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**Sermons and Prayers, Delivered by Joseph John Gurney,  
in the Friend's Meeting House, Liverpool, 1832**

**Gurney Joseph John**

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**Author: Gurney Joseph John**

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NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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Great pains have been taken to ensure the fidelity of the following Discourses, but the publisher considers it due to their eminent and highly gifted Author to state, that as they are published without his consent, or the benefit of his revision, of course he is in nowise responsible for any inaccuracies that may have occurred.

The last three Prayers were delivered in places of temporary accommodation during the repair of Friends' Meeting House.

*Liverpool, 11 Mo., 1836.*



## SERMON I.

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING,

5th MONTH 6th, 1832.

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WHEN our Lord Jesus Christ was drawing towards the close of his ministry, and when he was about to ascend into that glory from which he came, and wherein he was with the Father before the world was, he appeared to his disciples on the mountain, at the place appointed in Galilee, which had been very much the scene of his labours in the ministry of the gospel, (for he was himself the prince of prophets;) and he said to them, when they were assembled together, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He therefore proclaimed his own supreme authority over all things, visible and invisible, under the Father, who gave him all authority, as the glorious Mediator between God and man, in whom was the nature of the unchangeable God, and who had taken upon him the nature of man, but without sin. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" and then followed his final commission, "Go ye, and teach all nations," (or make disciples of all



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the grace and good spirit, of the glorious Head of the church, who is the minister of the true tabernacle, and who can still pour forth of his anointing Spirit, even on the poorest and the feeblest of the children of men : and when his servants are favoured with this influence, although they are nothing in themselves, and worse than nothing, they are at times enabled, even by means of a living and powerful ministry, to baptize their hearers into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Important distinctions sometimes hang on little words ; a man may be said to baptize *in* the name of God, when he baptizes under the authority, and by the commission of God, as John the Baptist did in the name of God ; and man may be said to baptize *into* the name of God, when he is made the means of bringing his fellow-men into that living and saving faith, of which God is the object. And in order truly to baptize the benighted children of men into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth is the grand, essential qualification ; and whatsoever opinion we may form on the subject of the outward rite, no man ever was, or ever will be, truly baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, but by the influence of the Spirit of God, who is omnipotent. And the ministry of the gospel is here described, as it appears to me, as the medium through which this essential and saving blessing is communicated, even as

Christ is said, by the apostle Paul, to "cleanse his church, by the washing of water through the word." And oh! my beloved friends, my soul is filled with an ardent desire, that whatsoever may be our form of worship, whatsoever our name to religion, whatsoever the ceremonies which we practise, or of which we avoid the practice, we may all be baptized under the power of the Lord Almighty, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; that ours may not be a barren, fruitless, speculative religion, but a religion which shall embrace the whole truth as it is in Jesus, and which shall be productive of that new creation, wherein we may serve the Lord our God in the beauty of holiness, and be made meet for the final and full enjoyment of life everlasting: for "if any man be in Christ, it is a new creation; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." And we may depend upon it that we cannot live either by the practice of forms, or by the absence of them; "for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation:" and God grant, my beloved friends, that you may all experience this new creation, by being baptized, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, into the name of the Father.

Beloved friends, we often talk of God as if we knew him; we talk of the wonders of creation, we admire the starry firmament, we are astonished at the harmonious courses of planets and of systems, we are lost in the

contemplation of the magnificen, boundless whole; we take the microscope in our hands, and scrutinize the matchless beauties of a feather or a leaf, the mysteries of divine power, and behold it in the formation of the smallest insect; and in the small, as well as the great things of nature, we find that there is a hidden infinity, into which the most perspicacious philosophy cannot dive; and we do acknowledge in words, that the Creator of heaven and earth is an omnipotent, glorious, and incomprehensible being; but for all that, he is hidden from our view, as it relates to all things which pertain to life and salvation; yea, were it not for the light of revealed religion, we should often fail, even in reading the book of nature itself.

We are blind by nature, my brethren, and utterly incapable of understanding God. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." But, beloved friends, when the Spirit of God anoints the blind eye of man's benighted soul, then he begins to understand his Creator; when he reads the book of nature, his mind is filled with something far better than mere philosophical speculation; it is filled with love, with admiration, with awe, and with gratitude: and when he reads the book of revelation, under the influence of that Spirit which gave it forth, his mind opens to a glorious view of the attributes of the Creator of heaven and earth,