

All Things for Good
Thomas Watson

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- I. Introduction
 - A. Two Difficulties
 1. To make the wicked sad
 2. To make the godly joyful
 - B. Proof text
 1. *[Romans 8:28]- And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
 - C. The Text's Three Branches
 1. A Glorious Privilege: *'All things work for good'*
 - a. The Certainty of the Privilege: *'We know'*
 - 1.) *[1 Corinthians 13:12]- For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*
 - 2.) *[2 Corinthians 3:18]- But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*
 - 3.) *[1 John 3:14]- We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*
 - 4.) *[2 Corinthians 5:1]- For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*
 - 5.) *[2 Corinthians 1:22]- who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*
 - b. The Excellency of the Privilege: *'All things work together for good'*
 - 1.) *[1 Samuel 14:27]- But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 25:10]- All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.*
- II. The Best Things Work for God for the Godly
 - A. God's attributes work for good to the godly
 1. God's power works for good
 - a. It is a glorious power
 - 1.) *[Colossians 1:11]- strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;*
 - b. Supporting us in trouble
 - 1.) *[Deuteronomy 33:27]- The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them*
 - c. Upheld by the arms of the Almighty
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 12:9]- And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
 - d. Supplying our wants
 - 1.) *[1 Kings 17:14]- For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.*

- e. Subdues our corruptions
 - 1.) *[Micah 7:19]- He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*
 - 2.) *[Job 23:16]- For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:*
- f. Conquers our enemies
 - 1.) *[Psalm 2:9]- Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*
 - 2.) *[2 Chronicles 14:11]- And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power : help us, O Lord our God ; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God ; let not man prevail against thee.*
 - 3.) *[Deuteronomy 33:29]- Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.*
- 2. The wisdom of God works for good
 - a. Our oracle to instruct us
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 9:6]- For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*
 - b. Our light
 - 1.) *[Psalm 32:8]- I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.*
- 3. The goodness of God works for good to the godly
 - a. It means to make us good
 - 1.) *[Romans 2:4]- Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*
 - b. It ushers in all blessings
 - 1.) Common blessings: all partake of these, the bad as well as the good
 - 2.) Crowning blessings:
 - a.) *[Psalm 103:4]- who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;*
- B. The Promises of God work for good to the godly
 - 1. Promises of God described
 - a. Notes of God's hand for our security
 - b. The milk of the gospel for an infant
 - c. Precious
 - 1.) *[2 Peter 1:4]- knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.*
 - d. Cordial to the faint soul
 - e. Full of virtue
 - 2. Ailments that the promises help
 - a. Guilt of sin
 - 1.) *[Exodus 34:6]- And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,*

- b. Under the defilement of sin
 - 1.) *[Hosea 14:4]- I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.*
- c. Need for the Spirit for Sanctification
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 44:3]- For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:*
- d. While in trouble
 - 1.) *[Psalm 37:39]- For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.*
- e. Fearing for outward wants
 - 1.) *[Psalm 34:10]- The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.*
 - 2.) *[Exodus 23:25]- And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.*
- f. Fearing for a livelihood
 - 1.) *[Psalm 37:25]- I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*
- 3. Question: How do the promises work for good?
 - a. Answer 1: The promises are the food and milk of faith.
 - 1.) *[Genesis 32:7,12]- Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.*
 - 2.) *[John 10:29]- My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*
 - 3.) *[Psalm 119:92]- Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.*
 - b. Answer 2: The promises are as cork to the net, to bear up the heart from sinking in the deep waters of distress.
- C. The mercies of God work for good to the godly
 - 1. They humble us
 - a. *[2 Samuel 7:18]- Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto ?*
 - 2. They have a melting influence upon the soul
 - a. *[1 Samuel 24:16]- And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.*
 - 3. They make the heart fruitful
 - 4. They make the heart thankful
 - a. *[Psalm 116:12-13]- What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*
 - 5. They quicken
 - a. *[Psalm 116:9]- I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*

6. They work compassion to others
 - a. *[Psalm 112:5]- A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.*
7. Spiritual mercies also work for good
 - a. The word preached works for good
 - 1.) *[1 Thessalonians 1:5]- For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.*
 - b. Prayer works for good
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 45:11]- Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.*
 - 2.) *[1 Timothy 4:5]- for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*
 - 3.) *[1 Samuel 1:18]- And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.*
 - c. The Lord's Supper works for good
 - 1.) *[Revelation 19:9]- And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*
- D. The graces of the Spirit work for good
 1. Graces described
 - a. Grace is to the soul, as light to the eye, as health to the body.
 - b. Grace does to the soul, as a virtuous wife to her husband
 - 1.) *[Proverbs 31:12]- She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*
 - c. Faith and fear
 - 1.) Faith keeps the heart cheerful, fear keeps the heart serious.
 - 2.) Faith keeps the heart from sinking in despair; fear keeps it from floating in presumption.
 - d. Hope is 'the helmet'
 - 1.) *[1 Thessalonians 5:8]- But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.*
 - e. Meekness is 'the ornament'
 - 1.) *[1 Peter 3:4]- but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*
 - f. Love is 'the bond of perfectness'
 - 1.) *[Colossians 3:14]- And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*
- E. The Angels work for the good of the Saints
 1. To do all offices of love to the people of God
 - a. *[Hebrews 1:14]- Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*
 2. To do service to the saints in life

