

# *Means of Grace* by the Rev. Robert Bickersteth, M.A.

## Questions and Exercises for the Reader

### LECTURE I.

#### GROWTH IN GRACE

***But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of  
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him  
be glory both now and for ever. Amen.***

*2 PETER, iii. 18.*

1. Why did the author teach this subject during the period of Lent? (p. 2)
2. Define *grace* and *holiness*. (p. 3)
3. How is the work of grace progressive, and able to grow? (p. 4)
4. What is the evidence for growth of grace? (p. 5)
5. What is the relation of means that we can use, to the bestowment of a gift which originates entirely in the free favour of God? (p. 5)
6. Are there only certain means to grow in grace? (p. 6)
7. How did the author choose these seven means? (p. 7)
8. What is the difference between an ordinary and an extraordinary mean? (p. 8)

#### **Ministry of the Gospel:**

9. Why is this the first mean? (pp. 8–9)
10. Discuss the following “preachers”: Enoch, Noah, David, Solomon, Christ, John the Baptist, the Twelve Apostles, Paul. (pp. 9–11)
11. Do you agree with the author that the health of the Church depends on the strength of its preaching? (p. 12)
12. What is the design of faithful preaching? The preacher’s role? The most important theme? (p. 14)
13. What are the duties of the hearer? What about unsound preaching? (p. 16)
14. What is the one infallible rule? One infallible teacher? (p. 17)

### LECTURE II.

#### THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE.

***Thy word hath quickened me.***

*Psalm, cxix. 50.*

1. How can means be over or undervalued? (p. 20)
2. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the Bible, and of its understanding by the reader? (p. 22)
3. What must be the reader’s state of mind? (p. 23)
4. Read the 119th Psalm. Discuss David’s view of the Scriptures. (p. 25)

5. How are grace and knowledge connected? (2 Peter 3:18) (pp. 27–28)
6. Where is knowledge of the Bible to be found? (p. 28)
7. Why do the Scriptures promote growth in grace with both hope and fear? (pp. 30–32)
8. What is the best method for reading Scripture? (p. 35)

### LECTURE III.

#### PRAYER.

#### ***What profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?***

*Job, xxi. 15.*

1. What is the argument that prayer is unnecessary? (pp. 37–38)
2. Can prayer alter the will of God? (pp. 38–39)
3. What happens to the soul of the newly-spiritual person when he begins to pray? (pp. 39–40)
4. Are all types of prayers effective? (p. 40)
5. What is the experience of a prayer of conviction? (p. 41)
6. How does it indicate a new birth? (pp. 41–42)
7. How does what we think about affect the mind? (p. 43)
8. Describe the interaction between the soul and God during prayer. (pp. 43–44)
9. How did Enoch “walk with God”? (p. 45)
10. How do worldly concerns and influences affect spiritual life? (pp. 46–47)
11. How does prayer counteract these influences? (p. 47)
12. What does St. Paul mean by “Pray without ceasing”? (p. 48)
13. Why do the other means depend on prayer? (p. 48)
14. What type of prayer has power with God? Discuss the examples of Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Abraham, and Jesus Christ. (pp. 49–50)
15. What are the practical steps for faithful prayer? (pp. 51–52)

### LECTURE IV.

#### RELIGIOUS MEDITATION &

#### SELF-EXAMINATION.

#### ***I commune with mine own heart : and my spirit made diligent search.***

*Psalm, lxxvii. 6.*

#### **Religious Meditation:**

1. What are the results of neglecting religious meditation? (p. 54)
2. Why does conversion often spring from meditation? (p. 55)
3. Discuss the questions for meditation for the spiritual novice as well as the believer. (p. 56)
4. As in prayer, why is what you think about important? (pp. 58–59)
5. Why is religious meditation a mean? (p. 59)
6. How does meditation help to incorporate Scripture, both read and spoken? (p. 60)

7. After meditating on God and His Word, write a psalm about the experience. Use the Psalms on page 62 as examples.

#### **Self-Examination.**

8. Discuss David's thoughts on self-examination. (p. 64)
9. What questions would you ask yourself? (p. 65)
10. Answer these two questions, (p. 66)
  - a) *Whether we are, in truth, the disciples of Jesus?* (p. 67)
  - b) *Whether, if disciples, we are walking worthy of our vocation?* (p. 68)
11. When and how often should we examine ourselves? (p. 69)
12. What is the greatest help to advancing in any mean? (p. 70)

#### **LECTURE V.**

RELIGIOUS INTERCOURSE.

***Did not our heart burn within us, while  
He talked with us by the way, and  
while He opened to us the Scriptures?***

*Luke, xxiv. 32.*

1. Reflect upon Luke 24:13–35, the Road to Emmaus. Imagine the effect on the disciples. (p. 71)
2. How does the world see Christians? (p. 75)
3. How should Christians be “a distinct and peculiar people”? (p. 75)
4. How are Christians supposed to interact with the world? (p. 76)
5. What is the difference between true and false charity? (p. 76)
6. How does the author define the “world”? (p. 77)
7. What about “good” people? (p. 77)
8. How do Christians separate from the world? (p. 78)
9. How does conversation about a subject of interest lead to growth? (p. 79)
10. How does thinking about a subject differ from conversing about it? (p. 79)
11. What happens to believers when “conversing upon the truths of the Gospel”? (p. 80)
12. What is the effect of testimony on the speaker and the listener? (pp. 80–81)
13. Discuss David's Psalm passages. (p. 82)
14. How should Christians speak with one another? (p. 84)
15. How should Christians interact in this world? (pp. 85–86)

#### **LECTURE VI.**

BAPTISM.

***They are spiritually discerned.***

*I Corinthians, ii. 14.*

1. Why are Baptism and the Lord's Supper *extraordinary* means? (p. 90)
2. What is the solution to the doctrinal disputes relating to the sacraments? (p. 90)

3. Is there Scriptural authority for the supremacy of the sacraments over other means? (p. 92)
4. How can the sacraments be over or undervalued? (p. 93)
5. Discuss John Calvin's view of the sacraments. (p. 94)
6. Compare infant baptism to Jewish circumcision. (p. 95)
7. Why was Baptism dangerous in early Christianity? (p. 96)
8. Does Baptism always result in spiritual regeneration? (p. 98)
9. What are the equivalent terms for "regeneration"? (p. 99)
10. How does the author define "the being born of God," or "the being spiritually regenerate"? (p. 100)
11. What are other means of spiritual regeneration? (pp. 100–101)
12. Why does spiritual regeneration often occur not during, but after, Baptism? (p. 103)
13. Review your Baptismal rites and ask yourself the questions on page 104.
14. What is the danger of neglecting the privileges granted to you through Baptism? (p. 105)

### LECTURE VII.

#### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

***The cup of blessing which we bless, is it  
not the communion of the blood of Christ?***

***The bread which we break, is it not  
the communion of the body of Christ?***

I *Corinthians*, x. 16.

1. What does it tell you that the Lord's Supper and Baptism have remained virtually unchanged for two thousand years? (pp. 110–111)
2. What is the Lord's Supper a reminder of? (p. 111)
3. Before receiving, on what should the believer meditate? (pp. 112–13)
4. Why is this both painful and joyful? (p. 113)
5. How does it represent a union with Christ? (p. 114)
6. Who should and who shouldn't engage in the Lord's Supper? (pp. 115–16)
7. How are the means interconnected? (p. 118)