

God, the Fountain of Love and Consolation

by Thomas Bradbury

Thomas Bradbury's sermon explores God as the ultimate source of love and comfort, emphasizing the power of prayer and the role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

Scripture: Matthew 25:34, John 1:12, Romans 8:26, Ephesians 2:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 1 Peter 1:3

Topics: "Divine Love", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches on the profound love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father, who have given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. He emphasizes the importance of being taught by the Spirit to pray aright, drawing near to God as sin-convinced sinners hoping for forgiveness and salvation. Bradbury highlights the privilege of being led by the Holy Ghost in true prayer, experiencing the communion of saints and pouring out our burdens and needs before God. He delves into the significance of being rooted and grounded in love, comprehending the breadth, length, depth, and height of Christ's love, and being filled with the fullness of God.

Transcript

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." (2 Thessalonians 2:16,17)

A BLESSED privilege it is to be lifted up by the power of Divine grace, even to a little hope, and to be blessed with the manifestation of His goodness to us. It is a mercy to be brought as children, yes, as infants in a Sunday School, and, like so many Samuels or Timothy's, taught by the Lord to sing,

"Lord, teach us how to pray aright,

With reverence and with fear,

Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,

We may, we must, draw near,"

for the pardon of sin, and the guidance of our feet into the way of peace. I know what I am now talking about, for, as a child, I have known the Holy Scriptures, and though I have oftentimes to cry, "Remember not the sins of my youth," yet, as a child, I was the subject of deep convictions, sighing out my sins and

sorrows in secret. From that time to this, a spiritual necessity has been laid upon me, so that I must draw near as a sin-convinced sinner hoping for forgiveness, and for the revelation of God's Christ in me as my salvation. I must draw near as a condemned criminal, to receive the sentence of justification, and the robe of righteousness in which I shall stand eternally accepted. I must draw near as a mourning captive for that deliverance from sin and death which can only come with the appearing of Zion's Deliverer. I must draw near as a hungry beggar, praying, "Give me this day my daily bread" which alone can feed strengthen, and invigourate my spiritual man. Yes, it is a blessed privilege to be taught by the Spirit to say, "Lord, teach us to pray." Having a consciousness that we know not how to pray aright, we have tried to string a lot of sentences together before His throne of grace; but we have found nothing but failure, defeat, and shame. With all our attempts we are found in the old spot, confessing, "We know not what to pray for as we ought;" but here is the mercy, "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26)

It is our blessed privilege, when led by the Holy Ghost, to know what that means in spirit and in truth, "I believe in the communion of saints." The Spirit, which was upon Jesus without measure, (John 3:34) influences and rules every member of His body, the Church, making them quiver, sometimes with desire, and sometimes with delight, at one time with hope of promised blessings, and at another time with rejoicing in the blessed communication of the covenant blessing hoped for.

It is a marvellous mercy when we are led without fleshly partiality or canting hypocrisy, but in the solemnity of our soul in the presence of a heart-searching God to pour out our burdened spirits before Him, to make mention of the names, circumstances, temptations, trials, and sorrows of those who are near and dear to us, and to Him. Do you know anything about this? Thank God I do. It has pleased Him, to give me a well-grounded hope, firmly fixed, not in my feelings, which are ever fluctuating, but in His unshaken covenant of grace, knowing that all things designed for me, whether bitter or sweet, will, and must, come to me at the right time.

It is part of His design that for some of these things He "will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them," (Ezek. 36:37) not for every covenant blessing, as my soul knoweth right well, according to Isaiah 65:24, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." It is a sweet mercy when we are led by the Spirit's teaching into His sacred and solemn presence to pour out our need into His ear, and to be blessed with an assured interest in the all-fullness of grace and glory treasured up in a precious Christ, to meet and supply all our need.

As we look through God's Word we see that all His people were men, women, and children of prayer. I have no sympathy with those who limit the bestowal of high favour or deep experience to old men or old women. Our God is not limited to age or time in the communication of His grace, or in the manifestation of His mercy. I remember some nineteen or twenty years ago, a man coming to me, saying, "O, master, I shall be so thankful if you will come and see my little boy. He is so near to my heart.

I think he will die, and I want to know where he is going to!" I was soon by the couch of the little sufferer. His piercing eyes seemed to drink in every thought of my mind, as I read God's blessed Word to him. A clear, sharp apprehension of Divine realities had that little hunch-backed lad as I repeated and explained to him Toplady's precious hymn, "Rock of ages, cleft for me." I sat amazed and melted to tears as I listened to the child-like breathings of his wants and desires to God.