- a. *[Luke 1:28]- And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*
 - b. *[Daniel 6:22]- My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.*
 - c. *[Psalm 91:11]- For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*
 3. To do service at death
 - a. *[Luke 22:43]- And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*
 - b. *[Luke 16:22]- And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;*
 4. To do service at the day of judgment
 - a. *[Matthew 24:31]- And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*
 - b. *[Psalm 38:20]- They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.*
 - c. *[Matthew 13:38-42]- the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*
 - d. *[Revelation 3:12]- Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*
 - e. *[2 Timothy 1:14]- That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*
- F. The Communion of Saints works for good
1. To help in joy
 - a. *[2 Corinthians 1:24]- Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.*
 2. To confirm them
 3. To quicken them
 - a. *[Hebrews 10:24]- and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*
- G. Christ's intercession works for good
1. He prays for all believers as well as He did for the apostles
 2. He prays for all believers when they are weak
 3. He prays for three things
 - a. That the saints may be kept from sin
 - 1.) *[John 17:15]- I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*
 - b. That His people may progress in holiness
 - 1.) *[John 17:17]- Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
 - c. For the saint's glorification

1.) *[John 17:24]- Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

4. Christ's prayer takes away the sins of our prayers

H. The Prayers of Saints work for good to the godly

1. Their prayers prevail for recovery from sickness

a. *[James 5:15]- and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

2. Their prayers prevail for victory over enemies

a. *[Isaiah 37:4]- It may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.*

b. *[Isaiah 37:36]- Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.*

3. Their prayers prevail for deliverance out of prison

a. *[Acts 12:5-7]- Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.*

4. Their prayers prevail for forgiveness of sin

a. *[Job 1:5]- And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually. ****

b. *[Job 42:8]- Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.*

III. The Worst Things Work for Good

A. The evil of affliction works for good to the godly

1. In all the afflictions that befall us, that God has a special hand in them

a. *[Ruth 1:21]- I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?*

2. Afflictions work for good

a. Proof text

1.) *[Jeremiah 24:5]- Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.*

2.) *[Psalm 119:71]- It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

b. Afflictions to the godly are medicinal

- c. Afflictions are as needful as ordinances
 - 1.) *[1 Peter 1:6]- Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*
- d. Afflictions help the godly to be made vessels of honour
 - 1.) *[Psalm 25:10]- All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies. For thy name's sake, O Lord,*
- e. Scriptural examples
 - 1.) Joseph
 - a.) *[Genesis 50:20]- But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*
 - 2.) Jacob
 - a.) *[Genesis 32:30]- And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel [the face of God]: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*
 - 3.) King Manasseh
 - a.) *[2 Chronicles 33:11-13]- Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.*
 - 4.) Job
 - a.) *[Job 42:10]- And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.*
 - 5.) Paul
 - a.) *[Acts 9:8-9]- And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.*
- f. Ways how affliction works for good
 - 1.) As it is our preacher and tutor
 - a.) *[Micah 6:9]- The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.*
 - 2.) As they are the means of making the heart more upright
 - a.) *[Hosea 10:2]- Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.*
 - 3.) As they conform us to Christ
 - a.) *[Isaiah 53:3]- He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*
 - 4.) As they are destructive to sin
 - a.) *[Isaiah 27:9]- By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up.*

- 5.) As they are the means of loosening our hearts from the world
 - a.) *[Psalm 87:7]- As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.*
- 6.) As they make way for comfort
 - a.) *[Hosea 2:15]- And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.*
 - b.) *[John 16:20]- Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*
- 7.) As they are a magnifying of us
 - a.) *[Job 7:17]- What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?*
 - b.) In that He will condescend so low as to take notice of us
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 1:5]- Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*
 - c.) As they are ensigns of glory, signs of sonship
 - 1.) *[Hebrews 12:7]- If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*
 - d.) As they make them renowned in the world
 - 1.) *[James 5:11]- Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy*
- 8.) As they are the means of making us happy
 - a.) *[Job 5:17]- Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:*
 - b.) They bring us nearer to God
 - c.) *[2 Samuel 14:30-31]- Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?*
 - d.) *[Luke 15:13-18]- And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,*
- 9.) As they put to silence the wicked
 - a.) *[Job 1:9-12,20]- Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine*

hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

b.) [Job 13:15]- Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

10.) As they make way for glory

a.) [2 Corinthians 4:17]- For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

B. The evil of temptation is overruled for good to the godly

1. Satan called the tempter

a. [Matthew 4:3]- And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

2. His method in tempting

a.) He observes the temperament and constitution: he lays suitable baits of temptation

b.) He observes the fittest time to tempt in

c.) He makes use of near relations; the devil tempts by a proxy

1.) [Job 2:9]- Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

d.) Satan tempts to evil by them that are good, thus he gives poison in a golden cup

1.) [Matthew 16:22-23]- Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

e.) Satan tempts to sin under a pretense of religion

*1.) [Matthew 4:6,10]- and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. ****

3. The extent of his power

a.) He can propose the object; as he set a wedge of gold before Achan

1.) [Joshua 7:1]- But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.

b.) He can poison the fancy, and instill evil thoughts into the mind

1.) [John 13:2]- And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

c.) Satan can excite and irritate the corruption within, and work some kind of inclination in the heart to embrace a temptation

1.) [1 Chronicles 21:1]- And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

