

given, and the knowledge of salvation, receiving the spirit of adoption, whereby he cried, "Abba, Father." He was now filled with peace and joy in believing on the Son of God: indeed, so great was his joy for some time, that he could not help praising God continually in his heart, and with some difficulty restrained himself from doing it aloud.

During a visit to his native town, for the benefit of his health, he prayerfully read the Scriptures, and found them a source of great profit and delight; and having a heart formed for society; inclination, no less than duty, prompted him to measures for the spiritual benefit of his fellow-men. He accordingly made it his business to converse with young persons in order to awaken them to a sense of religion. God was pleased to bless these efforts, and several of them, notwithstanding the contempt to which they knew they must be exposed, joined with him, and met together from time to time for religious exercises. He also read to some poor people in the town twice or thrice a week, and read and prayed with the prisoners in the county jail every day.

WHEN Mr. Whitefield was about twenty-one years of age he was sent for by Dr. Benson, Bishop of Gloucester, who told him that though he had resolved to ordain none under twenty-three, he should reckon it his duty to ordain him whenever he should apply. Upon which, at the earnest request of his friends, he prepared for orders.—In order to this, he now with much prayer studied the Thirty-nine Articles of faith of the Church of England, (in which he proposed to become a minister,) that he might be satisfied of their conformity to the Scriptures. He then examined himself on the qualifications of a minister as required by the New Testament, and also by the questions that were to be proposed at the ordination. On Saturday, previous to his ordination, he was much engaged in prayer for himself and those who were to be ordained with him; and on the Sabbath morning on which he received orders, he rose early, and prayerfully read St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy, and at the close of the service, received the Lord's Supper.

On the following Sabbath he preached to a very crowded assembly in the church where he was baptized. In reference to this occasion he wrote:—

"Last Sunday in the afternoon I preached my first sermon in the church where I was baptized, and also first received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Curiosity drew a large congregation together. The sight at first a little awed me; but I was comforted with a heart-felt sense of the Divine presence, and soon found the advantage of having been accustomed to public speaking when a boy at school; and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners, and poor people at their private houses while at the university. By these means I was kept from being daunted overmuch. As I proceeded, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of Gospel authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck; and I have since heard that a com-

plaint has been made to the Bishop, that I drove fifteen mad the first sermon; the worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished the madness might not be forgotten before the next Sunday."

The following week he returned to Oxford, and took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, being inclined to this rather than to an acceptance of the parish which the Bishop would have given him. Here he found full employment in the prosecution of his studies and in visiting and teaching the sick, the prisoners, and the poor.

He was soon afterward invited to London, to supply the pulpit of a friend during a short absence from the city. The people were surprised at his youthful appearance, and seemed to sneer as he ascended the pulpit; but on hearing him, their smiles were soon succeeded by serious attention, and contempt was turned to esteem and respect. His two months' residence here was usefully occupied in preaching, catechizing the children, visiting the soldiers in the barracks and infirmary, and the prisoners in the jails, in one of which he preached each Tuesday.

For some months Mr. Whitefield had greatly desired to follow the Messrs. Wesley, who had gone out to Georgia as missionaries, and at length a concurrence of circumstances induced him to embrace what he deemed a providential call to visit America. He therefore readily accepted the proposal of Mr. Charles Wesley, and having made the necessary arrangement of his affairs in January, 1787, went to take leave of his relatives and friends in Gloucester and Bristol.

It was during this visit that God began to bless his labours in an uncommon manner. Wherever he preached, amazing multitudes flocked together, and great and extraordinary effects followed his sermons. He soon returned to London, and was introduced to the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury, both of whom approved of his undertaking.

While he continued in London it pleased God still more abundantly to bless his labours: he was indefatigable in his efforts, generally preaching four times on the Sabbaths to very large congregations,—beside reading the Church service twice or thrice, and walking ten or twelve miles.

Subsequently, upon repeated invitations, he visited Bristol a second time, and preached five times a week. Here, too, the multitude of his hearers increased. His meetings were attended by persons of all ranks and denominations: private religious societies were formed, and several times a week collections were made for the poor prisoners in Newgate. Large encouragement was offered him if he would relinquish his project of going to Georgia; but no pecuniary consideration could divert him from the path of duty.

On the 21st of June he preached his farewell sermon at Bristol, and when near its close he reminded the congregation that "it might be they would see his face no more." The whole assembly was deeply affected; high and low, young and old, burst into a flood of tears. Multitudes after sermon followed him home weeping, and the next day he was employed from seven in the morning until midnight, in conversing

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