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THE

# WORKS OF THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

VOL. X.

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# THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

# THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

VOLUME X.

CONTAINING

SEVERAL SERMONS UPON THE TWENTY-FIFTH CHAPTER OF ST MATTHEW;

ALSO

SERMONS UPON THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN.

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# SEVERAL SERMONS

UPON THE

# TWENTY-FIFTH CHAPTER OF ST MATTHEW.

# SEVERAL SERMONS UPON THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF ST MATTHEW.

## SERMON XVII.

*And cast ye the unprofitable servant into utter darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*—MAT. XXV. 30.

IN these words is the positive part of the sentence; the master doth not only take away the talent, but condemneth him to eternal torments. In them take notice—(1.) Of the reason of the punishment; and then, (2.) The punishment itself.

1. The reason of the punishment is represented in the notion and character by which the party sentenced is expressed, 'The unprofitable servant.' The word *unprofitable* is sometimes used in a larger, and sometimes in a stricter sense. In a larger sense it is used for him that deserveth no reward; so it is said, Luke xvii. 10, 'We are unprofitable servants.' Sometimes more strictly and properly for the idle and the negligent, for them that do not their duty, and make no improvement of their gifts. So it is taken here, and in many other places; καὶ τὸν ἀχρεῖον δοῦλον ἐκβάλλετε, 'Cast ye the unprofitable servant.'

2. The punishment itself is represented by two notions:—

[1.] It is dismal, 'Cast him into utter darkness.'

[2.] It is doleful, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

First, Dismal; εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον. (2.) It is doleful; ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων. Sometimes hell is expressed by one of these notions; as Mat. xiii. 42, 'He will cast the tares into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;' so Mat. xxiv. 51, 'He shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' It is notable, that is the punishment of the luxurious servant, that did eat and drink with the drunken, and beat his fellow-servants; and here the unprofitable servant is threatened with the same, though he was not riotous, but negligent. Sometimes by both together; as Mat. viii. 11, 12, 'The children of the kingdom shall be cast into utter darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;' and Mat. xxii. 13, 'Take him away, and cast him into utter darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Now, let us first consider the punishment as it is dismal, 'Cast him into utter darkness.' There are two terms to be explained—darkness, and utter darkness.

1. Darkness. Heaven is set forth by light, and hell by darkness. The inheritance of the saints is called an 'inheritance in light,' Col. i. 12, because that is an estate full of knowledge; for there we 'see God face to face,' 1 Cor. xiii. 12; an estate full of joy and comfort, Ps. xvi. 11; an estate full of brightness and glory: Dan. xii. 3, 'They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever;' Mat. xiii. 43, 'The righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of heaven.' How base soever the children of God appear in this world, in the world to come they shall be wonderful glorious. Now the opposite state of this is set forth by darkness; as the fallen angels are said to be 'held in chains of darkness,' 2 Peter ii. 4; or as Jude hath it, in 'chains under darkness,' Jude 6. Hell is compared to a prison or dungeon, 1 Peter iii. 19. So Christ speaketh of hell as the prison wherein damned spirits are held in a wretched and comfortless estate, in a state most remote from joy and blessedness.

2. It is called utter darkness, either because their prisons or dungeons were out of the city, as appeareth Acts xii. 10, or because they shall be shut from the feast or rooms of entertainment. Their feasts were usually kept by night; suppers, and not dinners; and then celebrated with a great many lamps and candles or torches. Now, those that were not only shut out from those rooms of entertainment, but cast into dungeons, were left in a comfortless condition. That it is opposite to the feast, these two places, Mat. viii. 12, and Mat. xx. 13, show. And here, when the good servants 'enter into the master's joy,' or sit down and feast with him, then is the naughty servant 'cast into utter darkness;' that is, shut out of the communion of the blessed spirits (who in the place of happiness have eternal joy), and cast into the dungeon of hell.

Secondly, Let us consider it as it is doleful, 'Where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Their estate shall be sad, and they shall have a bitter apprehension of it. Their apprehension is expressed by two things—their sorrow and indignation.

1. Their desperate tormenting sorrow, ἐκεῖ κλαυθμὸς, 'weeping.' This dolour shall arise from the inexplicable torments of body and soul.

2. Their indignation or vexation, 'gnashing of teeth.' It is a token of indignation and impatience; as Acts vii. 54, 'When they heard these things, they were cut at the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth.' I shall explain it more by and by. Two points will arise hence:—

*Doct.* 1. That hell is a place and state of inexpressible torments.

*Doct.* 2. That unprofitableness is a damning sin.

The unprofitable servant is condemned, though he did not waste his master's goods, yet because he did not increase them. There is no treachery laid to his charge, no riot and wasteful profusion, no opposition to his fellow-servants, to vex or hinder them in their work. We hear nothing of this laid to his charge; but he neglected to do that which is good.

For the first point, that hell is a place and state of inexpressible torment, the argument may seem harsh and ingrate, but this is part of the doctrine that we must unfold. See the commission of the ministers of the gospel: Mark xvi. 16, 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' It is gospel preaching to warn men of damnation; we must curse, as well as bless; and this part of doctrine hath its profit, as well as the more comfortable.

1. To those that are carnal, to rouse them out of their security. If men did believe the torments of hell, they would not sin as they do. Sermons of hell may keep many out of hell. *Ne fugiamus sermones de Gehenna, ut Gehennam fugiamus.* John startled many by pressing them 'to flee from wrath to come.' And it is God's usual course to bring to heaven by the gates of hell.

2. To God's children; partly that they may know what they have escaped, to be the more thankful to their Redeemer. We were all involved in this condemnation; and it is the Lord's mercy that we are 'as brands plucked out of the burning,' Zech. iii. 2. A child of God is a firebrand of hell quenched, Eph. ii. 3. It was the pity of our Lord Jesus to rescue us, 1 Thes. i. 10. It is a part of a christian's heaven to think of hell. The miseries of this life commend heaven to us; much more the torments of hell. We know good the better by the opposite evil; as the Israelites, when they looked back, and saw the Egyptians tumbling in the waters, it heightened the deliverance, and made them the more sensible of their own safety. And partly to warn them, and quicken them to their duty. This motive alone would beget slavish fear and compulsory obedience; but mixed with others, it doth good. We need this discipline as long as we are in the world. We are flesh as well as spirit. Adam in innocency needed to be threatened and told of death. Paul saith, 1 Cor. ix. 27, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.' If so sanctified a man as Paul, much more we; and Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' It is one of the saints' motives. And partly because they that cannot endure to hear of such discourses discover much of the guilt and security of their own hearts. As Ahab said of Michaiah, 'He prophesieth nothing but evil,' so men say of many of the preachers of the gospel (that yet speak with tenderness and compassion), He preacheth nothing but hell and damnation. Presumption is a coward and a runaway; but faith meeteth its enemy in open field: Ps. xxiii. 4, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet I will fear no evil.' It supposeth the worst; it can encounter the greatest terrors; but a false unsound peace is a tender thing, loath to be touched, cannot endure a few sad and sober thoughts of the world to come, as sore eyes cannot endure the light. I shall only speak of this dreadful place and estate as it cometh under the view of this text, leaving a more full discussion of this point to the 41st verse of this chapter.

1. That there is a hell, or everlasting torments prepared for the wicked. It is good to prove a hated truth strongly. Now, it is so, that there is a hell, if God, or man, or devils be competent witnesses

in the case. God hath ever told the world of it, and his witness is true. In the Old Testament but sparingly, because the state of the world to come was reserved as a discovery fit for the times of the gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10; yet there God speaketh, Deut. xxxii. 22, of a 'fire kindled in his anger, that shall burn to the lowest hell.' God's wrath is represented by fire, which is an active instrument of destruction; and the seat and residence of it is in the lowest hell. So Ps. xi. 6, 'Upon the wicked shall he rain snares, fire, and brimstone.' See more, ver. 41.

2. Let us see it described here.

First, As a dismal state, 'Cast them out into utter darkness;' that is—(1.) Shut them out of the feast; and (2.) Cast them into the dungeon of hell. There they shall be deprived of all consolation and joy and happiness. As—

1. Of the sight of God, the company of the good angels and blessed spirits; to which loss there is added the most inexplicable torments of body and soul, which is exceeding great. And it is a dreadful thing to be deprived of the light of God's countenance, to be banished out of his presence. The disciples wept when Paul said, 'Ye shall see my face no more,' Acts xx. 38. What will the damned do when he shall say, 'Depart, ye cursed,' as it is in the 41st verse? Here in the loss all are equal, but not in the pain; all alike depart from God; they all lose heaven's joys, the favourable presence of God, and the sight of Christ, the company of the blessed, and their abode in those happy mansions in Christ's Father's house. Hell is a deep dungeon, where the sunshine of God's presence never cometh. God is *summum bonum*, the chiefest good; and in the other world, *omne bonum*, all in all. All things there are immediately from God, rewards and punishments. Better lose all things than God: Exod. xxxiii. 15, 'If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence.'

*Object.* But is it any grief to the wicked to want God, from whom they have such an extreme averseness and hatred?

*Ans.* They are sensible of the loss of happiness; their judgment is changed, though not renewed. Fogs of error, atheism, and unbelief then vanish; they are confuted by experience. There are no atheists in hell; they know there is a God, and that all happiness consists in the full enjoyment of him; which happiness they have lost by their own folly, as by their bitter experience they can find, being in a place most remote from him: therefore, as rational creatures, they cannot but be sensible of their loss; and that sense must needs breed sadness and dejection of spirit; being they look not upon God as lovely in himself, but as one that might be profitable to them: *oculos quos occlusit culpa, aperiet pœna.* It would lessen their torments if their understandings might be taken away: they know what it is to want God, though their hatred of him still remaineth.

2. The sight of Christ. They had a glimpse before they went into hell, by the glory of his presence: 2 Thes. i. 9, 'They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.' That short experience of Christ's appearing will remain in their minds to all eternity; it will stick by them. How are they thrust out? Christ himself, who hath the keys of death and hell, shall bid them go; as if he had said, I cannot endure your presence.

3. From the company of the blessed: Luke xiii. 28, 'There shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.' Envy is a great part of their punishment, as well as horror: Luke xvi. 27, 'And being in torments, he lift up his eyes, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.' It is a torment to think that others of the same nature, interests, instruction, do enjoy what they have forfeited.

4. From an abode in the palace of heaven: Rev. xxii. 15, 'Without shall be dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.' If the pavement of heaven is glorious, what will the place itself be? And from this glorious place they are banished.

Secondly, This utter darkness implieth positively a state of woe and misery most remote from this blessedness; for as they are shut out of the palace of heaven, so they are cast into the prison of hell, where all is dark, without hope of ever coming out more: 2 Peter ii. 17, 'To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.' Hell is a region upon which the sun shall never shine. They know they shall never be reconciled to God, nor their punishment ended or lessened: 'Their worm shall never die, their fire shall never be quenched,' Mark ix. 44. They can never hope to be admitted into God's presence more. There are many ups and downs in a christian's experience. God hideth his face sometimes, that he may show it afterwards the more gloriously. The church prayeth, Ps. lxxx. 19, 'Turn again, and cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon us, and we shall be saved.' But this is an everlasting darkness. God doth, as it were, by chains hold them under everlasting torments. It is a curse that shall never be reversed, a comfortless life that shall never have an end. Men might lose the face of God if they were annihilated; but the souls of men and women do not go to nothing, or die as their bodies, but subsist in a dolesome miserable state of darkness, and in the place of everlasting imprisonment, where the devils and damned spirits torment one another. All here are kept safe, without any possibility of escaping; here God holdeth them in everlasting chains.

Now this is just; they that rejected the light are thrust into utter darkness. They reject the light of the gospel: John iii. 19, 'Men love darkness more than light.' They despise the light of glory, in comparison of worldly things and present satisfactions: Ps. cvi. 24, 'They despised the good land.' They forsake God and their own happiness; that which is now their sin is then their misery. They first excommunicated God, Job xxii. 17, and that for a trifle. They think his presence a torment: Mat. viii. 20, 'What have we to do with thee? art thou come to torment us before the time?' Rom. i. 28, 'They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.' They could not endure to think of God, and abhorred their own thoughts of God, that they were their burden.

Secondly, It is a doleful place and state. Here are two notions, the one expressing their grief and sorrow, the other their vexation and indignation.

1. Their grief and sorrow. In hell there is nothing but sorrow and

fear, overwhelming sorrow and despairing fear: it is a helpless and hopeless grief. Carnal men are prejudiced against godly sorrow; but that is useful and profitable, 2 Cor. vii. 10. These sorrows would prevent those that the damned suffer in hell. The sorrows of repentance are joys in comparison of these sorrows; the sorrows of repentance are full of hope. God will afford comforts to his mourners; but the sorrows of the damned are heightened by their own desperations; it is for ever and ever. These are small, those swallow us up; these are curing, those tormenting; here it is like pricking a vein for health, hereafter wounds to the heart. These are mixed with love: Luke vii., she that loved much, wept much. The cup of wrath is unmixed, confounding and overwhelming us with continual amazement. These are short, those endless.

2. Their vexation and indignation. The grinding and the gnashing of the teeth is usually in pain or rage, in pain of body and soul. But of that afterwards, when I come to speak of hell under the notion of everlasting fire. Now, as it is a token and effect of rage. Now the damned are represented as full of rage, blasphemy, and indignation against God, against the saints, and against themselves.

[1.] Against God; they have despised his favour, and now feel the power of his justice and displeasure against them, and have still an implacable hatred against him. We see in Rev. xvi. 9, when they were 'scorched with great heat, they blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues; and repented not, to give glory to God: they blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and sores, and repented not of their deeds.' I know that this prophecy doth not concern the state of the wicked in hell, but their plagues and disappointments in this world. However the fashion and guise of the reprobate is to be observed, here when they will not repent, so there when they cannot repent. Like men distracted and mad, they gnaw their tongues, and gnash their teeth; like mad dogs, that bite their chains, or wild bulls in a net or toil, that roar and foam. They will curse God that created, and sentenced them to this death; his power, by which they are continually tormented; his wisdom, by which he governeth the world; his goodness, that to them is turned into fury; his Son's death and blood, which hath profited so many, and they have no benefit by it.

[2.] Against the saints. They hate them, and have an envy at all the felicity that betideth them in this world: Ps. xxxvii. 12, 'The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth at him with his teeth;' so Ps. cxii. 10, 'The horn of the righteous shall be exalted with honour: the wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away.' The godly are their opposite party; then their blessedness shall be so great that they shall envy their happiness when they see the godly in good case, and themselves miserable. At the great day the wicked shall see the believers' joy to the increase of their own sorrow.

[3.] Against themselves; their own hearts shall reproach them: Hosea xiii. 9, 'Thou hast destroyed thyself.' They shall rave and vex at their own past folly, past neglects, and past abuse of grace, and past refusal of that happiness which others enjoy, when they find their own

delights salted with the present curse. Little comfort and satisfaction shall they have, when they remember they came thither to avoid the tediousness of a few blessed duties.

*Use.* Is to shame us that we make no more preparation to escape this dreadful estate; or, in the language of the Holy Ghost, that we do not 'flee from wrath to come.' No motion can be earnest and speedy enough. There are two things that are very great wonders:—

1. That any man should reject the christian faith, so clearly promised in the predictions of the prophets, before it was revealed, and confirmed with such a number of miracles, when it was first set afoot, received among the nations by so universal a consent, in the learned part of the world, notwithstanding the meanness of the instruments employed in it; and perpetuated to us throughout so many successions of ages, who have had experience of the truth of it. And yet still we have cause to complain: Isa. liii. 1, 'Lord, who hath believed our report?' Some cannot outsee time and look beyond the grave: 1 Peter i. 9, 'He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off;' and 2 Peter iii. 3, 'There shall come in the latter times scoffers, and mockers, walking after their own lusts.' Many dare not question the precepts of christianity, because of their usefulness to human society and reasonable nature; they doubt of the recompenses, and yet have a secret fear of them, and seek to smother it by their incredulity and unbelief. But alas! it will not do. They scoff at others as simple and credulous; none so credulous as the atheist; there is a thousand to one against him: at least, if it prove true, in what a case are they? It will do them no hurt to venture upon probabilities until further assurance. What assurance would you have? Luke xvi. 30, 31, 'You have Moses and the prophets; if you believe not them, neither will you be persuaded if one came from the dead.' Will you give laws to heaven? God is not bound to make a sun for them to see that wilfully shut their eyes; yet that way what assurance would you have to prove this is nc phantasm? Doth God need a lie to persuade you to your duty? But—

2. The greater miracle is that any should embrace the christian faith, and yet live sinfully and carelessly; that they should believe as christians, and yet live as atheists. You cannot drive a dull ass into the fire that is kindled before him: Prov. i. 17, 'Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.' How can men believe eternal torments, and yet with so much boldness and easiness run into the sins that do deserve them? Many times not compelled by any terror, nor asked or invited by any temptation, but of their own accord they tempt themselves, and seek out occasions of sinning. On the other side, can a man believe heaven, and do nothing for it? If we know that it will not be lost labour, there is all the reason we should not grudge at it: 1 Cor. xv. 58, 'Be steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.'

Now there are three causes of this:—(1.) Unbelief; (2.) Inconsideration; (3.) Want of close application.

[1.] Want of a sound belief. Most men's faith is but pretended, as appeareth by the effects.

(1.) By our proneness to sin. If God did govern the world by sense, and not by faith, we should be other manner of persons than we are, in all holiness and godliness of conversation. If we were sure and certain that for every law we break, or for every one whom we deceive and slander, we should hold our hands in scalding lead for half an hour, how afraid would men be to commit any offence? Who would taste meat, if he knew there were present death in it? yea, that it would cost him bitter gripes and torments? How cautious are men of their diet that are prone to the stone, or gout or colick, where it is but probable the things we take will do us any hurt? We know certainly that 'the wages of sin is death,' yet how little are we concerned at sin!

(2.) By our backwardness to good works. Sins of omission will damn as well as sins of commission, small as well as great. It is not said, Ye have robbed, but, Ye have not fed, ye have not clothed; not, Ye have blasphemed, but, Ye have not invoked the name of God; not done hurt, but done no good: 'And cast the unprofitable servant,' &c.

(3.) By our weakness in temptations and conflicts. We cannot deny a carnal pleasure, yet we are told, Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.' Nor withstand a carnal fear, yet we are told, Mat. x. 28, 'Fear not him that can kill the body, but fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell.' But shrink at the least pains of duty, when we are told on the one hand, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 'That our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord;' on the other side, Rev. xxi. 8, 'That the fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.' On the other side, that it is the most irrational thing to go to hell to save ourselves the labour of obedience. The whole world promised for a reward cannot induce us to enter into a fiery furnace for half an hour. If one much desiring sleep, which is Chrysostom's supposition, should be told that if he once nodded he should endure ten years' torment, would he venture?

(4.) By our carelessness in the matters of our peace. If we were in danger of death every moment, we would not be quiet till we got a pardon. All men by nature are children of wrath, liable to this horrible estate that hath been described to you; but yet few run for refuge, Heb. vi. 18, 19, nor 'flee from wrath to come,' Mat. iii. 7. Seek 'peace upon earth,' Luke ii. 14. Labour 'to be found of him in peace,' 2 Peter ii. 14. How can a man be at rest, till he be secured, and can bless God for an escape?

[2.] Want of serious consideration. The scripture calleth for it everywhere: Ps. l. 22, 'Consider this, ye that forget God;' and Isa. i. 3, 'My people will not consider.' Many that have faith do not act it, and set it a-work by lively thoughts. When faith and knowledge are asleep, it differeth little from ignorance or oblivion, till consideration awaken it. Carnal sensualists put off that they cannot put away, Amos vi. 3. Many that know themselves wretched creatures are not troubled at it, because they cast these things out of their thoughts, and so they sleep; but their damnation sleepeth not, it lieth watching to take hold of them; they are not at leisure to think of eternity.

[3.] Want of close application: Rom. viii. 31, 'What shall we then

say to these things?' Job v. 27, 'Know this for thy good.' Whether promise or threatening, we must urge and prick our hearts with it. Self-love maketh us fancy an unreasonable indulgence in God, and that we shall do well enough, how slightly and carelessly soever we mind religion. We do not lay the point and edge of truths to our own hearts, and say, Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' These are the causes. Now there is no way to remedy this but to get a sound belief of the world to come, and often to meditate on it, and urge our own hearts with it.

*Doct.* 2. That unprofitableness is a damning sin.

If there were no more, this were enough to ruin us. By unprofitableness I do not mean want of success; to the best, gifts may be unprofitable: Isa. xlix. 4, 'I have laboured in vain,' saith the prophet Isaiah; but want of endeavour, omitting to do our duty. The scope of the parable is to awaken us from our negligence and sloth, that we may not prefer a soft and easy lazy life before the service of God, and doing good in our generation. Now, because we think omissions are no sins, or light sins, I shall take this occasion to show the heinousness of them; and here I shall show two things:—

First, That there are sins of omission. Sins are usually distinguished into sins of omission and commission. A sin of commission is when we do that which we ought not; a sin of omission, when we leave that undone which we ought to do. But when we look more narrowly into these things, we shall find both in every actual sin; for in that we commit anything against the law, we omit our duty, and the omitting of our duty can hardly or never fall out but that something is preferred before the love of God, and that is a commission. But yet there is ground for the distinction, because when anything is formally and directly committed against the negative precept and prohibition, that is a sin of commission; but when we directly sin against an affirmative precept, that is an omission. We have an instance of both in Eli and his sons. Eli's sons defiled themselves 'with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,' 1 Sam. ii. 22. Eli sinned in that 'he restrained them not,' 1 Sam. iii. 13. His was an omission, theirs a commission.

Secondly, That sins of omission may be great sins appeareth—

1. Partly by the nature of them. There is in them the general nature of all evil; that is, *ἀνομία*, 'a transgression of a law,' 1 John iii. 4; a disobedience and breach of a precept, and so by consequence a contempt of God's authority. We cry out upon Pharaoh when we hear him speaking, Exod. v. 2, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?' By interpretation we all say so; this language is couched in every sin that we commit, and every duty we omit. Our negligence is not simple negligence, but downright disobedience, because it is a breach of a precept; and the offence is the more, because our nature doth more easily close with precepts than prohibitions. Duties enjoined are perfective, but prohibitions are as so many yokes upon us. We take it more grievously for God to say, 'Thou shalt not covet,' than for God to say, 'Thou shalt love me, fear me, and serve me.' We are contented to do much which the law requireth, but to be limited and barred of our delights, this is distasteful. To meet with

man's corruptions indeed, the decalogue consists more of prohibitions than precepts; eight negatives, the fourth and fifth commandments only positive. To be restrained is as distasteful to us as for men in a fever to be forbidden drink; nature is more prone to sin. But to return, there is much disobedience in a sin of omission. When Saul had not done what God bid him to do, he telleth him, 'Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry,' 1 Sam. xv. 11; implying that omission is rebellion, and stubbornness parallel to idolatry and witchcraft.

2. Partly by the causes of them. The general cause is corrupt nature: 'They are all become unprofitable,' Rom. iii. 12, compared with Ps. xiv. 3, 'They are altogether become filthy.' There is in all by nature a proneness to evil, and a backwardness to good. Onesimus before conversion was unprofitable, good for nothing, Philem. v. 11; but grace made a change, make him useful in all his relations. The particular causes are—(1.) Idleness and security; they are loath to be held at work: Isa. lxiv. 7, 'None stirreth up himself to lay hold on thee;' 'They forget his commandments,' Jer. ii. 31, 32. (2.) Want of love to God: Isa. xliii. 22, 'Thou hast been weary of me, O Israel;' and Rev. ii. 4, 'Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' And (3.) Want of zeal for God's glory: 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,' Rom. xii. 11. Where there is a fervour, we cannot be idle and neglectful of our duty. There is an aversion from God before there is an express disobedience to him.

3. Partly by the effects—internal, external, eternal.

[1.] Internal; gifts and graces languish for want of employment: 1 Thes. v. 19, 'Quench not the Spirit.' Thomas his omission made way for his unbelief, John xx. 24.

[2.] External; it bringeth on many temporal judgments. God put by Saul from being king for an omission: 1 Sam. xv. 11, 'It repenteth me for setting up Saul to be king, for he hath not done the thing that I commanded him;' forbearing to destroy all of Amalek. For this he put by Eli's house from the priesthood: 1 Sam. iii. 13, 'I will judge his house for ever, because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.' Eli's omission is punished as well as his sons' commission, yet it was not a total omission. Compare 1 Sam. ii. 23–25, 'And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people; nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear of you; ye make the Lord's people to transgress: if one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not to the voice of their father.' His admonition was grave and serious, yet it was not enough. All Israel knew their sin before; Eli took upon him to reprove them secretly, whereas the fact was open, and he should have put them to open shame: and then his rebukes were mild and soft; he should have frowned upon them, punished them, but his fondness would not permit that.

[3.] Eternal, here in the text: 'Cast the unprofitable servant,' &c. These sins Christ will mainly inquire after at the day of judgment; and ver. 42, 43 of this chapter, and Mat. vii. 19, 'Every tree that

bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire;' though not bad or poisonous fruit. By all these arguments it appeareth that sins of omission may be great sins.

Thirdly, That some sins of omission are greater that others. All are not alike, as the more necessary the duties, the more faulty the omission: Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' 1 Cor. xvi. 22, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha.' Not if a man hate, but if he love not, &c. These are *peccata contra remedium*, as others *contra officium*. By other sins we make the wound, by these we refuse the plaster. Again, if the omission be total: Jer. x. 25, 'Call not on the name of the Lord;' Ps. xiv. 3, 'None seeketh after God.' Again, when seasonable duties are neglected: Mat. xxv. 44, 'When I was an hungered ye fed me not;' 1 John iii. 17, 'He that hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother in need;' Prov. xvii. 16, 'Why is there a price put into the hand of a fool?' And then when it is easy, this is to stand with God for a trifle: Luke xvi. 24, *Desideravit guttam, qui non dedit micam;* Amos ii. 6, 'They sold the poor for a pair of shoes.' And when convinced of the duty: James iv. 17, 'To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.'

Fourthly, In many cases sins of omission may be more heinous and more damning than sins of commission. (1.) They are the ruin of most part of the carnal world. Carnal men are often described by their omissions, 'To be without God,' Eph. iii. 12; Ps. x. 3, 4, 'The wicked through the pride of their heart will not seek after God; God is not in all their thoughts;' Jer. ii. 32, 'None stirreth up himself to seek after God.' And (2.) Partly because these are most apt to harden us more. Foul sins scourge the conscience with remorse and shame, but these bring on insensibly slightness and hardness of heart; and therefore Christ saith, publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God before pharisees that rested in a superficial righteousness, but neglected faith, love and judgment, Mat. xxi. 31. And (3.) Partly because omissions make way for commission of evil: Ps. xiv. 4, 'They that called not upon God eat up his people like bread.' They lie open to gross sins that do not keep the heart tender by a daily attendance upon God. If a man do not that which is good, he will soon do that which is evil, John ii. 13. Oh! then, let us bewail our unprofitableness, that we do no more good, that we do so much neglect God, and no more edify our neighbour, so that God's best gifts lie idle upon our hands.

Fifthly, The first and main evil of sin was in the omission: Jer. ii. 13, 'My people have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters;' James i. 14, 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed.' First enticed from God, and then drawn away to sin, therefore the work of grace is to 'teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts,' Titus ii. 12. By ungodliness is meant, not denying God, but neglecting God; there our chief mischief began; for when we do not look upon God as our chief good, then we seek happiness in the creature.

*Use* 1. To show that if the unprofitable servant be cast into hell, what will become of them that live in open sins, that bid defiance to God?

2. To condemn the unprofitable lives of many; they live as if they had only their souls for salt to keep their bodies from stinking; cumber the ground, Luke xiii. 7; do not good in their relations, are neither comfortable to the bodies nor souls of others. Certainly how mean and low soever you be in the world, you may be useful. Dorcas made coats for the poor. Servants may adorn the gospel, Titus ii. 10.

3. If sins of omission be so dangerous, we may cry out with David, Ps. xix., 'Who can understand his errors?' The children of God offend in these kind of sins oftener than in the other kind. They are not guilty of drunkenness or uncleanness, but of omission of good duties, or slight performance of them. Paul complaineth, Rom. vii. 18, 19, 'For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not; for the good that I would, I do not.' And should not you complain likewise? A child is not counted dutiful because he doth not wrong and beat his father; he must also give him that reverence that is due to him. Alas! how many duties are required of us to God and men, the neglect of which we should humble ourselves before God for!

## SERMON XVIII.

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*—MAT. XXV. 31–33.

THIS latter paragraph I cannot call a parable, but a scheme and draught or a delineation of the last judgment, intermingled with many passages that are plainly parabolical; as that Christ setteth forth himself as a king sitting upon the throne of his glory, and as a shepherd dividing his flock; that he compareth the godly to sheep and the wicked to goats. Those allegations and dialogues between Christ and the righteous, Christ and the wicked, 'When saw we thee an hungry?' &c., have much of the nature of a parable in them. In these three verses we have described—

1. The appearance, or sitting down of the judge.

2. The presenting the parties to be judged. The former is in ver. 31, the latter in ver. 32, 33. In ver. 31 we have—

[1.] The person who shall be the judge, *the Son of man.*

[2.] The manner of his coming; it shall be august and glorious. Where note—

(1.) His personal glory, he *shall come in his glory.*

(2.) His royal attendance, *and all the holy angels with him.*

(3.) His seat and throne, *then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.*

First, The person is designed by this character and appellation,

'the Son of man.' He is called so to show that he is true man, and descended of the present race of men. He might have been true man if God had framed his substance out of nothing, as he did Adam out of the dust of the ground. And this title is given him here, as in many other places, when the last judgment is spoken of, as I shall show you by and by—

1. Partly to recompense his foregoing humiliation, or despicable appearance at his first coming.

2. Partly because of his second coming: he shall appear visibly in that nature as he went from us: Acts i. 11, 'In like manner,' &c. Christ shall come in the form of a man, but not in the same humble and mean appearance as now when he spake these things to them; for it is added for the manner—

[1.] For his personal glory, 'He shall come in his glory.' Not in the form of a servant, but becoming his present state. All infirmities shall be removed from his soul and body. It is not a borrowed glory, but he shall come in his own glory. It is said, Mat. xvi. 27, 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father.' Here, in his own glory. The Son of man and the son of God is only one person; and his glory as God and his Father's glory is the same. So that he 'shall come in his glory,' noteth either—(1.) His divine power and majesty, which shall then conspicuously shine forth; or (2.) The glory put upon the human nature; and so it will note his plenary absolution as our surety. The Father sendeth him from heaven in power and great glory: 'He appeareth without sin,' Heb. ix. 28. He doth not say, They that look for him shall be without sin; but 'He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation;' that is, fully discharged of our debt. First, he came *in carnem;* he showed himself in the nature of man to be judged: then, *in carne;* he shall show himself in the nature of man to judge the world. At his first coming he was holy, yet in the garb of a sinner; we judged him as one forsaken of God: his second coming shall make it evident that he is discharged of the debt he took upon himself.

[2.] His royal attendance. The angels shall attend him, both to honour him and to be employed by him.

[3.] His royal posture, he shall 'sit upon the throne of his glory.' A glorious throne, beseeming the Son of God and the judge of the quick and the dead, shall be erected for him in the clouds, such as none can imagine how glorious it shall be till they see it.

Secondly, The next thing that is offered in these words is the presenting the parties to be judged; and there you may take notice—

1. Of their congregation, *and before him shall be gathered all nations.*

2. Their segregation, *and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.* In the segregation we have—

[1.] The ordering them into two several ranks and companies, sheep and goats, ver. 32.

[2.] As to posture and place, ver. 33, 'And he shall set his sheep on the right hand and the goats on his left.' Not only a separation as to Christ's knowledge and discerning them, but a separation in place.

I begin with the first branch, the appearance and sitting down of the judge.

Two points I shall observe:—

*Doct.* 1. That the judge of this world is Jesus Christ.

*Doct.* 2. That Christ's appearance for the judgment of the world shall be glorious and full of majesty.

For the first point, that Jesus Christ is the world's judge—

1. Here I shall inquire why he is judge.

2. In what nature he doth act or exercise this judgment, whether as God or man, or both.

First, Let us inquire how Christ cometh to be the world's judge, and with what conveniency and agreeableness to reason this honour is put upon him? To a judge there belongeth these four things—(1.) Wisdom; (2.) Justice; (3.) Power; and (4.) Authority.

1. Wisdom and understanding, by which he is able to judge all persons and causes that come before him, according to the rules and laws by which that judgment is to proceed; for no man can give sentence in a cause wherein he hath not skill, both as to matter of right and wrong, and sufficient evidence and knowledge as to matter of fact. Therefore, in ordinary judicatures, a prudent and discerning person is chosen.

2. Justice is required, or a constant and unbiassed will to determine and pass sentence, *ex œquo, et bono*, as right and truth shall require. He that giveth wrong judgment because he doth not accurately understand a thing is imprudent, which in this business is a great fault; but he that doth rightly understand a matter, and yet is biassed by perverse affections and aims, and giveth wrong judgment in the cause brought before him, that is highly impious and flagitious; therefore, the judge must be just and incorrupt.

3. Power is necessary that he may compel the parties judged to stand to his judgment, and the offenders may receive their due punishment; for otherwise all is but precarious and arbitrary, and the judgment given will be but a vain and solemn pageantry.

