

LAUS DEO

“For of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

Romans 11:36

MY text consists almost entirely of monosyllables, but it contains the loftiest of sublimities. Such a tremendous weight of meaning is concentrated here that an archangel's eloquence would fail to convey its teaching in all its glory to any finite minds, even if seraphs were his hearers. I will affirm that there is no man living who can preach from my text a sermon worthy of it. No, among all the sacred orators and the eloquent pleaders for God, there never did live and never will live a man capable of reaching the height of the great argument contained in these few simple words. I utterly despair of success and will not, therefore, make an attempt to work out the infinite Glory of this sentence.

Our great God alone can expound this verse for He only knows Himself and He only can worthily set forth His own perfections. Yet I am comforted by this reflection that maybe, in answer to our prayers, God Himself may preach from this text this morning in our hearts. If not through the words of the speaker, yet by that still small voice to which the Believer's ear is so well accustomed. If thus He shall condescend to favor us, our hearts shall be lifted up in His ways.

There are two things before us, the one worthy of our observation and the second of our imitation. You have in the text, first of all, doctrine and then devotion, The doctrine is high doctrine—“Of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things.” The devotion is lofty devotion—“To whom be glory forever. Amen.”

1. Let us consider THE DOCTRINE. It is laid down by the Apostle Paul as a general principle that all things come of God—they are of Him as their source. They are through Him as their means. They are to Him as their end. They are of Him in the plan, through Him in the working and to Him in the Glory which they produce. Taking this general principle, you will find it applies to all things and it is ours to mark those in which it is most manifestly the case. May the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, open His treasures to us at this moment that we may be enriched in spiritual knowledge and understanding.

Meditate, dear Friends, upon the whole range of God's works in Creation and Providence. There was a period when God dwelt alone and creatures were not. In that time before all time, when there was no day but, “The Ancient of Days”—when matter and created mind were alike unborn and even space was not—God, the great I Am, was as perfect, glorious and blessed as He is now. There was no sun and yet Jehovah dwelt in light ineffable. There was no earth and yet His Throne stood fast and firm. There were no heavens and yet His Glory was unbounded.

God inhabited eternity in the infinite majesty and happiness of His self-contained greatness. If the Lord, thus abiding in awful solitude, should choose to create anything, the first thought and idea must come of Him, for there was no other to think or suggest. All things must be of Him in design. With whom can He take counsel? Who shall instruct Him? There existed not another to come into the council chamber, even if such an assistance could be supposed with the Most High.

In the beginning of His way before His works of old, eternal Wisdom brought forth from its own mind the perfect plan of future creations and every line and mark therein must clearly have been of the Lord alone. He ordained the pathway of every planet and the abode of every fixed star. He poured forth the sweet influences of the Pleiades and girt Orion with His hands. He appointed the bounds of the sea and settled the course of the winds. As to the earth, the Lord alone planned its

foundations and stretched His line upon it. He formed in His own mind the mold of all His creatures and found for them a dwelling and a service.

He appointed the degree of strength with which He would endow each creature, settled its months of life, its hour of death, its coming and its going. Divine Wisdom mapped this earth—its flowing rivers and foaming seas—the towering death. Nothing could have been suggested by any other, for there was no other to suggest. It was in His power to have made a universe very different from this if He had so pleased. And that He has made it what it is must have been merely because, in His Wisdom and prudence, He saw fit to do so.

There cannot be any reason why He should not have created a world from which sin should have been forever excluded. And that He suffered sin to enter into His creation must again be ascribed to His own infinite Sovereignty. Had He not known that He would be master over sin and out of evil evolve the noblest display of His own Glory, He had not permitted it to enter into the world—but, in sketching the whole history of the universe which He was about to create, He permitted even that black spot to defile His work—because He foreknew what songs of everlasting triumph would rise to Himself when, in streams of His own blood, Incarnate Deity should wash out the stain. It cannot be doubted that whatever may be the whole drama of history in Creation and Providence, there is a high and mysterious sense in which it is all of God.

