of the divine law, and as an offence committed against the majesty and holiness of God. I trust that I do indeed repent of all my transgressions. But I do not trust *in* my repentance. No! I look only to the blood of Jesus for pardon and for peace." And, on the Sunday before his death, he said to his beloved partner and his children, *u* I feel that I am resting upon the Right Foundation; and I can now leave you all rejoicing." Behold the Foundation, brethren, the sure, the tried, the precious foundation, on which, with the divine assistance, he was continually building up the superstructure of a pure and holy life, until he became "an holy temple, acceptable unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."\* He was continually *looking to Jesus, as the author and finisher of our faith*; and hence it was that he was adorned with all the graces of the Christian character, *above all things putting on charity, that bond of perfectness, which taught him to look not on his own things only, but on the things of others, also.* &#39;Collector Saint Simon and Saint Judc. t Heb. xii. 2. &#9830; Col. iii. 14.

This grace of charity manifested itself in his daily and hourly intercourse with his family; in his considerate regard for the comfort and the welfare of his servants; in his tender compassion for the temporal and spiritual wants of the poor; and in the love which he bore to his country, and to the world at large. And it was in the highest and the purest exercise of this heavenly grace, that, in the year 1804, he consented to accept the office of the First Presioent Of The British And Foreign Bible Society. Esteeming the word of God as *better unto himself than thousands of gold and silver*,\* he desired, not only that every cottage in England should be provided with a copy of the Scriptures,&#39;) "but that *their sound should go into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.*% And during the thirty years in which he presided over this Institution, he had no greater joy than to hear of the increasing circulation of the Scriptures in every quarter of the globe. Throughout the whole of this period, he never ceased to offer up his earnest intercessions, in behalf of the Society, beseeching God to bless his word to the edification of those to whom it had been already given, and to prosper the work of the Society, in carrying the glad tidings of salvation to those who were as yet unacquainted with the *joyful sound*. \* Upon the occasion of the Apocryphal and Socinian controversies, he prayed that it would please God to give him *the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*, that so he might be enabled to speak and to act with the *wisdom which is from above*. And when, after each of those controversies, he was permitted to behold the Society still pursuing its *labour of love*, &#167; and *rejoicing as a giant to run his course*,\ he ascribed all the praise to Him, to whom all praise is due, and who has promised that *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*% \* Psalm cxix. 72. f The well-known wish of our revered sovereign, George the Third, whose name yet lives in the hearts of Englishmen, coupled with the endearing title of *the father of his people*. Rom. x. 18, and Psalm xi. 4.

The prayers which he was thus offering up, continually, for the success of the Bible

Society, plainly testified how he had learned to *look not on his own things, but also on the things of others.* And it was in the same blessed spirit of charity, that he was accustomed to regard intercessory prayer in general, as an important part of his daily devotions. Until within a few i Psalm Ixxxmc. 15. f 2 Tim. i. 7. \* James i. 17. &#167; 1 Thess. i. 3, and Heb. vi. 10. || Psalm xix. 5. f Hab. ii. 14.

days of his death, the offices of the Church of England were continually in his hand: and it was one of his last injunctions to his son, (who will, I trust, be long spared to us, to tread in his father's steps,) that he would make a constant use of the admirable prayer, iu the Communion office, for the whole state of Christ's church militant here in earth. "I do not know any form of words," he said, u in which I can better express the feelings of my heart for my country, and for the church at large. I use it both in my morning and my evening prayers; and I always add another prayer for my country, beseeching God to raise up his mighty power, in order that he may check the flood of immorality, ungodliness, and blasphemy, which threatens to deluge the land." You will readily believe, brethren, that a love such as I have endeavoured to describe, was accompanied by all the other graces of the christian character. I have already said, that *nothing was done by him through strife or vain glory, but that in lowliness of mind he esteemed others better than himself;* and I might sum up all, by saying, with our apostle, that he was BlameLess And Harmless, as becomes *the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.* \* As he advanced in years, he became more and more remarkable for the simplicity of his faith, the singleness of his heart, the meekness and gentleness of his spirit, and the devotedness of his obedience to the divine will; and all this was combined with a stedfast and cheerful reliance on the watchful and gracious providence of God.t In the bosom of his family, he often dwelt with delight on the manner in which he had been *ho/den up by God's good providence ever since he was born;*% and he called on them to bear witness with him, how, *even to his old age, and even to hoar hairs,*% he had experienced the same tender and never-failing care. He felt, indeed, that he himself had too often been unmindful of his God; and he confessed, with shame and sorrow, that he had wandered from his paths like a lost sheep ; but he acknowledged, with devout thankfulness, that his heavenly Father had never been unmindful of him; that *he had not dealt with him after his sins, nor re*

