

blemish the purity of all our services for God. But it will be far from us, if we reflect either upon our obligations or upon ourselves.

Two considerations seemed to influence the apostle, and may tend to promote this salutary state of feeling—

1. Because *necessity is laid upon us.*

It is impossible for a minister of Christ seriously to contemplate his high calling, with all the responsibilities which it involves, and with all the sanctions by which it is commended, without feeling his utter inadequacy for a position so solemn. He is under a positive command of heaven, which he is bound to obey, but obedience to which is rendered difficult by adverse influences. The love of Christ constrains him, but earthliness and evil prevent its full development within his soul. He is burdened with a sense of the necessities of men; he sees them wandering without hope, straining wistfully through the midnight in search of a guide and of a home. But while he yearns for their deliverance, he is helpless as a child; and, moreover, his own passions are strong, and a moral battle rages in his own heart the while.

It is no wonder that he should feel a dependence most utter and absolute; and while, as he dwells upon the worth of the soul and its danger, and the dread issues in which his ministry may terminate, his heart often sends forth its cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" He is consoled only by the response, divinely thundered from behind the cloud of fear, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

There is need for this humility, if we consider—

2. *That we have nothing which we have not received.*