The sin is not God's, but the temporary permission of its existence formed part of the foreknown scheme and to our faith the intervention of moral evil and the purity of the Divine Character do neither of them diminish the force of our belief that the whole scope of history is of God in the fullest sense. When the plan was all laid down and the Almighty had ordered His purpose, this was not enough—mere arrangement would not create. "Through Him," as well as "of Him," must all things be. There was no raw material ready to the Creator's hand. He must create the universe out of nothing. He calls not for aid—He needs it not and besides, there is none to help Him. There is no rough matter which He may fashion between His palms and launch forth as stars.

He did not need a mine of unquarried matter which He might melt and purify in the furnace of His power and then hammer out upon the anvil of His skill—no, there was nothing to begin with in that day of Jehovah's work—from the womb of Omnipotence all things must be born. He speaks and the heavens leap into existence! He speaks again and worlds are begotten with all the varied forms of life so fraught with Divine Wisdom and matchless skill. "Let there be light and there was light," was not the only time when God had spoken and when things that were not, were, for aforesaid He had spoken and this rolling earth and yon blue heavens had blossomed out of nothingness.

Through Him were all things—from the high archangel who sings His praises in celestial notes—down to the cricket chirping on the hearth. The same finger paints the rainbow and the wing of the butterfly. He who dyes the garments of evening in all the colors of Heaven has covered the kingcup with gold and lit up the glowworm's lamp. From yonder ponderous mountain piercing the clouds down to that minute grain of dust in the summer's threshing floor—all things are through Him. Let but God withdraw the emanations of His Divine power and everything would melt away as the foam upon the sea melts into the wave which bore it!

Nothing could stand an instant if the Divine foundation were removed. If He should shake the pillars of the world the whole temple of Creation falls to ruin and its very dust is blown away. A dreary waste, a silent emptiness, a voiceless wilderness is all which remains if God withdraws His power. No, even so much as this were not if His power should be withheld. That nature that is as it is, is through the energy of the present God. If the sun rises every morning and the moon walks in her brightness at night, it is through Him. Away with those men who think that God has wound up the world as though it were a clock and has gone away—leaving it to work for itself apart from His present hand!

God is present everywhere—not merely present when we tremble because His thunder shakes the solid earth and sets the heavens in a blaze with lightning—but just as much so in the calm summer's eve when the air so gently fans the flowers and gnats dance up and down in the last

gleams of sunlight. Men try to forget the Divine Presence by calling its energy by strange names. They speak of the power of gravitation. But what is the power of gravitation? We know what it does, but what is it? Gravitation is God's own power!

They tell us of mysterious laws of electricity and I know not what. We know the laws, and let them wear the names they have. But laws cannot operate without power. What is the force of nature? It is a constant emanation from the great Fountain of power, the constant out-flowing of God Himself—the perpetual going forth of beams of light from Him who is “the great Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow.” Tread softly, be reverent, for God is here, O Mortal, as truly as He is in Heaven! Wherever you are and whatever you look upon, you are in God's workshop where every wheel is turned by His hands. Everything is not God, but God is in everything and nothing works, or even exists, except by His present power and might. “Of Him and through Him are all things.”

Beloved, the great glory of all is that in the work of Creation everything is to Him. Everything will praise the Lord—He so designed it. God must have the highest motive and there can be no higher motive conceivable than His own Glory. When there was no creature but Himself and no being but Himself, God could not have taken as a motive a creature which did not exist. His motive must be Himself. His own Glory is His highest aim. The good of His creatures He considers carefully. But even the good of His creatures is but a means to the main end—the promotion of His Glory. All things, then, are for His pleasure and for His Glory they daily work.

Tell me that the world is marred by sin and I lament it. Tell me that the slime of the serpent is upon everything beautiful here and I sorrow for it. But yet, even yet shall everything speak of the Glory of God. To Him are all things and the day shall come when with eyes spiritually illuminated you and I shall see that even the introduction of the Fall and the curse did not, after all, mar the splendor of the majesty of the Most High. To Him shall all things be. His enemies shall bow their necks unwillingly but abjectly, while His people, redeemed from death and Hell, shall cheerfully extol Him.

