

loved us." And both from what he is, and from what he hath done, he draws the cheering inference as to what he will do: "may he comfort your hearts!" His is the power to reach the heart; no other can soothe it effectually: "and stablish you in every good word and work." Behold here the far-reaching morality of the Gospel! See the help provided for every faithful and obedient disciple! Thus, as the Apostle does not the less enjoin the duty of standing fast, that he has just told them of the securities of the covenant; so, not the less does he plead for stablishing grace, that such grace is promised. The promises are our warrant to plead; and the Spirit of adoption teaches Christians to guide themselves by all God's revealed will. Enough for them to know that he will be inquired of for these things to do them for them. They use without gainsaying the appointed instrumentality; and the blessing comes only sweetened the more, that what was rendered sure by love is seen to be accomplished in faithfulness:—the gift at once of preventing grace, and the fulfilment of prayer!

PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT.

The exposition has nearly anticipated our practical remarks. Yet we would invite attention to certain great lessons to be derived from the passage as a whole.

1. It is very significant how often Paul exemplifies the duty of thanksgiving for distinguishing grace. It is not in the spirit of vain boasting that any one should contemplate the grace that has made him to differ. But neither is it a small matter for congratulation, if mercy hath chosen us. There are some who would take away the praise of virtue by referring to the various lots of individuals, and by supposing what might have been the event had our circumstances and disadvantages been the same as those of others. They think they assign a sufficient reason not only for sympathy with the ignorant or the errorist, but for holding the chances of acceptance with God equal as between men of sound creed and unsound, when they can say: "Had you been born where these were, and trained as they were, you might have thought as they do, and feel as they do. Why value yourselves on a distinction of privilege which as to you has been so ac-