4. These temptations are overruled for good

a.) Temptation sends the soul to prayer

- 1.) *[2 Corinthians 12:8]- For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*
 - b.) Temptation is a means to keep from the perpetration of sin
 - 1.) *[Genesis 39:10]- And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.*
 - c.) Temptation abates the swelling of pride
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 12:7]- And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.*
 - d.) Temptation is a touch-stone to try what is in the heart
 - 1.) *[Hosea 7:11]- Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.*
 - e.) God makes those who are tempted, fit to comfort others in the same distress
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 2:11]- lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.*
 - 2.) *[1 Corinthians 10:13]- There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*
 - f.) Temptation stir up paternal compassion in God to them who are tempted
 - g.) Temptation make the saints long more for heaven
 - h.) Temptation engage the strength of Christ
 - 1.) *[Hebrews 2:18]- For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.*
 - 2.) *[Romans 8:37]- Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
 - i.) *Question. But sometimes Satan foils a child of God. How does this work for good?*
 - 1.) *Answer. I grant that, through the suspension of divine grace, and the fury of a temptation, a saint may be overcome; yet this foiling by a temptation shall be overruled for good. By this foil God makes way for the augmentation of grace.*
 - 2.) *[Matthew 26:75]- And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body.*
 - 3.) *[John 21:15]- So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.*
 - 4.) *[Ephesians 6:16]- above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*
 - j.) *Objection. But if being foiled works for good, this may make Christians careless whether they are overcome by temptations or no*
 - 1.) *Answer. There is a great deal of difference between falling into a temptation, and running into a temptation*
 - 2.) *[Acts 27:4]- And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.*
- C. The evil of desertion works for good to the godly
1. Proof texts

- a. *[Song of Solomon 5:6]- I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*
 - b. *[Job 6:4]- For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.*
2. Four consolations in the dark of desertions
- a. None but the godly are capable of desertion
 - b. There may be the seed of grace, where there is not the flower of joy
 - 1.) *[Psalm 51:11]- Cast me not away from thy presence ; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*
 - c. These desertions are but for a time
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 54:8]- In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*
 - 2.) *[Isaiah 57:16]- For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.*
 - d. These desertions work for good to the godly
 - 1.) Desertion cures the soul of sloth
 - a.) *[Song of Solomon 5:2]- I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*
 - b.) *[Song of Solomon 5:6]- I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*
 - 2.) Desertion cures inordinate affection to the world
 - a.) *[1 John 2:15]- Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
 - 3.) Desertion makes the saints prize God's countenance more than ever
 - a.) *[Psalm 63:3]- Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*
 - 4.) Desertion works for good, as it is the means of embittering sin to us
 - a.) *[John 20:13]- And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.*
 - b.) *[Ezekiel 8:6]- He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary ? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.*
 - 5.) Desertion works for good, as it sets the soul a weeping for the loss of God
 - a.) *[Judges 18:24]- And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee ?*
 - 6.) Desertion sets the soul to seeking after God
 - a.) *[Song of Solomon 3:2-3]- I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I*

*found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said,
Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*

- 7.) Desertion puts the Christian upon inquiry
 - a.) *[Isaiah 57:17]- For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.*
- 8.) Desertion gives us a sight of what Jesus Christ suffered for us
 - a.) *[Matthew 27:46]- And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?*
- 9.) Desertion works for good, as it prepares the saints for future comfort
 - a.) *[2 Corinthians 7:6]- Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;*
 - b.) *[Psalm 97:11]- Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.*
 - c.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:17]- then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
- D. The evil of sin works for good to the godly
 1. The sins of others are overruled for good to the godly
 - a. Proof text
 - 1.) *[Psalm 120:5]- Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!*
 - b. The sins of others work to produce holy sorrow
 - 1.) *[Psalm 119:136]- Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.*
 - 2.) *[Jeremiah 11:15]- What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.*
 - 3.) *[Mark 3:5]- And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.*
 - c. The sins of others work to set them the more a praying against sin
 - 1.) *[Psalm 35:13]- But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting;*
 - d. The sins of others work to make us the more in love with grace
 - 1.) Pride is a disfiguring sin; another's pride makes us the more in love with humility
 - 2.) Malice is a disfiguring sin, we see in others the more we love meekness and charity
 - 3.) Drunkenness is a disfiguring sin, the more intemperate we see others, the more we must love sobriety
 - e. The sins of others work to work in us the stronger opposition against sin
 - 1.) *[Psalm 119:126-127]- It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.*
 - f. The sins of others work to make us more earnest in working out our salvation

- 1.) *[Jeremiah 2:23]- How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways;*
- g. The sins of others work that we may see our own hearts
- h. The sins of others work as the means of making the people of God more thankful
 - 1.) *[Luke 18:11]- The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.*
- i. The sins of others work as the means of making God's people better
 - 1.) *[Psalm 109:4]- For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.*
- j. The sins of others work for good, as they give an occasion to us of doing good
 - 1.) *[Daniel 12:3]- And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*
2. The sense of their own sinfulness will be overruled for the good of the godly
 - a. Sin makes them weary of this life
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 7:4]- Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.*
 - 2.) *[Romans 7:24]- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?*
 - b. Sin makes the saints prize Christ more
 - 1.) *[Romans 7:25]- I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*
 - c. Sin makes an occasion of putting the soul upon six especial duties
 - 1.) It puts the soul upon self searching
 - a.) *[Job 13:23]- How many are mine iniquities and sins? Make me to know my transgression and my sin.*
 - 2.) It puts a child of God upon self-abasing
 - a.) *[Deuteronomy 32:5]- They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.*
 - 3.) It puts a child of God on self-judging
 - a.) *[Proverbs 30:2]- Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.*
 - b.) *[1 Corinthians 11:31]- For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*
 - 4.) It puts a child of God upon self-conflicting
 - a.) *[Galatians 5:17]- For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
 - b.) *[Revelation 2:7]- He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*
 - 5.) It puts a child of God upon self-observing
 - a.) *'A subtle heart needs a watchful eye'*
 - 6.) It puts the soul upon self-reforming

a.) *[Psalm 119:59]- I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*

7.) The danger of abuse of this doctrine

a.) Sin does not work for good but works for damnation to an impenitent person.