The new heavens and the new earth shall ring with His praise and we who shall sit down to read the record of His creating wonders, shall say of them all, “In His temple does everyone speak of His Glory and even until now to Him have all things been.” Courage then, Beloved! When you think that matters go against the cause of God, throw yourselves back upon this as a soft couch. When the enemy hisses in your ears this note—“God is overcome! His plans are spoiled. His Gospel is thrust back. The honor of His Son is stained,” tell the enemy, “No, it is not so! To Him are all things.”

God's defeats are victories. God's weakness is stronger than man and even the foolishness of the Most High is wiser than man's wisdom and at the last we shall see most clearly that it is so. Hallelujah! We shall see, dear Friends, one day in the clear light of Heaven, that every page in human history, however stained by human sin, has nevertheless something of God's Glory in it. And that the calamities of nations, the falling of dynasties, the devastations of pestilence, plagues, famines, wars and earthquakes have all worked out the eternal purpose and glorified the Most High!

From the first human prayer to the last mortal sigh! From the first note of finite praise onward to the everlasting hallelujah all things have worked together for the Glory of God and have served His purposes. All things are of Him and through Him and to Him. This great principle is most manifest in the grand work of Divine Grace. Here everything is of God and through God and to God. The great plan of salvation was not drawn by human fingers. It is no concoction of priests, no elaboration of Divines. Grace first moved the heart of God and joined with Divine Sovereignty to ordain a plan of salvation.

This plan was the offspring of a Wisdom no less than Divine. None but God could have imagined a way of salvation such as that which the Gospel presents—a way so just to God—so safe to man. The thought of Divine Substitution and the Sacrifice of God on man's behalf could never have suggested itself to the most educated of all God's creatures. God Himself suggests it and the plan

is “of Him.” And as the great plan is of Him, so the fillings up of the details are of Him. God ordained the time when the first promise should be promulgated—who should receive that promise and who should deliver it. He ordained the hour when the great Promise-Keeper should come—when Jesus Christ should appear—of whom He should be born, by whom He should be betrayed, what death He should die, when He should rise and in what manner He should ascend.

What if I say more? He ordained those who should accept the Mediator, to whom the Gospel should be preached and who should be the favored individuals in whom effectual calling should make that preaching mighty for salvation! He settled in His own mind the name of every one of His chosen and the time when each elect vessel should be put upon the wheel to be fashioned according to His will. He ordained pangs of conviction should be felt when the time of faith should come! How much of holy light and enjoyment should be bestowed—all this was purposed from of old! He settled how long the chosen vessel should be glazing in the fire and when it should be taken up—made perfect by heavenly workmanship to adorn the palace of God Most High. Of the Lord’s Wisdom every stitch in the noble tapestry of salvation most surely comes.

Nor must we stop here—through Him all these things come. Through His Spirit the promise came at last, for He moved the seers and holy men of old. Through Him the Son of God is born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through Him, sustained by that Spirit, the Son of God leads His thirty years of perfection. In the great redemption God alone is exalted. Jesus sweats in Gethsemane and bleeds on Calvary. None stood with our Savior there. He trod that winepress alone. His own arm worked salvation and His own arm upheld Him. Redemption work was through God alone! Not one soul was ever redeemed by human suffering! No spirit was emancipated by mortal penance. All is through Him.

And as through Him the Atonement, so through Him the application of the Atonement. By the power of the Spirit the Gospel is daily preached. Upheld by the Holy Spirit, pastors, teachers and elders still abide with the Church—still the energy of the Spirit goes forth with the Word to the hearts of the chosen. Still is “Christ crucified,” the power of God and the wisdom of God because God is in the Word and through Him men are called, converted, saved. O my Brethren, beyond a doubt we must confess of this great plan of salvation that it is all to Him! We have not a note of praise to spare for another!

Silenced forever with everlasting confusion is the man who would retain a solitary word of praise for man or angel in the work of Grace. You fools! Who can be praised but God, for who but God determined to give His Son Jesus? You knaves! Will you rob Christ of His Glory? Will you steal the jewels out of His crown when He so dearly bought them with drops of His precious blood? O you who love darkness rather than light, will you glorify man’s will above the energy of the Holy Spirit and sacrifice to your own dignity and freedom? God forgive you!