4. There is required authority; for otherwise, if a man should obtrude himself of his own accord, they may say to him, 'Who made thee a judge over us?' Or if he by mere force should assume this power to himself, the parties impleaded have a pretence of right to decline his tribunal, and appeal from him. Certainly he that rewards must be superior, and much more he that punisheth; for he that punisheth another bringeth some notable evil and damage upon him; but for one to bring evil upon another, unless he hath right to do it, is unjust; therefore good authority is required in him that acts the part of a judge. These things, as they stand upon evident reason, and are necessary in all judicial proceedings between man and man, so much more in this great and solemn transaction of the last judgment; for this will be the greatest court that ever was kept both in respect, of the persons to be judged, which shall be all men and evil angels, high and low, small and great, rich and poor, princes and subjects; and in respect of the causes that shall be produced, the whole business of the world for six thousand years, or thereabouts; or the retributions made, which shall be punishments and rewards of the highest nature

and degree, because everlasting. And therefore there must be a judge sought out that is exactly knowing not only of laws, but of all persons and causes: 'That all things should be naked, and open to him with whom we have to do,' Heb. iv. 12, 13, and 1 John iii. 20. Again, exceeding just, without the least spot and blemish of wrong dealing: Gen. xviii. 25, 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?' and Rom. iii. 5, 6, 'Is God unrighteous, that taketh vengeance? God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?' It cannot be that the universal and final judgment of all the world should be committed to him that hath or can do anything wrongful and amiss. And then, that power is necessary both to summon offenders, and make them appear, and stand to the judgment which he shall award, without any hope of escaping or resisting, will as easily appear; because the offenders are many, and they would fain hide their guilty heads, and shun this tribunal, if it were possible: Rev. vi. 16, 'Say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' But that must not, cannot be: Ps. xc. 11, 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger? According to thy fear, so is thy wrath.' Authority is necessary also, or a right to govern and to dispose of the persons judged into their everlasting estate; which being all the world, belongeth only to the universal king, who hath made all things, and preserveth all things, and governeth and disposeth all things for his own glory. Legislation and execution both belong to the same power. Judgment is a part of government. Laws are but shadows if no execution follow. Now, let us particularly see how all this belongeth to Christ.

[1.] For wisdom and understanding. It is in Christ twofold—divine and human; for each nature hath its particular and proper wisdom belonging to it. As God, it is infinite: Ps. cxlvii. 15, 'His understanding is infinite.' And so by one infinite view, or by one act of understanding, he knoweth all things that are, have been, or shall be, yea, or may be, by his divine power and all-sufficiency. They are all before his eyes, as if naked and cut down by the chine-bone. We know things successively, as a man readeth a book, line after line, and page after page; but God at one view. Now his human wisdom cannot be equal to this. A finite nature cannot be capable of an infinite understanding, but yet it is such as it doth far exceed the knowledge of all men and all angels. When Christ was upon earth, though the forms of things could not but successively come into his mind or understanding, because of the limited nature of that mind and understanding, yet then he could know whatever he would, and to whatsoever thing he would apply his mind, he did presently understand it; and in a moment, by the light of the divinity, all things were presented to him; so that he accurately knew the nature of whatever he had a mind to know. And therefore then he was not ignorant of those things that were in the hearts of men, and were done so secretly as they were thought only to be known to God himself. Thus he knew the secret touch of the woman, when the multitude thronged upon him, Luke viii. 45, 46. So Mat. ix. 3, 4, 'When certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth: Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Why think ye evil in your hearts?' He discerneth

the inward thoughts, and turneth out the inside of the scribes' minds. So Mat. xii. 24, 25, Jesus knew their thoughts when they imagined that 'by Beelzebub the prince of the devils he cast out devils.' But most fully, see John ii. 24, 25, 'He committed not himself to them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.' It may be they knew not themselves, but he knew what kind of belief it was, such as would not hold out in time of temptation. We cannot infallibly discern professors before they discover themselves; yet all hypocrites are seen and known of him, even long before they show their hypocrisy, not by a conjectural, but a certain knowledge, as being from and by himself, as God. He doth infallibly know what is most secret and hidden in man. Now, if he were endowed with such an admirable understanding even in the days of his flesh, while he grew in wisdom and stature, Luke ii., and his human capacity enlarged by degrees, what shall we think of him in that state in which he is now glorious in heaven? Therefore, to exercise this judgment, he shall bring incomparable knowledge, so far exceeding the manner and measure of all creatures, even as he is man; but his infinite knowledge as God shall chiefly shine forth in this work. Therefore he is a fit judge, able to bring forth the secret things of darkness and counsels of the heart into open and manifest light, 1 Cor. iv. 5, and disprove sinners in their pretences and excuses, and pluck off their disguises from them.

[2.] For justice and righteousness. An incorrupt judge, that neither doth nor can err in judgment, must be our judge. As there is a double knowledge in Christ, so there is a double righteousness; one that belongeth to him as God, the other as man; and both are exact and immutably perfect. His divine nature is holiness itself: 'In him is light, and no darkness at all.' The least shadow of injustice cannot be imagined there. All virtues in God are his being, not superadded qualities. God's holiness may be resembled to a vessel of pure gold, where the substance and lustre is the same; but ours is like a vessel of wood or earth gilded, where the substance and gilding is not the same. Our holiness is a superadded quality. We cannot call a wise man, Wisdom; or a righteous man, Righteousness. We use the concrete of man, but the abstract of God. He is love, he is light, he is holiness itself; which noteth the inseparability of the attribute from God. It is himself; God cannot deny himself: his act is his rule. Take Peter Martyr's similitude: A carpenter chopping a piece of wood by a line or square, may sometimes chop right and sometimes wrong; he cannot carry his hand so evenly; but if we could suppose that a carpenter's hand were his rule, he could not chop amiss. Christ's human nature was so sanctified, that upon earth he could not sin, much more now glorified in heaven. And there will be use of both righteousnesses in the last judgment; but chiefly of the righteousness that belongeth to the divine nature; for all the operations of Christ are theandrical; neither nature ceaseth to work in them. As in all the works of men, the body and the soul do both conspire and concur in that way which is proper to either; only, as in the works of his humiliation his human nature did more appear, so in the works that belong to his exaltation and glorified estate, his divine nature

appeareth most; especially in this solemn action, wherein Christ is to discover himself to the world with the greatest majesty and glory.

[3.] For power. A divine power is plainly necessary, that none may withdraw themselves from this judgment, or resist or hinder the execution of this sentence; for otherwise it would be passed in vain: Titus ii. 13, 'Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' Christ is then to show himself the great and powerful God. His power is seen in raising the dead, in bringing them together in one place, in opening their consciences, in casting them into hell: Mat. xxiv. 30, 'The Son of man shall come from heaven with power and great glory.'

[4.] For authority. I shall the longer insist on this, because the main hinge of all lieth here, and this doth bring the matter home. That Jesus Christ, and none but Jesus Christ, shall be the world's judge. By the law of nature, the wronged party and the supreme power hath right to require satisfaction for the wrong done. Where no power is publicly constituted, possibly the wronged party hath power to require it; but where things are better constituted, lest the wronged party should indulge his revenge and passion too far, it rests in the supreme power, and those appointed by it, to judge the matter, and to make amends to those that are wronged in their body, goods, or good name. Now, to God both these things concur.

(1.) He is the wronged party, and offended with the sins of men. Not that we can lessen his happiness by anything that we can do; for our good and evil reacheth not unto him; his essential glory is still the same, whether we obey or disobey, please or displease, honour or dishonour him. That which is eternal and immutable neither is lessened nor increased by anything that we can do. He is out of the reach of all the darts that we can cast at him. Hurt us they may, but reach him they cannot. But sin, it is a wrong to his declarative glory as sovereign lord and lawgiver, as it is a breach of his law. There was hurt done to Bathsheba and Uriah, Ps. li. 4, but the sin and obliquity of the action was against God and his sovereign authority. If the injury done to the creature could be severed from the offence done to God, it were not so great. God is the author of the light of nature, and that order which begetteth a sense of good and evil in our hearts. God is the author of the law given by Moses, and the gospel revealed by his Son. Therefore, whatever things are committed against the law of nature, or the law of Moses, or the gospel, certainly it is a wrong to the justice of God, as being a breach of that order which he hath established: 1 John iii. 4, 'He that committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is a transgression of the law.' Laws cannot be despised, but the majesty of the lawgiver is contemned, disparaged, and slighted. Therefore upon this right God might come in as a very proper judge. But, indeed, God doth not punish merely as offended, or as a private man revengeth himself, where there is no power publicly constituted to do him right; but he properly judgeth.

(2.) A supreme and sovereign lord, and governor of the world, to whom it belongeth, for the common good, to see that it be well with them that do well, and ill with them that do evil, and that no compassion be showed but where the case is compassionable, according to

that declaration he hath made of himself to the creatures. To declare this more plainly, we shall see how this right accrueth to God. It may be supposed to accrue to him two ways—either because of the excellency of his being, or because of his benefits which he hath bestowed upon mankind.

(1st.) The excellency of his being. This is according to the light of nature, that those that excel should be above others; as it is clear in man, who is above the brute creatures; he is made to have dominion over them, because he hath a more excellent nature than they. And when God said, 'Let us make man after our own image,' he presently upon that account gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea. So God, being infinite, and far above all finite things, hath a power over the creatures, angels or men, who are as nothing to him, and therefore to be governed by him. But chiefly—

(2d.) By virtue of the benefits bestowed by him; for great benefits received from another do necessarily beget a power over him that receiveth them; as parents have a power and authority over their children, who are a means under God to give them life and education; the most barbarous people would acknowledge this. How much greater, then, is the right of God, who hath given us life, and breath, and being, and well-being, and all things! He created us out of nothing; and being created, he preserveth us, and giveth us all the good things which we enjoy. And therefore we are obliged to be subject to him, and to obey his holy laws, and to be accountable to him for the breach of them. Therefore, let us state it thus: As the excellency of his nature giveth him a fitness and a sufficiency for the government of mankind, his creation, preservation, and other benefits give him a full right to make what laws he pleaseth, and to call man to an account whether he hath kept them, yea or no. His right is greater than parents can have over their children; for in natural generation they are but instruments of his providence, acting only the power which God giveth them; and the parents propagate nothing to the children but the body, and those things that belong to the body; called, therefore, 'The fathers of our flesh,' Heb. xii. 9. Yea, in framing the body God hath a greater hand than they; for they cannot tell whether the child will be male or female, beautiful or deformed. They know not the number and posture of the bones, and veins, and arteries, and sinews; but God doth not only concur to all these things, but 'form the spirit of man in him,' Zech. xii. 1. And all the care and providence of our parents cometh to nothing, unless the Lord directeth it, and secondeth it with his blessing. Therefore God naturally is the governor and judge of all creatures, visible and invisible; so that, from his empire and jurisdiction they neither can nor ought to exempt themselves. So that to be God and judge of the world is one and the same thing expressed in divers terms.

Well, then, you will ask, Why is Christ the judge of the world, rather than the Father and the Spirit, who made us, and gave the law to us? I answer—

1. That we have gone a good step to prove that it is the peculiar right of God, common to the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; 'for these three are one,' 1 John v. 7. They have one

common nature, and the operations that are with the divine essence are common to them all. So that as the creation of all things is equally attributed to all, so also the right of this act of judging the world doth alike agree to all. So that as yet the thing is not explained enough, unless we should grant that it shall be exercised by all, or can prove out of the scriptures that one person of these three is ordained, and by mutual consent chosen out by the rest to exercise it for himself and for the other. Indeed, at the first, when the doctrine of the Trinity was not as yet openly revealed, it was not needful to inquire more diligently after it; but this general truth sufficed, that God is the judge of the world. As when Enoch said, Jude 14., 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints;' and as David, Ps. lxiv. 2, 'Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth;' and Ps. l. 6, 'God is judge himself;' and in many other places. It was enough to understand it of one only and true God, without distinction of the persons; but when that mystery was clearly manifested, then the question was necessary, which of the persons should be judge of the world?

2. As there is an order among the persons of the blessed Trinity in the manner of subsisting, so there is also a certain order and economy according to which all their operations are produced and brought forth to the creature; according to which order their power of judging fell partly to the Father, and partly to the Son.

[1.] In the business of redemption. The act of judging, which was to be exercised upon our surety, who was substituted in our room and place, and offered himself not only for our good, *in bonum nostrum*, but *loco et vice nostri*, to bear our punishment, and to procure favour to us; there the act of judging belongeth to the Father, to whom the satisfaction is tendered, 1 John ii. 1; the advocate is to plead before the judge. But—

[2.] As to the judgment to be exercised upon us, who either partake of that salvation which was purchased by that surety, or have lost it by our negligence and unbelief; there the Son, or second person, is our judge. In the former, the Son could not be judge, because in a sense he made himself a party for our good, and in our room and place; and the same person cannot be both judge and party too; give and take the satisfaction both; that cannot be. Well, then, in this other judgment the Holy Ghost cannot be conveniently the judge; for in this mystery he hath another part, function, and office prepared; and being the third person in the order of subsisting, the Son was not to be passed over, but it fell to him.

[3.] In the Son there is a double relation or consideration—one as he is God, the other as he is mediator; the one natural and eternal, and shall endure for ever; the other of mediator, which as he took upon himself in time, so in the consummation of time he shall at length lay aside: in this latter respect, as mediator, he is judge by deputation. The primitive sovereign and judge is God; and the king and judge by derivation is Jesus Christ the mediator, in his manhood, united to the second person in the Godhead; and so the judgment of the world is put upon him. In regard of the creatures, his authority is absolute and supreme, for there can be no appeal from his judgment; but in regard of God, it is deputed. He is ordained; so it is said,

John v. 27, 'The Father hath given him authority also to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of man.' He hath the power of life and death, to condemn and to absolve. So Acts x. 42, 'He is ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead;' and Acts xvii. 31, 'He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.' In all which he acts as the Father's vicegerent; and after he hath judged, 'He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father,' 1 Cor. xv. 24. So that the right of Christ as mediator is not that which befalleth him immediately from the right of creation; but is derivative, and subordinate to that kingdom which is essential to him, common to the Father, Son, and Spirit.

[4.] This power which belongeth to Christ as mediator is given to him partly as a recompense of his humiliation; of which I shall speak in the second point. But chiefly—

(1.) Because it belongeth to the fulness of his mediatory office; and therefore, being appointed king by the Father, his last function as a king was to judge the world. The Mediator was not only to pay a price to divine justice, and to separate the redeemed from the world, by his Spirit converting them to God, but also to judge the devil, and all those enemies out of whose hands he had freed the Church. He was to fight against the blind world, and triumph over them; and when the world is ended, to judge them, and cast them into eternal torments.

(2.) His office is not full till this be done. It is a part of his administration as mediator. The last act of conquest is overcoming his enemies, and glorifying and redressing injuries and wrongs of his saints.

Secondly, In what nature he doth act and exercise the judgment, as God, or man, or both.

I answer—In both. Christ is the person, as God-man; yet the judgment is acted visibly by him in the human nature, sitting upon a visible throne, that he may be seen of all, and heard. Therefore Christ is so often designed by this expresion, 'Son of man;' as in the text, and Mat. xvi. 27, and Acts xvii. 31, and Mat. xxvi. 64, 'Ye shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with power and great glory;' John v. 27. The Son of man is the visible actor and judge. Because the judgment must be visible, therefore the judge must be such as may be seen with bodily eyes. The Godhead puts forth itself by the human nature, in which all these great works are acted.

*Use.* You see what need there is to get in with Christ: Rom. viii. 1, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ;' 1 John ii. 28, 'And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Oh! what a comfort will it be to have our Redeemer in our nature to be our judge! Then we shall see our *goel*, our kinsman, whom we have heard so much of, whom we have loved, and longed for. But the contemners of his mercy will find the Lamb's face terrible: Rev. vi. 16, 'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' But believers will find their advocate their judge, to reward those that trust in him, Ps. ii. 12. He that

hath so often pleaded with God for us, he is to pass sentence upon us. Would a man be afraid to be judged by his dearest friend, or think his sentence would be terrible? If the devil were our judge, or wicked men, we might be sad; but it is your dear Lord Jesus; therefore let us comfort ourselves with the thoughts of it. David's followers were afraid; but when he came to be crowned at Hebron, then he dignified and rewarded them. Christ's followers are now despised; but when he shall come in his glory, they shall be invited into his kingdom: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father.'

## SERMON XIX.

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.* —MAT. XXV. 31.

I COME now to the second point:—

*Doct.* 2. That Christ's appearance for the judgment of the world shall be glorious and full of majesty.

I shall prove it by opening the circumstances of the text. Three things are offered here:—

1. His personal glory.
2. His royal attendance.
3. His glorious seat and throne.

*First*, His personal glory. Let us see what it is, and why he will come in such an appearance.

First, What it will be. We cannot fully know till we see it; but certain we are this glory must be exceeding great, if we consider—

1. The dignity of his person. He is God-man; and now that mystery is to be discovered to the utmost; therefore he must needs have such a glory as never creature was capable of, nor can be; but at that day the creatures are capable of great glory; for it is said, Mat. xiii. 43, 'The righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father.' And if it be thus with the saints, how shall it be with Christ? The saints are but creatures; they are not deified when they are glorified; but he is God-man in one person. The saints are but members of the mystical body, but Christ is the head; and therefore he must needs far excel the glory of all the creatures. Ours is but a derived ray; the body of light is in himself. We read, 2 Thes. i. 10, that 'he will be admired in the saints;' that is, in the glory he puts upon them. All the spectators shall stand admiring at the honour he puts upon them, that are but newly crept out of dust and rottenness. But how much more may he be admired for his own personal glory!

2. The quality of his office. He is the judge of the world, who now cometh to appear upon the throne, to be seen of all; therefore there must be a glory suitable. We read, Acts xxv. 23, that Agrippa and Bernice came to the judgment-seat, *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, with a great deal of pomp and state. And we see in earthly judicatures, when great malefactors are to be tried, the whole majesty and glory of

a nation is brought forth; the judge in gorgeous apparel, accompanied with nobles and gentry and officers, and a great conflux of people, to make it more magnificent and terrible. So here is a conflux of the whole world, angels, devils, men from all corners of the earth; all the men that ever were and ever shall be; and Christ cometh forth in his greatest glory.

3. Consider the greatness of his work, and that will show that his glory must needs be discovered. His work is, on the one side, to gather together, to convince, to judge, and punish creatures opposite and rebellious; and to honour and reward his servants, on the other. There is not such a union and confederation of miracles in any one point and article of faith, so much as there is in this of the general judgment. The mighty power and dominion of God is seen in dissolving the elements, in raising the dead bodies, and giving every dust its own flesh, and bringing them together that they may be arraigned and judged; and then in separating them into their several ranks, in which his omnisciency and wisdom is seen, that not one of the reprobate shall lie hid among the elect. In judging them his justice cannot be eluded; he that seeth all things in the light of the Godhead cannot want evidence. Then one of the books that is opened is in the parties' custody; and yet they cannot deface it, or blot it out. And then for execution, the majesty of his person and presence will be enough to confound a wicked man. How will the wolves tremble at the sight of the pure and unspotted Lamb! Rev. vi. 16. Oh! it will be a piercing sight to them to see him whom they have despised upon the throne! That Jesus whose word they have scorned, whose ordinances they have neglected or corrupted, whose servants they have molested! When Joseph, who was so great and high in Egypt, discovered himself to his brethren,—'I am Joseph,'—they were abashed and confounded because of the injury they had done him; much more shall sinners be confounded when he shall tell them, 'I am Jesus,' and that he is come on purpose to be revenged on all the abusers and despisers of his grace, and the troublers of his people. How can they then look him in the face? We read, that when they came to attack Christ, John xviii. 6, as soon as he had told them, 'I am he,' they went backward, and fell to the ground. He would convince his enemies in the midst of his greatest abasement how full of majesty and terror his presence is, if he should let out the glory of it upon them. If the Lamb's voice be so terrible, how dreadful will he be when he roareth as a lion! And if then, when he was taken and led to be judged, you may guess how glorious his presence will be when he cometh in all his glory to judge others. And by this you may understand the apostle's expression, 2 Thes. i. 9, 'That the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' *From* there is as much as *by*; it doth not signify there the kind of the punishment, the *pœna damni*, but the cause. The majesty of Christ is the cause of their torments; and his look and face will be terror enough to sinners. And as he cometh in glory to shame and punish those that despised him, so to comfort and reward his people who have trusted in him, and served him, and suffered for him. He shall come from heaven in

state to lead them into those blessed mansions with honour: 1 Peter iv. 13, 'Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.' They have seen him in his worst, and now in his best also. The glory of Christ's appearing is sometimes expressed by fire, and sometimes by light. To the saints it is as light, and as a comfortable sunshine; but to the wicked it is a dreadful fire, ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς: 2 Thes. ii. 8, 'And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.'

4. If you consider some foregoing appearances of Christ. As for instance, at the giving of the law, it was the second person that managed that appearance; for it is said, Acts vii. 38, that it was 'an angel that appeared in Mount Sinai, and spoke to our fathers;' that is, the angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ; for it is clearly said, Heb. xii. 26, that 'the voice of Christ then shook the earth.' Now, what a dreadful appearance was that! The earth shook, the mountain trembled, and out of the midst of the thunderings, and lightnings, and a thick cloud, was the sound of the trumpet heard, so that the people trembled; yea, Moses himself, a meek man, that had done great service in the church, did exceedingly quake and tremble, Heb. xii. 18–21. When he gave the law, he is represented as a terrible judge, ready to overcome his adversaries with the tempest of his wrath; much more when he cometh to execute the sentence of the law; as execution is always more terrible than promulgation. Or you may guess at it by the prophet Isaiah's terror when he saw God in vision, Isa. vi. 5. Into what an agony it drove that holy prophet! 'Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.' Adam fled from the presence of God walking in the garden, though God came to him in no terrible appearance, and though he had sinned, yet was not cut off from all hope of reconciliation. How will wicked men abide the presence of Christ when he cometh to show forth his glory, and they are excluded by his final sentence from all hope of pardon? Or you may set it forth by the glory of Christ's transfiguration, the glory that was seen then; for that was a glimpse of this glory of the Father, in which he shall appear at that day: Mat. xvii. 2, 'And he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.' And then arose a bright cloud, and a voice out of the bright cloud: 'And when the disciples heard it, they were sore afraid.' There was a glorious shining brightness, breaking through skin and garment, overwhelming the disciples, that they were not able to stand before his majesty, though it were in mercy revealed to them. Or by that appearance of the angel, described Mat. xxviii. 3, 4, 'His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment as white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.' Or by the appearance of Christ to Paul, Acts ix., when he was blind for seven[1] days, when the Lord Jesus showed himself to him from heaven. These instances will give us a guess, a taste of it. But—

[1] Three.—ED.

Secondly, Why he will come in this great glory? I answer—

1. To take off the scandal and ignominy of the cross, and to recompense him for his humiliation. He that was once despised in the world for his outward and despicable estate will then be glorious, when he shall declare his power in raising the dead by his voice, and all the elements burning about him, and all the saints and angels attending him, every one as bright as the sun; a glorious high throne set in the air for him, and all the creatures presented before him, and bowing to him. Ransacking the consciences of sinners, and bringing forth the story of all his administrations in the world. Then there will be a full recompense for all his sufferings. To make this evident, let us compare the two comings of Christ. Christ's first coming was so obscure, that it was scarce observed and understood by the world. The second will be so conspicuous and glorious as to be seen of all. In the former, he came in the form of a servant, and the contemptible appearance of a mean man; in the second, he cometh as the Lord and heir of all things, clothed with splendour and glory as with a garment. At his first coming he had a forerunner, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness;' in the second he hath a forerunner also; there the Baptist, here an archangel with his trumpet, 1 Thes. iv. 10. In his first coming he was accompanied with a few poor fishermen, twelve disciples, persons of mean condition and rank in the world; now with legions of angels, and with his holy ten thousands of his saints, Jude 14. Heretofore he raised three to life; now all the dead. Then he was scorned, buffeted, spit upon; now crowned with glory and honour. In the former he was to act the part of a minister of the circumcision, to preach the gospel to the people of Israel; in the latter he shall act as the judge of all the world. In the former he invited men to repentance, and offered remission of sins to those that received him as a redeemer; but in the latter he shall cut off all hope of pardon for evermore from them that received him not, and neglected their day of grace. At first he came to bear the sins of many; but now he shall come without sin, Heb. ix. 28, not bearing a burden, but bringing a discharge; not as a surety, but as a paymaster; not as a sufferer, but as a conqueror; triumphing over death, and hell, and the devil. He cometh, no more to go from us, but to take us from all misery unto himself. In the former state he was God-man; but he did as it were hide his godhead under the infirmities of his flesh; sometimes it peeped out through the veil in a miracle, but yet mostly obscuring himself; but in the latter he shall discover himself with an unspeakable brightness and majesty, and there will be no need of miracles to prove the divinity of his person and office; for then it shall be a matter of sense; all shall see it, and feel it; some with joy, others with trembling. In the former state he presented himself to suffer death; but then he shall tread death under his feet. In the former he was judged and condemned by men to an ignominious death, the death of the cross; but in the latter he will judge, and with his own mouth pronounce sentence upon all men, on all kings, emperors, and judges, as well as poor peasants, sitting upon a glorious throne and tribunal. Then he judged no man: John iii. 17, 'For God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might

be saved.' His work then was to hold out the way of life, or to open the way of salvation to lost man, as a meek saviour and mediator. So John xii. 47, 'If any man hear my words, and believe them not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.' 'I judge not,' that is, as yet. He laid aside the person of a judge then, and took on him the office of a Saviour, to offer and purchase mercy; that was his proper errand when he came first into the world. So Luke ix. 56, 'The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' And to comply with that end, he cast a veil upon his glory, and endured the enmity and contradiction of the world; but now it is otherwise, so that the scandal of his first estate is fully taken off.

2. He appeareth in this great glory to beget a greater reverence and fear in the hearts of all those that shall be judged by him. He telleth them aforehand, that 'the Son of man will come in great glory and majesty;' to daunt and quell the haughty minds and proud conceits of the potentates, oppressors, and great ones of the earth, who often abuse their power to wrong and violence: Eccles. v. 8, 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' Here is swaying and swaggering, and bearing high upon the thought of their title and greatness; but there they and all their greatness and power shall meet with a judge that is able by the breath of his mouth to consume them. What meaneth the insolency of the mighty, the pride of the great heroes of the earth, that swell and grow haughty with their greatness, to look and speak so big? Nothing is so profitable to allay the excesses of power, or to fortify us against the fears of it, as the consideration of this mighty judge, who will review all matters, and cause the great men of the earth to tremble. Power is an unwieldy thing, apt to degenerate, and to put men upon unwarrantable practices; therefore, it needeth to be allayed and balanced with the consideration of a greater power. Alas! all the power and glory of the world is but a fancy, a vain pageantry, compared to Christ's power and glory. What is their authority to his, their splendour to his, their guard to his? Nothing can excuse them; this judgment must and shall pass upon them.

3. For the comfort of his people; for Christ is a pledge and pattern of what shall be done in them; in all things he must first it, Rom. viii. 29; and we are made conformable to his image and likeness. All privileges come to us not only from Christ but through Christ: he as mediator is the first possessor. Are we elected? he was elected first: 'My elect servant,' Isa. xlii. 1. Are we justified? so was he as our surety: 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'Justified in the Spirit.' Are we sanctified? first he received the Spirit of holiness. Are we glorified? so was he: Col. iii. 4, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory;' 1 John iii. 2, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' There will be a manifestation of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 19; first the first-born, then all the rest of the brethren. Yea, we participate of his judicial power: the saints shall not only be judged, but the judges, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. The evil spirits a long time

ago had their punishment, but then their solemn doom. The saints shall sit down with him as justices upon the bench. Here the saints judge the world by their doctrine and conversation, there by their vote and suffrage. There is the relation between Christ and the church of wife and husband; *uxor fulget radiis mariti;* as the husband riseth in honour so doth the wife: of head and members, when the head is crowned all the members are clothed with honour. His mystical body shares with him, that there may be a proportion in the body. He is the captain of our salvation, and he will dignify and reward his soldiers, Heb. ii. 10. David, when he was crowned at Hebron, his followers were made captains of thousands, captains of hundreds, and captains of fifties. Masters and servants: 'My servant shall be where I am.' He will put marks of honour and favour upon all his servants. Here they were disgraced with him, suffered with him, slighted with him; then they shall be glorified with him, for still there is a likeness. We must be contented to lie hid till he be publicly manifested to the world, for we have all our blessings at secondhand. So much for the first thing, his personal glory.

*Secondly*, His royal attendance, 'And all the holy angels with him.' Chrysostom saith the whole court of heaven removeth with him; surely there are many of them: Jude 14, 'The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment on all, to convince all that are ungodly.' It is likely these angels will put on some visible shape, for the greater glory and majesty of Christ's appearing; for as he will appear in a body upon his glorious throne, so will his legions round about him; whose order, power, and formidable hosts must some way or other be seen of the wicked for their greater terror. Their attendance upon Christ seemeth to be for these reasons:—

1. Partly for a train, to make his appearance the more full of majesty. We find angels waiting upon Christ at his ascension, and so at his return to judgment. Public ministers of justice are made formidable by their attendance, and Christ will come as a royal king in the midst of his nobles. And—

2. Partly that by their ministry the work of the day may be the more speedily and powerfully despatched. They are to 'gather the elect from the four winds,' Mat. xxiv. 31. The angels that carried their souls to heaven shall be employed in bringing their bodies out of the graves: Luke xvi. 22, 'Carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.' They are still serviceable about the saints; this is the last office they perform to them; they are as it were, under Christ, guardians of their bones and dust. Now, to the wicked, they are to bind the tares in bundles, Mat. xiii. 41, that they may be burnt in the fire. They force and present wicked men before the judge, be they never so obstinate. They are witnesses; they attend upon congregations, 1 Cor. xi. 10. In assemblies there is more company meets than is visible; devils and angels meet there; the devils to divert your minds as soon as they begin to be serious, to catch the good word out of your heart; and angels observing you; here should be no indecency. So in your ordinary conversations they are conversant about you. And then for execution, no sooner is sentence pronounced but executed; as Haman's face was covered, and he led away to execution as soon as the king

had but said the word. Thus the scripture, in a condescension to our capacity, representeth to us the ministry of angels in that great and terrible day. We can better understand the operations of angels than of God himself; they being nearer to us in being, and of an essence finite and limited, their acts are more comprehensible.

3. There may be a third reason imagined why the angels should come to this judgment, which will give us an occasion for handling a question, Whether they shall be judged, yea or no?

I answer—For the good angels, I think not; for the bad, the scripture is express and plain.

[1.] For the good angels, it is clear, by what hath been said already, that they shall be present at this action, not to be judged, but to bring others to judgment; as officers, not as parties. I suppose this, if men had continued in their innocency and integrity of their creation, such a day of universal judgment had been needless, for then there had been none to be condemned, because none had sinned; the covenant of God would have been enough to have secured their happiness: so the good angels continuing in that state wherein they were created, there is nothing doubtful about them that needeth any judiciary debate and discussion; and being already confirmed in the full fruition of God and happiness as to their whole nature, their estate is not to be put to any trial: whereas good men, though their souls be in heaven, yet their bodies are not admitted there; some part of them as yet lieth under the effects of sin, and their glorification is private, and God's goodness as yet hath not been manifested to them in the eyes of all the world, nor their uprightness sufficiently vindicated; therefore a judgment needeth for them, but not for the angels, who were never as yet censured and traduced in the world, and they in their whole nature and person enjoy most absolute felicity in God's heavenly sanctuary: no such great change will happen to them after the judgment as happeneth to the saints when their whole persons are taken into glory. It is true they have a charge and ministry about the saints, Heb. i. 14; but of that ministry and charge they give an account daily in the sight of God, to whom they do approve themselves in it; so that there is no cause for further inquisition concerning that thing, there being no necessity of judgment concerning them; I think they shall not be judged.

[2.] For the evil angels, the scripture is express: 1 Cor. vi. 3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' that is, as evil men, so evil angels. So 2 Peter ii. 4, 'God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved to the judgment of the great day.' Though they are imprisoned in the pit of hell, yet reserved for further judgments. God's irresistible power and terrible justice overruleth, tormenteth, and restraineth them for the present. These are the chains of darkness; yet there is a more high measure of wrath that shall light upon them at the day of judgment. Where any accession or considerable increase shall be made either to the happiness or punishment of any creature, there that creature shall be judged. Now, there is no such considerable alteration or increase of happiness to good angels as to men; and on the other side, there is a considerable alteration as to wicked angels: Mat. viii. 20, 'Art thou come to torment us before the time?' They

know there is a time coming when they shall be tormented more than they are yet. And besides, God's justice was never publicly manifested, and by any solemn act glorified, as to the punishment of the evil angels for their rebellion against him, but was reserved for this time. Besides, as God would now receive into glory the good and holy among men, and therefore would first begin with their head, which is Christ, sending him in power and great glory, so, on the other side, when God would punish the disobedient, he would begin with condemning their head, who is the devil, and is first cast into hell as a pledge of what should light upon all those that follow him, and are seduced by him. I could say more, but I forbear.

