

the consciousness of God with you, clearness of judgment, and not distracted or dismayed by half a dozen thoughts. (You have the *secret of the Lord*; going on quietly, it may be, but going on with God. Then comes, no matter how active I may be, the inward preparation—"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." We have had the inward affection and the sword of the Spirit, but now it is entire dependence—the word of God and prayer. These two things are found running together through Scripture: *the word of God and prayer*. Mary sat at the Lord's feet and heard His *word*. The Lord said, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." In the next verses, the Lord teaches His disciples to *pray*. When deacons were chosen, the reason assigned by the apostles was that they might give themselves continually to *prayer* and to the ministry of the *word* (Acts vi.). When there is to be service carried on against the wiles of the devil, half the battle is to be fought out in God's presence beforehand in *prayer*. When the prince of this world came to the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, he found Him agonizing in prayer. Peter slept while the Lord prayed: the result was, that Peter denied Him, but the blessed Lord witnessed a good confession.

Nothing can, or ever will, take the place of that earnestness in prayer: if we are to have God with us, we must pray. It is marked by perfect calmness. If we have God with us, we must be with God, who is sovereign in love and goodness, and has associated us with His own interests. Does not my heart yearn after the conversion of poor