But as for His saints, they will always sing, “To God, to God alone be all the Glory! From the first to the last let Him who is the Alpha and the Omega have all the praise! Let His name be extolled, world without end.” When the great plan of Grace shall be all developed and you and I shall stand upon the hilltops of Glory, what a wondrous scene will open up before us! We shall see more clearly then, than now, how all things sprang from the fountainhead of God’s love. How they all flowed through the channel of the Savior’s mediation and how they all worked together to the Glory of the same God from whom they came. The great plan of Grace, then, bears out this principle.

The word holds good, dear Friends, in the case of every individual Believer. Let this be a matter for personal enquiry. Why am I saved? Because of any goodness in me, or any superiority in my constitution? Of whom comes my salvation? My spirit cannot hesitate a single moment. How could a new heart come out of the old one? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one! How can the spirit come out of the flesh? That which is born of the flesh is flesh. If it is spirit it must be born of the Spirit. My Soul, you must be quite clear about this, that if there is in you any faith, hope, or spiritual life, it must have come of God!

Can any Christian here who possesses vital godliness differ from this statement? I am persuaded he cannot. And if any man should arrogate any honor to his own natural constitution, I must, with all charity, doubt whether he knows anything at all about the matter. But, my Soul, as your salvation must have come out of God—as He must have thought of it and planned it for you, and then bestowed it upon you—did it not also come to you through God? It came through faith, but where did that faith take its birth? Was it not of the operation of the Holy Spirit? And what did you believe in? Did you believe in your own strength, or in your own good resolution? No, but in Jesus, your Lord. Was not the first ray of light you ever had received in this way?

Did you not look entirely away from self to the Savior? And the Light which you now have, does it not always come to you in the same way, by having done once and for all with the creature, with the flesh, with human merit—and resting with childlike confidence upon the finished work and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? Is not, dear Hearer, is not your salvation, if you are, indeed, saved, entirely “through” your God, as well as “of” your God? Who is it that enables you to pray every day? Who keeps you from temptation? By what Grace are you led onward in spiritual duty? Who upholds you when your foot would trip? Are you not conscious that there is a power other than your own?

For my part, Brethren, I am not taken to Heaven against my will, I know, but still so desperate is my nature and so prone to evil that I feel myself floated onward against the current of my nature. It seems as if all we could do were to kick and rebel against Sovereign Grace, while Sovereign Grace says, “I will save you. I will have you, whatever you may do. I will overcome your raging corruption. I will quicken you out of your lethargy and take you to Heaven in a fiery chariot of afflictions, if not by any other means. I will whip you to Paradise sooner than let you be lost.”

Is not this your experience? Have you not found that if once the strong hand of God were taken from your soul, instead of going onward to Heaven you would go back again to Perdition? It is through God you are saved! And what do you say, Believer, to the last point? Is it not “to Him”? Will you take one single jewel out of His crown? Oh, there is not one of you who would wish to extol himself! There is no song we sing more sweetly in this House of Prayer than the song of Grace and there is no hymn which seems more in keeping with our own experience than this—

*“Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days.
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.”*

Let who will extol the dignity of the creature. Let who may boast in the power of free will—we cannot do it! We have found our nature to be a very depraved one and our will to be under bondage. We must, if other creatures do not, extol that unchangeable Omnipotent Grace which has made us what we are and will continue to keep us so till it brings us to the right hand of God in everlasting Glory! In each individual, then, this rule holds good.

Once more, in every work which the Christian is enabled to do, he should bear in mind the rule of the text. Some of you are privileged to work in the Sunday school and you have had many conversions in your class. Others of you are distributing tracts, going from house to house and trying to bring souls to Christ, not without success, by God’s Grace. Some of us, too, have the honor of being sent to preach the Gospel in every place and we have sheaves of our harvest too many for our barns to hold. In the case of some of us, we seem to have received the promised blessing to its fullest extent. The Lord has spiritually made our children like the sand of the sea and the spiritual offspring of our heart like the gravel.