*Thirdly*, There remaineth one circumstance in the text, and that is, Christ's throne of glory; which, because it is wholly to come, and not elsewhere explained in scripture, we must rest in the general expression. The cloud in which he cometh possibly shall be his throne; or, if you will have it further explained, you may take that of the prophecy of Daniel, chap. vii. 9, 10, 'I beheld all the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit; whose raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from him: thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The judgment was set, and the books were opened.' I cannot say this prophecy is intended of the day of judgment; but as they said of the blind man, John ix. 9, 'Either it is he, or it is very like him,' so this is it, or very like it. And in the general you see it describeth that which is very glorious. Or you may conceive of it by the description of Solomon's throne: 1 Kings x. 18–20, 'Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold: the throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood behind the stays: and twelve lions stood on the one side, and on the other, upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.' It was high and dreadful, but not worthy to be a footstool to this tribunal.

The *Use* of all is exhortation. To press you to propound this truth —(1.) To your faith; (2.) To your fear and caution; (3.) To your love; (4.) To your patience; (5.) To your hope. That all these graces may be the more exercised upon this occasion, that you may believe it, and consider it—

1. Propound it to your faith; be persuaded of it. We are so occupied in present things, that we forget or do not mind the future; and men that are in love with their lusts and errors love to be ignorant of those truths, the knowledge whereof might disquiet them in following those lusts: 2 Peter iii. 5, 'This they are willingly ignorant of.' But we had need to call upon you again and again to believe these things, that the Lord Jesus shall come in his glory with his angels. They that are slaves to their lusts strongly desire an eternal enjoyment of the present world, and labour to banish out of their hearts the thoughts of the day of judgment. The sound belief of it is not so much encountered with doubts of the understanding, as the lusts and inclinations of their carnal and perverse hearts. But, beloved, I hope

it will not be tedious to you to tell you again and again of these things, and to press you to rest your hearts upon them; to you that have set your hearts to love Christ, and to wait for his coming; to you that know there is no such powerful help to the mortification of your lusts as to consider the day of judgment, no such special encouragement in your difficulties as the comfort, glory, and sweetness of it. Oh! therefore, press your hearts with this truth: Hath not the mouth of truth averred it? Would Jesus Christ assure us of that which shall never be? He that hath been so punctual on his word in lesser truths, would he deceive us in this main article? Sure it should be no hard thing to persuade you that are assured of his fidelity and love that what he hath spoken will come to pass. If it were not so, he would never have told you so. You will find no less than he hath promised. If we did deceive you with sugared and golden words, it were another matter. Expect not that I should bring arguments from nature to prove it to you: God's word is sufficient. Faith is built upon God's testimony, and nothing else. Though other arguments have their use, and at other times I have produced them, now I shall forbear: only, because there are godless mockers, who suspect all, and do not so much reason against this article of our christian faith, as scoff at it, and you may meet with some of those, I think it not amiss to answer their cavils. A carnal and devilish wit will find out so many reasons, plausible to themselves and others like themselves; otherwise it were enough to reject them as blasphemies with detestation. But, because they please themselves in their atheistical conceits, you shall see they make rather against them than for them.

[1.] If they should urge that reason in the apostles' days, when blasphemy was not grown so bold and witty: 2 Peter iii. 3, 4, 'All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;' we might answer, as, the apostle did, that it is fit that things should keep one constant course in the day of the Lord's patience and mercy; but 'the day of the Lord will come as a thief.' Shall there never be a change because the preparations are not presently visible? This is a manifest lie. Particular judgments on some wicked men do prove that there shall be a general judgment on all; for seeing some are justly punished, and others deserving no less are spared, he who is immutably good and impartially just must have a day for punishing these afterwards; and God hath fire in store as well as water, to burn up as well as to drown the object of their lusts and pleasure.

[2.] Their great argument is the blemish of providence in their eyes, the seeming neglect of the good, and evil done amongst men. I answer—That will prove it which they bring to disprove it; for the apostle telleth us, 'This is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God,' 2 Thes. i. 5. What! even the calamity of good men? Solomon made another the quite contrary use of it: Eccles. iii. 16, 17, 'Moreover, I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time for every purpose and for every work.' The wicked prosper, and destroy the just. You make it an argument for your infidelity; but it is an argument against it. Stay till the assizes come. It followeth

not there is no government because the thief and murderer is not hanged as soon as he hath done the fact. God's day will come, and then they go to prison. When you see malefactors drinking, dancing, frolicking in prison, will you say, I see there is no government in this kingdom?

[3.] Many think this is a state-engine to keep the world in better order and government. But I answer—Needeth there a lie to establish so great a benefit to mankind? It cannot be. Doth interest or virtue govern the world? If mere interest, what a confusion would there be of all things? Then men might commit all villany, take away men's lives and goods at pleasure, when it is their interest, when they could do it safely and secretly; then servants might poison their masters, if they could do it without discovery; and we might prey one upon another if it were in the power of our hands, and so live like wild and ravenous beasts; and by this rule, catch he that catch can here would be the best, and vicé and impiety would be the greatest wisdom. But if virtue govern the world, it is a clear case virtue cannot be supported without thoughts of the world to come; and can we imagine that God would make a world that cannot be governed but by falsehood and deceit, as you suppose the opinion of judgment to come is?

2. Propound it to your fear and caution. Great ones, that are most powerful and unruly, there is a power above them: Jer. v. 5, 'I went to the great ones, that had altogether broken the yoke.' They should tremble now at this glorious coming, to prevent trembling then, Ps. ii. 10–12. It is your wisdom to observe the Son, not to oppress his truth, interest, and people. Take heed of living in opposition to Christ: he will come in great power and great glory. If you neglect, if you stumble upon the rock you should build upon, and reject your own mercies, perish for want of a little care, you shall see the excellency of Christ, but have no benefit by it; see the happiness of the saints with your eyes, but shall not taste thereof, 2 Kings vii. 19; as Haman was forced to be Mordecai's lacquey, and cry before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king will honour.'

3. Propound it to your love, that you may long for it. The saints are described to be those 'that love his appearing,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. And the apostle biddeth them 'hasten to the coming of the day of the Lord,' 2 Peter iii. 12. These will be days of refreshing to the saints. Send forth your wishes after it. 'The Spirit in the bride saith, Come,' Rev. xxii. 17. Nature saith not, Come, but, Tarry still. If it might go by voices whether Christ should come, yea or no, would carnal men give their voice this way? No; the voice of corrupt nature is, Depart, Job xxii. 14. They are of the devils' mind, cannot endure to hear of it, Mat. viii. 24. If malefactors were to choose whether there should be assizes, yea or no, there would never be none. But you, my beloved, should desire to see him whom you have heard so much of. When Christ took his leave of us, his heart was upon meeting and fellowship again, John xiv. 2. So should we be affected towards his appearing.

4. Propound it to your patience, fortitude, and self-denial. Have no cause to think shame of Christ's service, though you suffer disgrace for it; he will appear worthy of all the respect you show to his person and ways. He is disgraced indeed that is refused by Christ when he

cometh in great glory. The judgment of the blind world is not to be regarded. The Lord will show who are his condemned in the world on purpose to try you, though now you are accounted the scurf and offscouring of all things. I know it is a great temptation to persons of honour and quality; but Christ suffered greater indignities: therefore let us resolve to be more vile for the Lord. Chiefly consider the glory reserved for us in the life to come, 1 John iii. 2. Then is the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. Christ is contented for a while to lie hid, and will not show himself in his full glory till the end of the world. In the days of his flesh his person was trampled upon by wicked men; and now he is in heaven, he is despised in his cause and servants: his person is above abuse and contempt, but not his members. Christ came in disguise to try the world. Satan would not have had the boldness to encounter him, the Jews to reject him, carnal christians to neglect him, nor the faith of the elect found to such praise and honour, if all were honourable, glorious, and safe here in the world. But the day of manifestation is hereafter. Let us be patient therefore, and bear all the harsh usage we meet with. There will be honour: 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall meet with him in glory.'

5. Propound it to your hope, and stand ready to meet with him and wait for him; and comfort yourselves with the hopeful expectation, This will be when all things are ready. And you should look every day and long every day for his appearing. I have a Saviour in heaven, that will come again, with all his saints with him: 'Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

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## SERMON XX.

*And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*—MAT. XXV. 32, 33.

WE now come to the second general, the presenting the parties to be judged; and there we have—

1. The congregation, *and all nations shall be gathered before him.*

2. A segregation.

[1.] As to company, *he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*

[2.] As to place and posture, *and he shall set the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left.*

*First*, The congregation. All the dead shall rise, and being risen, shall be gathered together into one place or great rendezvous. According to the analogy of faith we may gather this point:—

*Doct.* That in the general judgment, all that have lived from the beginning of the world unto that day shall without exception, from the least to the greatest, appear before the tribunal of Christ.

This point will be best illustrated and set forth to you by considering the several distinctions of mankind.

1. The most obvious distinction of mankind is of grown persons and infants; and if all these are presented to the judgment, it will go far in the decision of the point that we have in hand. Grown persons are those whose life is continued to that age wherein they come to the full use of reason; infants are those that die before they are in an ordinary way capable of the doctrine of life. Now for grown persons, the scripture is written purposely for them, and showeth that they shall be judged according to the dispensation they are under; as to infants or lesser children, the case is more difficult and obscure. It is likely that all shall rise in the stature and condition of grown persons, that is to say, in such a state of body and mind as they may see and hear and understand the judge. When they were born, they were born with a rational soul, which though according to ordinary course lieth idle for a while, and doth not discover itself in any human and rational actions till the organs be fitted and matured, yet that it should be still buried in the body, and perpetually sleep, as being hindered by its organs or instruments of operation, reason will not permit us to conceive, because it is contrary to its natural aptness and disposition, as also the end of its creation. We cannot conceive that God should form the spirit in man, which is immortal, in a body in vain and to no purpose; therefore children shall rise again: we know God hath made a difference between infants. The scripture seemeth to extend the merit of Christ's death to his church, Eph. v. 26, 27; and that infants of believers are born members of the church is out of question. To be sure, the covenant taketh in our children together with us: Gen. xxii. 7, 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed.' And those that never lived to disinherit themselves of that blessing, we have no reason to trouble ourselves about them: God is their God, and knoweth how to instate them in the privileges of the covenant. Look, as we judge of the slip according to the stock upon which it groweth, till it live to bring forth fruit of its own, so we judge of children according to the parents' covenant, till they come to years of discretion to choose their own way, and declare what have been God's counsels concerning them. The parents' sprinkling the blood on the door-posts saved the whole family. It is very reasonable therefore to think that infants, born in the church, dying infants, obtain remission of original sin by Christ, whatever become of others; for what reason have we to judge them that are without? 1 Cor. v. 12. And if God vouchsafe some the remission of that sin which they have, out of his mercy and grace in Christ, they must in the resurrection be in that state, that they may enjoy eternal felicity. The sum of the whole matter is, that in this great congregation children shall appear as well as parents. But children, dying children, are reckoned to their parents as a part of them, or as an appendage and accession to them, whose condition is likely to be the same with theirs as to glorification and acceptance to life. And with the condition of others we meddle not, but leave them to God. The scripture is sparing of speaking of them to whom it speaketh not. God speaketh more fully to grown persons, as those with whom he dealeth and treateth in the gospel. He is not bound to give us an

account how he will proceed with others; yet for godly parents' comfort, he hath more fully revealed his mind concerning their children than the children of infidels or wicked and open enemies to his truth. What he may do to them as to their original sin we cannot easily pronounce, as to their condemnation or absolution. Many allege, indeed, that they have an evil heart, and a nature that they would despise the gospel, if they had lived to receive the offer of it. I answer—It is true they are by nature children of wrath, as all are, Eph. ii. 3; and the gospel telleth us who are the serpentine brood of a transgressing stock; but how far God may show grace to them we know not. But for what they would do afterwards, that can make no argument in this case; for God being a most just and most equal judge, doth not judge his creature for what is possible and future, but only for things that are past and actually committed. He punisheth nothing but sins; but things that are not, cannot be sins. We crush serpents for their venomous nature before they have actually done us any harm; so may God destroy children; but that he doth not always do it, plain experience manifesteth.

2. The next distinction is of those whom Christ shall find dead or alive at his coming. Those that are dead shall be raised out of their graves, and have the spirit of life restored to them, that they may come to judgment. Those that are alive shall undergo a change like death: 1 Cor. xv. 51, 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.' These bodies, as thus qualified, cannot brook the state of the other world. Now, there will be found both good and bad alive at Christ's coming. If all the faithful were dead before, there would be some time when God would have no church upon earth. Now, it is foretold in the scriptures that the kingdom of Christ, which consists in the church, shall endure for ever, and that of his government there shall be no end; as no intermission, so no interruption. That therefore it may not be interrupted, some believers there must be, even in the very last times, by whom the kingdom of Christ may be continued in this world, and come to join with the other part of Christ's kingdom that is in the other world. Therefore the apostle telleth us, 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17, 'The dead in Christ shall rise first, and then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, and meet the Lord in the air; and so for ever be with the Lord.' On the other side, all the wicked shall not die; for the man of sin is to be consumed with the brightness of his coming. Now, how shall the brightness of his coming consume him if he were already abolished, with all his adherents and followers?

3. The third distinction is of good and bad. Both sorts shall come to receive their sentence; only the one come to the judgment of condemnation, the other to the judgment of absolution: John v. 28, 29, 'They which are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.' The word is clear in this point, that both the godly and wicked shall live again, that they may receive a full recompense according to their ways. None of the godly will be lost, but shall all meet in that general assembly; nor shall any of the wicked shift or shun this day of appear-

ance, but both shall at the call of Christ be brought before his judgment-seat; the godly rejoicing to meet their Redeemer, and the wicked forced into the presence of their judge, who could otherwise wish that hills and mountains might cover them. So Acts xxiv. 15, 'I believe the resurrection of the just and unjust;' not *æquabiliter boni;* for Mat. v. 45, 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and unjust.' Let us answer some places for the good: John iii. 18, 'He that believeth in him, οὐ κρίνεται, is not judged;' that is, with the judgment of condemnation; so we render it; and εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται: John v. 24, 'He that believeth on him shall not come into condemnation.' Yet for absolution they come. On the other side, some of the ancients denied the wicked's entering into judgment: Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in judgment' (the latter clause expounds it), 'nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' This is the great bridle upon the wicked when they are serious; they fear more the resurrection from the dead than death itself.

4. The next distinction of men whom Christ shall judge are believers and unbelievers. To believers we reckon all those that lived not only in the clear sunshine of the gospel, but those also to whom the object of faith was but more obscurely propounded; to those that lived before the flood and after the flood, as well as those that lived in Christ's time, and after the pouring out of the Spirit. Abel and Enoch and Noah are mentioned in the chronicle and history of faith, Heb xi., as well as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and believers of a later stamp and edition. And among unbelievers are reckoned all those that through their own obstinate incredulity rejected the divine revelation made to them, as well those that neglected the great salvation spoken by the Lord himself, as the world of ungodly in Noah's time, 1 Peter iii. 20, who were disobedient when Noah preached righteousness to them, or laid open the way of life and salvation to them. Indeed, it concerneth most those that have the gospel clearly preached to them, but others are not excused. In short, this distinction will bring in several ranks of men.

[1.] Some that have heard of Christ, and of the grace of God dispensed by him. These shall be judged by the gospel tenor and dispensation, which clearly sets forth all men to be sinners, and therefore to have deserved eternal death; and that 'there is no name under heaven whereby men can be saved, but by the name of Jesus,' Acts iv. 12. And the great question propounded to them is, whether they have believed in Christ, yea or no? Mark xvi. 16, 'They that believe not shall be damned.' They are condemned upon a double account—partly by the law, and partly by the gospel. Partly by the law, because they, being under the wrath and curse of God, would not embrace the remedy. Besides, the sentence of the law standeth in full force against a man if he cometh not to Christ to get it repealed: John iii. 18, 'He that believeth not is condemned already;' and the sentence is ratified in the gospel: John iii. 36, 'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' To their other sins they added unbelief, which is a heinous crime; yea, the great damning sin, 1 John v. 10. Those that say they believe are to prove the truth of their faith by the power it hath upon their hearts and

practice, James ii. 6–8, Rev. xx. 21; if that hath drawn off their hearts from worldly vanities and fleshly lusts, and engaged them to live unto God in the new and heavenly life.

[2.] All that have heard of Christ have not the gospel alike clearly made known unto them. To some he is preached clearly and purely, and without any mixture of errors that have any considerable influence upon the main of religion. Others are in that communion in which those doctrines are as yet taught that are indeed necessary to salvation, but many things are added which are indeed pernicious and dangerous in their own nature; so that if a man should possibly be saved in that profession, 'he is saved as by fire,' 1 Cor. iii. 13. And it is a strange escape; as if one had poison mingled among his meat, the goodness of his digestion and strength of nature might work it out, but the man runneth a great hazard. As the Papists acknowledge Christ for the redeemer and mediator between God and men; they own his two natures and satisfaction, though they mingle doctrines that strangely weaken these foundations. The Turks deny not Christ to be a great prophet, but they deny him to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and the Redeemer of mankind, and wickedly prefer their false prophet before him. The Jews confess there was a Jesus the son of Mary, that gave out himself in their country of Judea to be the Messiah, and gathered disciples, who from him are called christians; but they call him an impostor, question all the miracles done by him, as done by the power of the devil. Now, all these shall be judged by the gospel, which is so proudly and obstinately rejected by them: 'The Spirit shall convince the world of sin, because they believe not in me,' John xvi. 9. He hath so proved himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, the great prophet, and true Messiah, that their rejecting and not believing in him and his testimony will be found to be a great and damning sin, both in itself and as it bindeth their other sins upon them; however, their judgment shall be lighter or heavier, according to the diversity of their offence, and the invincible prejudices they lie under. The corrupters of the christian religion, because they have perverted the truth of the gospel to serve their interests (ambition, avarice, or any human passion), their doom will be exceeding great: 2 Thes. ii. 10–12, 'And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.' To poison fountains was the highest way of murder; to royle the waters of the sanctuary, to mangle Christ's ordinances, is a crime of a high nature. The Jews that rejected Christ in so clear light of miracles, John viii. 24, Christ saith, 'If you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;' it maketh the judgment the more heavy upon them. Others to whom Christ is less perspicuously revealed shall have a more tolerable judgment; for the clearer the revelation of the truth is, the more culpable is the rejection or contempt of it. For there is no man that heareth of Christ's coming into the world, suffering for sinners, and rising again from the dead, and ascending into heaven, but is bound more diligently

to inquire into it, and to receive and embrace this truth. Carnal christians, their profession condemneth them; they are inexcusable; they deny in works what in word they seem to acknowledge.

[3.] Some lived under the legal administration of the covenant of grace, to whom two things are propounded:—(1.) The duty of the law; (2.) Some strictures and obscure beginnings of the gospel. They shall be judged according to that administration they are under; either for violating the law, or neglecting the gospel, or those first dawnings of grace which God offered to their view and study. Indeed the law was more manifest, but the gospel was not so obscure but they might have understood it. Therefore God will call them to an account about keeping his law, by which who can be justified? Or whether by true repentance they have fled to the mercy of God, which by divers ways was then revealed to them, and have owned the Messiah in his types? Ps. cxliii. 2, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;' Ps. cxxx. 3, 4, 'If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' Which, if not clear, they shall be condemned not only for not keeping the law, but also for neglect of grace. Though their unbelief and impenitency be not so odious as theirs is that lived under a clearer revelation, yet a grievous sin it was, which will bring judgment upon them.

[4.] There are some that have no other discovery of God but what they could make from the courses of nature and some instincts of conscience, as mere pagans. The apostle having told us of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5, and how managed, ver. 6–8, and how aggravated, the Jew first, and then the Gentile; he then concludeth, ver. 12, 'For as many as have sinned without the law, shall perish without the law; but as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law;' that is, the Jews, as the other is to be understood of the Gentiles, to whose notice no fame of Christ or the law of Moses could possibly come. To perish without the law is to be punished, and punishment followeth upon condemnation, and condemnation is in this judgment. Therefore pagans and heathens, that lived most remote from the tidings of the gospel and divine revelation, must appear before Christ's tribunal to be judged. But by what rule? He telleth us, ver. 14, 15, 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; these having not a law, are a law to themselves: which show the work of the law written upon their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or excusing one another.' They knew themselves to have sinned by that rule, by the natural knowledge of God, and some sense of their duty impressed upon their hearts; nature itself told them what was well or ill done; the law of nature taught them their duty, and had some affinity with the law of Moses; and the course of God's providence taught that God was placable, which hath some affinity with these gospel rudiments and first strictures. Therefore the goodness and long-suffering of God should lead them to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. Surely, then, the impenitency of the Jews will meet with a heavy condemnation, according to the proportion of clearness in their revelation.

[5.] Men of all conditions, high and low, rich and poor, mighty and powerful, or weak and oppressed, kings, subjects: Rev. xx. 12, 'I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God.' No rank or degree in the world can exempt us. These distinctions do not outlive time; they cease at the grave's mouth; there all stand upon the same level, and are of the same mould. To bridle the excesses of power, the scripture often telleth us of the day of judgment, how the great men of the earth shall tremble, and the hearts of the powerful then be appalled, Rev. vi. 15–17. They shall then understand the distance between God and the creature, when his wrath and terror is in its perfection. Who can stand when he is angry? Ps. lxxvi. 7. It is a wonder men will live in a way of controversy with him, and are so little moved at it. No wrath so considerable as the wrath of the Lamb. When their mediator is their enemy, none in heaven or earth can befriend them. Those that, in the thoughts of men, are most secure, ringleaders to others in sin, that swear and swagger, and bear down all before them, and persist in their opposition to Christ with the greatest confidence, will be found the greatest and most desperate cowards then. Now these gallants ruffle it as if they would bid defiance to Christ and his ways. Oh! how pusillanimous and fearful then! Appear they must, though they cannot abide it. What torture do they endure between these two, the necessity of appearing, and the impossibility of enduring! Oh! the great ones then would gladly change power[1] with the meanest saint. Then they know what an excellent thing it is to have the favour of God, and of what worth and value godliness is, and how much a good conscience exceedeth all the glory of the world, and what an advantage it is to have peace made with God.

[6.] Not only some of all sorts, or of all nations, but every individual person. In one place the apostle saith, 'All of us,' *collectivè*, 2 Cor. v. 10; in another place, *distributivè*, 'Every one of us,' Rom. xiv. 12; not only all, but every one; not all, shuffled together in gross, but every one, severally and apart, is to give an account of his ways and actions to God.

*Use.* If these things be so, that all places shall give up their dead, and all those nations that differ so much one from another in tongues, rites, and customs of living, and distance of habitation, shall be gathered together into one place, and not left scattered up and down the world;—there are many ways to shift men's courts and tribunals (they may fly the country, or bribe the judge), but there is no shunning the bar of Christ;—oh! then, let the thought of this make us more watchful and serious.

1. In this judgment there is no exemption; for all are summoned, small and great; and whether they will or no, they shall be gathered together. The faithful shall willingly come, as to absolution; the wicked shall be violently haled, as to condemnation.

2. There is no appearing by a proctor or attorney; but every one in his own person must give an account of himself to God.

3. No denying; for the books shall be opened, Rev. xx. 12.

4. No excusing or extenuating; for Christ will 'judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31, according to terms of strict justice.

[1] Qu. 'place'?—ED.

5. No appealing; for this is the last judgment. No suing out of pardon, or no time of showing favour; for this is too late; the day of grace is past; sinners are *in termino;* their work is over, and now come to receive their wages. Oh! then, now let us take care that this day may be comfortable to us. God's children have more cause to look and long for it than to dread it.

*Secondly,* We now come to the segregation; and there—

First, as to company, 'He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth between the sheep and the goats.' In these words there is—

1. A point intimated and implied, that Christ is represented as a shepherd and the godly as sheep, but the wicked as goats.

2. There is a second point expressed, that though there be a confusion of the godly and wicked now, yet at the day of judgment there will be a perfect separation.

For the first of these, that Christ is represented to us under the notion of a shepherd, so he is called, Zech. xiii. 7, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd: I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;' and 1 Peter ii. 25, 'But are now returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls.'

1. A shepherd among men is one that is not lord of the flock, but a servant to take care of them and charge of them. This holdeth good of Christ as mediator; for he is God's elect servant, the servant of his decrees: the flock are his, not in point of dominion, right, and original interest, but in point of trust and charge. So Christ is lord of the faithful as God; but as mediator he hath an office and service about them, and is to give an account of them to God, when he bringeth them home, and leadeth them into their everlasting fold, John vi. 37–40, with 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25; Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me;' Jude 24, 'Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory;' and Col. i. 22, 'To present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight.'

2. The work of the shepherd is to keep the flock from straying, to choose fit pasture and good lair for them; yea, not only to fodder the sheep, but to drive away the wolf. To defend the flock is a part of his office; as David fought with the lion and the bear, and slew them for the flock's sake. All these concur in Christ, as you may see, Ps. xxiii. 1–4, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' There is guarding, and feeding, and defending. So John x., there is leading, ver. 3, 4; then there is feeding them, ver. 9; and defending them, ver. 12, 27–29.

3. Christ is not an ordinary shepherd: he is ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός, 'The good shepherd,' John x. 11; and Heb. xiii. 20, ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν, 'The great shepherd of the sheep;' and 1 Peter v. 4, ἀρχιποίμενος, 'The chief shepherd;' 'When the chief shepherd shall appear,' &c.

[1.] He is the good shepherd. Other shepherds are said to be good when they perform their office well, or quit themselves faithfully in the discharge of their trust. But besides the resemblance in these

qualities, there are certain singularities in Christ's office that denominate him the good shepherd.

(1.) A good shepherd is known by his care and vigilance; if he know the state of his flock, Prov. xxvii. 23. This resemblance holdeth good in Christ: he hath a particular care and inspection of every soul that belongeth to his flock: 'Calleth his sheep by name,' John x. 3. He hath a particular exact knowledge of every one of them, their persons, their state, their condition, their place, their country, their conflicts, temptations, and diseases: 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The Lord knoweth who are his;' John xiii. 18, 'I know whom I have chosen.' Though there be so many thousands of them scattered up and down in the world, yet he is acquainted with every individual person, every single believer, and all their necessities; John, James, Thomas. As the high priest carried the names of the tribes upon his bosom, so hath Christ the names of every one that belongeth to God's flock engraven upon his heart, though they may be despicable in the world, mean servants, employed in the lower offices of the family: Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried unto the Lord.' Poor soul! he lieth under such temptations, encumbered with such troubles, employed in such a hard task and service: My Father gave me a charge of him; I must look to him. Luke xv. we read, that when one was missing, he left all to look after the stray lamb. His knowledge is infinite.

(2.) The goodness of a shepherd lieth in his pity and wisdom to deal tenderly with the flock as their state doth require; so is Christ a good shepherd by reason of his tender respect and gentle conduct: Isa. xl. 11, 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young.' He guideth his people with dispensations suitable to them. In his lifetime he taught them, *καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν*, 'He spake the word unto them as they were able to hear it,' Mark iv. 33; as Jacob drove as the little ones and cattle were able to bear, Gen. xxxiii. 14. He calleth to work and suffering according as he giveth grace and strength, 1 Cor. x. 13. Proportioneth their temptations according to their growth and experience. He sendeth great trials after large assurances, Heb. x. 32. As castles are victualled before they are suffered to be besieged. There is a sweet condescension in all his dispensations to every one's state and condition.

(3.) The goodness of a shepherd lieth in a constant performing all parts of a shepherd to them: Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16, 'I will seek that which was lost, bring back that which was driven away, bind up that which was broken, strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them with judgment.' There is all necessary attendance and accommodation conducing to the safety and welfare of the flock; to protect them from violence from without, to prevent diseases within, to keep them from straying by the inspirations of his Spirit and the fence of his providence ('Blessed be God, that sent thee to meet me this day,' saith holy David), and to reclaim and reduce them when strayed. It were endless to instance in all.

(4.) There is this particularity in this good shepherd, of which there is no resemblance found in others: John x. 11, 'I am the good shepherd, that giveth my life for the sheep.' He doth not only give life to

them, but his own life for them, by way of ransom. This is a flock purchased by the blood of God, Acts xx. 28. He came from heaven to find out lost sheep; left a palace for the wilderness, and the throne for the fold. David was called from the sheep-hook to the sceptre; but Christ from the sceptre to the sheep-hook. Lost man had never been found if Christ had not come from heaven to seek him. We were forfeited, and therefore to be ransomed; and no price would serve but Christ's own blood.

(5.) There is this peculiar in this good shepherd, that he maketh us become the flock of his pasture, and sheep of his fold, Ps. c. 3. When other shepherds have the sheep delivered into their hands, he searcheth up and down for them in the woods and deserts; wherever they are scattered abroad, a lamb here and a lamb there; free grace findeth them out: Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 'I will search out my sheep, and seek them out;' Zeph. iii. 10, 'I will look after my dispersed from beyond the river of Ethiopia.' In the farthermost and unknown countries in every land, Christ knoweth where his work lieth, though it may be but one in a village, in the midst of wolves and swine. He maketh them to be what they are not by nature; turneth and changeth swine into sheep and wolves into lambs.

[2.] He is the great shepherd. (1.) Great in his person, the Son of God. *Dominus exercituum fit pastor ovium*, saith Bernard—the Lord of hosts is become the shepherd of the flock. He needed us not; if he had delighted in multitudes of flocks and herds, there are ten thousand times ten thousand angels that stand about the throne. He needed not leave his throne and die for angels as for us. And (2.) He is great in regard of the excellency of his gifts and qualifications: he is king, priest, and prophet. In the pastoral relation he manifesteth all his offices; he feedeth them as a prophet, dieth for them as a priest, defendeth them as a king; never sheep had better shepherd. *Redimit preciose, pascit caute, ducit solicite, collegit secure.* Jacob was very careful, yet some of his flock were lost, or torn, or stolen, or driven away; but it cannot be so with Christ's flock; we are safe as long as he is upon the throne. (3.) Great in regard of his flock: he is the shepherd of souls; millions of them are committed to his charge, and one soul is more worth than all the world.

[3.] He is the chief shepherd. Though he doth employ the ministry of men to feed his flock under him, yet doth he keep the place and state of arch-shepherd and prince of pastors, as the chief ruler and feeder of his flock, from whom all the under-shepherds have their charge and commission, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20, their furniture and gifts, Eph. iv. 8, 11; upon whose concurrence dependeth the efficacy and blessing of the ordinances dispensed by them, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7; and to him they give an account, Heb. xiii. 17, as he doth to God. Now this is a great comfort, that Christ taketh the prime charge of the flock. Some thrust in themselves, but he will require his flock at their hands.

*Use.* Let all this encourage you to look for your supplies by Christ. He professeth by special office to take charge of you; and you may be confident of his care and fidelity. Besides his love to the flock, he is bound as God's shepherd. By distrust you carry it so as if Christ were unfaithful in his charge and office. When you come to the ordinances,

you do directly cast yourselves upon Christ's pastoral care to feed you to everlasting life; and he will give you strength and refreshing. Only be not lean in Christ's pasture, nor faint, as Hagar, near a fountain.

Secondly, The godly are as sheep.

1. Sheep are *animalia gregalia*, such kind of creatures as naturally gather themselves together and unite themselves in a flock. Other creatures we know, especially beasts of prey, live singly and apart; but sheep are never well but when they come together and live in a flock. Such are christians, and such as are partakers of a heavenly calling. It is unnatural for them to live alone: they feed in flocks, Heb. x. 25. Man by nature is *ζῶον πολιτικὸν;* he hath a nature that is apt to make him gather into a community and society. We are social, not only upon interest, as weak without others, but upon natural inclination. We have a desire to dwell and live together, Eccles. iv. 10. The voice of nature saith, it is not good to be alone; so it is true of the new nature; there is a spirit of communion that inclineth them to some other, and to join with them.

2. Sheep, they are innocent and harmless creatures. They that belong to Christ are not bears and tigers and wolves, but sheep, that often receive harm, but do none. Christ was holy and harmless, Heb. vii. 26, and so are they.

3. Sheep are obedient to the shepherd. The meek and obedient followers of Christ are like sheep in this, who are docile and sequacious: John x. 4, 'He goeth before them, and they know his voice;' and ver. 16, 'Other sheep must I bring in also, and they shall hear my voice;' and ver. 27, 'My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.' All Christ's comforts,[1] in all places and all ages, have the same properties and the same impression.

4. They are poor dependent creatures. They are ever attendant on the shepherd, or the shepherd on them.

[1.] Because of their erring property. They are creatures pliant to stray; but being strayed, do not easily return. Swine will run about all day and find their way home at night. *Domine, errare per me potui, redire non potuissem*, saith Austin. Christ bringeth home the stray lamb upon his own shoulders, Luke xv.; and Ps. cxix. 176, 'All we like sheep have gone astray.' If God leave us to ourselves, we still shall do so.

[2.] Because of their weakness. They are weak and shiftless creatures, unable to make resistance. Other creatures are armed with policy, skill, or courage to safeguard themselves; but sheep are able to do little for themselves; they are wholly kept in dependence upon their shepherd for protection and provision. All their happiness lieth in the good wisdom, care, and power of the shepherd. Wolves, lions, and leopards need none to watch over them. Briars and thorns grow alone; but the noble vine is a tender thing, and must be supported, pruned, and dressed. The higher the being the more necessitous, and the more kept in dependence. There needs more care to preserve a plant than a stone; a stone can easily aggregate and gather moss to itself. There needeth more supplies for a beast than a plant, and more supplies to a man than to a beast.

[1] Qu. 'consorts'?—ED.