b.) Sin works for good to them that love God; and for the godly

1.) *[Psalm 51:8]- Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

IV. Why All Things Work for Good

A. The grand reason why all things work for good

1. Proof texts

a. *[Jeremiah 32:38]- and they shall be my people, and I will be their God:*

b. *[Psalm 50:7]- Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee:*

2. The relation of a physician

a. *[Deuteronomy 8:16]- who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;*

3. The relation of a Father

a. *[Deuteronomy 8:5]- Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.*

b. *[Psalm 103:13]- Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*

c. *[2 Corinthians 1:3]- Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

d. *[Isaiah 9:6]- For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

4. The relation of a Husband

a. *[Ephesians 5:29]- For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:*

b. *[Isaiah 54:5]- For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.*

c. *[Isaiah 49:16]- Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.*

d. *[Song of Solomon 8:6]- Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*

e. *[Isaiah 43:3]- For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*

5. The relation of a Friend

a. *[Song of Solomon 5:16]- his mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*

b. *[1 Samuel 19:4]- And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good:*

c. *[Deuteronomy 7:9]- Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations*

- d. *[Titus 1:2]- in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*
 - e. *[Psalm 119:75]- I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.*
 - f. *[Psalm 66:10]- For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.*
 - g. *[Hebrews 13:5]- Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
 - h. *[Psalm 23:4]- Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*
 - i. *[John 13:1]- Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*
6. The relation between the Head and the members
- a. *[Ephesians 5:23]- For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*
- B. Inferences from the proposition that all things work for the good of the saints
1. If all things work for good, hence learn that there is a providence
 - a. *[Psalm 103:19]- The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*
 2. Observe the happy condition of every child of God
 - a. *[Psalm 112:4]- Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.*
 - b. *[Job 36:10]- He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.*
 - c. *[Hebrews 12:11]- Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*
 - d. *[2 Corinthians 4:16]- For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*
 - e. *[1 Peter 4:14]- If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*
 - f. *[Hebrews 11:26]- esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*
 3. See then what an encouragement here is to become godly
 - a. *[Job 22:21]- Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.*
 4. Notice the miserable condition of wicked men
 - a. Temporal good things work for hurt to the wicked
 - 1.) *[1 Samuel 18:21]- And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in the one of the twain.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 69:22]- Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.*
 - 3.) *[Numbers 11:33]- And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.*

- 4.) *[Deuteronomy 32:15]- But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.*
 - 5.) *[Ecclesiastes 5:13]- When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?*
 - 6.) *[1 Timothy 6:9]- But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*
- b. Spiritual good things work for hurt to the wicked
- 1.) The ministers of God work for their hurt
 - a.) *[Isaiah 6:10]- Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.*
 - 2.) Preaching works for their hurt
 - a.) *[Amos 5:10]- They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.*
 - b.) *[Jeremiah 44:16]- As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.*
 - 3.) Prayer works for their hurt
 - a.) *[Proverbs 15:8]- The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*
 - b.) *[Psalm 109:7]- When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.*
 - 4.) The Lord's Supper works for their hurt
 - a.) *[1 Corinthians 10:21-22]- Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?*
 - b.) *[1 Corinthians 11:29]- For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*
 - 5.) Christ Himself works for hurt to desperate sinners
 - a.) *[1 Peter 2:8]- and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*
 - b.) *[Luke 2:34]- And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;*
5. See the wisdom of God, who can make the worst things imaginable turn to good of the saints
- a. *[Romans 11:33]- O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*
 - b. *[Psalm 106:41]- And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.*
 - c. *[Philippians 1:12]- But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;*
 - d. *[Job 9:4]- He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*
 - e. *[Psalm 76:10]- Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*
 - f. *[Job 11:12]- For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.*

6. Learn how little cause we have then to be discontented at outward trials and emergencies
 - a. *[Psalm 37:8]- Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.*
 - b. *[Jonah 4:9]- And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.*
 - c. *[Romans 8:28]- And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
7. See here that Scripture fulfilled
 - a. *[Psalm 73:1]- Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.*
 - b. *[Lamentations 3:15]- He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.*
 - c. *[1 Corinthians 11:32]- But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*
8. See what cause the saints have to be frequent in the work of thanksgiving
 - a. *[1 Thessalonians 5:18]- In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*
 - b. *[Job 1:21]- and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*
 - c. *[Revelation 14:2]- And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*
9. If the worst things work for good to a believer, what shall the best things; Christ and heaven!
 - a. If the cross has so much good in it, what has the crown?
 - b. If such precious clusters grow in Golgotha, how delicious is that fruit which grows in Canaan?
 - c. If there be any sweetness in the waters of Marah, what is there in the wine of Paradise?
 - d. If God's rod has honey at the end of it, what has His golden sceptre?
 - e. If the bread of affliction tastes so savoury, what is manna? What is the heavenly ambrosia?
 - f. If God's blow and stroke work for good, what shall the smiles of His face do?
 - g. If temptations and sufferings have matter of joy in them, what shall glory have?
 - h. If there be so much good out of evil, what then is that good where there shall be no evil?
 - i. If God's chastening mercies are so great, what will His crowning mercies be?
10. Consider, that if God makes all things to turn to our good, how right is it that we should make all things tend to His glory
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 10:31]- Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*
11. Question: How can we be said properly to glorify God? He is infinite in His perfections, and can receive no augmentation from us.
 - a. Answer: It is true that in a strict sense we cannot bring glory to God, but in an evangelical sense we may
 - 1.) When we make Him the first in our thoughts, and the last in our end
 - 2.) By being fruitful in grace
 - 3.) When we give the praise and glory of all we do unto God

V. Of Love to God

A. The nature of love to God

1. Love is an expansion of soul, or the inflaming of the affections, by which a Christian breathes after God as the supreme and sovereign good.