In all this it behooves us to remember that, “of Him and through Him and to Him,” are all things. “Of Him.” Who makes you to differ? What have you which you have not received? The burning heart, the tearful eye, the prayerful soul—all these qualifications for usefulness come of Him. The fluent mouth, the pleading tongue—these must have been educated and given by Him. From Him

all the many gifts of the Spirit by which the Church is edified—from Him, I say, they all proceed. What is Paul? Who is Apollos, or Cephas—who are all these but the messengers of God in whom the Spirit works, dividing to every man according as He wills?

When the preacher has achieved his usefulness, he knows that all his success comes through God. If a man shall suppose himself capable of stirring up a revival, or encouraging even one saint, or leading one sinner to repentance, he is a fool! As well might we attempt to move the stars, or shake the world, or grasp the lightning flash in the hollow of our hand as think to save a soul, or even to quicken saints out of their lethargy! Spiritual work must be done by the Spirit. Through God every good thing comes to us. The preacher may be a very Samson when God is with him—he shall be like Samson when God is not with him only in Samson's degradation and shame!

Beloved, there never was a man brought to God except through God and there never will be! Our nation shall never be stirred up again into the celestial heat of piety except by the Presence of the Holy Spirit anew. Would God we had more of the abiding sense of the Spirit's work among us! That we looked more to Him! That we rested less in machinery and men and more upon that Divine but Invisible Agent who works all good things in the hearts of men! Beloved, it is through GOD that every good thing comes. And I am sure it is to Him. We cannot take the honor of a single convert. We do look with thankfulness upon this growing Church, but we can give the Glory alone to Him! Give glory to the creature and it is all over with it! Honor yourselves as a Church and God will soon dishonor you!

Let us lay every sheaf upon His altar, bring every lamb of the fold to the feet of the Good Shepherd feeling that it is His. When we go abroad to fish for souls, let us think that we only fill the net because He taught us how to throw it on the right side of the Church. And when we take them they are His, not ours. Oh, what poor little things we are and yet we think we do so much! The pen might say, "I wrote Milton's Paradise Lost." Ah, poor Pen! You could not have made a dot to an "i," or a cross to a "t," if Milton's hand had not moved you! The preacher could do nothing if God had not helped him. The axe might cry, "I have felled forests! I have made the cedar bow its head and laid the stalwart oak in the dust." No, you did not—for if it had not been for the arm which wielded you, even a bramble would have been too much for you to cut down!

Shall the sword say, "I won the victory! I shed the blood of the mighty! I caused the shield to be cast away?" No, it was the warrior, who with his courage and might made you of service in the battle, and apart from this you are less than nothing. In all that God does by us let us continue to give Him the praise—so shall He continue His Presence with our efforts. Otherwise He will take from us His smile and so we shall be left as weak men. I have, perhaps, at too great length for your patience, tried to bring out this very simple but very useful principle. And now, before I go to the second part, I wish to apply it by this very practical remark.

Beloved, if this is true, that all things are through Him and to Him, do you not think that those doctrines are most doctrines commonly called Calvinistic (but which ought never to have been called by such a name, for they are simply Christian doctrines), which I think commend themselves to the minds of all thoughtful persons. For this reason, mainly, that they do ascribe to God everything.

Here is the doctrine of election, for instance. Why is a man saved? Is it the result of his own will or God's will? Did he choose God, or did God choose him? The answer, "Man chose God," is manifestly untrue because it glorifies man. God's answer to it is, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." God has predestinated His people to salvation from before the foundation of the world. Ascribing the will, which is the hinge of the whole matter, and turns the balance—ascribing that to God—we feel we are speaking in keeping with the doctrine of our text.

Then take effectual calling. By what power is a man called? There are some who say that it is by the energy of his own will, or at least that while God gives him Grace, it depends upon him to make use of it. Some do not make use of the Grace and perish. Others make use of the Grace and are saved—saved by their own consenting to allow Grace to be effectual. We, on the other hand, say no—a man is not saved against his will—but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy

Spirit. A mighty Grace which he does not wish to resist enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him and he is saved. We believe that the calling which saves the soul is a calling which owes nothing at all to man, but which comes from God. The creature being, then, passive, while God, like the potter, molds the man like a lump of clay. Clearly the calling, we think, must be through God—for so it coincides with this principle, “of Him and through Him and to Him are all things.”

