

must first have the loins girded about with truth, the heart covered with righteousness, the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and then (the shield of faith being up, and the helmet of salvation on) I can take the Sword of the Spirit. Nothing is more dangerous than to use the Word if it has not touched my own conscience. I put myself into Satan's hands if I go beyond what I have from God, or what my soul is in possession of. To talk with saints on the things of God, beyond what I hold in communion, is most pernicious; to fight without it is fatal.

Verse 18. The Word must always deal with ourselves before others, but prayer is the expression and the exercise of dependence. If a person asks me a question and I answer without speaking to God about it, going direct, it may be more likely to lead him away from God than to God. When a question or difficulty comes do we turn to God? We may have turned to God before and the thing is answered, and we ought to have such power of prayer, that there would be no difficulty when any circumstance arises. If supplication be thus continual, there would be no occasion to ask Him about particular things when they come before us.

"Supplication in the Spirit." All acceptable prayer is not, I think, prayer in the Spirit. A wish or a desire expressed to God, in all the confidence of a child to his Father, is heard, but this is not necessarily "prayer in the Spirit." It is the power of the Spirit in us looking for blessing as walking