

exercised upon the mind and spirit of men, in blinding them, deceiving them, seducing them, harassing and sifting them, in thwarting the ministers of Christ in their work, sowing tares, and hindering the precious seed of truth in taking root. Says Paul in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians: "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Abstractly considered, we know but little of the power of Satan and his wicked associates; but viewed as "the God of this world," he has all the temptations of the world in alliance with himself, and who is there here, this morning, who does not know something of his power in this respect? What a hold he has of some, through the world, with its fashions, its maxims, and its customs! With what authority he says—"Go," and they go; "Come," and they come; "Do this," and it is done! O how many mighty have fallen! how many strong have been cast down! how many wise have become as fools! all because the devil, as "the god of this world," got them under his influence, and darkened their understanding, and blinded their eyes, with ignorance, and error, and prejudices, so that they should not "behold the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the

image of God." The grand design our blessed Lord had in coming into this world, and in giving us this blessed gospel was to make such a glorious discovery of God to the minds of men, that they beholding the power and the wisdom of God might be constrained to accept of His grace, and His mercy for their salvation. Now, the devil's design is to defeat that purpose, and keep men in darkness, and in ignorance. When he cannot keep the light of the gospel out of the world, then his next best thing,—or rather worst thing—is to keep it out of the hearts of men, and this, he often effectually does by filling their hearts full of the world. In this way he overcame our first parents; and in the same way he attacked, and endeavored to traduce our Saviour himself. His power, friends, is not diminished. He is as mighty as ever. Still he works among the children of disobedience, blinding the eyes of them that believe not, restlessly sowing seeds of error and doubt in the church, and going about like "a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." He is mighty. Again he is

3. *An Artful Enemy.* His cunning craftiness is one of his chief characteristics. It is suggested by the word, "wiles" in our text. We are not ignorant of his devices. If we meditate upon his policy, we find him wonderfully skilful in devising ways and means to se-