Then next, the question of particular redemption. Some insist upon it that men are redeemed not because Christ died, but because they are willing to give efficacy to the blood of Christ. He died for everybody according to their theory. Why, then, are not all men saved? Because all men will not believe? That is to say that believing is necessary in order to make the blood of Christ efficacious for redemption! Now we hold that to be a great lie! We believe the very contrary—namely, that the blood of Christ has in itself the power to redeem and that it does redeem and that faith does not give efficacy to the blood but is only the proof that the blood has redeemed that man. Hence we hold that Christ did not redeem every man, but only redeemed those men who will ultimately attain unto eternal life.

We do not believe that He redeemed the damned! We do not believe that He poured out His life blood for souls already in Hell! We never can imagine that Christ suffered in the place of all men and that then, afterwards, these same men have to suffer for themselves—that in fact Christ pays their debts—and then God makes them pay their debts over again! We think that the doctrine that men, by their wills, give efficacy to the blood of Christ is derogatory to the Lord Jesus and we rather hold to this that He laid down His life for His sheep and that His laying down His life for His sheep involved and secured the salvation of every one of them. We believe this because we hold that, “of Him and through Him and to Him are all things.”

So, again, take the total depravity of the race and its original corruption—a doctrine much abhorred of those who lift up poor human nature—but is, nevertheless, true. We hold that man must be entirely lost and ruined, because if there is some good thing in him, then it cannot be said that, “of God and through God and to God, are all things,” for at least some things must be of man. If there are some relics of virtue and some remnants of power left in the race of man, then some things are of man and to man will some things be. But if of God are all things, then in man there must be nothing—man must be set down as ruined—hopelessly ruined—

“Bruised and mangled by the Fall,”

and his salvation must be described as being from the first to the last, in every jot and every tittle of that almighty Grace of God, which at first chose him, at length redeemed him, ultimately called him, constantly preserved him and perfectly shall present him before the Father’s Throne.

I put these doctrines before you, more especially today, because last Friday many Believers both in Geneva and London met together to celebrate the centenary of the death of that mighty servant of God, John Calvin. I honor Calvin, not as teaching these doctrines himself, but as one through whom God spoke and one who, next to the Apostle Paul, propounded the Truth of God more clearly than any other man that ever breathed. He knew more of Scripture and explained it more clearly than most. Luther may have as much courage, but Luther knows little of theology. Luther, like a bull, when he sees one Truth, shuts his eyes and dashes against the enemy, breaking down gates, bolts and bars, to clear away for the Word!

But Calvin, following in the opened pathway with clear eyes, searching Scripture, ever acknowledging that of God and through God and to God are all things, maps out the whole plan with a delightful clearness which could only have come of the Spirit of God. That man of God expounds the doctrines in so excellent and admirable a manner that we cannot too much bless the Lord who sent him, or too much pray that others like him may be honest and sincere in the work of the Lord. Thus much then, of doctrine, but one or two minutes by way of devotion.

II. The Apostle puts his pen back into the ink bottle, falls on his knees—he cannot help it—he must have a doxology. “To whom be glory forever. Amen.” Beloved, let us imitate this DEVOTION. I think that this sentence should be the prayer, the motto for every one of us—“To Him be glory forever. Amen.” I will be but very brief, for I would not weary you. “To Him be glory forever.” This should be the single desire of the Christian. I take it that he should not have twenty wishes, but only one. He may desire to see his family well brought up, but only that, “To God may be glory forever.”