Thirdly, The wicked are as goats. They are as goats both for their unruliness and uncleanness. Unruliness: they have not the meekness of sheep, are ready to break through all fence and restraint; so a wicked man is yokeless. They are also wanton and loathsome; it is a baser sort of animal than the sheep; therefore chosen to set forth a wicked and ungodly man.

The second point expressed is this, that though now there is a confusion of godly and wicked, as of goats and sheep in the same field, yet then there shall be a perfect separation.

There will not then be one of one sort in company with the other: Ps. l. 5, 'He will gather his saints together;' and Ezek. xxxiv. 17, 'I will judge between cattle and cattle, the sheep and the goats;' Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' When the saints meet in a general assembly, not one bad shall be found among them. Though now they live together in the same kingdom, in the same village, in the same visible church, in the same family, yet then a perfect separation.

The reasons are briefly these two—(1.) The judge's wisdom and perspicuity; (2.) His justice. They that will not endure them now shall not then abide with them in the same fellowship.

*Use* 1. Here is comfort to them that mourn under the degenerate and corrupted state of christianity. The good and the bad are mixed together; many times they live in the same herd and flock. It is a trouble to the godly that all are not as they are; and we feel the inconveniency, for the carnal seed will malign the spiritual, Gal. iv. 29. But God will distinguish between cattle and cattle. Discipline indeed is required in the church to keep the sound from being infected, and the neglect of it is matter of grief. But the work is never perfectly done till then; then there is a perfect separation, and a perpetual separation, never to mix more.

*Use* 2. This may serve to alarm hypocrites. Many hide the matter from the world and themselves, but Christ shall perfectly discover them, and bring them to light, and show themselves to themselves and all the world. All their shifts will not serve the turn. Here are mixed together the sheep and the goats, the chaff and the solid grain, tares and wheat, thorns and roses, vessels of honour and dishonour. Many do halt between God and Baal. A man cannot say, They are sheep or goats; neither do they themselves know it. Therefore it calleth upon us to make our estate more explicit. Yea, many that seemed sheep shall be found goats. Then it will appear whether they are regenerated to the image of Christ, or destitute of the spirit of sanctification, yea or no; whether they loved God above all, or continued serving the flesh, making it their end and scope.

*Use* 3. Are we sheep or goats? There is no neutral or middle estate. Is there a sensible distinction between us and others? Then we shall have the fruit and comfort of it at that day: 1 Peter ii. 25, 'Ye were as sheep going astray; but now are returned to the bishop and shepherd of your souls.' We all should look back upon our former courses, betaking ourselves to Jesus Christ, seeking to enjoy his favour and fellowship, submitting to him as our ruler and guide, resigning up ourselves to be at his disposal, both for condition of life and choice

of way and course. I say, when by his powerful grace we are thus brought back from our sinful way and course, and made to follow him as our Lord, we are his flock, and he will mind us. Time was when you did run wild, according to your former fancies and the bent of your unruly hearts, and were wholly strangers to God, and could spend days, nights, and weeks, and months, and yet never mind communion with him; but now the business of your souls is to give up yourselves to him, or take the way which he hath prescribed to everlasting glory. Resolve no longer to live to yourselves, but to be under his discipline.

*Secondly*, As to place, 'He shall set the sheep upon the right hand, and the goats upon the left.

In the right hand there is greater strength and ability, and fitness for all kind of operations; therefore that place is counted more honourable. So Christ himself is said to 'sit down at the right hand of God the Father;' that is to say, hath obtained the highest place of dignity and power, above all angels and men, in bliss, honour, and dominion.

*Doct.* The godly shall be placed honourably at the day of judgment, when the wicked shall have the place of least respect.

A type and figure of this we have in Moses his division of the tribes. Some were to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, some on Mount Ebal to curse; those born of Jacob's wives put upon Mount Gerizim, those of his servants on Mount Ebal, Reuben excepted, who went into his father's bed. The saints, in their measure, enjoy all the privileges that Christ doth. Now the Father saith to the Son, Ps. cx. 1, 'Sit thou at my right hand.' So they have chosen the best blessings. It is said, Ps. xvi. 11, 'At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;' and Prov. iii. 16, 'Length of days is in her right hand.' They love God, and are beloved of him; they honour God in the world: 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'They that honour me I will honour.'

*Use.* Let us then encourage ourselves when we are counted the scurf and offscouring of all things. We shall not always be in this condition, but Christ will put honour upon us in sight of all the world.

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## SERMON XXI.

*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.*—MAT. XXV. 34.

WE have considered in the former verses—(1.) The sitting down of the judge; (2.) The presenting the parties to be judged. Now (3.) The sentence.

First, Of absolution, in these blessed words which I have now read to you. Observe in them—(1.) The preface; (2.) The sentence itself.

1. The preface showeth the person by whom the sentence is pronounced, *then shall the King say.*

2. The parties whom it concerneth, *to them on the right hand.*

Secondly, The form and tenor of the sentence itself; it is very comfortable and ravishing. Take notice—

1. Of a compellation used, *ye blessed of my Father.*

2. An invitation, expressed in two words, δεῦτε, κληρονομήσατε, *come* and *inherit.*

The first giveth warning for entering; the second, for possessing of this blessed estate, and that by a sure tenure.

3. The happiness unto which we are invited; and there the notion by which it is expressed, *the kingdom.* The adjunct, *a kingdom prepared.* The application of it to the parties concerned, *for you.* The ancientness of it, *from the foundation of the world.* An estate excellent in itself, and made sure for us.

*Doct.* That Jesus Christ, at his coming, will adjudge his people unto a state of everlasting happiness, by a favourable and comfortable sentence passed in their behalf.

First, Observe the order, *then.* The godly are first absolved, before the wicked are condemned. Why? Because—

1. It is more natural to God to reward than to punish, to save than to condemn. The one is called *alienum opus,* 'his strange work,' Isa. xxviii. 21. His self-inclination bendeth him to the one more than to the other. The absolution of the good maketh for the manifestation of his mercy, the attribute wherein God delighteth, Micah vii. 18. But his justice, as to the punitive part of it, it is last. God doth good of his own accord, but punishment is extorted and forced from him.

2. It is suitable to Christ's love to begin with the saints. He is so pronely inclined to them, that he taketh their cause first in hand. He parted from them with thoughts of returning to them again.

3. For the godly's sake, that they be not for any while terrified with that dreadful doom which shall pass on the reprobate; and that afterwards become judges of the wicked, by their vote and suffrage, when absolved themselves, 1 Cor. vi. 3.

4. For the wicked, that they may understand and be affected with their loss, and so be made more sensible of their own folly. Christ will, in their sight, put glory and honour upon his good servants, that they may have a stinging and vexatious sense of that happiness which they have forsaken. Whether it be for this or that reason, let us the better bear it here. When judgment beginneth at the house of God, as it often doth, 1 Peter iv. 17, there absolution beginneth at the house of God; and if upon us God first show his displeasure against sin, it is for the bettering of the saints, and reforming the world. First Christ will take in hand our absolution and coronation before he passeth sentence against the wicked.

Secondly, The next thing observable is the title given to Christ, 'Then shall the King say.' Christ first calleth himself the Son of man, ver. 31, because in human nature he administereth this judgment; afterward sets forth himself by the notion of a shepherd, ver. 32, because of his office and charge about the flock, and then to show it in the exact discrimination he shall make between cattle and cattle. But now the notion is varied, 'The King shall say.' Partly because it belongeth to his kingly office to pass sentence, and prefer his faith-

ful subjects to dignity and honour, as also to punish the disobedient. Partly because in that day he shall discover himself in all his royal magnificence, and call the godly to him, and solemnly put them in possession of the promised glory. The King shall crown and absolve us: it shall be a tribunal act; and therefore valid and authentic. When the Redeemer of the world, as King, shall then sit in judgment in all his royalty, he shall then put this honour upon the saints.

Thirdly, The next thing is—

1. The compellation used, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father.'

[1.] Observe in the general, it is a friendly compellation, used to such as were thought to be in favour with God. Witness Laban's words to Abraham's servant; Gen. xxiv. 31, 'Come in, thou blessed of the Lord;' and Judges xvii. 2, 'Blessed be thou of the Lord.' Those that were counted dear and beloved of the Lord were thus treated and spoken to. And because of the high favour vouchsafed to the Virgin Mary, in being the mother of the Son of God, it is said, 'All generations shall call thee blessed,' Luke i. 28, 42, 48. But what an honour is this, when Christ shall pronounce us to be so with his own mouth: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father.'

[2.] More particularly, two terms must be explained—(1.) 'Blessed;' (2.) 'Of my Father.'

First, 'Blessed.' This term is—

(1.) Opposed to the world's judgment of them. The world despiseth them, and counteth them execrable, vile, and cursed. Therefore it is said, Mat. v. 44, 'Bless them that curse you;' and Mat. v. 11, 'Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil of you for my name's sake.' He is blessed whom Christ blesseth. The world rails at us as cursed miscreants, unfit to live in human societies. The world saith, *Abite maledicti*; 'Away, ye cursed;' it is not fit for such a one to live. But Christ saith, *Venite benedicti*, 'Come, ye blessed.' We should set one against the other. The least thing intended in this compellation is an absolution from the reproaches of the world and their censures, whether rashly vented, or pronounced under a colour of law and church power. They are not so ready to curse and fulminate dreadful censures on the true worshippers of Christ as he is to acquit and absolve them. Their Redeemer in judgment will call them blessed, and publish to the world that all the censures of wicked men were preposterous and perverse.

(2.) The term is opposed to the sentence of the law. The world's obloquy is the less to be stood upon, as being the product of wrath, bitterness, and hatred. But the law of God, that containeth in it the highest reason in the world, pronounceth them accursed: Gal. iii. 10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all that is written in the law to do them.' And to this sentence we were once subject, and were so to look upon ourselves, Eph. ii. 3. Whatever we were in the purpose of God, our duty is to look upon what we are in the sentence of the law of God; and so we were all of us condemned to a curse. And the wicked, that never changed copy and tenure, lie still under that curse; as Christ himself showeth in his sentence on them, ver. 41, 'Depart, ye cursed.' The curse of the law taketh them by the throat, and casteth them into eternal torments. The devil would

have that sentence executed upon us now, according to our deserts; but the judge on the throne pronounceth us blessed, as having taken hold of the privilege of the new covenant, and so escaped the curse of the law. In this term our justification is implied, Acts iii. 19, Christ doth in effect say, These my friends and servants deserved in themselves to be accursed and miserable for ever, but I have made satisfaction to God for them, and pronounce them blessed, and free from all sin and misery.

(3.) The term is opposed to their own fears. Not only doth the world condemn us, and Satan urge the curse of the law against us, as having transgressed the bonds and rules of our duty in many cases, but our own trembling hearts are ever and anon casting up many a fearful thought: What shall become of us to all eternity? This fear is so strong, and rooted in the hearts of the godly, that it is a long time ere the promises of the gospel can vanquish and quell it; though the messengers of Christ come and tell them of the tender mercies of God, that there is enough in the merits of Christ, of the privileges and immunities offered by the new covenant, and beseech them that they would not obstinately lift up their fears against the whole design of Christ in the gospel, yet all will not do: if they can get a little peace and rest from accusations of conscience, it is almost all they can attain unto in the world: 'Perfect love casteth out fear,' 1 John iv. 10. But then the supreme judge, before whom all must stand or fall, will assure them with his own mouth that they are blessed; and therefore they shall fully get rid of all disquieting and tormenting fears. He shall say, Tremble no more; 'Come, ye blessed of my Father.'

(4.) It noteth what God hath done for them to bring them to this estate of blessedness: Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' He hath loved them, and enriched them with grace, heaped many spiritual favours upon them, which now they are to receive the consummation and accomplishment of. *Dei benedicere est benefacere*—when we bless God, we declare him blessed; when God blesseth us, he maketh us blessed; his saying is doing. Since ye are elected, called, justified, sanctified, at the will of my Father, come and freely possess yourselves of all that you have hoped, longed, and waited for.

Secondly, 'Of my Father.'

(1.) In this expression he pointeth at the fountain cause of all our happiness; the beginning of our salvation was from a higher cause than our own holiness, yea, than Christ's merit, from the favour and blessing of God the Father. He was the principal efficient cause and ultimate end of the work of our redemption and the saints' blessedness. Christ as mediator is but the way to the Father, John xiv. 6. It is the Father appointed Christ, gave him to us, John iii. 16, gave them to Christ, John xvii. 6, and in time brought them to close with his grace, John vi. 44. It is the Father that prepared this kingdom for them before the foundation of the world; they are the Father's chosen ones, those whom the Father loveth.

(2.) This expression shows how the divine persons glorify one

another. As the Spirit glorifieth the Son, John xvi. 14, so here the Son glorifieth the Father, and referreth all to him; he doth not say, My redeemed ones, but 'Ye blessed of my Father,' they are not less beloved and blessed by the Father than by the Son who redeemed them; blessed in the Father's love who elected them, gave them to Christ, sent Christ and accepted his ransom, declared his will in willing their glorification.

2. The invitation, in two words, δεῦτε, κληρονομήσατε; both have their emphasis and proper signification: the one signifieth our entrance upon the glorified estate, the other our everlasting possession of it.

[1.] Δεῦτε, 'Come.' To the wicked he saith 'Depart,' but to the saints, 'Come.' As the quintessence of all misery lieth in the one, so the consummation of all blessedness in the other. He had said before, Mat. xi. 28, 'Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest;' but that was but an acquaintance at a distance, and some remote service we were called unto. But now, Come into my heart, my bosom, my glory. Our nearest communion with Christ is not till we be translated into heaven. Come, draw near to me; be not afraid of my majesty. This was it the saints longed for, and now they enjoy it: 'When shall I come and appear before God?' saith holy David, Ps. xlii. 2. You that had a heart upon my first invitation to come to me, and seek after me in the kingdom of grace, come near to me now in the kingdom of glory. The godly do not so much desire to come near to Christ, as Christ desireth to come near to them. Where have you been all this while? Come, come; I am ready to receive you; you are welcome guests to me: we have been too long asunder. Oh! how ravishing will this be to every gracious heart that loved and longed for this day!

[2.] Κληρονομήσατε, 'Inherit.' Our happy and blessed estate we have and hold by inheritance: 1 Peter iii. 9, 'Ye are called to inherit a blessing.' That noteth a tenure free, full, and sure. This heritage—

(1.) Is free. We do not possess it as bondmen or servants only; we do not come to this happiness by our own earning and purchase; but as heirs of Christ. Adam's tenure was that of a servant; the blessings he expected from God were mere wages. We hold promises in another manner. Our title is by adoption, which we have immediately upon closing with Christ, John i. 12, by virtue of our sonship, Rom. viii. 17; not by merit, but free gift, Rom. vi. 23.

(2.) A full tenure. As children under age differ but little from a servant; but we come then as heirs to our full right. A child, though he be an heir, and owner of all his father's inheritance in hope, yet as long as he is a minor, or under age, he differeth little or nothing from a servant in point of subjection, and as to free government and enjoyment of his rights and goods. But now, to this inheritance we come as meet heirs. They distinguish of *jus hereditarium*, and *jus aptitudinale*—an hereditary right and an aptitudinal right. Now, when we have believed, suffered, and been exercised enough, we shall receive our full inheritance, 'being made meet for it,' Col. i. 12.

(3.) A sure title. It was given us by the Father, and purchased by the Son; and we hold it by this tenure for ever. God the Father gave

it: Luke xii. 32, 'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom.' And Christ hath purchased it, Heb. ix. 15; it is left us as a legacy by him, John xvii. 24; and he liveth for ever to be the executor of his own testament, Heb. vii. 25; so that now we are past all danger when once admitted into possession.

3. Here is the description of that happy estate we are invited unto. Where observe—

[1.] The notion by which it is expressed; it is 'a kingdom.' What can be thought of more magnificent and glorious than a kingdom? It is called a kingdom—

(1.) Partly with respect to Christ, who is our head and chief; in whose glory we shall all participate and share, in our places and capacities. Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and we shall reign with him as kings; for he hath made us a royal priesthood, 1 Peter ii. 9; and Rev. i. 6, 'He hath washed us in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God;' and Rev. v. 10, 'And hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign with him.' It is begun on earth spiritually, but it is perfected in heaven gloriously, where the saints shall be as so many crowned kings.

(2.) And partly with respect to the very thing itself. Our blessed estate shall be an estate of the highest dignity and dominion, of the fullest joy and content that heart can wish for. We have no higher notions whereby to express a blessed and happy estate; and therefore our eternal glory, whereof we are partakers, is thus set forth; especially to counterbalance our mean and low estate in the world: James ii. 5, 'God hath chosen the poor of the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom;' 'The saints shall have dominion in the morning,' Ps. xlix. 14. They shall sit with Christ as kings upon the throne, to execute the judgment written. Oh! how should this warm our hearts with the thoughts of these things!

(3.) Partly with respect to our loss by the fall. In the creation God put man in dominion, but by subjecting ourselves to the creature, who was made to be under our feet, we lost our kingdom, and are become slaves under the power of brutish lusts; and till our blessed estate, we never fully recover it again; but then we are absolutely free, and at liberty to love and serve God.

Well, then, it is no mean thing Christ inviteth us unto, but unto a kingdom, which we shall all jointly and severally possess. There are two quarrellous pronouns, *meum* and *tuum*, mine and thine, which are the occasion of all the strifes in the world. These shall be excluded out of heaven as the common barrettors and makebates. There is no envy, no uncharitableness. There one cannot say to another, This part of this glorious kingdom is mine, that is yours; for every heir of this kingdom shall be as much an heir as if he were sole heir. Here we straiten others as much as we are enlarged ourselves; but there each one hath his full proportion in that blessed estate; each hath the whole, and the rest never the less; as the same speech may be heard entirely by me and all, as the light of the sun serveth all the world; another hath not the less, because I enjoy the whole of it.

Secondly, The adjunct of this kingdom is that it was prepared for us. The word signifieth made ready. God made ready this state of

happiness long ere we were ready for the possession of it. Eternal love laid the foundation of it. Merit of infinite value carried on the building, and powerful and effectual grace still pursueth the work in our hearts; for we must be prepared for the kingdom, as well as this kingdom prepared for us. So that, in short, this kingdom was prepared for us—

1. By the Father's love. It was his own love and most free goodness that inwardly moved him to do all this for us: Luke xii. 32, 'It is your Father's good pleasure.'

2. By the Son's merit and mediation, who 'died that we should live together with him,' 1 Thes. v. 10.

3. By the sanctification of the Spirit, by which we are fitted for this estate, 2 Cor. v. 5.

1. The Father's love. The preparation is ascribed unto God: 1 Cor. ii. 9, 'The things which God hath prepared for them that love him;' and Heb. xi. 16, 'For God hath prepared for them a city.' Particularly by God the Father. So Mat. xx. 23, 'It is not mine to give, but to them for whom it was prepared of my Father.' The Father's act may be thus conceived: God loved us so much, as he decreed to give Christ for us, that by his precious blood he might purchase and acquire for us a blessedness in heaven; and in the fulness of time accordingly sent him into the world for that end, and bound himself by eternal paction and covenant that all that believe in his name should have this kingdom. This was the preparation of his decree.

2. Jesus Christ, by way of execution of this decree, maketh a further preparation, when by his death he purchased it, and by his ascension went to seize upon it in our name: John xiv. 2, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' As Christ by his death did purchase a right and title to heaven, so by his ascension he prosecuteth and applieth that right. He is gone, as our harbinger, to take up rooms for us. As the high priest entered into the most holy place with the names of the children of Israel upon his breast and shoulders, and with the blood of the sacrifices, so he hath entered heaven with our names, to present the merit of his blood continually, and to pour out the Spirit to fit us for glory: this is his errand and business in heaven, and he is not unmindful of it.

3. The Spirit prepareth us, without which all the rest would come to no effect; for it is the wisdom of God to dispose all things into their apt and proper places. Therefore the persons are prepared, as well as the place: Rom. ix. 23, 'Vessels of mercy, which he hath aforehand prepared unto glory.' He worketh faith in their hearts, giveth them a title, and by sanctifying prepareth them for the possession and enjoyment of it: 'He that worketh us for this self-same thing is God,' 2 Cor. v. 5.

Thirdly, The application or appropriation of this preparation to the persons that shall now enjoy it, 'For you;' which respects not only the qualification, but the persons.

1. Not only for such as you, but for you particularly. In the general, heaven was prepared for believers. God never intended unbelievers should have such a glorious estate; such as love the world do not prize nor long for this happiness, and therefore it is fit they should never enjoy it; for though the preparation be a work of abundant mercy,

yet that mercy is so tempered and limited by his wisdom and justice, that it will not permit him to give such holy things to dogs, or cast pearls before swine. No; it was prepared to be enjoyed only by believers and holy ones.

2. For you personally and determinatively. This is most agreeable to Christ's scope and sense, for all the conditions were also prepared for them. God did elect us to faith and holiness, as well as to eternal life. Faith is the fruit of election, not a cause; he did not choose us because we were holy, or because he did foresee that we would be holy, but that we might be holy, Eph. i. 4; that, being sanctified and renewed by the Spirit, we might be placed in the new Jerusalem. For you in person, that is Christ's meaning.

Fourthly, The antiquity or ancientness of this preparation, 'From the foundation of the world;' that is, from all eternity; for the scripture goeth to the highest point of time unto which we can ascend in our thoughts. So that ἀπὸ καταβολῆς signifieth as much as πρὸ καταβολῆς; as it is expressly said, Eph. i. 4, 'Before the foundation of the world.' The phrase is ordinary in scripture, and is as much as to say, from all eternity, or before any time was; for God's purposes are as he is, eternal and without beginning; therefore, if we speak of God's intention and purpose, it was before all worlds. Those that understand this, 'For you,' that is, for persons so qualified, will deny the meaning of the phrase to be that the dignities of the kingdom of heaven were designed to be the reward of all the faithful servants of Jesus Christ before all worlds; and they that know the scriptures cannot but conclude that from all eternity he made choice of us to be justified, sanctified, and glorified. The elective love of God is of an ancient standing, even from all eternity, and therefore most free, there being nothing in the elect before they had a being to move his love towards them; and this will be the glory of his grace at that day, that we are invited into that estate that was prepared for us long before: and who are we, that the thoughts of God should be taken up about us so long since? Titus iii. 2, 'Which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;' so 2 Tim. i. 9, 'Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, according to his purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ before the world began.' He indented then with Christ to bring us to what we shall at last enjoy. But if any morosely insist upon the phrase, because it doth not necessarily signify eternity, we must then understand that though the purpose of God were from everlasting, yet the things designed and acted by him, they take their beginning in time, or with time; and so the words must be understood—(1.) Of preparing the place which shall be the state of the blessed. The third heaven is the dwelling-place of the saints, which was framed about the beginning of the creation. So good and gracious was our God, that he did not make man or angel till he prepared a place convenient for them. Or (2.) To the promise presently made upon Adam's fall; but the former exposition is more simple.

Well, then, you have heard what entertainment the faithful shall have from Christ at his coming, so far as our dull minds can conceive of it, and with weak and imperfect words can express it to you. Now let us see what use we may make of all this.

*Use* 1. Let us be convinced that there is such an estate, and will be such a time, and that there is no true blessedness but this enjoyment of God in the kingdom of heaven, that we shall then have. The world hath been much puzzled about disputes of happiness, and the way to it. The philosophers, some placed it in knowledge, some in that virtue which they knew, some in pleasure; some in this, some in that. Austin out of Varro reckoneth up two hundred and eighty-six opinions about the chief good. They erred thus because they sought it in so many things, whereas it consists in one—the enjoyment of God; and because they sought it in this world, where all things are mortal and frail, and we can find not one thing that can make us completely happy. This discovery was left for the scriptures, which teach us that our happiness lieth in God alone, and that our perfect enjoyment of him, in body and soul, is reserved for Christ's coming, when there is a perfect conformity to God and communion with him: 1 John iii. 2, 'Beloved, we are now the children of God; but it doth not appear what we shall be, but we know when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' The Lord revealeth his truth to us in the word, but before we can be convinced of it we must be enlightened by the Spirit; for spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. We may talk of these things by rote one to another, and have an assent to them, which is called a non-contradiction, though not a positive understanding and conviction of the truth of them: 'Believest thou this?' John xi. 26.

2. When we believe it, let us look for it and long for it, and live in the hopeful expectation of this blessed time, when all these things shall be accomplished. Therefore, if we believe such a thing, we must long for it, and live in the hope of it: Titus ii. 13, 'Looking for the blessed hope.' Hope showeth itself—

(1.) Partly by frequent and serious thoughts and delightful meditations of the thing hoped for. Thoughts are the spies and messengers of hope; it sendeth them into the land of promise, to bring the soul tidings thence. It is impossible a man can hope for anything but he will be thinking of it, for it is the nature of this affection to set the mind a-work, and to preoccupy and forestall the contentments we expect before they come by serious contemplations, and feast the soul with images and suppositions of things to come, as if they were already present. So should we demean ourselves as if the judgment were set, and the judge upon his white throne, and we heard him blessing and cursing, absolving and condemning. The heart will be where the treasure is, Mat. vi. 18. As if we saw Christ with his faithful ones about him. If a beggar were adopted to the succession of a crown, he would please himself in thinking of the happiness, honour, and pleasure of the kingly estate. If you did hope to be coheirs with Christ, or to inherit the kingdom prepared for you, you would think of it more than you do. Our musings discover the temper of our hearts. A carnal heart is always thinking of building barns, advancing the family higher, our worldly increase: Luke xii. 18, 'I will pull down my barns, and build bigger, and bestow my fruits.' And those in James iv. 13, 'To-morrow we will go to such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain.' It is usual with men to

feed themselves with the pleasure of their hopes; as young heirs spend upon their estate before they possess it.

(2.) By hearty groans, sighs, and longings: Rom. viii. 23, 'We groan in ourselves.' They have had a taste of the clusters of Canaan in private justification; they can never be soon enough with Christ: when shall it once be? They are still looking out, and the nearer to enjoyment the more impatient of the want: 'The earnest expectation of the creature,' Rom. viii. 19. Stretching out the head to see if they can spy a thing a great way off; as Judges v., 'She looked through the lattice: why is his chariot so long a-coming?' They would have a fuller draught of consolation, more access to him, and communion with him.

(3.) By lively tastes and feelings. It is called a lively hope, 1 Peter i. 3; not a living hope only, but lively; because it quickens the heart, and filleth it with a solid joy, Rom. v. 2; 1 Peter i. 8. Where we have such a fruition, the very looking and longing giveth us a taste.

3. This hope should put us upon serious diligence and earnest pursuit after this blessedness, 1 Peter i. 13. Partly as it purgeth the heart from lusts: 1 John iii. 3, 'He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as Christ is pure.' These are the months of our purification, wherein we are made meet to be partakers of the saints in light; we are a-preparing for heaven, as that is prepared for us, and it is a lively expectation which produceth this. That puts us upon mortification and diligence in cleansing the soul, that we may be counted worthy to stand before the Son of God. Partly as it withdraweth our hearts from present things, and minding earthly things: 'But our conversation is in heaven,' Phil. iii. 18–21. A man that is always looking and longing for the world to come, the present world is nullified to him, and he hath a mean esteem of all secular interests and contentments in comparison of those other which his soul looketh after; as a man looking upon the sun cannot see an object less glorious. On the contrary, our overprizing secular contentments necessarily breedeth an undervaluing of matters heavenly; and those that have so great a relish for the world and the delights of the flesh, they know not what eternal life meaneth. The Israelites longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt before they tasted the clusters of Canaan; by faith Moses refused the honours and pleasures of Pharaoh's court. We cannot value real happiness till we are brought to contemn earthly happiness. Partly as it urgeth to care and diligence, and constancy in obedience. This is the spring that sets all the wheels a-going: Phil. iii. 13, 'I press towards the mark, because of the high prize of our calling.' What is the reason christians are so earnest and serious? There is an excellent glory set before them; the race is not for trifles. We want vigour, and find such a tediousness in the Lord's work, because we do not think of the kingdom of heaven prepared for us, 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9; 1 Cor. xv. 53, 'We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord: wherefore we labour, that whether we are present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' If it be tedious to us to be at work for God, this tediousness will not consist with the cheerful remembrance of that great blessedness which

he hath prepared for us. How eminent should we be in the labours of holiness, to whom this estate was so peculiarly designed! Partly in self-denial; men venture all in this vessel of hope. Self-denial is seen in refusing and resisting temptations of honour and profit. Sin maketh many promises, and so prevaileth by a carnal hope. Balaam was enticed by proffers of riches to curse God's people; Babylon's fornications are presented in a golden cup. Now faith and hope sets promise against promise, heaven against earth, the pleasures at God's right hand against carnal delights; as the kingdoms of the world are nothing to this glorious kingdom. Partly in charity; laying up treasure in heaven: Luke xii. 33, 'Being rich in good works,' 1 Tim. vi. 18. I call this self-denial, because it is a loss for the present, Eccles. ii. So in hazarding interests: christians' blessings are future, their crosses are present, Rom. viii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 12.

Thus you see there are some who are carried on by the hopes of heaven to make serious preparation; others are wholly wedded and addicted to present things. The world, morally and spiritually considered, is divided into two ranks; the one of the devil, the other of God. Some seek their rest and happiness on earth, others eternal felicity in heaven. By nature all are of this earthly society, in the kingdom of darkness, and strangers to the commonwealth and city of God; but when grace hath wrought in them the belief of this coming of Christ, and the hope of this blessed estate is rooted in us, we are always purging out of fleshly lusts, and weaning our hearts from the world, exercising ourselves to godliness, and denying our worldly interests.

4. This hope must moderate our fears, sorrows, and cares, so as no temporal thing should unreasonably affect us: Luke xii. 32, 'Fear not, little flock.' The fear is allayed; the world cannot take away anything from us so good as Christ will give unto us. If our earthly estate be sequestered, or anyway taken from us, we have a better estate in heaven, Heb. x. 34. If we be reproached and disgraced in this world, yet we shall be kings and priests, and for ever be honoured in heaven. If banished and driven from place to place, so that we can find no rest nor safety, but are wearied out with our removals, let us consider we have a place of eternal abode in heaven, a kingdom that cannot be shaken, of which none can dispossess us. Our sufferings may be many, long, and grievous, but then all will be at an end when Christ shall place us at his right hand: Heb. vi. 19, 'Which hope have we as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' We have a sure anchor in the stormy gusts of temptations: 1 Thes. v. 8, 'Let us put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation;' and Eph. vi. 17, 'And take the helmet of salvation.' Hope is our helmet in the dreadful day of battle. As long as we can lift up our heads and look to heaven, we should patiently bear all calamities. We shall at last hear this blessed voice, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'

## SERMON XXII.

*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 unto me.*—MAT. XXV. 35, 36.

WE have seen the sentence, now the reason of the sentence. *For*, the illative particle, showeth that many like the sentence, would be glad to be entertained with a 'Come, ye blessed of my Father;' but turn back upon the reason, to visit, feed, and clothe; they have no mind, or to any other serious duties and acts of faith and self-denial. But we must regard both; and I hope in a business of such moment you will not be skittish and impatient of the word of exhortation. I shall first vindicate the words, and then give you some observations from them.

First, Vindicate them, and assert their proper sense and intendment; for upon the reading four doubts may arise in your minds:—

1. That good works are the reason of this sentence.
2. That the good works of the faithful are only mentioned, and not the evil they have committed.
3. That only works of mercy, or the fruits of love, are specified.
4. All cannot express their love and self-denial this way.

Let me clear these things, and our way will be the more easy and smooth afterward.

1. For the first doubt, that works are assigned as the reason of the sentence of absolution; for the papists thence infer their merit and causal influence upon eternal life. I answer—

[1.] It is one thing to give a reason of the sentence, another to express the cause of the benefit received and adjudged to us by that sentence. A charter may be given to a sort of people out of mere grace, and privileges promised to all such as are under such a qualification, though that qualification no way meriteth those privileges and that grace promised; as if a king should offer pardon and preferment to rebels that lay down their arms and return to their duty and allegiance, and live in such bounds; their returning to their duty doth not merit this pardon, for it was a mere act of grace in the prince; much less doth their return to their duty, and living peaceably within their ancient bounds, merit the honours and advancement promised; yet this is pleadable in court, and the judge that taketh knowledge of the cause, taketh the reason of his sentence from their peaceable living within their bounds, whereby he judgeth them capable of the honours promised and expected. So here; God of his mere grace promiseth the pardon of our sins, and to bestow upon us eternal life, if we believe and repent, and return to the duty we owed him by our creation. Our obedience is not the cause of our pardon, or of our right to glory, but his free promise; but yet this qualification must be taken notice of by our judge in the great day, as the reason of his sentence. The sprinkling of the door-posts with blood was not a proper cause to move the destroying angel to pass over, but according to that rule he must proceed; the admitting all that have a ticket to any solemnity

is not the cause why they are worthy to be received. This is clear, that a person is justified in some other way than a sentence is justified. These works are produced to justify the righteousness of his sentence before the whole world. A sinner is justified by faith; Christ's sentence by the believer's obedience.

[2.] That works merit not the blessings promised and adjudged to us, is evident; for they are due: Luke xvii. 10, 'So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.' And they are imperfect: Phil. iii. 12, 'Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect.' And they are gifts of God, for which we ought to give him thanks, 2 Cor. viii. 1; a grace of God bestowed on us; and gifts have no equality with the reward, Rom. viii. 18. And they are done by servants redeemed by an infinite price: 1 Peter i. 19, 'With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot;' being already appointed 'heirs of eternal life,' Rom. viii. 17; deserving eternal death, Rom. vi. 17; and that need continually implore the mercy of God for the pardon of sin. So much as you ascribe to man's merit, so much you detract from the grace of God; and the more sin is acknowledged, the more illustrious is grace: Rom. v. 20, 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' You cross the counsel of God, all glorying in himself: 1 Cor. i. 29, That no flesh should glory in his presence;' and Deut. ix. 4–6, 'Speak not thou in thy heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people.'