2. Love is to the soul as the weights to the clock, it sets the soul a-going towards God, as the wings by which we fly to heaven.
 3. By love we cleave to God, as the needle to the loadstone.
- B. The ground of love to God-knowledge
1. A fullness
 - a. *[Colossians 1:19]- For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;*
 2. A freeness
 - a. *[Revelation 22:17]- And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*
 3. A propriety, or property
 - a. *[Psalm 48:14]- For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.*
- C. The kinds of love
1. A love of appreciation
 - a. All creatures vanish in our thoughts when the Sun of righteousness shines in His full splendour.
 2. A love of complacency and delight
 - a. *[John 14:8]- Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.*
 3. A love of benevolence- a wishing well to the cause of God
 - a. He that is endeared in affection to his friend, wishes all happiness to him.
 - b. This is to love God when we are well-wishers.
 - c. We desire that His interest may prevail.
- D. The properties of love
1. It must be entire, with the whole heart
 - a. *[Mark 12:30]- and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*
 - b. *[Hosea 10:2]- Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.*
 2. It must be a sincere love
 - a. *[Ephesians 6:24]- Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.*
 3. It must be a fervent love
 - a. *[Psalm 120:4]- Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 7:30]- and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;*
 - c. *[Song of Solomon 2:5]- Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.*
 - d. *[Ezra 9:13]- And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this;*
 4. It must be an active love
 - a. *[1 Thessalonians 1:3]- remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

- b. *[2 Corinthians 5:14]- For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:*
 - c. *"The living creatures, mentioned in Ezekiel 1:8, had wings - an emblem of a good Christian. He has not only the wings of faith to fly, but hands under his wings: he works by love, he spends and is spent for Christ."*
 - 5. It must be a liberal love
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 13:4]- Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*
 - b. *[2 Samuel 24:24]- And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*
 - c. *[2 Corinthians 8:3]- For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;*
 - 6. Love to God is peculiar
 - a. *[2 Corinthians 11:2]- For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*
 - b. *[Song of Solomon 4:12]- A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*
 - 7. Love to God is permanent
 - a. *[Song of Solomon 8:6-7]- Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*
 - b. *[Ephesians 3:17]- that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*
- E. The degree of love
 - 1. We must love God above all other objects
 - a. *[Psalm 73:25]- Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*
 - b. *"The measure of our love to God must be to love Him without measure." – Bernard*
 - 2. We must love God more than relations
 - a. *[Genesis 22:2]- And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*
 - b. *[Luke 14:26]- If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*
 - c. *[Deuteronomy 33:9]- who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.*
 - 3. We must love God more than our estate
 - a. *[Hebrews 10:34]- For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.*
- F. Use: A sharp reproof to those who do not love God

1. *[Isaiah 3:9]- The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.*
2. *[Psalm 73:9]- They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.*
3. *[1 Corinthians 16:22]- If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.*

VI. The Tests of Love to God

A. Musing of the mind upon God

1. *[Psalm 139:18]- If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.*
2. *[Psalm 10:4]- The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.*

B. Desire of communion

1. *[Psalm 84:2]- My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.*
2. *[Psalm 143:7]- Hear me speedily, O Lord; my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.*
3. *[Job 21:14]- Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

C. Grief

1. *[Matthew 26:75]- And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.*
2. *[Jeremiah 11:15]- What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.*

D. The magnanimity

1. *[Acts 4:20]- For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*
2. *[John 3:2]- the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

E. The sensitiveness

1. *[2 Peter 2:7]- and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

F. Hatred against sin

1. *[Hosea 14:8]- Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.*

G. The crucifixion

1. *[Galatians 6:14]- But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*
2. *[1 John 2:15]- Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
3. *[Acts 4:35]- and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.*
4. *[Amos 2:7]- that pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name:*

H. Fear

1. A fear of displeasing
 - a. *[Genesis 39:9]- there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*
2. A fear mixed with jealousy
 - a. *[1 Samuel 4:13]- And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out.*

I. Love of what God loves

1. We love God's Word
 - a. *[Psalm 119:103]- How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.*
 - b. *[Psalm 119:72]- The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*
2. We love God's day
 - a. *[Isaiah 58:13]- If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:*
3. We love God's laws
 - a. *[Psalm 2:3]- Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*
 - b. *[Matthew 11:29]- Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*
4. We love God's picture, His image shining in the saints
 - a. *[1 John 5:1]- Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*
 - b. We love a saint, though he be poor
 - c. We love a saint, though he has many personal failings
 - d. We love the saints though in some lesser things they differ from us
 - e. We love the saints, though they are persecuted
 - 1.) *[Galatians 6:17]- From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

J. Entertaining of good thoughts of God

1. *[1 Corinthians 13:5]- doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;*

K. Obedience

1. *[John 14:21]- He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*
2. In things difficult
 - a. *[Ephesians 4:32]- and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
3. In things dangerous