His feeling apprehension of God's mind and will as revealed in His Gospel, and his intense thirst after Jesus, caused me to feel ashamed of myself, and leave little doubt in my mind as to where the little fellow is gone to. In young Abihah's heart there was found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel, and a little Samuel could be taught to address the Lord thus, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth."

Come to the New Testament, where you will see that true prayer is contained in very few words. The poor woman with the devil-possessed daughter cried, "Lord help me." Listen to Peter when sinking chin-deep in the water: "Lord save me." Listen to the publican with his bursting, broken heart: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Hark to the cry of yon poor dying thief on Calvary's height: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." You may depend upon this, and I speak from a feeling sense of what true prayer is, supported by the concurrent testimony of God's Word, that true prayer often consists in ejaculations, and sometimes less than that. It is a sigh for home a groan for deliverance, a breathing for life, a tear which pleads powerfully with Jesus for the sympathy of His heart. Yes, it is encouraging for those who write bitter things against themselves to notice what true prayer is, according to the testimony of God's blessed Word. Many are the prayers recorded in the New Testament Scriptures, the most precious and spiritual of which is that which flowed from the heart of our blessed Lord and Master as recorded in John 17. The apostle Paul was a man of prayer, though he knew not what true prayer was, nor how to ask God for a single mercy, until he was made miserable by the appearing of the glory of Christ to him on the road to Damascus. He was led into a street called Straight. While here our Lord declared concerning him, "Behold, he prayeth." (Acts 9:11) We have no record of his prayer, nor have we any detail given of his petitions: but he prayed. For what did he pray? No doubt for deliverance from guilt he had never experienced before, for forgiveness of sin which precious had been no burden to him for redemption from his wretched religion. This last may appear strange to you, but it is no more strange than true. See 1 Peter 1:18,19: "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversion received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ." Paul, being blind, would pray for spiritual eyesight; being ignorant of the Way of life, he would pray for spiritual guidance, and for the revelation of God's Christ in him. Our Lord had begun to teach him something of living union with Him. The Voice which arrested him came not in words of command or authority. It was not, "Behold the Lamb of God," or "Look unto Me," or "Come unto Me." No! Words of loving sympathy flowed from the heart of Jesus to the heart of Paul: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Me, in the persons of My members. This was the quickening truth in the case of Paul, and, from that moment, it was registered concerning him in heaven, "Behold, he prayeth."

If we go through all his epistles, we shall find a prayer of his in every one of them, some of which are very full and comprehensive. Sometimes as we read them we experience a gracious lift out of ourselves into the glorious land of life, light, love, and liberty. See how the spirit of prayer pervades the whole of the first part of Rom. 1: "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you all in my prayers."

Ah, my dear friends, it is no mean mercy to think that we are remembered by the friends of Jesus when they see His face. It is no small privilege, when we find some tremendous trouble pressing us down to the very dust of death, to think that a brother or sister in the covenant is pouring into the ears of the Brother once born to adversity the tale of our distress and sorrow. Paul continues: "Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you."

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." His longings and

desires to see the Roman Christians were, that they might experience blessed fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit; compare notes with each other; tell out each other's sorrows, and share each other's joys; and speak to one another of the gracious lifts and blessed deliverances vouchsafed to them by their covenant God and Father.

Turn to the 15th chapter, where you find a sweet prayer: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Which of us have not noticed those Heaven-inspired prayers in "The Family Epistle?" See Eph. 1:15, "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints." Do you notice that. "Unto all the saints." Not to some of a particular type. I was greatly amused the other day.

It was my lot to preach God's Gospel to a few of His saints in the North. As I looked round the room, there were the Baptists in a cluster at one end, and the Church people at the other, while the middle was filled with a lot of indescribables. All enjoying God's truth from the lips of one whom none of them could truly describe, and you may rest assured one was as dear to me as another. It was what the apostle says here: "Love to all the saints." It does not matter to whom you belong, if the love, grace, and mercy of our covenant God is revealed in and through you, the members of the same family cannot help but love you.

Paul continues: "Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." Do you hear any such prayers as that in our days? Ah, my friends, our pulpit utterances and our private aspirations are feeble in comparison. Turn to the 3rd chapter, 14th verse: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory."

We are lost in wonder, love, and praise at such a declaration. This is the standard according to which the Father deals with His children in all their necessities. "To be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." That is proof positive that all of them experience weakness and helplessness. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." What faith? His own faith, the faith of the great and glorious Head communicated to each member of His body. "That ye being rooted and grounded in love."

"More of Thy love, my God, I find

In every hour I live;

More of Thy peace, in heart and mind,

Doth each sharp trial give."

