

- ing love. But at length the set time came for the new revelation, or at least the fuller revelation, of the attribute that governs all the rest: that which, to adopt St. James's word, is the νόμος βασιλικός, the *royal law* in God as in man. But love when it is revealed takes many names, or rather is the mother of a new and blessed family of attributes.
- Jas. ii. 8.
- Common to God and Man.
- 2 Peter i. 4.
- Heb. xii. 10.
- 1 John iv. 12.
- 1 John iv. 16.
- 1 Cor. vi. 17.
- 1 Peter i. 2.
- 1 John iv. 13.
3. But, whatever other manifestations love may take, or whatever other name it may bear, it is the moral attribute in God which is His most blessed gift to the individual soul: in the administration of the Holy Ghost it is the bond between God and the redeemed, as it were their common ethical principle. We are said to be made *partakers of the Divine nature* generally, and with special reference to the two great moral attributes of holiness and love. We are *partakers of His holiness* as being purified from sin and sanctified to His service. But a stronger word is used about our participation of His love. St. John points our thought to the invisible essence of God, *No man hath seen God at any time*, but only that he may tell us in what sense we become one with the Invisible: *If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is fulfilled in us*. Soon afterwards he utters the profoundest word the Bible contains as to the relations and privilege of the saints: *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him*. It may be added here in conclusion that the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is the real bond of fellowship between God and the believer: *He that is joined unto the Lord is One Spirit*. Our partaking of the Divine holiness is the *sanctification of the Spirit*; and our partaking of the Divine love is explained to be *because He hath given us of His Spirit*.

Grace.

GRACE AND ITS RELATED ATTRIBUTES.

What the righteousness is to the holiness of God, that His *grace* is to His love: the firstborn of its strength and its minister in the things pertaining to salvation. Love retains its distinction to define both the nature and the attribute. The supreme principle or feeling, governing the Divine dealings with sinners, is in the Christian dispensation *grace*.

Born of the Gospel.
Ps. lxxxvi.
15.

1. This word is in some respects a creation of the Gospel. God was, in the Old Testament, *a God full of compassion, and gracious*,

longsuffering and plenteous in mercy and truth; but there is something in the Evangelical term that surpasses all these. In the New Testament this unwearied agent of Love appears as the *Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is only another form of the *love of God*, and this again only another form of the *communion of the Holy Ghost*. The love of the Triune God is communicated by the Spirit through the redeeming grace of Christ. As holiness comes upon the scene of atoning administration under the aspect of justice, so love comes under the aspect of grace, which is the Divine love with an emphasis upon the ill desert and utter impotence of those who receive it. *Not that we loved God, but that He loved us*: this is the best interpreter of the grace that represents in the active work of redemption the love of God which provided the redemption itself. It may be added in conclusion, that as an attribute of God each Person of the Holy Trinity shares it. We read of *the grace of our God*, AND *the Lord Jesus Christ*, and of *the Spirit of grace*.

2. It is needless to enumerate the other attributes or modifications of grace with which God *in Christ*, *reconciling the world unto Himself*, is clothed in the whole of Scripture, and specially in the Gospel. They are as many as the aspects of sin and the need of sinners. Here practical theology may multiply its epithets: gathering from the abundance of the Bible, or framing them anew according to Biblical analogy or precedent. The grace that seeks the well-being of the whole race is the Divine *philanthropy* or *kindness* to humankind. That which looks upon man in his sin and misery and waits to be gracious is Compassion and Pity. The Grace that waits for the sinner's return and submission, restraining the deserved judgment upon evil, is Forbearance, or Longsuffering. That which forgives him when he comes is Mercy. It is well seen that in the *exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus* God invests Himself with every attribute that is sanctified to the service of lovingkindness generally, and that there is not much exact discrimination in their use. Finally, the grace that rejoices over the recovered and renewed spirit with delight and complacency has no name, but returns again to the source of all these perfections, the Divine and original love of our Father in heaven.

2 Cor. xiii
14.

1 John iv
10.

2 Thess. i
12.

Heb x. 29.
Other
Names.
2 Cor. v.
19

Tit. iii. 4.

Eph. ii. 7.