- a. *[Acts 21:13]- Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 13:7]- beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*
 - c. *[Hebrews 11:35]- Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:*
 - L. Make Him appear glorious in the eyes of others
 - 1. Love cannot be silent; we shall be as so many trumpets, sounding forth the freeness of God's grace, the transcendency of His love, and the glory of His kingdom.
 - M. Another fruit of love is to long for Christ's appearing
 - 1. *[2 Timothy 4:8]- henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
 - 2. *[Hebrews 9:24]- For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:*
 - 3. *[1 John 3:2]- Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*
 - 4. *[Revelation 22:17,20]- And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*
 - N. Love will make us stoop to the meanest offices
 - 1. He who loves God will humble himself to the meanest office of love to Christ and His members.
- VII. An Exhortation to Love God
 - A. An exhortation to become lovers of God and twenty motives for loving God
 - 1. Proof texts
 - a. *[Psalm 31:23]- O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*
 - b. *[Romans 1:30]- backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*
 - 2. Twenty motives for loving God
 - a. Without this, all our religion is vain
 - 1.) *[1 Chronicles 28:9]- And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*
 - b. Love is the most noble and excellent grace
 - 1.) *[1 John 4:16]- And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*
 - c. Is that unreasonable which God requires?
 - 1.) Was there ever any debt so easily paid as this?
 - 2.) We do not at all impoverish ourselves by paying it.
 - d. God is the most adequate and complete object of our love

- 1.) He is wisdom, beauty, love, yea, the very essence of goodness
 - 2.) There is nothing in God can cause a loathing; the creature sooner surfeits than satisfies, but there are fresh beauties sparkling forth in God
 - 3.) There is nothing in God to deaden our affections or quench our love; no infirmity, no deformity, such as usually weaken and cool love
- e. Love facilitates religion
- 1.) It oils the wheels of the affections, and makes them more lively and cheerful in God's service.
 - 2.) Love takes off the tediousness of duty
- f. God desires our love
- 1.) If we deny Him our love, He has more sublime creatures who pay the cheerful tribute of love to Him
 - 2.) God does not need our love, yet He seeks it
- g. God has deserved our love; how has He loved us
- 1.) ***[Ezekiel 16:6]- And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.***
 - 2.) *'The cross is a pulpit, and the lesson Christ preached on it is love.'* - Augustine
- h. Love to God is the best self-love
- 1.) ***[1 John 4:16]- And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.***
- i. Love to God evidences sincerity
- 1.) ***[Song of Solomon 1:4]- Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.***
 - 2.) ***[John 21:15]- So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.***
 - 3.) ***[Psalm 78:34,36-37]- When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.***
- j. By our love to God, we may conclude God's love to us
- 1.) ***[1 John 4:16]- And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.***
- k. If you do not love God, you will love something else
- 1.) If you set your love on worldly things, they will not satisfy
 - a.) ***[Job 20:22]- In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.***
 - b.) ***[Psalm 17:15]- As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.***
 - 2.) If you love worldly things, they cannot remove trouble of mind
 - a.) ***[1 Samuel 28:15]- And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more,***

- neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.*
- b.) *[Amos 5:8]- seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is his name:*
- 3.) If you love the world, you love that which may keep you out of heaven
- a.) *[Mark 10:23]- And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!*
- 4.) You may love worldly things, but they cannot love you in return
- a.) *[John 14:23]- Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*
- 5.) When you love the world, you love that which is worse than yourselves
- a.) *[Matthew 6:26]- Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*
- 6.) You may love the world, and have hatred for your love
- a.) *[John 15:19]- If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*
- b.) *[Judges 9:15]- And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.*
- c.) *[Proverbs 8:17]- I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*
- 7.) You may over-love the creature.
- a.) *[Ezekiel 16:30]- How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman;*
- 8.) You may love worldly things, and they die and leave you
- a.) *[Psalm 73:26]- My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*
- 9.) If it is better to love God than the world, surely also it is better to love God than sin
- a.) *[Matthew 6:12]- And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*
- b.) *[Isaiah 1:5]- Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*
- c.) *[James 1:21]- Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*
- d.) *[Zechariah 11:8]- Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.*
- e.) *[Proverbs 23:32]- At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*
1. The relation we stand in to God calls for love. There is near affinity
- 1.) *[Isaiah 54:5]- For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.*
- 2.) *[Isaiah 62:5]- For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*

- 3.) *[John 17:26]- And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*
- m. Love is the most abiding grace
- 1.) *[Hebrews 11:1]- Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
 - 2.) *[1 Corinthians 13:8]- Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*
 - 3.) *[2 Corinthians 5:7]- (for we walk by faith, not by sight :)*
- n. Love to God will never let sin thrive in the heart
- 1.) Some plants will not thrive when they are near together: the love of God withers sin
- o. Love to God is an excellent means for growth of grace
- 1.) *[2 Peter 3:18]- But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
 - 2.) *[2 Thessalonians 3:5]- And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*
- p. The great benefit which will accrue to us, if we love God
- 1.) *[1 Corinthians 2:9]- But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*
 - 2.) *[James 1:12]- Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*
 - 3.) *[1 Peter 5:4]- And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*
- q. Love to God is armour of proof against error
- 1.) *[2 Thessalonians 2:10-11]- and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:*
- r. If we love God, we have all winds blowing for us, everything in the world shall conspire for our good
- 1.) We know not what fiery trials we may meet with, but to them that love God all things shall work for good.
 - 2.) Those things which work against them, shall work for them; their cross shall make way for a crown; every wind shall blow them to the heavenly port
- s. Want of love to God is the ground of apostasy
- 1.) *[Ruth 1:16-17]- And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.*
- t. Love is the only thing in which we can retaliate with God
- 1.) There is nothing in which we can answer God again, but love.
 - 2.) We must not give Him word for word, but we must give Him love for love.
3. *Question.* What shall we do to love God?