&#8226; Phil. ii. 15, 16. .f. It \*u only a few weeks before his death, that he allowed the Rev. A. Brandram to carry through the press some "thoughts on the providence of God," which had been committed to writing in the year 1810, and which he had repeatedly been solicited to publish. J Ps. lxxi. 5. Prayer Book translation. &#167; Is. xlvi. 4.

*warded him according to his iniquities ;*\* yea, that he had heard the sighing of a contrite heart, and that he had encouraged and enabled him to return into the paths of holiness and peace. Upon reviewing his past life, he invariably ascribed it to the Lord's mercies, that he had been graciously spared to such an advanced age, to *declare his faithfulness and his salvation.*^ And it may be said, without any exaggeration, that for many years a sense of the Divine goodness was never for a moment absent from his thoughts. He knew, also, from his own joyful experience, that *all things do indeed work together for good to them that love God;*% and it was under the sweet persuasion of this blessed and consolatory truth, that he repeatedly said to his old and faithful servants,&#167; as they were rendering him any little offices for his comfort or refreshment, " It is my duty to be as thankful for my Sufferings, as for all my Other Mercies." Indeed, upon every occasion, and under every trial, so perfect was the composure and serenity of his mind, and so entire his submission to the \* Ps. ciii. 10. One of his favourite psalms. f Ps. xl. 10. Rom. viii. 28. &#167; The three servants who were watching by his bedside, when he breathed his last, had been, severally thirty-four, thirty-one, and twenty-eight years in his service. C 2

divine will, that, had this been considered independently of the other parts of his character, the conjecture might possibly have arisen, that it was to be attributed, either wholly or chiefly, to a constitutional coldness and insensibility. But you have heard, that to his lowliness of mind, and his spirit of thankfulness, under every dispensation, he added a warmth of heavenly love, which led him, under all circumstances, and in every possible way, to look not on his own things, but also on the things of others. And my own observation enables me to add, that the affection towards others, which always glowed within his bosom, and which had been cherished, directed, and purified by divine grace, seemed to gather fresh force as his bodily strength decayed. During the last week of his illness, he spoke, in terms of the warmest affection, of his only absent child, the son who is now resident in India; to his other children he gave, at intervals, his parting blessing; his beloved partner was more than ever the object of his tender regard; and he often addressed to his attached and sorrowing attendants a few words of Christian kindness and Christian admonition, which will, I trust, be always treasured up in their remembrance. It was the observation of one, who had lived for some years in his immediate neighbourhood, that "Lord Teignmouth always reminded him of one of the ancient patriarchs;" and, assuredly, brethren, when I recal all that I have been privileged to witness, since the first hour of my acquaintance with this beloved and venerated nobleman, I feel that I am only endeavouring to describe the impression produced on my own mind, when I say, that he lived a patriarch's life, and that he died a patriarch's death. Like Abraham, he commanded his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord." And, like Jacob, he was able to say, *The God which fed me all my life long, unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, Bless My Children, because, like Jacob, he could say also, I have waited for Thy Salvation, O Lord*

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