That is being rooted and grounded in covenant love. See! When the devil comes and gives you a tremendous shaking, when the North wind of destruction howls horribly around you, and when the cutting East wind of spiritual desolation rages in your heart's experience, He who holds all winds and causes in His fists will see to it that the faith of His own operation shall take deeper root and firmer hold in the clefts of the old Rock of Ages. "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Come to the 1st Epistle to the Church of the Thessalonians, chap. 1:2, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." But how did Paul and his companions pray for the brethren

beloved at Thessalonica? See chap. 3:10, "Night and day praying exceedingly." My dear friends, that was something more than repeating a collect; but I do not speak sneeringly of a collect, for it has pleased God in my spiritual experience to bless some of them to my soul. I shall never forget, while memory holds its seat, those words with which I opened my lips to address the throne of the heavenly grace this morning: "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen." That, to me has been prayer a thousand times. But Paul says: "Night and day praying exceedingly." That was something more than the articulation of words, it was the deep desire, the groaning which could not be uttered. "That we might see your face, and might perfect that which was lacking in your faith. Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." Again, in the 5th chap. 23rd verse, he prays: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Our God cannot sanctify or save any other way than wholly. He never does things by halves. Paul's prayer is in harmony with God's purpose. "And I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul's prayer is in keeping with his persuasion: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Arminians will say, "If that is your creed, why do you pray? What is the use of asking God to do that which He has determined to do?" Well, such understand not the spiritual experience of God's children in which He is reminded of His promise to do as He has said. (2 Sam. 7:25) Come to the 2nd Epistle 1:11,12: "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." Come to chap. 2:16,17. Paul is still praying in the words I have read for you as my text: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." We will notice

THE FOUNTAIN from whence all spiritual blessings flow "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us."

THE FLOW of spiritual blessings from the FOUNTAIN "And hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace."

THE FULLNESS of blessing spiritually experienced "Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

I. THE FOUNTAIN "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us." I love to look at God's most Holy Word in that order in which the blessed Spirit has been pleased to present and communicate Divine truth. It is of God's rich mercy that we at the Grove are worshippers of the undivided Godhead, JEHOVAH THREE IN ONE AND ONE IN THREE. We delight in the threefold cord of everlasting love which can never be broken. As is the love of the Father, so is the love of the Son, and so is the love of the Holy Ghost; One cannot be afore or after the other. In the purposes, promises, and performances of the Divine Three there can be no discordance whatever. The purposes of love in the will of the Father, the promises of life and grace treasured in the heart of the Son, with the performances of all in the experiences of the election of grace by the Holy Ghost are "fitly framed," marvellously executed, and know of no failure or fluctuation. In our confessions of faith in the glorious Trinity, we invariably say, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but God, in the revelation of Himself, will not be restricted by human

arrangements or conclusions. Sometimes in Holy Scripture the Father is mentioned first, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the Holy Ghost. Look at the apostolic benediction in 2 Cor. 13:14, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice! It is not the Father first, but "our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Notice that wonderful chapter, Luke 15, where we have the Eternal Three, and three aspects of sinnership set before us in the three-in-one parable of the lost sheep, the lost silver, and the lost son. In the first place, we see the Good Shepherd seeking and finding His wandering sheep; in the second place, the Spirit in the woman sees and finds the lost piece of silver; and lastly, the Father runs and welcomes His wayward but repentant son to His home and to His heart.

The Holy Ghost is mentioned first several times. Look at that remarkable prayer by Paul in the midst of conflict, fear, and care. Col. 2:2, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." Here we have three distinct Persons mentioned. The first as God. Who is it? Not the Father, nor the Son, but God the ever-blessed Spirit. Now turn with me to 2 Thess. 3:5. Here we have a prayer of the apostle: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now, what can this mean, but that the Holy Ghost is the One who directs the understanding and affections of redeemed sinners into the love of the Father and into the patience of Christ? These Scriptures fully prove that the blessed Spirit knows no inferiority to the Father or to the Son. After giving an awful description of the falling away, which must take place previous to the revelation of our Lord, the apostle prays in the words of our text, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself." Look at those words, and may the Holy Ghost cause you to ponder them well and receive instruction: "Our Lord Jesus Christ." Now many honest and true hearts have made use of these words this morning? It is all very well for you to say, I believe in Jesus Christ our Lord; but how did you come to believe in Him? Is He your Jesus, your Salvation? What has He saved you from? Is He your Christ, your Anointed? What has He taught you? Is He your Lord, your Governor? Does He reign and rule over all things in you and for you? These are heart-searching and probing questions, from which the poor child of God may shrink a little at times, but to which he will be brought quietly to submit, because of his earnest longing to be searched by a heart-searching God. He may start from the inquisitive intrusions of those who would have dominion over his faith, and disturb his peace and joy. Yes, he may start from these as I have oftentimes done. I have found that persons who are imperious in their demands as to where a poor child of God obtained his religion, are very scanty and superficial in the detailing of the origin of their own.