- a. Answer 1: Study God.
1.) *[Psalm 63:1]- O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;*
 - b. Answer 2: Labour for an interest in God
1.) *[Galatians 5:6]- For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*
 - c. Answer 3: Make it your earnest request to God, that He will give you a heart to love Him
1.) *[1 Kings 3:9-10]- Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.*
- B. An exhortation to preserve your love to God
1. Proof text
 - a. *[Revelation 2:4]- Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*
 2. Four signs by which Christians may know their love is lukewarm
 - a. When they have lost their taste
 - 1.) *[1 Peter 2:3]- if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*
 - 2.) *[Job 6:6]- Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?*
 - b. When Christians have lost their appetite
 - 1.) *[Matthew 5:6]- Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*
 - 2.) *[1 Kings 1:1]- Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.*
 - c. When Christians grow more in love with the world
 - 1.) *[Matthew 17:27]- Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*
 - d. When Christians make little reckoning of God's worship
 - 1.) Duties of religion are performed in a dead, formal manner; if they are not left undone, yet they are ill done
 3. Question. How may we keep our love from going out?
 - a. Answer 1: Watch your hearts every day
 - b. Answer 2: Take notice of the first declinings in grace
 - c. Answer 3: Observe yourselves when you begin to grow dull and listless, and use all means for quickening
 - d. Answer 4: Be much in prayer, meditation, and holy conference
- C. An exhortation to increase your love to God
1. Proof text
 - a. *[Philippians 1:9]- And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*
 2. Four divine incentives to increase your love to God
 - a. The growth of love evinces its truth

- 1.) Where we see love to God increasing and growing larger, as Elijah's cloud, we may conclude it is true and genuine.
- b. By the growth of love we imitate the saints in the Bible
 - 1.) *[John 21:16]- He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*
- c. The growth of love will amplify the reward
 - 1.) The more we burn in love, the more we shall shine in glory: the higher our love, the brighter our crown.
- d. The more we love God, the more love we shall have from Him
 - 1.) *[Philippians 3:8]- Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*
 - 2.) *[Romans 9:3]- For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*
 - 3.) *[2 Corinthians 12:4]- how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

VIII. Effectual Calling

A. Proof text

1. *[Romans 8:30]- Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

B. A distinction about calling

1. An outward call, which is nothing else but God's blessed tender of grace in the gospel
 - a. *[Matthew 20:16]- So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.*
2. An inward call, when God overpowers the heart, and draws the will to embrace Christ
 - a. *[Acts 16:14]- And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*

C. Our deplorable condition before we are called

1. We are in a state of vassalage
 - a. Before God calls a man, he is at the devil's call
2. We are in a state of darkness
 - a. *[Ephesians 5:8]- For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light;*
3. We are in a state of impotency
 - a. *[Romans 5:6]- For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*
 - b. *[Judges 16:20]- And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.*
 - c. *[Acts 7:51]- Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*
4. We are in a state of pollution

- a. *[Ezekiel 16:6]- And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.*
 5. We are in a state of damnation
 - a. *[John 3:36]- He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
- D. The means of our effectual call
 1. By His Word
 - a. *[Psalm 110:2]- The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.*
 - b. *[Hebrews 12:25]- See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:*
 2. By His Spirit
 - a. *[Acts 10:44]- While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*
 - b. *[Revelation 3:7]- And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.*
- E. The method God uses in calling of sinners
 1. He comes sometimes in a still small voice
 - a. Such as have had godly parents
 2. He comes to them in a rough wind
 - a. He uses more wedges of the law to break their hearts
- F. The properties of this effectual calling
 1. It is a sweet call
 - a. *[Psalm 110:3]- Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.*
 2. It is a holy call
 - a. *[2 Timothy 1:9]- who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;*
 - b. *[Isaiah 63:18]- The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.*
 - c. *[1 Thessalonians 4:7]- For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*
 3. It is an irresistible call
 - a. *[Acts 26:19]- Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:*
 - b. *[Romans 9:19]- Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*
 - c. *[Psalm 107:16]- For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.*
 - d. *[Psalm 114:5]- The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.*
 - e. *[Acts 16:30]- and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*
 4. It is a high call

- a. *[Philippians 3:14]- I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*
 - b. *[1 John 1:3]- that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*
5. It is a gracious call
 - a. *[James 2:5]- Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 1:26]- For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*
 - c. *[Matthew 11:26]- Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*
6. It is a glorious call
 - a. *[1 Peter 5:10]- 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.*
 - b. *[2 Peter 1:3]- According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*
7. It is a rare call
 - a. *[Matthew 22:14]- For many are called, but few are chosen.*
 - b. *[Revelation 3:4]- Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*
 - c. *[Daniel 3:7]- Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*
8. It is an unchangeable call
 - a. *[Romans 11:29]- For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*
- G. The end of our effectual calling
 1. We should be to the praise of his glory
 - a. *[Ephesians 1:12]- that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*
 2. See the necessity of effectual calling
 - a. *[Colossians 1:12]- giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*
 3. Take notice what a mighty power God puts forth in calling of sinners
 - a. *[John 6:44]- No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*
 - b. *[Revelation 20:6]- Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*
 - c. *[Colossians 3:10]- and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*
 4. Objection: But, say some, the will is not dead but asleep, and God, by a moral persuasion, does only awaken us, and then the will can obey God's call, and move of itself to its own conversion.
 - a. Answer: Every man is by sin bound in fetters.