He may wish for prosperity in his business, but only so far as it may help him to promote this—“To Him be glory forever.” He may desire to attain more gifts and more graces, but it should only be that, “To Him may be glory forever.” This one thing I know, Christian—you are not acting as you ought to do when you are moved by any other motive than the one motive of your Lord’s Glory. As a Christian you are “of God and through God.” I pray you be “to God.” Let nothing ever set your heart beating but love to Him. Let this ambition fire your soul! Be this the foundation of every enterprise upon which you enter, and this your sustaining motive whenever your zeal would grow chill—only, only make God your object! Depend upon it, where self begins, sorrow begins. But if God is my supreme delight and only object—

*“To me ‘tis equal whether love ordain
My life or death appoint me ease or pain.”*

To me there shall be no choice, when my eyes singly look to God’s Glory, whether I shall be torn in pieces by wild beasts or live in comfort—whether I shall be full of despondency or full of hope. If God is glorified in my mortal body, my soul shall rest content. Again, let it be our constant desire, “To Him be glory.” When I wake up in the morning, O, let my soul salute her God with gratitude—

*“Wake and lift up yourself, my Heart,
And with the angels bear your part,
Who all night long unwearied sing
High praises to the eternal King.”*

At my work behind the counter, or in the Exchange, let me be looking out to see how I may glorify Him. If I am walking in the fields, let my desire be that the trees may clap their hands in His praise. May the sun in his march shine out the Master’s Glory and the stars at night reflect His praise.

It is yours, Brethren, to put a tongue into the mouth of this dumb world and make the silent beauties of creation praise their God. Never be silent when there are opportunities and you shall never be silent for want of opportunities. At night fall asleep praising your God! As you close your eyes let your last thought be, “How sweet to rest upon the Savior’s bosom!” In afflictions praise Him—out of the fires let your song go up! On the sick-bed extol Him! Dying, let Him have your sweetest notes. Let your shouts of victory in the combat with the last great enemy be all for Him. And then, when you have burst the bondage of mortality and come into the freedom of immortal spirits—then, in a nobler, sweeter song—you shall sing unto His praise!

Be this, then, your constant thought—“To Him be glory forever.” Let this be your earnest thought. Do not speak of God’s Glory with cold words, nor think of it with a chilly heart, but feel, “I must praise Him. If I cannot praise Him where I am, I will break through these narrow bonds, and get where I can.” Sometimes you will feel that you long to be disembodied—that you may praise Him as the immortal spirits do. I must praise Him! Bought by His precious blood, called by His Spirit I cannot hold my tongue! My Soul, can you be dumb and dead? I must praise Him! Stand back, O Flesh! Away, you Fiends! Away, you Troubles! I must sing, for should I refuse to sing, surely the very stones would speak!

I hope, dear Friends, while thus earnest, your praise will also be growing. Let there be growing desire to praise Him of whom and through whom are all things. You blessed Him in your youth, do not be content with such praises as you gave Him then. Has God prospered you in business? Give Him more as He has given you more. Has God given you exmore sweetly! Do you have happier times than you once had? Have you been restored from sickness and has your sorrow been turned into peace and joy? Then give Him more music! Put more coals in your censer, more sweet frankincense, more of the sweet cane bought with money. Oh, to serve Him every day, lifting up my heart from Sunday to Sunday, till I reach the ever-ending Sunday! Reaching from sanctification to sanctification, from love to love, from strength to strength, till I appear before my God!

In closing, let me urge you to make this desire practical. If you really glorify God, take care to do it not with lipservice which dies away in the wind, but with solid homage of daily life. Praise Him by your patience in pain, by your perseverance in duty, by your generosity in His cause, by your boldness in testimony, by your consecration to His work. Praise Him, my dear Friends, not only this morning in what you do for Him in your offerings, but praise Him every day by doing something for God in all sorts of ways, according to the manner in which He has been pleased to bless you. I wish I could have spoken worthily on such a topic as this, but a dull, heavy headache sits upon me and I feel that a thick gloom overshadows my words, out of which I look with longing, but cannot rise.

For this I may well grieve, but nevertheless God the Holy Spirit can work the better through our weakness and if you will try and preach the sermon to yourselves, my Brethren, you will do it vastly better than I can. If you will meditate upon this text this afternoon, "Of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things," I am sure you will be led to fall on your knees with the Apostle and say, "To Him be glory forever," and then you will rise up and practically, in your life, give Him honor, putting the "Amen" to this doxology by your own individual service of your great and gracious Lord. May He give a blessing now and accept your thank offering through Christ Jesus. Amen.