[3.] That works are produced as the undoubted evidences and fruits of a true and sound faith. Justification is opposed to accusation before God's tribunal. A double accusation may be brought against us—that we are sinners, or guilty of the breach of the first covenant, and that we are no sound believers, having not fulfilled the conditions of the second. From the first accusation we are justified by faith, from the latter we are justified by works, and that not only in this world, but in the day of judgment. Christ's commission and charge is to give eternal life to true believers, and the mark of true believers is holiness. Therefore, if his judgment be right, by producing this fruit and effect it must be justified. A judge is to proceed *secundum regulas juris, et allegata et probata,* as to the parties judged; and because in the day of judgment the covenant of grace hath the force of a law, therefore it belongeth to Christ as a judge to see we have fulfilled the condition of it, which is faith; and that our faith is true is proved by works. When we are first pressed with sin, because the promise of justification, or remission of sin, requireth

faith, it must be embraced by faith, and taken hold of by faith; our faith must pitch upon it, draw comfort from it, even before good works are done by us. But because the next accusation will presently arise, as if our faith were not true, we must be justified from this accusation by good works, not be contented with one or two good works, but abounding in all, that thus we may be justified more and more, and approved by our judge.

[4.] That faith is implied in all the works mentioned is evident—(1.) From Christ's scope. The manner of judging those in the visible church is intended. And (2.) The expression showeth it; for it is Christ they respected in his members. Now it requireth faith to see Christ in a poor beggar or prisoner, to love Christ in them above our worldly goods, and actually to part with them for Christ's sake. Self-denial is the fruit of faith. It is not merely the relieving of the poor, but the doing of it as in and to Christ. (3.) There is a near link between faith and works. Faith is not sound and perfect unless it produce these works, and these works are not acceptable unless they were the works of faith, and done in faith.

2. The second doubt is, whether the good works of the faithful shall be only mentioned, and not the evil? I answer—

So some would collect from this scheme and draught set down by Christ. It is a problem disputed, with probabilities on both sides, by good men. Some reason from the terms by which pardon is expressed; as by the blotting out of sin, remembering transgressions no more, cast into the depths of the sea. It is like God will cover them, because repented of and forgiven in the world. On the other side, they urge the exact reckoning, Rev. xx. 11; the general particles, 2 Cor. v. 10, and Eccles. xii. 13; and that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment, Mat. xii. 36. I would not interpose; I cannot say absolutely that their sins shall not be mentioned at all; for Acts iii. 19, it is said, 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Certainly not to their trouble and confusion; possibly not particularly. These scriptures are not cogent to prove they shall. For it may be meant distributively; all the evil of the wicked, and the good of the godly. However, these scriptures should breed an awe in our hearts.

3. A third doubt is, that only works of mercy and charity, rather than piety, are mentioned by our Lord and Saviour. I answer—

[1.] It is clear that the special is put for the general, and an act of self-denying obedience is put for all the rest. In other places a more general expression is put; as Mat. xvi. 27, 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works;' and 2 Cor. v. 10, 'For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;' and Rev. xx. 12, 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the

books, according to their works.' And therefore acts of mercy are not intended to be cried up alone, as separate from all other acts of piety and charity to God and men; yea, all acts of charity, for which we are accountable unto God, are not mentioned; comforting the afflicted, reproving the faulty, instructing the weak, counselling the erring, praying for others. Therefore, under these works of charity, all the fruits of faith are understood, and the real gracious constitution of the heart that must produce them: 1 Cor. xiii. 3, 'And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me not,' *οὐδέν εἰμι*. But Christ doth not express that so plainly, because he would show that this judgment shall proceed according to what is visible and sensible.

[2.] Christ singled out works of mercy for the evidence; because the Jews had been more exact and diligent in the observing the ceremonies of external worship, but negligent of these things. Therefore doth God so often by the prophets tell them of mercy above sacrifices: Hosea vi. 6, 'For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.' And mercy above fasting, Isa. lviii. 6, 7. These are duties never out of season, and including a real benefit to mankind. God preferreth them before external rites of worship.

[3.] These are most evident and sensible discoveries, and so fitted to be produced as fruits of faith. There is a demonstration of the soundness of it; *a signis notioribus*. These are most conspicuous, and so fittest to justify believers before all the world, who reckon good and evil most by the bodily life. Therefore doth Christ instance in acts of bodily rather than spiritual charity. Not in reproving, converting, counselling, but in feeding and clothing.

[4.] These are acts wherein we do exercise faith and self-denial. In imparting spiritual gifts to others we lose nothing ourselves, as our candle loseth nothing by communicating light to another. Christ would have us venture something on our heavenly hopes; and not please ourselves with a religion that costs us nothing, and puts us to no charges. Alms is an expensive duty; here is something parted with, and that upon reasons of faith: Eccles. xi. 1, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days;' Prov. xix. 17, 'He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he giveth them, will he pay it again.'

[5.] Christ would hereby represent the excellency of charity, and commend it to the covetous niggardly world. It is the duty wherein we do very much resemble God and Christ; and all his followers should be like him. These are all works of God; to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, we imitate him in this, are instruments of his providence. Mercy is a very lovely thing, an imitation of the divine nature. Our Lord told us, Acts xx. 35, it is a more blessed thing to give than to receive. It cometh nearest the nature of God. So Christ himself went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed. And by helpfulness to others we do very much resemble Christ. I cannot exclude this, since mercy is mentioned only.

4. A fourth doubt is this, that all cannot express their love and self-denial this way; some are so very poor and miserable. I answer—

[1.] All must have that faith which will work by love: Gal. v. 6, 'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love;' and self-denial, which some way or other must be expressed: Mat. xvi. 24, 'Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.' By denying the ease of the flesh, if not the interests of it; to be serviceable in their place, whatsoever it be.

[2.] Though some be so needy themselves that they cannot clothe the naked or feed the hungry, yet they may visit the sick, resort to such as are in prison. Every one, in some kind or other, may be the object of his neighbour's charity; so may every one be either the instrument or agent in the doing of it. The rich may stand in need of the help or prayers of the poor, and the poor of the bounty of the rich. If we have a heart to part with all for Christ, we have that faith which will carry away the price of gospel privileges. All must have such a value for Christ, see such an excellency in the world to come, that they have a heart and disposition to part with all, rather than quit the profession of the gospel, or neglect the duties thereof, Mat. xiii. 44, 45.

These things premised, I come now to observe these points:—

First, That at the general judgment all men shall receive their doom, or judgment shall be pronounced according to their works; for Christ produceth works both in the sentence of absolution and condemnation.

Secondly, That Christ hath so ordered his providence about his members, that some of them are exposed to necessities and wants, others in a capacity to relieve them.

Thirdly, That works of charity, done out of faith and love to Christ, are of greater weight and consequence than the world usually taketh them to be.

Other points may be raised, but to these three all the rest may be reduced.

First, That at the general judgment all men shall receive their doom, or judgment shall be pronounced according to their works.

Of the wicked there is no doubt but that they shall receive according to their works; they stand on their own bottom; their works deserve punishment; their doom and sentence is justified by their works. But for the godly, it is also true that life everlasting shall be awarded, *secundum opera, non propter opera*. Not that this kingdom is by right due to us for our works; but the righteousness of the sentence is manifested by producing our works. This will appear if we consider—(1.) The business, scope, or end of the day of judgment; (2.) The respect of good works, and how far they are considered.

1. The business of that day is not only to glorify God's free love and mercy, but also his holiness rewarding justice and truth. Then God will not only glorify the riches of his glorious grace, in the electing of his people out of his love and favour to them, without anything considered in them—('Come, ye blessed of my Father.' The first cause of our salvation is made the blessing of the Father)—but also his

remunerating justice, veracity, or truth. This maketh for our purpose now.

[1.] His holiness. The holy God delighteth in holiness. He will now manifest it in the sun, the estimation he hath of the holiness of his people. The veil is taken away; now it is made matter of sense. It is a delight to him. Christ mentions their graces and services as things which are pleasing and acceptable to him: Ps. v. 4, 'Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness.' But he hath pleasure in the holiness of his people. The upright are his delight, and as such will he speak of them, and commend them, and represent them to the world.

[2.] His remunerating justice. The justice of God requireth that there should be different proceeding with them that differ among themselves; that it should be well with them that do well, and ill with them that do evil; that every man should reap according to what he hath sown, whether he hath sown according to the flesh or the spirit; and the fruit of his doings be given into his bosom. Therefore, those whom Christ will receive into everlasting life must appear faithful and obedient; for then Christ will judge the world in righteousness, Acts xvii. 31.

[3.] That he may show his veracity and faithfulness. The faithful God will make good his promises, and reward all the labours and patience and faithfulness of his servants, according to his promises to them. If his promises take notice of works, his justice will. God is not unfaithful or unrighteous, 'to forget your work and labour of love, which you have showed to his name,' Heb. vi. 10.

2. The respect of good works, and how far they are considered.

[1.] They are perfectional accomplishments. Those that have done them are lovely objects in his sight, as being conformed to his nature and pattern. Can we imagine that God should bid the saints love one another for their holiness, and count them the excellent ones of the earth, Ps. xvi. 3, how poor and despicable soever they be as to their outward condition, and that he himself should not love them the more? We, that have but a drop of the divine nature, hate impure sinners. Lot's righteous soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, 2 Peter ii. 8. And we find a complacency and delight in the good. And can we imagine, without a manifest reproach to him, that God should be so indifferent to good and evil, and that the saints should not be more lovely in his sight for their holiness? Therefore the more lovely the more endeared objects to their Redeemer.

[2.] They are qualifications to make them capable of his remunerating justice. There is in God a threefold justice:—(1.) His strict justice; (2.) His justice of bounty, or free beneficence; and (3.) As judging according to his gospel law of promise.

(1.) He may be said to be strictly just when he rewardeth man according to his perfect obedience; yet no obedience, though never so perfect, can bind him to reward man or angel.

(2.) He is just by way of bounty, when he rewardeth a man capable of reward; though not in respect of his perfect righteousness in himself, yet because he is some way righteous in respect of others that are unrighteous. So it is said, 2 Thes. i. 6, 7, 'It is a righteous thing

with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble his saints; and to them that are troubled, rest,' &c. This with respect to Christ's merit, and the qualification of the parties.

(3.) The third righteousness is in performance of his promises; for though his promise be free, yet if it be once made, justice doth require it; and God is not free, but bound to perform it. Now, in these two latter respects, are they capable.

[3.] They are signs and tokens of their being approved and accepted with God, according to the gospel covenant. Christ, as God's steward, cometh to distribute the appointed reward to the heirs of glory. This is the evidence he is to proceed by. When the destroying angel was sent to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians, he was to take notice of the sign of sprinkling of blood on the door-posts, Exod. xii. Not that that blood deserved; but it signified that there dwelt Israelites.

[4.] They are measures according to the degrees of grace, and our abounding in the work of the Lord: 2 Cor. ix. 6, 'He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.' The reward is more full or sparing according to what we have done or suffered for God.

*Use.* To set us right in the doctrine of grace and works. We have to do with three parties—

(1.) The pharisaical legalist; (2.) The carnal gospeller; and, (3.) The broken-hearted and serious Christian.

1. The legalist that trusts in himself that he is righteous, and hopeth to be accepted with God for his works' sake. Trusting in works is very natural and very dangerous. It is very natural, because of the law written upon our hearts. We all come into the world with a sense of a duty-covenant; and because every one would be sufficient to his own happiness, an unhumbled soul is apt to give more to duty and personal righteousness than to Christ: Rom. x. 3, 'For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God,' *οὐκ ὑπετάγησαν.* A russet ragged coat of his own pleaseth a proud man better than a silken coat that is borrowed. It is dangerous; for it is contrary to all the declarations of God: Eph. ii. 9, 'By grace ye are saved; not of works, lest any man should boast.' The whole progress of salvation, from its first step in regeneration till its final and last period in glorification, doth entirely flow from God's grace, and not from our works. The securing the interest of free grace in our salvation is a thing the Spirit of God is very careful of in the scriptures, the glory of grace being that which God mainly aimeth at, Eph. i. 6, and a thing which we do naturally incline to intrench upon, and to rob him of, in whole or in part. It crosseth the great end which God aimed at in contriving of man's salvation, which was that all ground of glorying should be taken away from man, as being in the meanest or least respect a saviour to himself, and that all the glory might be ascribed completely to God in Christ, 1 Cor. i. 29–31. Christ spake a parable against those that trusted in themselves that they were righteous: Luke xviii. 9, 'Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a pharisee, the other a publican.' The

one cometh appealing to justice: 'The pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust,' &c.; 'I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.' The other cometh crying out grace: 'The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.' The sinner is justified, not the worker. In short, to prevent all mistakes—

[1.] Our works, whatever they are, either works of love to God or man, and the good use of external means or common grace, are not the moving cause or inducement to incline God to give us Christ, or the grace of faith, or work of conversion before others; but this is the mere work of grace, or the mercy and good pleasure of God: Titus iii. 5, 6, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

[2.] Works, both before and after conversion, are not that righteousness, nor any part of that righteousness, by which sin is expiated, or the wrath of God appeased, or whereby we are reconciled to God, and do originally obtain a right to eternal life; this is only ascribed to the merit of Christ: Rom. iii. 24, 25, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.' The merit is in Christ's blood, Christ's obedience, his ransom and meritorious price.

[3.] Our works, or what we do to fulfil the law of God, are not that instrument by virtue of which we apply the merits of Christ to ourselves, or receive that righteousness by virtue of which we are reconciled to God. Our interest in the merits of Christ, our right to pardon of sin and grace, doth not arise from works, but merely faith, Rom. iii. 22; so that in the plea of justification, or our suit for the pardon of sin, we must renounce all our good works, and wholly rely on the merits of Christ, giving up ourselves to do the will of God. Abate this, and then works indeed come in as the fruits of faith, as evidences of eternal life and the way to glory.

2. The carnal gospeller is the other person we have to do with; and to him we say—

[1.] That no man can maintain his comfort, and faithfully rely upon Christ's merits, but he that is faithful in doing his Father's will. No other faith is allowed by the scriptures for sound in the judgment of our consciences but such a faith: Gal. v. 6, 'For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.' No other faith will be approved by Christ for sound at the last day: Mat. vii. 21, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'

[2.] That the doing of some good works cannot excuse men for the omission of others which be as necessary; we must not do one act of charity only, but all. Many acts are reckoned up of one kind, to imply

all the rest; not only fed, but clothed; not only clothed, but visited. Therefore, besides the goodness of the work which we are bound to do, there must be a uniformity in them. There are good works of divers kinds, many works of the same kind. To prophesy in Christ's name is a good work; to cast out devils would seem to us more excellent than these mentioned; as the workers of iniquity: Mat. vii. 22, 'Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?' Ver. 23, 'Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' Then there are many works of the same kind; we must not only visit, but clothe; not once, but often. The same faith which inclineth our hearts to works of one kind, will incline them to every kind; for they all stand by the same authority, and it is not agreeable with sincerity to balk any of them.

[3.] These works must be done so heartily as that it may appear we have denied all for Christ, and love him above all; or that it may appear they are fruits of faith and love. The parting with worldly goods implieth our hearts must be loosened from the love of temporal things; and the visiting of Christ in prison, which may be for righteousness' sake, implieth our victory over our fear of danger; otherwise it argueth our faith is weak and our love is cold, and so not sincere, not prevailing over us in such a degree as will argue sincerity. There is 'faith unfeigned,' 2 Tim. i. 5, and 'loving in deed and truth,' 1 John iii. 18. 'Faith unfeigned,' as when temporal things seem nothing to us, and are easily parted with; and 'love in deed and in truth,' is to relieve our brethren with our goods, yea, to give our lives for them if need be, as appeareth ver. 16, 17. But alas! love in most christians is cold; it will neither take pains, nor be at charge, much less lay down life for them, as Christ did for us; do little to maintain, comfort, or support Christ's servants in distress.

3. The broken-hearted, serious christian, that thinketh works can never have enough of his care, or too little of his trust, that is always hard at work for God, and yet seeth God must do all at last, he is persuaded that grace doth not weaken his duty, but enforce it; yet, when he hath done all, counteth himself but an unprofitable servant, and is still approving himself unto God more and more; and yet the more he doth, the more daily need he seeth of Christ. No man liveth under a greater dread of the holiness and justice of God, yet flieth oftener to his mercy. We must comfort these.

[1.] Consider, God observeth all the good that we do, and pondereth every action, of what kind soever it be; whether giving food, or clothing, or harbour, or entertainment, or visiting, or comforting; it will all be fruit abounding to your account, Phil. iv. 17. The more you abound in acts of communion with God, or relief towards such as are in misery, the greater will your reward be in the last day. There is fruit for our account, and abounding for our account.

[2.] The least actions done for Christ's sake shall be rewarded by him; for some of the actions are more inconsiderable than the other; yet, if done for Christ's sake, a meal's meat, a little harbour, yea, a visit, is taken notice of by him. He doth not say, Ye feasted me, ye made

me sumptuous entertainment; but, Ye gave me food, ye clothed me, ye visited, &c. The least action done for Christ's sake shall not go unrewarded: Mat. x. 42, 'Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in nowise lose his reward.'

[3.] God will pardon all their failings. Here is no mention of the evil, but the good they had done. An honest upright heart is dispensed with as to many weaknesses: Mal. iii. 17, 'I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.'

I come now to the second point:—

*Doct.* 2. That Christ ordereth his dispensations so that some of his people are exposed to necessity, others in a capacity to relieve them.

The privileges and promises of the gospel do not exempt the one from distress, nor do the duties and rules of the gospel make the possession of riches to the other unlawful. In the one sort of good men Christ is hungry and athirst, in the other sort of good men he feedeth and clotheth them: Christ is in the giver and receiver: these want, that they may have matter of patience; those abound, that they may have matter of bounty: Abraham was rich, Lazarus that slept in his bosom was poor. It is so—

1. That he may show himself to be the governor and disposer of all things here in the world, and that he giveth honour and riches to whomsoever he will, Dan. iv. 17. If these things were at the devil's disposal, God's friends should never have them.

2. To show that the bare possession is not unlawful; that it is not the having, but the ill use that bringeth so much mischief.

3. That the world may know somewhat of his favour to his people, and what prosperity he can bestow upon all if it were expedient: some diseases require cordials, others sharp and bitter potions.

4. That in the time of our exercise we may have a pledge what he will do for us hereafter, and give us in heaven.

5. That they may be instruments of his providence, to supply others that want house and harbour, and all necessaries; as the great veins receive blood to convey it to the lesser: some are kept under affliction. We sail more safely to the haven of salvation with an adverse wind than a prosperous.

*Use.* If it fall to your lot to give rather than to receive, bless God in that behalf, and neglect not your duty. God could level all to an equality, but he will not, that you may be instruments of his providence to cherish them: you should be a fountain, not to keep the water to yourselves, but to overflow for the necessity of others.

I come now to the third point:—

*Doct.* 3. That works of charity, done out of faith and love to God, are of greater weight and consequence than the world taketh them to be.

1. There is a command of God requireth it. Next to the great duties of the gospel, nothing more enforced. To relieve the necessities of the poor is not arbitrary, but a duty required of us according to our abilities; it is charity to them, but a due debt to God, and a part of our righteousness. Stewards are to dispense the estate by the master's command.

2. It is the trial of our love to Christ. He hath made the poor his proxies and deputies. We would cozen ourselves with an empty faith, and a cheap love, if God had not devolved his right upon our brethren: 1 John iii. 17, 'But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' If Christ were sick in a bed, we would visit him; if in want, we would relieve him. Christ is so nearly conjoined with his servants, that in their afflictions he is afflicted, in their comforts he is comforted; he looks upon it as done to him. The godly of old time thought themselves much honoured if they could get a prophet or an apostle to their houses: Heb. xiii. 1, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.' Here is Christ himself; will you refuse him who is heir of all things?

3. It is the great question interrogated by him at the great day of accounts. It is not, Have you heard? have you prophesied? have you ate and drank in my presence? but, Have you fed? have you clothed? have you visited? We are one day to come to this account, and what sorry accounts shall we make! So much for pleasure, for riot, for luxury, for bravery in apparel, and pomp in living, and little or nothing for God and his people; as if a steward should bring in his bill, so much spent in feasts, in rioting, in merry company, when his master's house lieth to ruin, the children starved, and the servants neglected. We are very liberal to our lusts, but sparing to God. A man that expecteth to be posed, is preparing himself, and would fain know the questions aforehand. Christ hath told us our question.

## SERMON XXIII.

*Then shall the righteous answer and say, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? and thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? and naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Insomuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*—MAT. XXV. 37–40.

WE have handled the sentence and the reason. The reason is amplified in some parabolical passages, which contain a dialogue or interchangeable discourse between Christ the King and his elect servants. In which you may observe—(1.) Their question, ver. 37–39; (2.) Christ's reply and answer, ver. 40. Not that such formal words shall pass to and fro at the day of judgment, between the judge and the judged; but only to represent the matter more sensibly, and in a more lively and impressive way to our minds.

First, For their question; certainly it is not moved—(1.) By way of doubt or exception to the reason alleged by the judge in his sentence, there being a perfect agreement and harmony of mind and will between

them. Neither (2.) Out of ignorance, as if they knew not that Christ was so much concerned in their works of love done to his children for his sake; for this they knew aforehand, that what was done to christians is done to Christ, and upon that account they do it as to Christ; and such ignorance cannot be supposed to be found in the glorified saints. (3.) Some say the question is put to express a holy wonder at what they hear and see; and no question Christ will then be admired in his saints, 2 Thes. i. 10. And three causes there may be of this wonder:—

1. Their humble sense of their own nothingness, that their services should be taken notice of and rewarded; that he should have such a respect for their mean offices of love, which they little esteemed of, and had no confidence in them.

2. The greatness of Christ's condescension, that he should have such a care of his mean servants, who were so despicable in the world.

3. The greatness of the reward. Christ shall so incomparably, above all that they could ask or think, reward his people, that they shall wonder at it. This sense is pious, taken up by most interpreters. I should acquiesce in it, but that I find the same question put by the reprobates afterwards, ver. 42–44; they use the same words; therefore I think the words are barely parabolical, brought in by Christ that he might have occasion further to declare himself how they fed him and clothed him, and what esteem he will put upon works of charity; and to impress this truth the more upon our minds, that what is done to his people is accepted by him as if it were done to his person. However, because the former sense is useful, I shall a little insist upon it in this note.

*Doct.* That when Christ shall come to reward his people, they shall have great cause to wonder at all that they see, hear, and enjoy.

1. They shall wonder at the reason alleged. They that are holy ever think humbly of their own works, and therefore, considering their no-deservings, their ill-deservings, they cannot satisfy themselves in admiring and extolling the rich grace of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he should take notice of anything of theirs, and produce it into judgment. See how they express themselves now: Ps. cxliii. 2, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant;' *Non dicit, Cum hostibus tuis.* So Ps. cxxx. 3, 'If thou shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?' So 1 Cor. iv. 4, 'For I know nothing by myself, yet am not I thereby justified;' Isa. lxiv. 6, 'But we are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' This thought they have of all they do, and their minds are not altered then, for this is the judgment of truth as well as of humility: Luke xvii. 10, 'When we have done all, we are unprofitable servants.' Their Lord hath taught them to say so and think so; they did not this out of compliment. And for their works of mercy, they were not to let their left hand know what their right hand did, Mat. vi. 3. It is a proverb that teaches us that we should not suffer ourselves to take notice of what we give in alms, nor esteem much of it, as if there were any worth therein; and therefore, when Christ maketh such reckoning of these things, their wonder will be raised; they will say, 'Lord, when

saw we thee an hungry or athirst?' Their true and sincere humility will make them cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour.' Lord, it is thy goodness; what have we done? The saints, when they are highest, still show the lowest signs of humility to their Redeemer, and confess that all the glory they have they have it from him, and are contented to lay it down at his feet, as holding it by his acceptance, and not their own merit; they have all and hold all by his grace, and therefore would have him receive the glory of all.

2. They shall wonder at the greatness of Christ's condescension and hearty love to his servants, though poor and despicable; for in the day of judgment he doth not commemorate the benefits done to him in person in the days of his flesh, but to his members in the time of his exaltation: he doth not mention the alabaster box of precious ointment poured on his head, nor the entertainments made him when he lived upon earth, but the feeding and clothing of his hungry and naked servants. The greatest part of christians never saw Christ in the flesh; but the poor they have always with them. Kindness to these is kindness to him. Again, among these he doth not mention the most eminent, the prophets and apostles, or the great instruments of his glory in the world, but the least of his brethren, even those that are not only little and despicable in the esteem of the world, but those that are little and despicable in the church, in respect of others that are of more eminent use and service. Again, the least kindness shown unto them: Mat. x. 42, 'Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.' He had spoken before of kindness to prophets and righteous men, men of eminent gifts and graces; then ordinary disciples; among these, the least and most contemptible, either as to outward condition or state of life, or to use and service, and, it may be, inward grace. Now all this showeth what value Christ sets upon the meanest christians, and the smallest and meanest respect that is showed them. The smallness and meanness of the benefit shall not diminish his esteem of your affection: anything done to his people, as his people, will be owned and noted. When the saints, that newly came from the neglects and scorns of an unbelieving world, shall see and hear all this, what cause will they have to wonder, and say, Lord, who hath owned thee in these? Alas! in the world all is quite contrary. Let a man profess Christ, and resemble Christ in a lively manner, and own Christ thoroughly, presently he is (*σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον*) set up for a sign of contradiction; and that, not only among pagans, but professing christians; yea, by those that would seem to be of great note in the church, as the corner-stone was refused by the builders, 1 Peter ii. 7. And therefore, when Christ taketh himself to be so concerned in their benefits and injuries, they have cause to wonder: Christ was in these, and the world knew it not.

3. At the greatness of the reward; that he should not only take notice of these acts of kindness, but so amply remunerate them. In the rewards of grace God worketh beyond human imagination and apprehension: 1 Cor. ii. 9, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither

have entered into the heart of man, the things God hath prepared for them that love him.' We cannot, by all that we see and hear in this world, which are the senses of learning, form a conception large enough for the blessedness of this estate. Enjoyers and beholders will wonder at the grace, and bounty, and power of their Redeemer. It is a transcendent, hyperbolical weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Where is anything that they can do or suffer that is worthy to be mentioned or compared with so great a recompense? When these bodies of earth and bodies of dust shall shine like the stars in brightness, these sublime souls of ours see God face to face, these wavering and inconstant hearts of ours shall be immutably and indeclinably fastened to love him and serve him and praise him; as without defection, so without intermission and interruption; and our ignominy turned into honour; and our misery into everlasting happiness: Lord, what work of ours can be produced as to be rewarded with so great a blessedness?

*Use.* That which we learn from this question of theirs, supposed to be conceived upon these grounds, is—

1. A humble sense of all that we do for God. The righteous remember not anything that they did worthy of Christ's notice; and we should be like-minded: Neh. xiii. 22, 'Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.' When we have done our best, we had need to be spared and forgiven rather than rewarded. On the contrary, Luke xviii. 11, 'The pharisee stood and prayed thus to himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.' And those, Isa. lviii. 3, 'Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?' They challenge God for their work. None more apt to rest in their own righteousness than they that have the least cause. Formal duties do not discover weakness, and so men are apt to be puffed up; they search little, and so rest in some outward things. It is no great charge to maintain painted fire. The substantial duties of christianity, such as faith and repentance, imply self-humbling; but external things produce self-exalting. They put the soul to no stress. Laden boughs hang the head most; so are holy christians most humble. None labour so much as they do in working out their salvation; and none so sensible of their weaknesses and imperfections. Old wine puts the bottles in no danger, there is no strength and spirits left in it; so do formal duties little put the soul to it. On the other side, they are conscious to so many weaknesses as serious duties will bring into the view of conscience, and have a deep sense of their obligations to the love and goodness of God, and a strong persuasion of the blessed reward. None are so humble as they: they see so much infirmity for the present, so much obligation from what is past, and such sure hope of what is to come, that they can scarce own a duty as a duty. None do duties with more care, and none are less mindful of what they have done. They discern little else in it, that they contribute anything to a good action, but the sin of it. This is to do God's work with an evangelical spirit; doing our utmost, and still ascribing all to our Mediator and blessed Redeemer.

2. What value and esteem we should have for Christ's servants and faithful worshippers. Christ treateth his mystical body with greater indulgence, love, and respect than he did his natural body; for he doth not dispense his judgment with respect to that, but these. He would not have us know him after the flesh, 2 Cor. v. 16; please ourselves with the conceit of what we would do to him if he were alive and here upon earth; but he will judge us according to the respect or disrespect we show to his members, even to the meanest among them; to wrong them is to wrong Christ: Zech. ii. 8, 'He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.' The church's trouble goes near his heart, which in due time will be manifested upon the instruments thereof. To slight them is to slight Christ: 'He that despiseth you, despiseth me.' To grieve and offend them is to grieve and offend Christ: Mat. xviii. 10, 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' Did we but consider the value Christ puts upon the meanest christian, we would be loath to offend them. What comfort, love, kindness you show to them, it is reckoned by Christ as done to himself. If we would look upon things now as they shall be looked upon at the day of judgment, we would find our hands and tongues tied and bridled from injuring Christ's faithful servants; yea, we would show more of a christian spirit in relieving their bodily and spiritual necessities, and doing good upon all occasions.

3. It teacheth us to take off our thoughts from things temporal to things eternal; both in judging of ourselves and others. The great miscarriage of the world is because they measure all things by sense and visible appearance: 'Now we are the sons of God; but it doth not appear what we shall be,' 1 John iii. 2. Heirs in the world are bred up suitable to their birth and hopes, but God's sons and heirs make no fair show in the flesh.

[1.] Do not judge amiss of others. God's people are a poor, despised, hated, scorned company in the world as to visible appearance; and what proof of Christ is there in them? Who can see Christ in a hungry beggar? or the glorious Son of God in an imprisoned and scorned believer? or one beloved of God in him that is mortified with continual sicknesses and diseases? 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or sick, and in prison?' A pearl or a jewel that is fallen into the dirt, you cannot discern the worth of it till you wash it, and see it sparkle. A prince in disguise may be jostled and affronted. To a common eye things go better with the wicked than with the children of God. They enjoy little of the honour and pleasure and esteem of the world, and yet they are the 'excellent ones of the earth,' Ps. xvi. 3. If you can see anything of Christ in them, of the image of God in them, you will one day see them other manner of persons than now you see them, or they appear to be. These will be owned when others are disclaimed, and glorified when they are rejected and banished out of Christ's presence; and though your companying with them be a disgrace to you now, it will then be your greatest joy and comfort.

[2.] Do not judge amiss of yourselves. When the world doth not esteem of us, but is ready to put many injuries upon us, and to follow us with hatred and sundry persecutions, we are apt to judge ourselves

forsaken of God; that we have no room or place in his heart, or else these things would not befall us. Oh, no! Christ may be imprisoned in his members, banished in his members, reduced to great straits and exigencies in his members; yea, by the hand of God you may be made poor and hungry and naked; but all this shall be recompensed to you. We must not walk by sense, but by faith, 2 Cor. v. 7. Time will come when they that wonder at our afflictions shall wonder at us for the glory that Christ will put upon us, when you and all the saints about you shall say, Little did I think that a poor, base, laborious, miserable life should have such a glorious end and close. Christians, wait but a little time, and you will have more cause to wonder at the glory that shall be revealed in you than at the afflictions you now endure.

Secondly, We now come to Christ's answer and reply to this question. Wherein—

1. Take notice of the note of averment and assurance, 'Verily I say unto you.' I do the rather observe it, because I find the like in a parallel place: Mat. x. 42, 'Verily I say unto you, He shall in nowise lose his reward.' This showeth that it is hardly believed in the world, but yet it is a certain truth.

2. The answer itself; wherein the former passages are explained of Christ's being hungry, thirsty, naked, exiled, imprisoned; the riddle is opened. What is done to the afflicted, Christ taketh it as if it were done to him in person.

In this answer observe—

[1.] The title that is put upon afflicted christians; they are his 'brethren.'

[2.] The extent and universality of this title; the meanest are not excepted, 'The least of these my brethren.' The meanest as well as the most excellent; the poor, the abject of the world, believing in Christ, are accounted his brethren.

[3.] The particular application of this title, to every one of them, 'To one of the least of my brethren.' We cannot do good to all; yet if we do good to one, or to as many as are within our reach or the compass of our ability, it shall not be unrewarded.

[4.] The interpretation of the kindness showed to these brethren, 'What you have done to the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.'

1. I shall first consider the force and importance of these expressions.

2. Their scope and intendment here, which is to bind us to acts of charity and relief to Christ's poorest servants.

*First*, For the force and importance of these expressions. And there, first, observe, that whoever believeth in Christ are accounted as his brethren and sisters, and he will not be ashamed to own them as such at the last day.

Here I shall show you—(1.) Who are brethren; (2.) What a privilege this is.