But look at that blessed and adorable One: "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself." He, whom the Father gave as a Covenant to His elect people. He, who identified Himself with them in incarnation, and is with them in all their sorrows, temptations, and afflictions. He, who gives them the blessed assurance that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. He, who in the depths of Gethsemane's gloomy vale, agonized in tears and blood for them. He, who on Calvary's rugged tree, carried every one of their sins into everlasting oblivion. O what a glorious fact! In JEHOVAH'S account, every sin, transgression, and iniquity of His Church, is a complete nonentity. This is a marvellous truth, and has respect to the Church of God as it is seen in the person and perfections of the God-Man who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, abolished death, and, in His resurrection, triumphed over hell and the grave, entered with great triumph into His kingdom in heaven, there represents the whole election of grace, and ever lives to make intercession for them. He opens His mouth for His poor dumb children, and, when they know not what they are, nor where they are, He sends His blessed Spirit to cheer and comfort them with those communications of His grace which are good for them and glorifying to His Father. Now comes the question, Where are we in reference to these glorious

revelations? After all, that is the point. Without a just apprehension, Scriptural view and spiritual understanding of the true nature of sin, Jesus is no Saviour to us. It is all very well to talk about Jesus being a Saviour, but if I am brought, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, to see myself, in every point and particular, a hell-deserving sinner, with no hope but in Him who shed His precious blood on Calvary, I have the Spirit's witness that He is my Saviour and that I am His saved one.

"Our Lord Jesus CHRIST." Christ! What does that mean? It means that the Father in covenant chose and appointed a Saviour for me. Think of this:

"Ere He called me, well He knew

What a heart like mine could do."

He knew that my heart would wander from Him as long as it could, and that when He would stop me, it would question His right to do so. My wretched carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is ever questioning God's right to do as He will with me, and stop me in my enjoyment of those things which my blasphemous nature is ever set upon. Fleshly, proud freewill says, He sent me into the world with desires, propensities, and faculties, and why should He interfere with my right to gratify and satisfy them? This is old Adam all the world over. But God, in His own way, and by His own Spirit, reveals to me the truth, that my heart can do nothing but wander from Him, question His right to me, to His reign over me and in me, and would never think of His salvation, nor of His choice of a Saviour for me. He knew what strength would be required. He knew what wisdom would be needed. He knew what patience must be endured. He saw all this in His own Christ when He appointed Him as my Saviour, and appointed me to the enjoyment of Himself as my Salvation. That is God's Christ, but devils and men hate the truth of it. "Now our LORD Jesus Christ." Our Lord. Our Governor. Who is your Governor? Some imagine that, by the grace bestowed upon them, they are able to govern themselves. That won't do for me. Depend upon it, if God were to entrust me with just as much grace as would see me nicely through the day, and He gave it to me at nine o'clock in the morning, at half a minute past nine, I should not have a particle left. But it is my mercy to know that He holds all grace in His own hands for me, and will supply all my need according to JEHOVAH'S riches in glory by Himself. Blessed be His holy name, He is faithful to His engagements, and reveals Himself to His own as their covenant God, Governor, Monarch, Ruler, and Lord.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ HIMSELF." It is not our Lord Jesus Christ and self. No co-operation here. No fleshly freewill. No carnal alliance. Nothing of man's doings or man's interposition. None of the human element in respect to salvation, grace, or faith; but "our Lord Jesus Christ HIMSELF." You may say, He has given me a blessing! Am I not to prize it? Yes, if you can delight in the Blessor in it. You say, He has given to me exceeding great and precious promises! Am I not to rejoice in them? Yes, if the Promiser reveals HIMSELF in them. You cry, He has given me salvation! Has He given HIMSELF? What is salvation short of Christ? It is no salvation at all, but salvation in Christ is perfect and complete. He is a Saviour from first to last, without man's interposition or co-operation, and independently of anything to help, aid, assist, or supplement Him. It is Jesus the Saviour in Covenant, Jesus the Saviour in Communication, Jesus the Saviour in Communion, and Jesus the Saviour, when, with my last expiring breath, I may cry, "The LORD is my Light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear?" (Ps. 27:1) But see! Jesus Christ HIMSELF is my Great High Priest, my only Daysman and Mediator. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5) Then away altogether with that accursed Popish figment of bringing in sinful mortals to stand between an all-holy God and sinful, hell-deserving sinners.

