

of producing effects. Power in man is confined within very narrow limits. We can change the current of our thoughts, or fix our attention on a particular object and we can move the voluntary muscles of our body. Beyond this our direct power does not extend. It is from this small measure of efficiency that all the stores of human knowledge and all the wonders of human art are derived. It is only our thoughts, volitions, and purposes together with certain acts of the body, that are immediately subject to the will. For all other effects we must avail ourselves of the use of means. We cannot will a book, a picture, or a house into existence. The production of such effects requires protracted labor and the use of diverse appliances.

It is by removing all the limitations of power, as it exists in us, that we rise to the idea of the omnipotence of God. We do not thus, however, lose the idea itself. Almighty power does not cease to be power. We can do very little. God can do whatever He wills. We, beyond very narrow limits, must use means to accomplish our ends. With God means are unnecessary. He wills, and it is done. He said, Let there be light; and there was light. He, by a volition created the heavens and the earth. At the volition of Christ, the winds ceased, and there was a great calm. By an act of the will He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, and raised the dead. This simple idea of the omnipotence of God, that He can do without effort, and by a volition, whatever He wills, is the highest conceivable idea of power, and is that which is clearly presented in the Scriptures.... The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and doeth his pleasure among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, is the tribute of adoration which the Scriptures everywhere render unto God, and the truth which they everywhere present as the ground of confidence to his people. This is all we know, and all we need to know on this subject...

b. The potential and the actualization of God's power

Stephen Charnock, in *The Existence and Attributes of God* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1958), pp. 363-364, states:

Power sometimes signifies authority, and a man is said to be mighty and powerful in regard to his dominion, and the right he hath to command multitudes of other persons to take his part; but power taken for strength, and power taken for authority, are distinct things, and may be separated from one another.... The power of God is not to be understood of his authority and dominion, but his strength to act...

This power is divided ordinarily into absolute and ordinate. Absolute, is that power whereby God is able to do