First, Who are brethren? Some by brethren understand mankind; and so, 'What you have done to the least of my brethren,' in their sense, is to the meanest man alive, partaker of that human nature

which I have honoured by assuming it. But that is brethren in the largest sense. No; that is not his meaning here. Upon what grounds charity is to be expressed to them I shall show you more fully by and by. To do good to a poor man, as to a poor man, is a work of natural mercy; but to do good to a poor man, as he is one of Christ's brethren, is a work of christian charity: 2 Peter i. 7, 'Add to brotherly kindness, charity.' *Φιλαδελφία* and *ἀγαπη*, is distinguished. There is a more kindly and tender affection that we owe to those who are children of the same father, or are in charity bound to judge so, by sympathising with them in trouble, supplying their necessities, every way studying to promote their spiritual and temporal welfare. But a general love to all we must thirst after, and endeavour the true good of all, to whom we may be profitable. But the title of brethren to Christ groweth from faith, by which we are made the children of God: John i. 12, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' And therefore Christ calleth them brethren. And it is very notable to observe: Heb. ii. 11, 'For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' Mark, the kindred is only reckoned to the sanctified: though all mankind have the same nature, come of the same stock, yet 'He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' There the relation holdeth of both sides. Christ is born of a woman, and they are born of God, John i. 13; and so he is a kinsman doubly. *Ratione incarnationis suæ et regenerationis nostræ*, as Macarius. He taketh part of flesh and blood, partaketh of human nature; and we are made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4; and Mat. xii. 47–50, 'Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee: but he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'

Secondly, Now I shall show you, in the next place, what a privilege this is. I shall show you—

1. What condescension there is on Christ's part, that he should count the least of his people, not only for his own, but for his brethren. The apostle saith, 'He is not ashamed,' Heb. ii. 11. We are said to be ashamed in two cases:—

[1.] When we do anything that is filthy. As long as we have the heart of a man, we cannot do anything that hath filthiness in it without shame. Or—

[2.] When we do anything beneath that dignity and rank which we sustain in the world. The former consideration is of no place here; the latter then must be considered. Those that bear any rank and port in the world are ashamed to be too familiar with their inferiors; yet such is the love of Christ towards his people, that though he be infinitely greater and more worthy than us, yet 'he is not ashamed to call us brethren.' It is said, Prov. xix. 7, 'All the brethren of the poor do hate him.' If a man fall behind-hand in the world, his friends

look askew upon him; but Jesus Christ, though he be the eternal Son of God, by whom he made the world, the splendour of his Father's glory, and the brightness of his person, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, and we be poor, vile, and unworthy creatures, yet he disdaineth not to call us brethren, notwithstanding our meanness and unworthiness, and his own glory and excellency. Divines observe that Christ never gave his disciples the title of brethren but after his resurrection; before, servants, little children, friends, were their usual designations; but then he expressly calleth them brethren: John xiii. 13, 14, 'Ye call me lord and master, for so I am;' and John xii. 26, 'If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be.' Friends: John xv. 15, 'I have called you friends.' But after the resurrection the style of brethren is very frequent: Mat. xxviii. 10, 'Go tell my brethren, I go into Galilee;' and John xx. 17, 'Go to my brethren, and tell them, I go to my Father, and your Father.' And at the last day he giveth this title to all the elect, that are put at his right hand.

*Quest.* But what is the reason of this?

*Ans.* Though the ground were laid in the incarnation, when Christ naturalised himself to us, and became one of our own line, yet he doth expressly own it after his resurrection, and will own it at his coming to judgment, to show that his glory and exaltation doth not diminish his affections towards his people, but rather the expressions thereof are enlarged. He still continueth our brother, and will do so as long as our nature remaineth in the unity of his person, which will be to all eternity.

2. That it is a real privilege to us; it is a title of great dearness and intimacy; it is not an idle compliment, for there is cause and reason for it, *διὰ τὴν αἰτίαν*. All mankind coming of one father, and being made of one blood, are brethren; and Christ reckoneth himself among us, and assumeth the relation proper to his nature, especially when we get a new kindred by grace. It is not an empty title, but a great and real privilege; not a nominal, titular relation, to put honour upon us, but to give us benefit, Rom. viii. 17, and for the present assureth us of his tender respect.

*Use* 1. It comforts us against the sense of our own unworthiness. Though our nature be removed so many degrees of distance from God, and at that time polluted with sin, when Christ glorified it, and assumed it into his own person, yet all this hindered him not from taking our nature, and the title depending thereupon. Therefore the sense of our unworthiness, when it is seriously laid to heart, should not hinder us from looking after the benefits we need, and which are in his power to bestow upon us. This term should revive us. Whatever serves to our comfort and glory, Christ will think it no disgrace to do it for us. This may be one reason why Christ biddeth them tell his brethren, 'I am risen,' Mat. xxviii. 10. The poor disciples were greatly dejected and confounded in themselves; they had all forsaken him, and fled from him; Peter had denied him, and forsworn him; what could they look for from him but a sharp and harsh exprobration of their fear and cowardice? But he comforts them with this message, 'Go tell my disciples, and Peter, that I am risen.' The fallen man is

not forgotten. Peter was weeping bitterly for his fault, but Christ sends him a comfortable message, 'Go tell Peter I am risen.'

Secondly, The next thing that I shall observe is—

*Doct.* That what is done to his people, to the least of them, Christ will esteem it as done to himself.

1. It holdeth true in injuries: Isa. lxiii. 9, 'In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;' and Acts ix. 4, 'And he fell to the earth, and he heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Christ was wronged when the saints were wronged. He is above passion, but not above compassion. The enemies of the church have not men for their enemies, but Christ himself. When they are mocked and scorned, Christ is mocked and scorned.

2. It holdeth also true of benefits. The least courtesy or act of kindness showed to them is showed to Christ; that which is done in Christ's name, and for Christ's sake, is done unto Christ. You do not consider the man so much as Christ in him. The apostle saith they 'received him even as Christ Jesus,' Gal. iv. 14; that is, in his name, and as his messenger, 2 Cor. v. 10; and Luke x. 16, 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me;' as a king is resisted in a constable armed with his authority. As when we go to God in Christ's name, whatever we obtain is put upon Christ's account (it is not for our merit, but Christ's), so whatsoever you do to any person in Christ's name, and for Christ's sake, is done to Christ. If you send another in your name, if he be denied, you take yourselves to be denied; if granted for your sake, you think it granted to you.

I come now to consider—

*Secondly*, The scope. These things are parabolically represented, to increase our faith concerning the reward of charity. The doctrine is this—

*Doct.* That one special end and use unto which rich men should employ their worldly wealth should be the help and relief of the poor. Consider—

1. In the general, it is not to the rich, but to the poor. Feasts and entertainments are usually for the rich; but Christ saith, Luke xiv. 12–14, 'When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, thy brethren, neither thy kinsman, nor thy neighbour; lest they bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the blind, the lame; and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.' Many truck with their kindness; they make merchandise rather than impart their charity: this is not charity, but merchandise.

2. Of the poor there are three sorts:—

[1.] *Pauperes diaboli*, the devil's poor; such as have riotously spent their patrimonies and reduced themselves to rags and beggary by their own misgovernment. These are not wholly to be excluded when their necessity is extreme; you give it to the man, not to the sin: it may work upon them, especially when you join spiritual alms with temporal.

[2.] There are *pauperes mundi*, the world's poor: such as come of

poor parents and live in poor estate; those are to be relieved: there is a common tie of nature between us and them: Isa. lviii. 7, 'Thou shalt not hide thyself from thine own flesh.'

[3.] There are *pauperes Christi*, Christ's poor; such as have suffered loss of goods for Christ's sake, or being otherwise poor, profess the gospel; these especially should be relieved: Rom. xii. 13, 'Distributing to the necessities of the saints;' and Gal. vi. 10, 'Let us do good to all, especially to the household of faith.' There is an order; first, our own families, our parents, our children or kindred, 1 Tim. v. 8; then strangers; and among them those that profess the same faith with us; and then them who do most evidence the reality of faith by a holy life; and then to all, as occasion is offered.

Reasons of this duty.

1. The near union that is between Christ and his people. Christ and believers are one and the same mystical body, with Christ their head: 1 Cor. xii. 12, 'For, as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body; so is Christ.' Now that union compriseth all: 'When one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it,' ver. 26. There is a sympathy and fellow-feeling. When you tread upon the toe the tongue will cry out, and say, You have hurt me. They cast themselves out of the body that have not common joys and common sorrows with the rest of the members.

2. Christ hath commended them to us as his proxies and deputies. He himself receiveth nothing from us; he is above our kindness, being exalted into the heavens; but in every age he leaveth some to try the respects of the world. Oh! what men would do for Christ if he were now in the flesh! It is a usual deceit of heart to betray our duties by our wishes. Now Christ hath put some in his place: 1 John iv. 20, 'If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' We would be as much prejudiced against Christ as we are against the godly poor. That which your servant receiveth by your order, you receive it. He receiveth your respects by the hands of the poor; he hath devolved this right on the poor as his deputies: Mat. xxvi. 11, 'For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always.' We pretend much love to Christ; if he were sick in a bed, we would visit him; if in prison, or in want, we would relieve him. What is done to one of these is done to him.

3. It is a great honour put upon us to be instruments of divine providence and preservation of others. You are God's substitutes in giving, as the poor in receiving. As gods to them, we relieve and comfort them. He could give to them without thee, but God will put the honour of the work upon thee. This is the greatest resemblance of God: Acts xx. 35, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive;' that is, more God-like. It is a great mercy to be able and willing: Luke vi. 36, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.' The true advantage of wealth is in relieving and supporting others; nothing showeth our conformity to God so much as this. Christ saith not, If ye fast, ye shall be like your heavenly Father, or, If ye pray, or, If ye prophesy, or, If ye be learned; but, 'If ye be

merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.' Thou holdest the place of God, and art as it were a god to them.

4. The profit of this duty. It seemeth a loss, but it is the most gainful trade in the world. It is the way to preserve your estates, to increase them, to cleanse them, to provide for eternal comfort in them.

[1.] To keep what you have. Your goods are best secured to you when they are deposited in God's hands; you provide 'bags that wax not old.' Many an estate hath been wasted for want of charity, James v. 2, 3.

[2.] To increase it, as seed in the ground. The husbandman getteth nothing by keeping the corn by him: 2 Cor. ix. 6, 'He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully;' Deut. xv. 10, 'When thou givest to thy poor brother, the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto.' All your works of mercy and liberality shall be abundantly repaid: Luke vi. 36, 'Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.' But above all, Prov. xix. 17, 'He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord; that which he hath given he shall pay him again.' If you would put out your money to the best advantage, lend it to the Lord; the interest shall be infinitely greater than the principal. What better security than God's? He is a sure paymaster, and he will pay them to the full, great increase for all that he borroweth, a hundred for one, which is a usury not yet heard of in the world. You can expect nothing from the poor sort; they have nothing to give you; but God is their surety, he that is the great possessor of heaven and earth, that never broke his word. Nay, we have his hand and seal to show for it; his bond is the scriptures, his seal the sacraments; therefore he will pay you. But you will say, These are words. Venture a little and try: Mal. iii. 10, 'Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord. Give, and it shall be given to you.' Whereas, on the contrary, if you forbear to give, God will forbear to bless; as the widow's oil, the more it run the more it increased, and the loaves were multiplied by the distribution. And then—

[3.] It cleanseth your estate; you will enjoy the remainder more comfortably. Wells are the sweeter for draining; so are riches, when used as the fuel of charity. There are terrible passages against rich men: 'How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.' There is no way to free ourselves from the snare but to be liberal and open-handed upon all occasions: Luke xi. 41, 'Give alms, and all things shall be clean to you.'

[4.] You may possess an estate with a good conscience. It will not easily prove a snare. Nay, you shall have comfort of it for ever; you shall have treasure in heaven: Luke xii. 13, 'Sell that you have and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.' Whatever shift you make, rather sell than want to give out disbursements in this life, and your payment shall be in the next.

*Use* is reproof, because there are so few true christians in the world. Many men have great estates, but they have not a heart to be helpful to their poor brethren and neighbours, are very backward and full of

repinings when they give anything. They are liberal to their lusts, gaming, drinking, rioting, luxury, in lawsuits, and costly apparel. Do these men believe there is a heaven and hell, and a day of judgment?

For motives.

1. Thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Thou shalt not part with thy goods, so much as change them for those that are incomparably better. There is a reward for the liberal and open-handed. What is given to the poor is not cast away, but well bestowed. Now is the seed-time, the harvest is hereafter. The poor cannot requite thee; therefore God will: Luke xii. 14, 'A cup of cold water, given in charity, shall not want its reward,' Mat. x.

2. This reward is propounded to encourage us. Christ doth not only instruct us by commands, but allure us by promises. There is a dispute whether we may look to the reward. I say, we not only may, but must. Did we oftener think of treasure in heaven we would more easily forego present things.

3. The reward which we shall receive not only answereth the reward,[1] but far exceeds it. It is called a treasure: 'The riches of glory,' Eph. i. 18; and so are far better than these transitory riches which we cannot long keep. Thou shalt have eternal riches, which shall never be lost. Our treasure in heaven is more precious and more certain, Mat. vi. 19, 20.

4. This reward is not in this life, but in the life to come; treasure in heaven. What is it to be rich in this world? They are but uncertain riches: 1 Tim. vi. 17, 'Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.' Bracelets of copper and glass and little beads, and such like trifles, are valued by the rude barbarians, that are contemptible with us. The use and valuation of earthly things ceaseth in the world to come; it only holdeth on this side the grave. What we now lend to the Lord we must make it over, that we may receive it by exchange there.

5. It is a very pleasing thing to God: Acts x. 4, 'Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before the Lord.' They are a delight to God: Heb. xiii. 16, 'For with such sacrifices God is well pleased;' as the sweet incense that was offered with the sacrifice; not appeased, but well pleased. So Phil. iv. 18, 'An odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.'

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## SERMON XXIV.

*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* —MAT. XXV. 41.

I COME now to speak of hell. Startle not at the argument; we must curse as well as bless. See our gospel commission, Mark xvi. 16.

In this verse you have—(1.) The persons sentenced; (2.) The sentence itself.

[1] Qu. action,' or some such word?—ED.

First, The persons sentenced; in that title, or terrible compellation, *ye cursed.*

Secondly, The sentence itself; where we have—

1. *Pœna damni,* the punishment of loss, *depart.*
2. *Pœna sensus,* the pains, into *fire.*
3. The duration, *everlasting.*
4. The company and society, the *devil and his angels.*

I shall prosecute the text in this order:—

1. Show you that there are everlasting torments in hell, prepared for the wicked.
2. These torments shall be full at the day of judgment.
3. Concerning the persons sentenced; it shall light upon the cursed.
4. The nature of those torments; the loss of communion with God in Christ, and the horrible pain of fire; the duration, everlasting; and the company, the devil and his angels.

First, That there is a place of everlasting torments in hell, prepared for the wicked.

This being a truth hated by flesh and blood, ought the more strongly to be made evident to us. Now there is a hell, if God, or men, or devils may be judge.

1. Let God be the judge. He hath ever told the world of a hell, in the Old Testament and the New.

[1.] In the Old Testament, but sparingly, because immortality was reserved as a glorious discovery, fit for the times of the gospel: Deut. xxxii. 22, 'A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell.' God's wrath is still represented by fire, which is an active instrument of destruction; and the seat and residence of it is in the lowest hell, in the other world. So Ps. xi. 6, 'Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, and fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest.' First snares, and then fire and brimstone. Here they are held with the cords of vanity, and hereafter in chains of darkness. Here they have their comforts, crosses, snares; then hell-fire for their portion. So Isa. xxx. 33, 'For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire, and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.' Tophet is the same place which is called the valley of Hinnom and Gehenna in the New Testament; a filthy hateful place, which the Jews defiled with dead men's bones: 2 Kings xxiii. 10, 'And he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. And he brake in pieces the image, and cut down the groves, and defiled their places with the bones of men.' Infants were burnt there, with horrible cries and screeches, and sound of drums and tabrets and other instruments, to drown the noise; and those that were condemned were burnt in that valley, as also the bones of malefactors. Now, to the piles of wood, and the piles continually burning there, doth the prophet allude. This was represented in Sodom's burning as a type, as the drowning of the world was a figure of Christ's coming to judgment: the burning of the sacrifice, which, in the interpretation of the law, was the sinner himself, was the figure of it.

[2.] Now come we to the New Testament. There are places without number. It is sometimes represented by fire, where we read of a furnace of fire: Mat. xiii. 42, 'And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' God's wrath is compared in the Old Testament to a fiery oven, where the contracted flame appeareth most dreadful. Sometimes to a lake of fire: Rev. xix. 20, 'And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; both these were cast into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone.' At other times it is compared to a prison: 1 Peter iii. 19, 'By which also he went and preached to the spirits that are in prison.' Or to a bottomless pit: Rev. ix. 11, 'And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit.' There is darkness, and chains, and gaoler, and judge; the chains of invincible providence, and their own horrible despair. There is no making an escape; but of this more hereafter. So that, unless we will count God a liar, there is such a place of torment provided.

2. Ask men. The blind nations had a sense of eternity, and fancies of a heaven and hell, Elysian fields, and obscure mansions, and places of torment. There are some relics of this truth in the corrupt doctrine of the Gentiles. But we need not go so far back as tradition: look to conscience. Wicked men find in themselves an apprehension of immortality and punishment after death: Rom. i. 32, 'Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.' Reason showeth that he that perfectly hateth sin will perfectly punish it; not in this life, for abominable sinners are many times prosperous: here justice is not discovered to the utmost, therefore guilty conscience presageth there is more evil to come. There is much in these presages of conscience, especially when we are more serious, however they dissemble the matter when well: Heb. ii. 15, 'And deliver them from the fear of death, who all their lifetime were subject to bondage.' Yet, when they come to die, when they are entering upon the confines of eternity, then they cannot hide their fears any longer. Oh! the horrors and terrors of wicked men when they lie a dying! If ever men may be believed, it is then.

3. The devils are orthodox in this point for judges. There are no atheists in hell: Mat. viii. 29, 'And behold they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?' They know there is a time when they shall be in greater torment than now they are. Therefore, if we will take God's word or authentic record for it, or man's word when he is not in a case to dissemble, or the devil's word, there is a hell, or everlasting torments prepared for the wicked.

*Object.* 1. But is it not an everlasting abode under death, and, to make it the more terrible to vulgar capacities, expressed by eternal fire?

*Ans.* This were to make Christ a deceiver indeed, and to publish his doctrine with a lie or a handsome fraud. But clearly—

1. There is a state of torment, as well as a state of death. It is true it is called the second death, because deprived of eternal life,

which is the only true life; and because it is worse than the temporal death; better never have been born: Mat. xxvi. 24, 'It had been good for that man that he had never been born.' He doth not say, It had been good, but, It had been good *for that man*. If only death and annihilation were in it, what sense would there be in this speech? Therefore there is a lively and effectual sense of the wrath of God. Besides, the consciences of wicked men do fear and presage other kind of punishment from God's wrath, or else why are they most troubled when they come to die? Why is it so dreadful a thing to fall into the hands of the living God? Heb. x. 31. We are mortal creatures, but God is a living God; why should the eternity of God make his wrath terrible, but that there is a fear of an eternal subsistence on our part also? We read of many and fewer stripes, Luke xii. 47, 48; Mat. xi. 22, 'It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you.' If it be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you, torments are measured out by proportion, according to our sins, and means of grace that we have enjoyed but not improved.

2. There is a place of torment, a local hell, *τόπον βασάνου*: Luke xvi. 28, 'This place of torment.' And Judas went to his own place, Acts i. 25. As in all commonwealths, the prince hath not only his palace but his prison; it must be somewhere, for the wicked are somewhere: God keepeth it secret with wise counsel, because he will exercise our faith, and not our sense: Job xxxviii. 17, 'Have the gates of death been opened to thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?' This is one of the secrets of providence.

*Object.* 2. But how can it stand with God's love and mercy to punish his creature for ever? Our bowels are troubled if we should hear the howling of a dog in a fiery furnace for a small space of time. Now God is love itself, 1 John iv. 8; therefore surely he will not damn his creature to everlasting torments.

*Ans.* Man is not fit to fix the bounds of God's mercy, but the Lord himself; therefore take these considerations:—

1. God's punishments may stand with his mercy. It is very notable, in one place it is said, Heb. x. 31, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;' but in another place it is said, 2 Sam. xxiv. 14, 'I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great.' The one noteth God angry, the other God appeased. When God hath been long upon a treaty of love, patience abused is turned into fury. The one showeth what God is in himself, love, sweetness, mercy; the other, what he is when provoked. The sea in itself is smooth and calm, but when the winds and tempests arise, how dreadfully it roareth. God's attributes must not be set a-quarrelling. He is love and mercy, but he is also just, and true, and holy. If he were not angry for sin, he should not love his justice, make good his truth, manifest his holiness, and so hate himself. If God should pardon all sins, his abhorrency and hatred of sin could not be manifested, and so he would lose the honour of his infinite holiness; therefore in men and angels he would declare his displeasure of it, and no less hatred of the sinner. God saw it best for his own glory to suffer some to sin, and by sin to come to punishment. Therefore do not wallow in thy filthiness, and think that God will be all honey, that

mercy will bear thee out. He hath said that liars and drunkards shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. If God is merciful, and yet did such things to Christ, certainly he may remain merciful much more, and yet punish thee.

2. God doth it to show his mercy to others; it was necessary for the whole world that God should inflict so severe a punishment. Punishments are not always for the emendation of the delinquent, but for the good of others. The howlings and groanings of the damned maketh the harmony and music of providence more entire, saith Gerson. It was a necessary provision for the good of the whole world, and meet for the beauty of providence, that God should have a prison as well as a palace. Besides, for the restraint of sin, there is more mercy in the restraint of sin, or the taking away of sin, than there would be in restraining the punishment; this is the great means to lessen corruption. Origen, that thought the punishment of hell should one day have an end, yet thought not good to suppress this doctrine, lest men should take liberty to sin. So Epicurus and Seneca, that looked upon it as a poetical fiction, thought it to be a fit invention. A temporal punishment would not have been enough to restrain men; men are obstinate in sin, and will endure any temporal inconveniences rather than part with their lusts: Micah vi., 'Rivers of oil, the first-born of their bodies for the sin of their souls;' and Baal's priests gashed themselves. It was the wisdom of God to find out such a remedy; so that we may say, that God could not have been so merciful if he had not appointed these everlasting torments. It was necessary they should be, for they are a good help to virtue; and to threaten, unless they were, will not stand with truth. Now which is the greater mercy? to take away punishments or sins? to lessen the miseries of mankind or their corruptions? Many have escaped hell by thinking of the torments of it.

3. The damned in hell cannot accuse God for want of mercy; it will be a part of their torment in hell to remember that God hath been gracious; conscience will be forced to acknowledge it, and to acquit God. Though they hate God and blaspheme him, yet they will remember the offers of grace, riches of goodness, and care of his providence: 'They will not see, but shall see,' Isa. xxvi. 11. *Oculos quos occlusit culpa, aperiet pœna.* As now when God bringeth carnal men under mercies, it is one of the greatest aggravations.

*Object.* 3. How can it stand with his justice to punish a temporary act with eternal torment or punishment?

*Ans.* 1. We are finite creatures, and so not fit judges of the nature of an offence against God; the lawgiver best knoweth the merit of sin, which is the transgression of the law. The majesty against which they sin is infinite; the authority of God is enough, and his will the highest reason. A jeweller best knoweth the price of a jewel, and an artist in a picture or sculpture can best judge of the errors of it.

2. With man, offences of a quick execution meet with a long punishment, and the continuance of the penalty in no case is to be measured with the continuance of the act of sin. *Scelus non temporis magnitudine, sed iniquitatis magnitudine metiendum est.* Because man sinneth as long as he can, he sinneth *in æterno suo* (as Aquinas),

therefore he is punished *in æterno Dei*. We would live for ever to sin for ever, and because men despise an eternal happiness, therefore do they justly suffer eternal torment; and their obligations to God being infinite, their punishment ariseth according to the excess of their obligations.

*Use* 1. It informeth us of the evil of sin. God will never be reconciled to them that die in their sins, but for ever and for ever his bowels are shrunk up; though God be love itself, and delighteth in nothing so much as in doing good to the creature, yet he doth not only turn away his face, but torment them for ever.

*Use* 2. It reproveth and convinceth—(1.) The atheist; and (2.) The carnal sensualist.

1. The atheist. These men are short-sighted; they cannot out-see time, and look beyond the grave. There is a hell; how will you escape it? Men think incredulity or unbelief is the best remedy against this fear. Do but consider, there is ten thousand to one, at least, against you. None more credulous than the atheist. If it prove true, in what a case are you? As sure as God is, this is true. It will do you no hurt to venture the safest way, upon probabilities, till we have further assurance. Take heed of indenting with God upon your own terms: Luke xvi. 31, 'They have Moses and the prophets; if they believe not them, neither will they be persuaded if one came from the dead.' We will give laws to heaven, have one come from the dead. God is not bound to make them see that wilfully shut their eyes, nor to alter the course of his providence for our sake.

2. The carnal sensualist; that is, the practical atheist, that put it off, because they cannot put it away, Amos vi. 3. Many that know themselves careless, wretched creatures, yet are not at all troubled about things to come. A star that is bigger than the earth yet seemeth to us to be but a spark, because of the great distance between them and us. The sensual man looketh upon all things of the other world to be at a distance. It may be nearer than they are aware of; their damnation sleepeth not; it lieth watching to take hold of them. God can easily put you into the suburbs of hell, as Belshazzar, Dan. viii. 5, if you be negligent, and slip your time. You should labour to be found of him in peace. Now is the time of making peace with God; if not, 'Depart, ye cursed.' So is every man by nature. And such who were never brought to a sense of the curse, and have not fled to Christ for refuge, Heb. vi. 18, and are not at leisure to think of eternity, God's curse cleaveth to them.

*Use* 3. To chide us for our unbelief. The knowledge of these things swimmeth in the brains; we are guilty of incogitancy at least. This appeareth—

1. By our drowsiness, and weakness, and carelessness about the things of eternity. Did we believe that for every lie we told, or every one whom we deceived or slandered, we were forced to hold our hands in scalding lead for half an hour, how afraid would men be to commit an offence! Temporal things affect us more than eternal. Who would taste meat if he knew it were present death, or that it would cost him bitter gripes and torments? How cautious are we in eating or drinking anything in the stone or cholic or gout, where it is but probable

it will do us hurt! We know certainly that sin hath death in it: 'The wages of sin is death,' Rom vi. 23; yet we continue in sin.

2. By our backwardness to good works. Sins of omission will damn a man, as well as sins of commission, small as well as great. Christ saith not, Ye have robbed, but, Not fed, not clothed; not, Blasphemed, but, Not invoked the name of God; not that you have done hurt, but that you have done no good.

3. By our weakness in temptations and conflicts. We cannot deny a carnal pleasure, nor withstand a carnal fear, Mat. x. 28; shrink at the least pains in duty. The whole world promised for a reward cannot induce us to enter into a fiery furnace for half an hour; yet, for a momentary pleasure, we run the hazard of eternal torments.

4. By our carelessness in the matters of our peace. If a man were in danger of death every moment, he would not be quiet till he had got a pardon. How can a man be quiet till he hath secured his soul in the hands of Jesus Christ? 'He that believeth not in Christ, the wrath of God abideth on him.'

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## SERMON XXV.

*Then shall he say to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*— MAT. XXV. 41.

I COME now to the second doctrine.

*Doct.* 2. That these torments shall be full at the day of judgment: 'Then shall he say,' &c.

First, There is something presupposed, that they begin presently after death. They are in hell as soon as the soul departeth out of the body; that is, as to the soul, as to the better half: Luke xvi. 22, 23, 'And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.' It is a parable, but sure Christ spake intelligibly, and according to the received doctrine of the church in those times. Mark how quick it followeth. Here he had his pleasures: ἀπέθανε δὲ καὶ ὁ πλούσιος, 'The rich man also died' (rich men die as well as others), 'and was buried;' it may be, had a pompous and stately funeral, when the soul is in hell. The body is left in the hands of death, but the soul is in a living and suffering condition. The souls of good men are in heaven: Heb. xii. 24, 'Spirits of just men made perfect.' It would be uncomfortable for the saints to tarry out of the arms of Christ so long as the last judgment, to be in a drowsy estate, wherein they neither enjoy God nor glorify him. And so the spirits of wicked men, they are in hell, ἐν φυλακῇ: 1 Peter iii. 19, 'Who were sometimes disobedient, now in prison.' It would be some kind of comfort to the wicked to be so long delayed. The time is long till the last judgment, and we are not moved with things at a distance, what shall be thousands of years hence. It begetteth a greater awe when the danger is nigh. Oh!

let this startle wicked men: before night they may be in hell, before the body be committed to the grave: the soul flitteth hence as soon as it departeth out of the body, to God that gave it, to receive woe or weal. The hour of death is sudden; many are surprised, and taken unawares. Your carnal companions (if God would use that dispensation), that sometimes bowsed and caroused with you, and wallowed in filthy excess, by this time know what it is to be in torments; they would fain come and tell you that you are as rotten fruit, ready to tumble into the pit of darkness. Every wicked man groweth upon the banks of eternity, and hangeth but by a slender string and root; one touch of God's providence, and they drop into hell.

Secondly, There is something expressed, to wit, that these torments shall receive their full and final accomplishment at the last day.

That their torments shall be increased appeareth—(1.) By comparison; (2.) By scripture; and (3.) By reason.

1. By comparing them—

[1.] With the devils: Jude 6, 'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.' As good men are ἰσαγγέλοι, so wicked men are δαίμονες. The devils for the present are under the powerful wrath of God and horrible despair. Though they have a ministry and service in the world, yet they carry their own hell about with them; full of fears and tremblings under the wrath of God, but not in that extremity, discontented with their present condition. Such a fall is much to a proud creature, and there is a despair of a better: Mat. viii. 29, 'What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?' There is a bitter expectation of judgment to come. Now they have some delight in mischief, but at the last day their power shall be restrained, which is another infelicity of their nature. Their ignominy shall be manifested before all the world; they shall be dragged before Christ's tribunal, and judged by the saints, whom they hate, 1 Cor. vi. 3. The good angels shall come as Christ's companions, the evil as his prisoners. These are sights that will work on their envy and thwart their pride, to see the glory of the saints and angels. *Dolet diabolus, quod ipsum et angelos ejus Christi servus, ille peccator judicaturus est*, saith Tertullian. Then they are confined to hell, there to keep their residence, where they shall have a more active sense of their own condition, and of the wrath of God that is upon them. So it is with wicked men; they have their hell now, but at the last day they shall be brought forth as trembling malefactors before the bar of Christ; all their privy wickedness shall be manifested before all the world, 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2. However they may be honoured and esteemed now, either for their power or holiness, they shall then be put to public shame, driven out of his presence with ignominy and contempt, cast into hell to keep company with the devils, where their torments shall be most exquisite and painful.

[2.] Compare them with the saints. Heaven's joys shall then be full, so hell's torments. The full recompense of the righteous, and the full vengeance of the wicked keep time and pace. Christ cometh to fetch the saints to heaven in state, ἡμερὰ φανέρωσεως: Rom. viii.

19, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' Then it shall be seen what God will do for his children. They are clad in their best robes to set off Christ's triumph. So suitably the wicked's judgment is not yet full; upon the last day it shall be increased. Christ sets himself a-work to show the power of his wrath, to clothe them with shame and contempt.

2. Scripture: 2 Thess. i. 7–9, 'When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;' Heb. x. 27, 'There remaineth nothing but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary;' and in many other places.

3. Reason. The body, which hath so long respite, then hath its share of misery; upon the reunion of the body and soul, they shall drink the dregs of God's wrath: The soul worketh on the body, and the body on the soul. As a heavy sad spirit weakens the body, and drieth up the marrow of the bones, and a sickly body maketh the soul sad and mopish, so when the soul is filled with anguish, and the body with pains, their torment must needs be greater, because they have had a great sense of the joys of the glorified saints; as that nobleman, 'Thine eyes shall see it, but thou shalt not taste of it.' It worketh upon their envy to see them glorified whom they have maligned and used despitefully; and it worketh upon their conscience; this they have lost by their own folly. As a prodigal that cometh by the houses and fields which he hath sold, and thinks, This was mine; it is a grating thought to think, This might have been mine. Partly because of judgment and sentence. Then the books are opened, and all their ways are discussed; they are ashamed, but God is cleared and vindicated. There is a worm as well as a fire. The fire signifieth God's wrath, the worm the gnawing of their own conscience. It is hard to say which tormenteth them most, the terribleness or the righteousness. To consider that God is righteous in all that we feel, and we ourselves have been the causes of our own ruin, this is a cutting thought to the damned; it maketh them gnash their teeth, and though they hate God, they can discharge the anger upon none but themselves. Besides, their companions are gathered together, those that sinned by their enticement or example, which are as fuel to kindle the flames, bind them in bundles, and set fire on one another. Objects reviving guilt are very displeasing here when conscience flieth in the face, as when Amnon hated Tamar. They cannot look upon the devils, but they think of temptations; upon the damned, but either they read their own guilt by reflection (they are the same), or else it bringeth to mind their former example; they brought them to this place. Again, Christ's final sentence is past; and therefore wrath, εἰς τὸ τέλος, such wrath as they cannot have more, for he will no more deal with them.