- 1.) *[Acts 8:23]- For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*
 - 2.) There must be a breaking of his fetters, and setting him free, before he can walk
- H. Use. An exhortation to make your calling sure
1. Get sound evidences of our effectual calling
 - a. *[2 Peter 1:10]- Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*
 2. Do not acquiesce in outward privileges
 - a. *[Jeremiah 7:4]- Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these.*
 3. Do not rest in baptism
 4. Do not be content that Christ has been preached to you.
 5. Do not satisfy yourselves with an empty profession
 6. Consider how sad your case is, if you are not effectually called
 - a. You are strangers to God
 - 1.) *[Luke 15:13]- And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*
 - 2.) *[Ephesians 2:12]- that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*
 - b. You are enemies to God
 - 1.) *[Colossians 1:21]- And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*
 - 2.) *[Luke 19:27]- But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.*
 - c. Question. But is there any hope of my being called? I have been a great sinner.
 - 1.) Answer. Great sinners have been called.
 - a.) Paul was a persecutor, yet he was called
 - b.) Some of the Jews who had a hand in crucifying Christ, were called
 - c.) God loves to display His free grace to sinners
 - d. Question. But how shall I know I am effectually called?
 - 1.) Answer 1. He who is savingly called is called out of himself, not only out of sinful self, but out of righteous self; he denies his duties and moral endowments
 - a.) *[Philippians 3:9]- and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*
 - 2.) Answer 2: He who is effectually called has a visible change wrought
 - a.) *[Acts 9:21]- But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?*
 - b.) *[1 Corinthians 6:11]- And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*
 - 3.) Answer 3: In effectual calling there is a three-fold change wrought
 - a.) There is a change wrought in the understanding

- 1.) *[Ephesians 5:8]- For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light;*
- 2.) *[John 9:25]- He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*
- 3.) *[1 Peter 2:9]- But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*
- 4.) It is a marvelous light in six respects
 - a.) Because it is strangely conveyed. It does not come from the celestial orbs where the planets are, but from the Sun of righteousness
 - b.) It is marvelous in its effect. This light does that which no other light can
 - c.) It is a marvelous light, because it is more penetrating
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 4:6]- For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*
 - d.) It is a marvelous light, because it sets those who have it a marveling
 - e.) It is a marvelous light, because it is more vital than any others
 - 1.) *[Ephesians 2:1]- And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*
 - 2.) *[John 8:12]- Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
 - f.) It is a marvelous light, because it is the beginning of everlasting light
- b.) There is a change wrought in the will
 - 1.) *[Romans 7:18]- For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*
 - 2.) *[Acts 9:6]- And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*
 - 3.) *[Hebrews 2:10]- For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
- c.) There is a change in the conduct
 - 4.) He who is called of God, walks directly contrary to what he did before
 - 5.) He who is called of God esteems this call as the highest blessing
 - 6.) He who is effectually called, is called out of the world
 - a.) *[Hebrews 3:1]- Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;*
 - 7.) He who is effectually called, is diligence in our ordinary calling

IX. Exhortations to Them that are Called

A. Admire and adore God's free-grace in calling you

1. *[Psalm 145:1-2]- I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.*

B. Pity those who are not yet called

1. *[Luke 15:17]- And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!*

C. Honour your high calling

1. *[Ephesians 4:1]- I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*
2. *[1 Peter 2:9]- But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*
3. Question: What is it to walk worthy of our heavenly calling?
 - a. Answer 1: It is to walk regularly
 - 1.) *[Galatians 6:16]- And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*
 - b. Answer 2: It is to walk singularly
 - 1.) *[Genesis 7:1]- And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.*
 - c. Answer 3: It is to walk cheerfully
 - 1.) *[Philippians 4:4]- Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*
 - 2.) *[Luke 15:24]- for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.*
 - d. Answer 4: It is to walk wisely
 - 1.) It is to walk warily
 - a.) *[Ecclesiastes 2:14]- The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.*
 - 2.) It is to walk courteously
 - a.) *[1 Peter 3:8]- Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:*
 - b.) *[Genesis 23:7]- And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.*
 - c.) *[1 Corinthians 9:22]- To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*
 - 3.) It is to walk magnanimously
 - a.) *[1 Peter 2:25]- For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*
 - e. Answer 5: It is to walk influentially
 - 1.) *[Hebrews 13:16]- But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

X. Concerning God's Purpose

A. God's purpose is the cause of salvation

1. Proof text
 - a. *[Ephesians 1:11]- In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*
2. Let us then ascribe the whole work of grace to the pleasure of God's will
 - a. We must resolve all into God's purpose.
 - b. The signs of salvation are in the saints, but the cause of salvation is in God.

3. If it be God's purpose that saves, then it is not free will
 - a. *[Romans 9:16]- So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*
4. If it is God's purpose that saves, then it is not merit
 - a. *Objection: But the Papists allege that Scripture for merit*
 - 1.) *[2 Timothy 4:8]- henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
 - 2.) *Reply: God gives a reward as a just Judge, not to the worthiness of our works, but to the worthiness of Christ. God as a just Judge rewards us, not because we have deserved it, but because He has promised it.*
 - 3.) If the purpose of God be the spring-head of happiness, then we are not saved for faith foreseen
 - a.) *[Ephesians 1:4]- according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*
 - b. *Question: How shall we know that God has a purpose to save us?*
 - 1.) *Answer. By being effectually called*
 - a.) *[2 Peter 1:10]- Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*
 - b.) *[2 Thessalonians 2:13]- But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
- B. God's purpose is the ground of assurance
 1. *[2 Timothy 2:19]- Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*