"One Priest alone can pardon me,
Or bid me, 'Go in peace;'
Can breathe those words, 'I pardon thee,'
And make these heart-throbs cease.
My soul hath heard His priestly voice,
He said, 'I bore thy sins,' rejoice."

That is the Priest I glory in, and all else are impostors and presumers. That is the priesthood that will avail for me in the hour of necessity, weakness, or infirmity. Jesus the only Saviour. Christ the Father's Anointed. Himself, and none other, my Salvation, through time, my Life in death, and my Glory and Delight throughout eternity. HIMSELF.

"And God even our Father." When did He become your Father? In the covenant before all worlds, when He set up His own Son as the great and glorious Head of the Church, when He predestinated the whole of His eternally-loved family to the adoption of sons and of daughters. Our Father, because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Father, because the Elder Brother of all His elect brethren is revealed in us. Our Father, because we are regenerate, born again, and brought into experimental oneness with Himself. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.....Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter 1:3,23) Not the mere declaration or testimony of a book, but the living Word of God. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born." They were born to believe, they did not believe to be born. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12,13) This is the axe of Divine truth laid to the root of the upas tree of the creature's free-will with a vengeance. Our Father's children may wander into a country far off from Him, determined to have their own way, and squander the blessings held by them in experimental enjoyment. It may be that some of you are trying your utmost to tolerate Arminian husks and free-will trash, trying to put up with a half-and-half Gospel, trying to rest satisfied with "free-grace in the morning, free-will in the afternoon, and both at dinner-time;" but that won't do. If you are God's children, He may leave you to run the length of your tether; but He has devised means whereby His banished shall not be eternally expelled from Him, and these means are in the Person of His Son, and in the hand of the Holy Ghost. He is the eternal Father of His eternally-loved children. Those are precious words

"Which hath loved us." Who hath loved us? "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father." Ay, and the Holy Ghost loves us with an equal love. What kind of love is this? It is eternal, uninfluenced, invincible, immutable, and inexhaustible. Sins and follies can never wear it out. Doubts and fears can never mar its fair beauty. No relaxation in that love toward any poor, wayward, wandering child. Once our Father, our Father for ever. This love is manifested in marvellous pity, so beautifully expressed in Eph. 2:4,5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." See! All in Christ Jesus, and because it is in Christ Jesus, it is safe, secure, and sure to all the seed. (Rom. 4:16) Do notice that blessed declaration 1 Tim.

1:14, "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." It does not say, "which is in you." You have only the shedding abroad of it in your heart by the Holy Ghost; but the love of the Father in the Son to you is ever the same.

II. THE FLOW of spiritual blessings from the FOUNTAIN "And hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace." Many of us, without the experience of misery, may have many comforts in possession, but what about the consolation? See!

"A wounded soul,

And not a whole,

Becomes a true believer."

Without a broken heart and contrite spirit, there can be no experience of Divine consolation. This consolation flows from the once broken heart of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, according to the good pleasure of the Father by the gracious communications of the covenant Comforter. The bound, the bruised, and the burdened by sin are those whom JEHOVAH indulges with His rich consolations. Look to this, you who are brought into the experience of these things, there is consolation in Christ, and in Him alone. Why in Him? Because He was in all points tempted like as we are. Marvellous truth! never to be fully understood until we arrive at home; then shall we know, even as we are known. Oh, what consolation to know that sin is put away, death destroyed, and the love of the Covenant-Three unchangeably ours.

"And good hope." What is your hope? Many have the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish. Some have their hope built upon the sand; but the hope of the child of God is God Himself. He is the God of hope who fills His people with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost.

III. THE FULLNESS of blessing spiritually experienced: "Comfort your hearts." What will comfort the hearts of Zion's mourners? Warfare accomplished by Jesus; iniquity pardoned by the Father; all need supplied by the Holy Ghost. "And stablish you in every good word and work." A good word makes glad the heart of the child of God. "Thy sins are forgiven thee" is a good word to the sin-burdened. "Peace, be still," is a good word to the tossed with tempest and not comforted. "Fear not, I am with thee," is a good word to the doubting and fearing.

"And every good work." God's children cannot brag of many of these; but a precious Christ knows all about them. See how they are described in Matt. 25:34-40: "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came to Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came to Thee? And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." A cup of cold water given to a poor disciple, because he belongs to Christ (that is the secret), shall not lose its reward. The reward shall be God Himself in all that He is and all that He has.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, ye ransomed here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-bradbury/god-the-fountain-of-love-and-consolation/>

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