*Use* 1. Observe how a sinner hasteneth to his own misery by steps and degrees. In this life we are adding sin to sin, and in the next God will be adding torment to torment. Here God beginneth with

us: John iii. 18, 'He that believeth not, is condemned already.' Do not say, It is a long time till the last judgment; the halter is about thy neck, and there needeth nothing but turning over the ladder. Men are not sensible of it till they come to die, then there is a hell in the conscience, a sip of the cup of wrath. The horrors of the dying wicked are the suburbs of hell; then yellings and howlings begin. At death the bond of the old covenant is put in suit, and at the separation the gaoler carrieth us away to prison; there the soul is detained in chains of darkness, in a fearful expectation of more judgment; 'I am horribly tormented in this flame.' But after Christ's coming to judgment we are plunged into the depth of hell, the whole man is overwhelmed with misery. Well, then, if you add drunkenness to thirst, God will add to your plagues, till wrath come upon you to the uttermost.

2. Observe the patience of God; he doth not take a full revenge of his creatures till the last day. The most miserable creatures are suffered to enjoy some degree of happiness, or rather, do not feel the whole misery at the first. In the most dreadful executions of God's justice you may read patience. God is patient to the fallen angels, though presently, upon their sin, they were cast down into hell, 2 Peter ii. 5; but much more to sinning man: 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die,' was the sentence; yet the sentence is prorogued till the day of judgment. To those whom he hath a mind to destroy he is patient. The old world he bore with, first a hundred and twenty years, and then the rain was forty days in coming; and reprobates, ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ, Rom. ix. 22, 'He endureth them with much long-suffering;' intermission of wrath in this life, and respite to the body till the great day. How doth God bear with a company of hell-hounds! He suffereth them to stand by, as a dog, while the bread of life is distributed to the children. To bear with his children is much, but to bear with his enemies, who seek not his favour, and are the worse because forborne, and do provoke him daily, and do not relent and acknowledge their offence, is much more; yet all this while God holdeth his hands. Admire his patience, but do not abuse it. We are apt so to do: Eccles. viii. 11, 'Because sentence against an evil-doer is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.' Reprobates fare well for a time, live in plenty and ease, and therefore think hell but a dream and vain scarecrow. But take heed; that which is kept off is not taken away; and when you see wicked men endured, and not presently cut off, be not offended; 'their day is coming,' 1 Peter ii. 9; they are but reserved. Justice shall break forth, though the cloud of mercy long overshadow it. Their doom was long since passed; God might strike them dead in an instant.

3. One judgment maketh way for another. Our anger is rash, and therefore cooleth by degrees; it is at the height at first: but it is not so with God; his heateth by degrees, and is worst at last. There are first snares, then chains of darkness, then a most active sense of the wrath and displeasure of God. Let no man please himself in that he suffers affliction in this world; these may be the beginnings of sorrow, miserable here and miserable hereafter. There are wicked poor and

wicked rich; some have a double hell—here and hereafter too. Do not think death will be an ease: 'Son, in thy lifetime thou receivedst thy good things.' There are Lazaruses in hell as well as in Abraham's bosom.

4. Origen's charity was too large. Origen, and after him Gregory Nyssen and others, dreamed of *κάθαρσιον πῦρ*, a flaming river through which the wicked pass, and so be happy, and that so all are saved, even the devils themselves; abusing Rom. v. 18, and 1 Cor. xv. 2. There is an increase of torments, but no decay; then it will be said, 'Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.'

Secondly, Let us now speak of the persons sentenced. Here is a double description of them:—

1. From their posture, 'On the left hand.'

2. Their quality, in that title and terrible compellation, 'Ye cursed.'

1. Their posture, 'On the left hand.' It noteth not only the more ignominious place, but hath respect to their choice. The right hand is more honourable among all nations; the innocent were to plead their cause on the right hand, the guilty at the left. But it hath respect to their own choice; they seek after left-hand mercies: Ps. xvi. 11, 'At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;' eternity, that is at God's right hand. So Prov. iii. 16, 'Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour.' At the last day wicked men have but their own choice. As Darius distinguished between his followers; some love *Δαρεῖον*, some *δαρεῖαν*; so in the world there is a distinction; some love the gift better than the giver, make a sinister choice, choose greatness, honour, worldly pleasures. A man may know his future estate by his present choice. Wisdom standeth inviting with both her hands full: 'In her right hand is length of days;' here is eternity of pleasure; all the world runneth to the left hand. Riches and honour look more lovely than length of days in a carnal eye. Which will you have? Here in the church you will say, Eternity by all means; but the course of your lives saith, Riches and honour; these take up your time, care, and thoughts.

2. Let us see the title or terrible compellation, 'Ye cursed;' not by men, but by God. Many are blessed of God that are cursed of men: Mat. v. 12, 'Blessed are ye when men shall curse you for righteousness' sake:' it is no boot to have the world's blessings; yet observe the difference, ver. 34, he saith, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father;' but he doth not say, Cursed of my Father. Partly because cursing is *alienum opus*, his strange work; it doth not come so freely and kindly as mercy. The blessing cometh of his own accord; without and before the merit of the creature; but not the curse, till we force it, and wrest it out of God's hands. Partly because Christ would pass his sentence in a convincing way; and therefore he doth not pitch damnation upon the decree and counsel of God, as he doth election. It is 'blessed of my Father;' his love is the only cause; but 'ye cursed.' It is good to observe the tenderness of the scripture when it speaketh of the execution of the decree of reprobation, that they may not cast the blame upon God: their damnation is not cast upon his decree, but their own deservings. You may see the like difference, Rom. ix. 22, 'Endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to

destruction.' But then, ver. 23, 'The vessels of mercy which he hath aforehand prepared unto glory.' He endureth the one, but he fitteth and prepareth the other; he created them, and permitted them to fall in Adam, justly hardeneth them for refusing his will, but themselves prepare their own hell, by their natural corruption and voluntary depravation, following their lusts with greediness. Speaking of the elect, it is said he hath prepared; but of the reprobate, it is said he is fitted. The reprobates bring something of their own to further their destruction, pravity and naughtiness of their own; every man is the cause of the curse and eternal misery to himself, but God is the cause and author of the blessing: 'Thy destruction is of thyself, but in me is thy help found.' The elect have all from God; he prepareth them for heaven, and heaven for them, without any merit of theirs. The reprobate is not damned simply on God's pleasure, but their own desert; before he would execute his decrees, there is an interposition of their sin and folly.

*Object.* But it is said, Rom. ix. 11, 'Before the children had done either good or evil, it was said, Esau have I hated.' So that it seemeth that they are cursed and hated of God before any merit and desert of theirs. I answer—

There is a twofold hatred—(1.) Negative; (2.) Positive.

1. Negative hatred is *noluntas miserendi;* a purpose not to give grace, a nilling to give grace. And then—

2. There is a positive hatred, which is *voluntas puniendi et condemnandi.* In other terms there is præterition and predamnation. For the former, God hateth them, as he will not give grace, for he is not engaged; and it is a great mercy that when all are worthy of punishment, yet that he will choose some to life. And for the latter, punish and damn them he doth not till they deserve it by their own sins; therefore it stoppeth the mouths of them that blaspheme the Holy One of Israel, as if he did create men for death and the pains of hell: Hosea xiii. 9, 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.' They are compassed with a fire of their own kindling, Isa. l. 11. But it is time to return. Wicked men are cursed of God; and God's curse is wont to take place. It is no easy matter to get rid of it; the curse of the law sticketh to them at the last day, and shall eternally. He doth not say, Be ye cursed; but, Go, ye cursed. They were cursed before they came to the tribunal of Christ. Those that are condemned to hell are such as remain under the curse of the law. And who are they? Final unbelievers.

[1.] Every man by nature is under the curse; for till we are in Christ we are under Adam's covenant; and Adam's covenant can yield no blessing to the fallen creatures: Gal. iii. 10, 'As many as are under the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.' The law requireth perfect, perpetual, and personal obedience. God did disannul the covenant made with Adam presently upon the fall; but the curses stand in full force against those that have not changed state, but are only children of Adam; and wicked men will find it so at the day of judgment, for they shall have judgment without mercy, whereas others are judged by the law of

liberty, James ii. 12, 13. It is clear everywhere there are but two states; either we are under the law or under grace. Hear what the law saith. An innocent nature, that is presupposed; and the person must continue in this perfect obedience. But we have continued in the violation of all things contained in the law. No action without a stain. If God should call us to a punctual account for the most inoffensive day that ever we spent, who could stand before him? Better we had never been born than to stand liable to that judgment, as all natural men do.

[2.] There is no way of escape but in closing with Christ by faith. The apostle supposeth the objection, Gal. iii. 13. The curse of the law cleaveth to all Adam's posterity; therefore we must have interest in another, who keepeth up the curse of the law: John iii. 36, 'He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him.' The curse is not taken off; nay, when Christ is tendered, and finally refused, it is set on the closer; then we are condemned by the law, and condemned by the gospel too: John iii. 18, 'Condemned already;' cast in law. But what hath he done to the remedy? ver. 19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.' Not accepting Christ offered is the great condemning sin. There remaineth no more sacrifice; we cannot expect another way after refusing that: Heb. x. 26, 'For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.' The condemnation of the gospel can never be remitted. The curses of the law are ratified for our abuse of mercy; so that, in some sense, better we never had heard of Christ.

*Use* 1. Is for examination; how is it with you?

1. Every man by nature is in a cursed condition, Eph. ii. 3, liable to Adam's forfeiture and breach. Were you ever changed? Until we change copies, we are still miserable. And—

2. There is no way to avoid this curse but in closing with Christ. In the sense of it fly to Christ for refuge. There is the law driving, and the gospel drawing. Christ is the only remedy the gospel showeth, and so pulleth in the heart to God; and we are undone without that. The law showeth it, and so we are driven out of ourselves: Heb. vi. 18, 'Who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us.' Fly as if the avenger of blood were at your heels. Phil. iii. 9: Do you labour to be found in Christ? When the flood was upon earth, none were saved but they that got into the ark. So Cant. ii. 3, 'I sat under his shadow with great delight.' It supposeth the scorching of the sun in those hot countries. Canst thou find thy heart driven? Thou art afraid thou shalt not get soon enough; that God will leave his suit, or thou shalt be called out of the world before the match be made up. Dost thou find thine heart fastening upon Christ? I will pitch here, as Joab took hold of the horns of the altar.

3. Besides the sense of the benefit that we have by Christ, there must be an unfeigned love to him, or else the curse doth still remain: 1 Cor. xvi. 22, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha, accursed till the Lord come;' and that is for ever and ever. Can a man think he shall be the better for Christ when he esteemeth him as dung and trash, hath no delight in him, no

value for him? We esteem men either as they are excellent in themselves, or as they are profitable to us. There is both in Christ. Therefore, if you love him not, it is a sign you have had no benefit by him. Gospel love, it is a love of gratitude; it ariseth from faith, Gal. v. 6.

4. This love must be expressed by a sincere obedience: 1 John v. 3, 'His commandments are not grievous.' It is not grievous for Christ's sake. The devil, though he be a proud spirit, careth not for dispraises, nor Christ for empty profession. Can any man esteem Christ that cannot forbear one pleasure for God, one vanity for his sake? By this you shall know whether you shall do well or ill, yea or no. Is it a pleasure to you to renounce your interests, to deny lusts, to perform duties for Christ's sake?

*Use* 2. Is to press us to come out of the curse of nature.

1. Be sensible of it. Consider—

[1.] God's curse is very dreadful: *Dei benedicere est benefacere.* The 'curse causeless shall not come;' but God's curse is sure to take place. Micah was afraid of his mother's curse, that he dareth not keep the money; yet we will keep our sins, Judges xvii. 2. It was money dedicated to make a graven image; a senseless curse, that was pronounced at random; but he thought it a dreadful thing to lie under a mother's curse, and therefore is not quiet till she had recalled it. Elisha cursed when he was mocked, and it took effect: 2 Kings ii. 24, 'And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord; and there came two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty-two children of them in pieces.' A prophet's curse is a dreadful thing. And will God put up all the affronts we put upon him, when we do despite to his Spirit and scorn his grace? This was but a man, these but children; yet when they scorned his ministry and function, as being bred up in idolatry; God will tear in pieces, and none to deliver. Take notice of God's curse on Cain: Gen. iii. 11, 'Now thou art cursed from the earth.' He was the first-fruits of the reprobate, the patriarch of unbelievers, as Tertullian calleth him; the first cursed man in the world; and his curse was to be cast out of God's presence, ver. 14; a figure of what shall be done at the last day. It stuck close to him all his life; yea, cursed Cain was sensible of it: 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.' We are cursed again and again, Deut. xxvii. To every curse of the law they were to say Amen, to show the sure accomplishment of it. So certainly it will be; it is just as certain: it is a subscription to the justice of it, and a profession of their faith. Am I a cursed creature by nature? Are all his curses Yea and Amen, as well as his promises? Oh! what will become of me if I do not take hold of Christ? So the curse on the builder of Jericho is remarkable: Josh. x. 6, 'Cursed be the man before the Lord that raiseth up and buildeth this city; for he shall lay the foundation of it in his first-born, and in his younger son he shall build it up.' And you shall see, 1 Kings xvi. 34, some hundred of years afterwards was this curse executed: 'Cursed is every one.' Yet the sinner blesseth himself, and smileth in his heart, and thinketh none of this shall come upon him; but after many years it breaketh out.

[2.] We know not how soon God may take the advantage of this

curse, and cut us off from the possibility of his grace. Christ cometh as a thief, and stealeth upon men ere they are aware. We are indebted to God's justice, and we know not how soon God may put the bond in suit. Other debts have a day set for payment: God may demand it before to-morrow: Gen. iv. 17, 'Sin lieth at the door,' like a sergeant, to surprise us every hour; and then we go to prison, and remain there till we have paid every farthing, Luke xii. Solomon wisheth a man to hasten out of debt as a 'bird out of the hand of the fowler,' Prov. vi. 5. A condemned malefactor, that is only reprieved during the pleasure of the prince, is in danger of execution every hour. Wrath breaketh out of a sudden. What provision have you made? How stand matters between God and you? If a man were informed that his servants had a plot to take away his life, to carry away his treasure, which is speedily to be put in execution, he would not be quiet till he had rid his hands of them: so is sin.

[3.] At the last day this curse is ratified by Christ's sentence: 'Go, ye cursed;' depart, ye cursed creatures. When others are acquitted by proclamation, as at the day of judgment, we receive our solemn discharge, Acts iii. 19; then your curse is revived before all the world, and as cursed creatures you lose all pity from God, men, and angels. As Adam was driven out of paradise with a bitter taunt, Gen. iii. 22, so with a terrible bann and proscription, that shall never be reversed.

[4.] It shall be presently executed: Esther vii. 8, 'As soon as the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.' These are considerations to beget a feeling of wrath.

2. Flee from it to Christ. Poor sinners, they stand in continual fear of execution. Oh! fly to Christ, to get the sentence reversed.

For motives to persuade us to come to Christ for help:—

[1.] Consider how willing mercy is to receive those that fly from the curse. This was God's design in shutting us up under the curse, that there might be no other way of escape: Rom. iii. 19, 'That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God;' that we may become obnoxious, that we may acknowledge ourselves to be quite undone. So Gal. iii. 23, 'The scripture hath concluded all under sin;' and Rom. xi. 32, 'For God hath concluded them all in unbelief.' The law, in the name of God, arrests us, accuses us, convinceth us, leaving us dead (all preparations to damnation), that through the prison doors we may beg for mercy. He alloweth an appeal from court to court.

[2.] With what honour to himself God may show us mercy. It is no wrong to appeal from the law to the gospel: Gal. iii. 13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Christ hath taken the curse into his own person: Ps. lxix. 4, 'I restored that which I took not away;' that honour to God which he took not away.

[3.] The great offence in refusing Christ, Heb. xii. 15. Esau was called a profane person, because he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. He was no drunkard, no swearer. To refuse the Father's riches of wisdom and grace, the Son's self-denial and sufferings, is the greatest ingratitude that can be. When all the labours and wooings of the Spirit are in vain, it is the greatest spite we can do to God; it

is the greatest profaneness to set light by holy things, especially this great mystery, when we do not think it worthy our care and thoughts, Mat. xxii. 5.

## SERMON XXVI.

*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*—MAT. XXV. 41.

Now we come to the sentence itself. There we shall first take notice of the *pœna damni*, the loss, *depart*.

The point is—

*Doct.* This is the hell of hells, that the reprobates must all depart, or lose the fruition of God in Christ.

But before I begin to set forth this part of the punishment, let me observe something:—

1. In this part of the torment all are equal. There are degrees elsewhere, but here the reprobates are all equally excluded. Christ will thus profess, Mat. vii. 23, 'Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; I know you not.'

2. It is the greatest part of the punishment. The punishment of sense is finite in nature, though infinite in duration. Though it be from the wrath of God, it is still according to the capacity of the creature. But *pœna damni* is the privation of an infinite good. It is indeed a question which is the greater punishment, whether everlasting separation from God or everlasting torment? whether 'depart,' or 'everlasting fire'? According to the present state, pain is more sensible than loss. In the bodily state we judge altogether by the senses; but in the other world, when all objects are taken away, and there is a ceasing of temptations, and our judgments are mostly spiritual, there it is otherwise. The greatness of the punishment will appear:—

First, By the loss; they shall lose all heaven's joys, the favourable presence of God, the sight of Christ, the company of the blessed, and their abode in those happy mansions which are in Christ's Father's house.

1. The favourable presence of God. Hell is a deep dungeon, where the sunshine of God's presence never cometh. God is *summum bonum*, the chiefest good; and in the other world, *omne bonum*, all in all. All things are immediate from God, comforts and punishments: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' Paul's departure, how grievous was it, when he said, 'Ye shall see my face no more'! Acts xix. 28. Better lose all things than God: Exod. xxxiii. 15, 'If thy presence go not up with us, carry us not hence.' The appearance of the Son of God to the three children cast into Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, how comfortable was it to them!

*Object.* Ay! but this is not to be presupposed of the damned. Is it any grief to the wicked to want God, against whom they have such an extreme averseness and hatred? I answer—

(1.) They are sensible of the loss of happiness; their judgments are changed, though not renewed. Fogs of error, atheism, and unbelief then vanish, and they are convinced by experience. There are no atheists in hell; they learn to prize happiness by bitter experience. As rational creatures, they cannot but be sensible of their loss, that know the worth of what is lost; and so great a blessedness lost cannot but breed sadness and dejection of spirit. They look on God not as lovely in himself, but as one that might be profitable to them. *Oculos quos occlusit culpa, aperiet pœna.*

(2.) It would lessen their torments if their understandings might be taken away. By sad experience they know what it is to want God, though still their hatred of God remaineth. Heaven, that I am shut out of, is a blessing which others enjoy; Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom.

2. The sight of Christ. They had a glimpse before they went into hell of the glory of his presence: 2 Thes. i. 9, 'They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.' That short experience of Christ's appearing will remain in their minds; to all eternity it will stick by them, how they are thrust out. Christ himself, that hath the keys of death and hell, shall bid them go; as if he had said, I cannot endure your presence any longer.

3. From the company of the blessed: Luke xiii. 28, 'Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves shut out.' Envy is a part of their torment as well as their loss: Luke xvi. 27, 'And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.' It is a torment to think that others of the same nature and interest do enjoy what they have forfeited.

4. Their abode in those happy mansions which are in Christ's Father's house: Rev. xxii. 14, 15, 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.'

Secondly, This loss is the more bitter and grievous because it is a loss of their own procuring. Forsaking of God was their sin, and now their misery. They first excommunicated God for a trifle: Job xxii. 7, 'Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of God.' Man is like the devil: 'Art thou come to torment us before our time?' Rom. i. 28, 'They did not like to retain God in their knowledge; therefore, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.' They abhorred the thoughts of God; it was their burthen: 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' Now they are filled with their own thoughts. Man was first a fugitive before he was an exile.

Thirdly, The loss is irreparable. Despair is a constant ingredient to their sorrow. They cannot hope ever to be admitted into God's presence any more. There are many ups and downs in a christian's experience. God hideth his face that he may show it afterwards the more gloriously. This is a curse that shall never be reversed. It was the church's prayer, 'Return again, and cause the light of thy countenance to shine on us, and we shall be saved,' Ps. lxxx. 19; like the

sunshine after a cloudy night. But here are fogs of darkness for evermore. The sun is to shine no more on them to all eternity: 2 Peter ii. 17, 'To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.' Hell is a region upon which the sun shall never shine.

*Use* 1. Lay to heart your distance from God by nature. Let us not draw this great judgment upon ourselves. Our sin will be our torment. We are estranged from the womb, Isa. lviii. 3. As a stream runneth away from the fountain further and further, so are we absent from God both in heart and affections as well as in state: Eph. ii. 13, 'Ye were afar off;' as the prodigal went into a far country. Thoughts of God are not only strangers, but unwelcome guests. 'The devils believe and tremble;' so we. Guilt will not suffer us to look God in the face, Ps. x. 4.

2. Be not quiet till you come out of this estate by Christ; he is the bridge between earth and heaven, John xiv. 6. There can be no familiarity between us and God, but through him, Luke xvi. 26. Christ is the ladder by which we ascend, the means of intercourse between God and us. When man was driven out of paradise, the tree of life was guarded by a flaming sword. There is no coming to God but by him, and 'he is able to save to the utmost,' Heb. vii. 25.

3. Avoid sin, that separateth between God and you, Isa. lix. 1, 2. How will you pray when you cannot look God in the face? Fear followeth guilt. The Israelites, when they had sinned, worshipped at their tent-door. You cannot come to God with such confidence.

4. Let us often delight in communion with God and acquaintance with him. It is heaven begun. Heaven is for God's familiars. Strangers here will not be owned; and hereafter (Mat. vii. 23) Christ will say unto them, 'I know you not.' But Christ will take notice of his old friends. Oh! then, love his presence, make him of your counsel, your bosom friend.

5. Live in a holy sensibleness of his accesses and recesses; for his accesses, that you may be thankful; for his recesses, to be humble. It is a question which is worst, not to take notice of his accesses or recesses, not to mourn for his absence or rejoice in his presence; both are bad. Not to mourn for his absence is the worst sin, because absence is most sensible. In the present life, when our enjoyment of him is lost, it is a temporary hell; yet it is foul ingratitude not to take notice of his presence, when he counselleth you in doubts, guideth you in straits. God will have his acts of familiarity to be observed; it is his complaint, Hosea xi. 3, 'I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them.' The one argueth little feeling, the other little gratitude; only want of feeling is the worser sign, for that is a sign of deadness. When God suspends all acts of familiarity, some are stupid and insensible, so they can take up with the comforts of the creature; they never mind spiritual visits. Micah mourned for his gods. Love is discovered by grief in want, as well as delight in enjoyment. The main of christianity lieth in observing how it is between us and God. When actual influences are suspended, either of grace or comfort, when prayer finds not such an answer, and when we do not find such excitation to holy duties, and God hideth himself from our prayers.

We have handled the loss. Now we come, secondly, to speak of the pain. There are sad gripes at the parting of the soul and body; what then will there be at the parting of the soul and Christ, when the terror of Christ's face shall banish them out of his presence?

*Secondly*, The *pœna sensus*. Here I shall take notice of—

1. The nature of the torment, *fire*.
2. The aggravation from the duration, *everlasting*.
3. The company and society, *prepared for the devil and his angels*.

The nature of the torment, 'fire.' By fire is not meant material or ordinary fire; that cannot hurt spirits. Now this is such a fire as is prepared for the devil and his angels. All the other expressions are metaphorical, the wood, the brimstone, the lake, the smoke, the worm, the chains; and why not this? But observe, though it be not fire, yet it noteth real and horrible torments, such as are more painful than fire. It is called 'wrath to come,' 1 Thes. i. 10, because there was never such wrath before. The Holy Ghost useth such expressions as we are acquainted with.

1. The extremity of these pains cannot be told us. Fire is an active, furious element, the pain most searching, and no fire more scalding than brimstone; to sense that is most grievous and bitter. But the pains of hell surpass all that is spoken. Look, as when heaven is set out by gold and pearls and precious stones—the joys there are much above these shadows—so all notions come short of hell.

2. The whole man is under the pains of it, both body and soul; both are fellows in sin, and both are punished. It appeareth partly from scripture: Mat. x. 28, 'Fear not him that can kill the body, but fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell.' Mark, not only the soul, but the body. The body is not only the instrument, but the occasion of many sins; the law in the members, brutish motions of lusts; the eye is fed with lust; therefore the body hath its share.

[1.] For the body; what the torment shall be we cannot tell; the scripture is silent; only, in the general, that it shall have its share of punishment, is certain; and not only by the grief and anguish of the soul, but the pain residing in the body. As the saints have not only a happiness for their souls, but their bodies; their vile bodies shall be changed. At the day of judgment, when their bodies are united to their souls, their torments are increased. Here in the text it is said, 'Depart ye;' the whole man, no part free. There is a place of torment, as we proved before, as well as a state of torment; therefore the body hath its inconveniences: their eyes meet with nothing but affrighting spectacles, the devils and the damned. Every time they look on their tempter, it revives their guilt; as the saints, when they look on their Redeemer, it filleth their hearts full of love and adoration. What see they but devils to torture them, or other damned tormented with them? Wives and children through their negligence, or neighbours by their cursed example, brought into this place of torment. Their ears are filled with nothing but yellings and howlings, and hideous outcries. More particularly I shall not define.

[2.] For the soul; the soul's evils arise from a lively and effectual sense of the wrath of God, and the gnawings of conscience. There is a fire and a worm, Mark ix. 44, the wrath of God and the horrors of

conscience. There is an allusion to the worms that breed in dead bodies, and the fire wherewith they were burned.

First, Let us speak a little of the worm that breedeth. The worm of conscience consisteth in three things. There is—(1.) *Memoria præteritorum ;* (2.) *Sensus præsentium ;* (3.) *Metus futurorum.* All the periods and distinctions of time yield matter of sorrow and anguish to them, past, present, and to come.

1. Conscience worketh on what is past, the remembrance of their former enjoyments. *Miserum est dixisse, fuisse beatos.* It is the miserablest thing that can be to outlive our happiness; to think of what we once enjoyed, but now want: Luke xvi. 25, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedest thy good things.' Thy day is past, now no more pleasures, now all thy carnal delights are spent. The riches of God's goodness that I despised, I shall enjoy no more. The reflection on past comforts: I was thus and thus, but where hath sin brought me! The very remembrance will aggravate their present misery, especially when the memory shall be quickened by conscience to consider their ingratitude; their carnal confidence, how they neglected God in the abundance of all things, and nothing remaineth but the sin of their comforts and the curse. Where now are all your stately houses, pleasant gardens, costly tables, furnished with delicious meats? your gorgeous and pompous apparel, your merry meetings? These things I have enjoyed, but now they are come to their full and final period.

2. The time wasted; this is a commodity never valued till it be lost, and then it cannot be recovered. In hell they see the folly of it; the misspense of time is a killing circumstance. Experience maketh us value time. The horrors of the damned may be guessed at by the complaints of the dying. Oh! for a little time! If they had but one year, one month more. Here men are prodigal of nothing so much as time, as if they had more than they could tell what to do with; but when they come to die, Oh! if God would spare them a little longer!

3. Especially opportunities of grace slighted. God reckoneth to a day, how long, how often, he hath warned them: Luke xiii. 7, 'These three years came I seeking fruit from this fig-tree, but behold I find none; cut it down.' Here is Christ's righteous expectation, 'These three years came I seeking fruit;' their ungrateful frustration, 'But I find none;' and then his final denunciation, 'Cut it down.' Whenever God reckoneth with a people, he reckoneth with them for time and opportunities of grace. Did not I warn you? What means we have had, and offers of grace, God's drawing nigh to us in an acceptable time! Every sermon will sting our conscience. There was a fair advantage; it is good to feel the worm while it may be killed, to take notice of checks of conscience for the present, and the motions of God's Spirit; this is a spark that will not be quenched.

4. The folly of their own choice. Men will not see now, but they shall see: Isa. xxvi. 11, 'Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see, and be ashamed.' Their understandings are cleared to know the worth of things, and their eyes opened, when it is too late: Jer. xvii. 11, 'At his latter end he shall be a fool.' He

was a fool all his lifetime to neglect God for a trifle, but now he is a fool in the judgment of his own heart. If I had been as active for God as for my lusts, it would have been otherwise with me. Temptations are gone, lusts are gone: 'The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof.' There is no relish of pleasures in hell, if they could have them; they have now the bitter experience of the cost they have been at, therefore sadly reflect upon their folly. Conviction heightens their torment: Jer. ii. 17–19, 'Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way? And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and a bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.' This is your way in the valley; as when children burn, and feel the gripes of a disease, we upbraid them, This is your eating of raw fruit. Experience maketh them feel the smart of it.

2. There is the sense of their present pain. Here, when we are corrected, we are senseless, like stocks and stones; but there must needs be feeling, because there is nothing to mitigate their torment, no carnal comforts wherein to steep conscience, no carnal companions that can be a comfort to us: the more we look upon them, the more we see our own sorrow by reflection. There is nothing left but indignation and impatience, and gnawing their tongues because of their anguish. Their discontent is part of their torment.

3. For the future, their condition is hopeless. If there could be hope in hell, the punishment would be the better borne; but 'there remaineth nothing but a fearful looking for of the fiery indignation of God,' Heb. x. 27. And it is a living God, who liveth for ever and ever, that is their enemy. Oh! who can think of it without astonishment? When they have run through thousands of years they still expect more. It is tedious to think of a short fit of pain of the stone or gout; but that is for ever. They endure all at once by thinking of what is to come.

Again, there is the fire, or an active sense of the wrath of God. Consider the greatness of it in these circumstances:—

1. God hath an immediate hand in the sufferings of the wicked: Heb. x. 33, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' The wicked fall immediately into his hands; the quarrel is his own, therefore he will take revenge by his immediate power. No creature is strong enough to convey all his wrath, as a bucket cannot contain an ocean. Man's anger is like himself, weak and finite, but God's is infinite: Ps. xc. 11, 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger?' Surely we do not consider what it is to fall into God's hands.

2. God sets himself a-work to see what he can do, and what a creature can bear. The capacity of the creature is enlarged to the utmost: Rom. ix. 22, 'What if God, willing to show his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?' His justice decreeth it, his wisdom designeth it, and his power executeth it. He falleth upon us as an

enemy to the utmost; with one hand he upholdeth the creature, and with the other punisheth it. Here he showeth what a creature can do when armed by him, hereafter what he can do himself: Ps. lxxviii. 39, 'For he remembered they were but flesh; he did not stir up all his wrath.' It doth not break out in its full weight and force.

3. Consider some instances of God's wrath: 'When his anger is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him,' Ps. ii. 12. In corrective discipline, when God's children fall into any disease, the burnings of a fever, the gripes of the cholic, the torment of the stone, they cannot endure two or three days' pain; how wilt thou dwell with devouring burnings? These are nothing to the sharp punishments of hell on the body. Poor creatures are at their wits' end when but a spark or flash of this fire lighteth into the conscience. Judas hanged himself, Job cursed the day of his birth; yet this is but a drop; these come from hell, they have been in the suburbs of it. Dives wished that Lazarus might but dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue; these are warnings, they can tell you what a dreadful thing it is. The Lord Christ, who was the Son of God, perfect in faith and patience, he wanted no courage, he was under no despair in the midst of his agonies, yet he cried out, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Oh! what will become of them whose portion it is? Thus for the nature.

Secondly, The duration, everlasting fire. The pains of hell are eternal.

1. The moral reasons of it are—

[1.] Partly because our obligations to God are infinite. In a way of love, God hath done as much as he could. We turn the back upon eternal happiness which was offered in the gospel. They can never restore the honour to God which they have deprived him of, therefore their punishment is for evermore: the justice of God can never be satisfied by a finite creature. Believers do it in Christ, but the wicked are in their final estate.

[2.] They still remain impenitent; the damned are not changed in hell. Melted metal groweth hard again: the bad thief, that had one foot in hell, dieth blaspheming; their judgments are changed, but not their hearts. If one should come from the dead, he might speak to you of eternity, and that in hell they suffer eternal punishments.

2. The natural reasons are—

[1.] The fire continueth for ever, Heb. x. 33; the breath of the Lord still keepeth the flame burning; the fuel continueth for ever, and wicked men continue for ever; they consume not, but are immortal in body and soul. Oh! think of this! there is no end, no intermission. No end; the fire on Sodom lasted but a day; but when the wicked have lain in hell a thousand years, it is but as the first day. When a man is sick, he tumbleth and tosseth, and telleth the hours of the night, and wisheth it were day. We are wont to think a sermon long, a prayer long; what will hell be? Conscience will ever be talking to thee, repeating over the story of thy life, and putting thee in remembrance of the wrath of God that endureth for ever. And—

[2.] It is without intermission: Rev. xx. 10, 'They shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.' Not a drop to cool their

tongues. Here sin is everlasting; all day it runneth in the mind, and all night it playeth in the fancy. Wicked men begin the morning with it, and end the day with it. Man is ever haunted with his own horrors, and the wrath of God inflicted upon him.

Thirdly, The next aggravation is, it is 'prepared for the devil and his angels;' for them principally, and others to bear them company: Satan, and all that are seduced by him, are tormented together. There is a principality among the devils, one that was chief and ringleader in the rebellion against God, he and his angels; and then wicked men make up the company in that region of darkness. It was a sad judgment on Nebuchadnezzar when he was turned out among the beasts; but the cursed of the Lord are turned out among devils. If a man knew a house were haunted, he would not lie in it for a night. You must keep company with Satan and his angels for evermore. The saints enjoy God, and have the company of good angels; but you must dwell with devils. If the devil should appear to thee in some terrible shape, would not thy heart fail thee? Thou canst not look upon any in hell but thou must remember enemies to thy soul as well as to God.

*Use* 1. This should make us consider the folly of sinners, that will run this hazard for a little temporal satisfaction; for as he cried out, 'For how short a pleasure have I lost a kingdom!' when he had parted with his sovereignty for a draught of water; so you, out of a desire of present contentment, forfeit heaven, and run the hazard of eternal torments. When thou art about to sin, think of this. We need all kind of helps.

1. To stir us up to godliness. If men were as they should be, sweet arguments would be enough; but now we need the scourge. It is good to counterbalance any temptation, when it is violent. My heart will call me fool to all eternity. Can I dwell with everlasting burnings?

2. To rouse us up to the consideration of our natural misery.

[1.] Partly that we may 'flee from the wrath to come,' Mat. iii. 7. There is no way but by Jesus Christ. We need every day to look back. In their flight to Zoar they were not to look back upon Sodom, lest there should be relentings kindled. But it is good to look back in this sense; we shall see nothing but fire and brimstone behind us.

[2.] That we may be thankful to Christ: 1 Thes. i. 10, 'Even Jesus, which hath delivered us from wrath to come.' He was substituted in our room and place; he suffered a kind of hell in his own soul, or else this must have been our portion.

*Use* 2. Are we of the number? There is a catalogue of the damned crew: Rev. xxi. 8, 'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' The fearful; such as, for the fear of men, swerve from the holy profession and practice of godliness. The unbelieving; all that remain in an impenitent estate. Abominable, murderers, whoremongers; impure gnostics, such as ranters: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 'Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor

covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Is there any likelihood of deceit there. Corrupt nature is always devising one shift or another wherein to harden conscience. Idolaters; it is dangerous not to be right in worship. The covetous cometh in, Gal. v. 5, 'Nor covetous man, who is an idolater: let no man deceive you; for because of these things, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.' We think it a small matter. All liars; not only the gross liar, but the heretic; as heresy is called a lie: it is good to keep to the pattern of sound words. The hypocrite's hell is his portion: Mat. xxiv. 51, 'Appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Hypocrisy, it is a practical lie.

## SERMON XXVII.

*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*—MAT. XXV. 46.

THE words are a conclusion of a notable scheme and draft which Christ gives us of the last judgment. In that day there will be—(1.) A congregation; (2.) A segregation; (3.) A discussion of the cause; (4.) A solemn doom and sentence, both of absolution and condemnation; (5.) And, lastly, execution, without which the whole process of that day would be but a solemn and useless pageantry. The execution is in the text; wherein observe—

*First,* A distinction of the persons; *these* and *the righteous.* See the last sermon on 2 Cor. v. 10.

*Secondly,* As there are different persons, so different recompenses. See 2 Cor. v. 10.

*Thirdly,* Observe, these different recompenses are dispensed with respect to the different qualifications and state of the persons judged, as their case shall appear upon trial, according to their works. Some are wicked, and others righteous: God must needs deal differently with them—

1. To show the holiness of his nature. The holy God delighteth in holiness and holy persons, and hateth sin and the workers of iniquity; and therefore will not deal with the one as he dealeth with the other. Both parts of his holiness are spoken of in scripture, his delight in holy things and persons. See the fourth sermon on 2 Cor. v. 10.

2. The righteousness of his government requireth that there should be a different proceeding with the godly and the wicked; that every man should reap according to what he hath sown, whether he hath sown according to the flesh or the spirit; that the fruit of his doings should be given into his bosom. And this, though it be not evident in this life, where good and evil is promiscuously dispensed, because now is the time of God's patience and our trial, yet, in the life to come, when God will judge the world in righteousness, Acts xvii. 31,

it is necessary that it should go well with the good and ill with the bad; or, as the apostle saith, 2 Thes. i. 6, 7, 'It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels.' Mark, both parts of the recompense belong to the righteousness of his government, to give rest to the troubled, as well as tribulation to the troublers. Indeed, with the one he dealeth in strict justice; to the other he dispenseth a reward of grace. Yet that also belongeth to his righteousness; that is, his new-covenant righteousness; for so it is said, Heb. vi. 10, 'God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love;' as he hath bound himself by gracious promise to give life and glory to the penitent, obedient, and faithful.

3. The graciousness of his rewarding mercy and free love to his faithful servants. Though they were involved in the same condemnation with others as to their original and first estate, and the merit of their evil actions, and the constant imperfection of their best works; yet since it was the sincere bent of their hearts to serve and honour God, he will give them a crown of life. They might have perished everlastingly, as others do, if God should enter into a strict judgment with them. But when others receive the fruit of their doings, he dealeth graciously with them, pardoning their failings, and accepting them in the Beloved. God is not bound in justice, from the right and merit of their actions, to reward them that have done him most faithful service, but merely of his grace upon the account of Christ: 1 Peter i. 13, 'Hoping unto the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ;' and Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life;' and 2 Tim. i. 18, 'The Lord grant that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day,' namely, when the Lord shall judge the quick and the dead, and shall distribute punishments and rewards. In some measure we see grace here, but never so fully and perfectly as then.

[1.] Partly because now we have not so full a view of our unworthiness as when our actions are scanned, and all things are brought to light whether they be good or evil. And—

[2.] Partly because there is not so full and large a manifestation of God's favour now, as there is in our full and final reward. It is grace now that he is pleased to pass by our offences, and to take us into his family, and give us some taste of his love, and a right to his heavenly kingdom; but then it is another manner of grace and favour, when our pardon shall be pronounced by our Judge's own mouth, and he shall not only take us into his family, but into his immediate presence and heavenly palace; not only give us a right, but possession: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you;' and shall not only have some remote service and ministration, but be everlastingly employed in loving, and delighting in, and praising of God. This is grace indeed. The grace of God, or his free favour to sinners, is never seen in all its glory or graciousness till then. And it is the more amplified, when we see how God dealeth with others, who as to natural endowments were every way as acceptable as ourselves; and, as to spirituals, grace alone making the difference.

*Fourthly*, Observe, first, the wicked are described by sins of omission; as ver. 42, 43. Those that have not visited, not clothed, not fed, not harboured; these shall go into everlasting punishment. But the righteous, by their faithfulness in good works, or acts of self-denying obedience, shall go into life eternal.

1. The wicked by their omission of necessary duties. Because we think omissions no sins, or light sins, I shall take this occasion to show the heinousness of them. Sins are commonly distinguished into—(1.) Sins of omission; and (2.) Sins of commission.

[1.] A sin of commission is when we do those things which we ought not to do.

[2.] A sin of omission is when we leave undone those things which we ought to do. But when we look more narrowly into these things, we shall find both in every actual sin; for in that we commit anything against the law of God, we omit our duty; and the omitting of our duty can hardly fall out but that something is preferred before the love of God; and that is a commission. But yet there is a ground for the distinction; because when anything is directly and formally against the negative precept and prohibition, that is a sin of commission; but when we directly sin against an affirmative precept, that is an omission. An instance we have in Eli and his sons. Eli's sons 'defiled themselves with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,' 1 Sam. ii. 22; but Eli himself sinned in that 'he restrained them not,' 1 Sam. iii. 13. His sin was an omission; their sin was a commission. Now, that sins of commission may be great sins, appeareth—

(1.) Partly by the nature of them; for there is in them the general nature of all sin. It is *ἀνομία*, 1 John iii. 4, a transgression of a law, or a disobedience to God; and so, by consequence, a contempt of his authority. We cry out upon Pharaoh when we hear him saying, Exod. v. 2, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?' And by interpretation we all say so. This language is in every sin we commit, and in every duty we omit. Our negligence is not simple negligence, but downright disobedience; because it is the breach of an express precept and charge which God hath given us. Now when we make no reckoning of it, we do in effect say, 'Who is the the Lord, that I should obey him?' There may be much disobedience in a bare omission. When Saul had not done what God bade him to do, he telleth him, 'That rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry,' 1 Sam. xv. 23; implying that omission to be stubbornness and rebellion, parallel to idolatry and witchcraft.

(2.) By the causes. In the general, corrupt nature; but the particular causes are—

(1st.) Idleness. They do not stir up themselves, Isa. lxiv. 7.

(2dly.) Security, Jer. ii. 31, 32.

(3dly.) Want of love to God: Isa. xliii. 22, 'But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; thou hast been weary of me, O Israel;' Rev. ii. 4, 'Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' And—

(4thly.) Zeal for his glory: 'Not slothful in business, but fervent

in spirit, serving the Lord,' Rom. xii. 11. Where there is a fervour, we cannot be idle and neglectful of our duty.

(3.) By the effects; and they are—

(1st.) Internal. There is a sad withering: 1 Thes. v. 19, 'Quench not the Spirit.' Or—

(2d.) External. It bringeth on many temporal judgments. God puts by Saul from being king for a sin of omission: 1 Sam. xv. 11, 'It repenteth me for setting up Saul to be king; for he hath not done the thing which I commanded him.' For this he puts by Eli's house from the priesthood: 1 Sam. iii. 13, 'I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.' That omission was not total; for he reproved them, but did not punish them.

(3d.) Eternal: Mat. xxv. 30, 'Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness.' So Mat. vii. 19, 'Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire;' if it bringeth not forth good fruit, though not bad or poisonous fruit. For these sins Christ condemneth the wicked in the text. By all these arguments it appeareth that sins of omission may be great sins. But—

2. That some sins of omission are greater than others. All are not alike. As—

[1.] The more necessary the duties are: Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' &c.; 1 Cor. xvi. 22, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha.' These are *peccata contra remedium*, as others are *contra officium*. By other sins we make the wound; by these we refuse the plaster.

[2.] If the omission be total: Jer. x. 25, 'Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name;' Ps. xiv. 2, 'None seeketh after God.'

[3.] If a duty be seasonable; the feeding the hungry, &c., as ver. 44, 'When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger?' &c.; and 1 John iii. 17, 'He that hath this world's good, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

[4.] When it is easy. This is to stand with God for a trifle: Luke xvi. 24, 'And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' *Desideravit guttam, qui non dedit micam.*

[5.] When convinced: James iv. 17, 'Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.'

3. In many cases, sins of omission may be more heinous and damning than sins of commission. They are the ruin of the most part of the carnal world. They are described to be 'without God,' Eph. ii. 12. Of the wicked within the pale it is said, Ps. x. 3, 4, 'The wicked, through the pride of his heart, will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts.' Of the careless professor, Jer. ii. 32, 'My people have forgotten me days without number.' Sins of omission may be more heinous than sins of commission—

[1.] Partly because these harden more. Foul sins scourge the conscience with remorse and shame, but these bring on insensibly slight-

ness and hardness of heart. And therefore Christ saith, 'Publicans and harlots should enter into the kingdom of God' before Pharisees that neglected faith, love, and judgment, Mat. xxi. 31.

[2.] Partly because omissions make way for commissions: Ps. xiv. 4, they that 'called not upon God, did eat up his people as bread.' They lie open to gross sins that do not keep the heart tender by a daily attendance upon God. If a man do not that which is good, he will soon do that which is evil. Oh! then, let us bewail our unprofitableness, that we do no more good, that we do so much neglect God, that we do no more edify our neighbour, so that God's best gifts lie idle upon our hands. That child is counted undutiful that doth wrong and beat his father; so also he that giveth him not due reverence. How seldom do we think of God! Every relation puts new duties upon us, but we little regard them; every gift, every talent.

Again, secondly, The godly by their fruitfulness in good works, and acts of self-denying obedience. They fed, they refreshed, they harboured, they clothed, they visited, ver. 35, 36. The question is not, Have you heard, prayed, preached? These are disclaimed: Mat. vii. 22, 'Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity;' Luke xiii. 26, 'Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; but he shall say, I tell you, I know you not; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.' Nay, nor have you believed: James ii. 20, 'Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?' No; Christ telleth us of another trial. Well, then, a religion that costs nothing is worth nothing. A notional religion, a word religion, is not a christianity of Christ's making. Surely heaven is worth something, and it will cost us something if we mean to get thither. There is more in these works of costly charity than we usually think of, 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19; Luke xvi. 9; 1 John iv. 19, 'Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.' Hereby; by what? 'If we love not in word and tongue only, but in deed and in truth.' Refresh the bowels of the poor, own brethren though with danger of our lives. Heaven is but a fancy to them that will venture nothing for the hopes of it. What have you done to show your thankfulness for so great a mercy tendered to you? A cold belief and a fruitless profession will never yield you comfort. Good words are not dear, and a little countenance given to religion costs no great matter; and therefore do not think that religion lieth only in hearing sermons, or a few cursory prayers and drowsy devotions. We should mind those things about which we shall be questioned at the day of judgment. Have you visited, fed, clothed, harboured, owned the servants of God, when the world hath frowned on them? Comforted them in their distresses? Wherein really have you denied yourselves for the hopes of glory?

*Fifthly*, Observe the notions whereby their different estate in the other world is expressed, punishment and life. See sermon last, on 2 Cor. v. 10.

*Sixthly*, Observe, eternity is affixed to both; everlasting punishment and eternal life. See last sermon on 2 Cor. v. 10.

*Seventhly*, Observe, these are spoken of not only as threatened, but executed. When the cause hath been sufficiently tried and cleared, and sentence passed, there will be execution. The execution is certain, speedy, and unavoidable. See last sermon on 2 Cor. v. 10.

*Eightly*, Observe, sentence is executed on the wicked first. It beginneth with them, for it is said, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal.' Now this is not merely because the order of the narration did so require it. See last sermon on 2 Cor. v. 10.

The *Use* is to press us—(1.) To believe these things; (2.) Seriously to consider of them.

1. To believe them. Most men's faith about the eternal recompenses is but pretended, at best too cold and speculative, an opinion rather than a sound belief, as appeareth by the little fruit and effect that it hath upon us; for if we had such a sight of them as we have of other things, we should be other manner of persons than we are, in all holy conversation and godliness. We see how cautious man is in tasting meat in which he doth suspect harm, that it will breed in him the pain and torments of the stone and gout or cholic; I say, though it be but probable the things will do us any hurt. We know certainly that 'the wages of sin is death,' yet we will be tasting forbidden fruit. If a man did but suspect a house were falling, he would not stay in it an hour. We know for certain that continuance in a carnal estate will be our eternal ruin; yet who doth flee from wrath to come? If we have but a little hope of gain, we will take pains to obtain it. We know that 'our labour is not in vain in the Lord.' Why do we not 'abound in his work'? 1 Cor. xv. 58. Surely we would do more to prevent this misery, to obtain this happiness, when we may do it upon such easy terms, and have so fair an opportunity in our hands; if we were not strangely stupefied, we would not go to hell to save ourselves a labour. There are two things which are very wondrous:—

[1.] That any should suspect the christian faith, so clearly promised in the predictions of the prophets before it was set afoot, and confirmed with such a number of miracles after it was set afoot; received among the nations with so universal a consent in the learned part of the world, notwithstanding the meanness of the instruments first employed in it, and perpetuated to us throughout so many successions of ages, who have had experience of the truth and benefit of it;—that now in the latter end of time, any should suspect this faith, and think it a fond credulity, is a wonder indeed.

[2.] But a greater wonder by far is it that any should embrace the christian faith and yet live sinfully; that they should believe as christians, and yet live as atheists. You cannot drive a dull ass into the fire that is kindled before him: 'Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.' How can men believe eternal torments, and yet with so much boldness and easiness run into the sins that do deserve them? Many times they are not compelled by any terror, nor asked by any tempter, nor invited by any temptation; but of their own accord seek out occasions of their ruin. On the other side, can a man

believe heaven and do nothing for it? If we know that it will not be lost labour, there is all the reason we should not grudge at it.

2. Seriously consider of these things. The scripture everywhere calleth for consideration: Ps. l. 22, 'Consider this, ye that forget God;' Isa. i. 3, 'My people will not consider.' Many that have faith do not set it a-work by lively thoughts. Knowledge is asleep, and differeth little from ignorance and oblivion, till consideration awaken it. If we were at leisure to think of eternity, it would do us good to think of this double motive—that every man must be judged to everlasting joy or everlasting torment. These things are propounded for our benefit and instruction. We are guarded on both sides; we have the bridle of fear and the spur of hope. If God had only terrified us from sin by mentioning inexpressible pains and horrors, we might be frighted, and stand at a distance from it; but when we have such encouragements to good, and God propoundeth such unspeakable joys, this should quicken our diligence. If God had only promised heaven, and threatened no hell, wicked men would count it no great matter to lose heaven, provided that they might be annihilated; but seeing there is both, and both for ever, shall we be cold and dead? We are undone for ever if wicked, blessed for ever if godly. What should we not do that we may be everlastingly blessed, and avoid everlasting misery?

Well, then, let this be considered by us seriously and often and deeply, that everlasting woe and weal is in the case. Meat well chewed nourisheth the more, but being swallowed whole breedeth crudities; so when we swallow truths without rumination or consideration, we do not feel the virtue of them; they do not excite our diligence, nor break the force of temptations: 'Oh! that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end,' Deut. xxxii. 29. I have read of a prodigal prince, that when he had given away a huge sum of money, they laid all the money into a heap before him, that he might see and consider what he had given away, to bring him to retract, or in part to lessen the grant. So it is good for us to consider what we lose in losing eternity, what we part with for these vile and perishing things.

# SERMONS

UPON THE

# SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN.

# SERMONS UPON JOHN XVII.

## SERMON I.

*These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.*—JOHN XVII. 1.

I SHALL, in the following exercises, open to you Christ's solemn prayer recorded in this chapter—a subject worthy of our reverence and serious meditations. The Holy Ghost seemeth to put a mark of respect upon this prayer above other prayers which Christ conceived in the days of his flesh. Elsewhere the scripture telleth us that Christ prayed; but the form is not expressed, or else only brief hints are delivered, but this is expressed at large. This was, as it were, his dying blaze. Natural motion is swifter and stronger in the end; so was Christ's love hottest and strongest in the close of his life; and here you have the eruption and flame of it. He would now open to us the bottom of his heart, and give us a copy of his continual intercession. This prayer is a standing monument of Christ's affection to the church; it did not pass away with the external sound, or as soon as Christ ascended into heaven, and sat at the right hand of the Father; it retaineth a perpetual efficacy; the virtue remaineth, though the words be over. As the word of creation hath retained its vigour these five or six thousand years: 'Increase and multiply, and let the earth bring forth after its kind;' so the voice of this turtle is ever heard, and Christ's prayers retain their vigour and force, as if but newly spoken.

In this prayer he mentions all blessings and privileges necessary for the church. He prayeth for himself, for the apostles, for all believers. He beginneth with his own glorification, as the foundation; and goeth on to seek the welfare of the apostles, as the means; and then the comfort of believers, as the fruit of his administrations in the world. Christ's merit, the apostles' word, the believers' comfort, are three things of the highest consideration in religion. I shall open these in the order and method in which they are laid down.

In the first verse we have:—

1. The preface to the whole prayer, *these things said Jesus, &c.*

2. Christ's free request, *glorify thy Son;* which is backed with reasons taken from—

[1.] His special relation, *Father*, and *thy Son.*

[2.] His present necessity, *the hour is come.*

[3.] The aim of his request, *that thy Son also may glorify thee.*

I shall go over the phrases as they are offered in the order of the words.

'These things spake Jesus;' that is, when he had spoken these things. This clause serveth—

1. To show the order of the history; his prayer followed his farewell sermon.

2. The suitableness of his prayers to the sermon. The points there enforced are here commended to God in prayer. It were easy to suit the requests to the consolations and instructions of that sermon. From hence—

[1.] Observe how fitly Christ dischargeth the office of a mediator. The office of a mediator, or day's-man, is 'to lay his hand upon both,' Job ix. 33; to treat and deal with both parties. Hitherto Christ hath dealt with men in the name of God, opening his counsel to us; now he dealeth with God in the name of men, opening our case to him. As Moses, the typical mediator, was to speak to God, Exod. xix. 19, and from God, Exod. xx. 19, so did our Lord speak from God and to God. He still performeth the same work and office. He speaketh to us in the word, and for us in prayer. The word never works till we hear Christ speaking in it: 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 'Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me;' and our prayers are not accepted, but by virtue of Christ's intercession. Those that made their addresses to King Admetus, brought the prince with them in their arms; or as Joseph charged his brethren that they should not see his face unless they brought Benjamin with them, their brother; we cannot see God's face unless we bring our elder brother with us. Acts xii. 20, when Herod was displeased with the men of Tyre, they made Blastus, the king's chamberlain, their friend. It is good to have a favourite in heaven. Among all the favourites, none so acceptable as Christ; get him to make intercession for you. Out of the whole, learn to see Christ in the word, to use Christ in prayer; he is the golden pipe by which our prayers ascend, and the influences of heaven are conveyed to us: 1 Cor. viii. 6, 'One Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' All things come from God to us through Christ.

[2.] Observe Christ's order and method. From preaching he descendeth to prayer; the word worketh not without the divine grace. We may open the word, but God must open the understanding, Luke xxiv. 28, with 45. Christ himself, you see, sealeth his doctrine with the seal of prayer. Moral suasion worketh not without a divine and real efficacy. The apostles said, Acts vi. 4, 'We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word.' When God hath spoken to us, we must speak to God again. Prayer is the best key to open the heart, because it first openeth heaven. Those that hear a sermon, and do not pray for a blessing, see nothing of God in his ordinances, nothing but what is of man's oratory and argument. Efficacy is quite another thing and when God speaketh in his word with

Samuel, they think it is Eli. It reproveth them that, when the sermon is ended, go out, and turn their backs upon prayer; this is to neglect Christ's method. And it presseth you still to help on the word by your prayers: Rom. xv. 30, 'I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers.' If you would have Christ's glory and the Spirit's efficacy promoted, you must take this course.

[3.] Observe the industry and diligence of the Lord Jesus in holy things. He letteth no time pass without some saving work; from doctrine he turneth himself to prayer. He began with the supper, and goeth on with discourse, and finisheth all with prayer. It upbraideth us that are soon weary of holy things. We are like foolish birds that leave the nest, and are often straggling, and let the eggs cool before they are hatched. Our religion cometh by flashes, which are never perfected and ripened. Now especially should we imitate Christ upon solemn days of worship; as the Lord's-day, our whole time should be parted into meditation and prayer and conference. And yet more especially after the Lord's supper we should continue the devotion, and make the whole day a post-communion, as civet-boxes retain their scent when the civet is taken out; and when the act is over, our thoughts and discourse and actions should still savour of the solemnity. Certainly it is an argument of much weakness to be all for flashes and sudden starts. If we would refresh ourselves with change, it should be with change of exercise, and not of affection. If it seem irksome, consider, it is more easy to persevere in a heavenly frame than to begin again; and when the heart is warm, we should take heed we do not lose the present advantage. A bell is kept up with less difficulty than raised; and when a horse is warm in his gears he continues his journey with more ease than if he should stand still a while and grow stiff. If we yield to weariness, how shall we hope to raise the heart again, and to get it to this advantage? Corruption doth but cheat thee if thou thinkest to get a fresh start by intermission. As I said before, there is refreshment in change of exercise; and when one teat is drawn dry, we may, as the lamb, suck another that will yield new supply and sweetness.

'And lift up his eyes to heaven.'—The scripture taketh notice of the gesture. Christ's gestures are notable, because real significations of the motions of his heart. In the garden, when he began his passion, he fell on his face and prayed, Mat. xxvi. 39; but here he lifted up his eyes. When he travailed under the greatness of our sins, his posture is humble; but now, when he is treating with God for our mercies, he useth a gesture that implieth a more elevated and generous confidence. Gestures, being actions suited to the affections, are significant, and imply the dispositions of the heart. Let us see what may be collected out of this gesture, lifting the eyes to heaven.

1. The raising of the heart to God in prayer. Prayer is *ἀνάβασις τοῦ νοῦ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, the ascension or elevation of the heart to God, the motion of the body suiting with that of the soul; so David expresseth it, Ps. xxv. 1, 'I lift my heart to thee.' When you pray, know what is your work. If you would converse with God, you need not change place, but raise the affection. God boweth the heavens, and you lift up the heart; it is not the lifting up the voice, but of the

spirit. The lifting up of the voice, or of the eye are good, as outward significations, but the chief work is to lift up the heart; the understanding in raised thoughts of God, the affections by strong operations of desire and love. Usually our hearts are heavy, and sink as lead within us; it is a work of difficulty to raise them. We must pull up the weights, προσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ προσευχῇ, 'continuing in prayer,' Acts i. 14. As Moses his hands easily fell and sunk, so do our hearts, Exod. xvii. There are plummets and weights of sin hang upon us, which must be cut off if we intend to get up the heart in prayer.

2. Spiritual reverence of God: 'The heavens are his throne and dwelling-place,' Ps. ciii. 19. There his majesty and power shineth forth, there we behold his majesty, in that sublime and stately fabric. Earthly kings, that their majesty may appear the greater to their subjects, have their thrones exalted, and made of precious matter, with cunning and curious artifice. But what are these to that sublime and admirable fabric of the heavens? The very sight of the heavens show how excellent God is. So that looking up to heaven noteth the raising the heart in the reverent consideration of God's majesty and excellency. We may come with hope; we speak to our Father: but we must speak with reverence; we speak to our Father in heaven. When we lift up our eyes, and look upon that stately fabric, the awe of God should fall upon us. We are poor worms crawling at God's footstool. By looking up to heaven we do most seriously set God before us. So when Solomon speaketh against the slightness of our addresses to God, he propoundeth this remedy, Eccles. v. 2, 'Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth.' There is a distance; there God appeareth in his royalty. We tremble to come before the thrones of earthly princes; they are but thy fellow clay: how far do the stars of heaven excel their richest jewels! What is all their state to the pure matter of the heavens, to that blaze of light wherewith he is clothed? Ps. civ. 2, 'Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.' What are the coaches of princes to the chariots of the clouds, and wings of the wind, and that majesty and state that God keepeth in the heavens?

3. It noteth confidence in God, or a disclaiming of all sublunary confidence. The godly, in all their prayers and cries, look up unto the heavens, to note their confidence in God, and not in fleshly aids; as Ps. cxxi. 1, 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help;' meaning, his relief and deliverance should come from God alone. A christian looketh round about him, and seeth no ground of help but in the tops of the hills. So Ps. cxxiii. 1, 'Unto thee I lift up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.' The thrones of princes are places slippery and unsafe; but our supports are out of gunshot: Lam. iii. 41, 'Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.' We must not rest upon anything in the world. He that made the heavens can accomplish our desires. The constant course of the heavens noteth God's faithfulness. A man may foresee some natural events some hundred years before. The glorious fabric of the heavens is a monument of his power.

4. To show that their hearts are taken off from the world, and from

carnal desires. Christ's eyes were to heaven; there his Father was: and christians lift up their eyes to heaven, because they mainly 'seek those things that are above,' where God's throne is, and 'where Christ is now sitting at his right hand,' Col. iii. 1. It is for beasts to grovel and look downward. Our home is above, in those upper regions; there is our Christ, our pure and sweet companions. Their heart cannot be severed from their head. When we expect one, we turn our eyes that way; as the wife looks towards the seas when she expects her husband's return. It doth them good to look towards these visible heavens, remembering that one day they shall have a place of rest there. God hath fixed his throne, and Christ hath removed his body out of the world, that we may look upward. These things from the gesture.

'And said.'—The word noteth a vocal expression of the prayer. Moses cried, Exod. xiv. 15, which noteth an inward fervency. There are no words mentioned, but Christ 'said;' that is, with an audible voice.

I shall from this word inquire—(1.) Why he prayed; (2.) Why he pronounced his prayers in the hearing of the apostles.

First, Why he prayed; for it seems strange that Christ should be brought upon his knees, and that he, who was the express image of his Father's glory, should need the comfort of prayer, and that the heir of heaven, who hath the key of David, and openeth and no man shutteth, should stand knocking at the Father's door. I answer—

1. This was the agreement between God and him, that he was first to establish a right, and then to sue it out in court: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.' This prayer is nothing else but Christ presenting his merits before the tribunal of God. In the whole transaction of man's salvation, God the Father would sustain the person of the ruler and governor of the world; and Christ was to come and make his plea before him, to give an account of his work, and to sue out his own right, and the right of his members. Oh! wonder at the business of our salvation, the love of God, the condescension of Christ, when he took the quality of our surety upon him. He is to make a formal process, to plead his own merits and our interest; for so he is less than the Father as mediator: 'My Father is greater than I.' Not only as man, but as mediator, Christ sustained a lesser place.

2. That we might have a copy of his intercession. Christ is good at interceding; he gave the world a taste in his last prayer. It is a pledge of those continual groans which, as a mediator of the church, he putteth up for us in heaven. We have an excellent advocate: 1 John ii. 2, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' When thou art in danger of temptation, he saith, 'They are in the world; keep them from the evil of the world.' When thou art practising holinesss, Christ speaketh a good word of thee behind thy back: 'Father, they keep thy word.' He is a good shepherd, that knoweth the state of his flock, and readily giveth an account to the Father.

3. That these prayers might be a constant fountain and foundation of spiritual blessings. Christ's prayers are as good as so many pro-

mises; for he is always heard, John xi. 42. In this prayer, Christ speaketh as God-man. There is not any ἐρωτῶ, I ask, but θέλω, I will. Ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also be with me where I am.' A word, not of request, but of authority. The divine nature giveth a force and efficacy to these prayers. When he prayeth, whole Christ prayeth, God-man; and as his passion received efficacy from his godhead, so did his prayers: Acts xx. 28, 'Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.' As it was the blood of God, so it is the prayer of God. The godhead is interested in all these actions; it is the prayer of the Son of God made flesh. The things which he asketh belong to the human nature, yet he prayeth as God. He that heareth with the Father, will be heard by the Father. Christ's prayer is not like the prayers of other holy men recorded in scripture for a form and pattern, but as a fountain of comfort and blessing. This should beget a confidence in the accomplishment of all these promises, the safety of the elect, the success of the word, the unity of the church, and the possession of glory.

4. To commend the duty of prayer. He commanded it before, and commended it by promise: John xiv. 13, 14, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it;' John xv. 16, 'That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.' Now, to precept and promise he would add his own example. Certainly there are none above ordinances, if Christ the eternal Son of God was not. If Christ, who was of the same majesty and power with his Father, did pray so earnestly and seriously, when, in the light of omnisciency, he saw the fruit of his passion, how much more are prayers necessary for us, under such infirmity of flesh to which we are subject, and such rage of Satan and the world! In all cases we must use this remedy. They that are above prayer are beyond religion. In his greatest works Christ despised not this remedy. Christ knew his own deliverance, and was sure of it; yet he will not have it but by prayer. He had an eternal right to heaven and glory, and a new right by purchase, yet he would have his charter confirmed by prayer. And so, though we have assurance of mercy, we must take this course to get it accomplished; though we have large possessions and a liberal supply, when it is at the table we must receive it as a boon from grace: 'Give us this day our daily bread.' If for no other reason, prayer is necessary for submission to God, and that we may renew the sense of that tenure by which we hold a charter of grace, that by asking we may still take it out of free grace's hands. Christ had a right, yet, because of that mixture of grace with justice in all divine dispensations, he is to ask.

5. That our prayers might be effectual. Christ's prayer is large and comprehensive. We can mention nothing but he has begged it already *in terminis*, or by consequence. The prayers of the saints have their efficacy, but not from any virtue in them, but by Christ's merits, by virtue of his prayers. Now Christ hath consecrated the way, it is like to be successful; no prayer can miscarry. God may cast out the dross, but he will be sure to receive the prayer. Now he doth not refuse your money, but rubbeth off the filth of it. It is very

notable that Christ consecrated all ordinances, and made them successful by his own obedience. Baptism; he made the waters of baptism salutary. Hearing; Christ was one of John's auditors: 'Behold the Lamb of God,' John i. 29. Singing, prayer, receiving the supper; he loveth the society, ever since he himself was a communicant: Mat. xxvi. 29, 'I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' Christ doth but act over that ordinance in heaven. So for prayer.

Secondly, The next thing is why Christ spake aloud in prayer.

I answer—He might have prayed in silence, but he would be our advocate, but so that he might be our teacher. When he prayed for us, he prayed publicly and with a loud voice, for our comfort and instruction, and to give vent to the strength of his affection by leaving this monument in the church: ver. 13, 'These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves;' that in all trials and afflictions we might draw consolation from the matter of this prayer. You may observe hence, that it is of advantage to use vocal prayer, not only in public, when we may quicken others, as one bird setting all the rest a-chirping, and we profess we are not ashamed of God or his worship, but in private also. God made body and soul, and will be served by both. Words are as giving vent to, or as the broaching of, a full vessel. Strong affections cannot be confined to thoughts: Ps. xxxix. 2, 3, 'My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue.' Musing makes the fire to burn. There is a continual prayer by ejaculations and thoughts; but words become solemn and stated times of duty. Words are a boundary to the mind, and fix it more than thoughts, which are usually light and skipping. The mind may wander, but words are as a trumpet to summon them again into the presence of God. Our roving madness will be sooner discerned in words than in thoughts. When a word is lost or misplaced, we are more ashamed; and by words, a dull sluggish heart is sometimes quickened and awakened. It is good to use this help.

Now I come to the prayer itself.

'Father.'—It is a word of confidence and sweet relation, in which there is much of argument, in that Christ, as God's only Son, speaketh to his own Father: 'Father, glorify thy Son.' A father is wont to be delighted with the glory and honour of a son, as the mother of Zebedee's children sought their preferment, Mat. xx. 20. It is good to observe that Christ doth not say, 'Our Father,' as involving our interest with his, because it is of a distinct kind. Christ would observe the distinction between us and himself: he is a Son that is equal with the Father, co-eternal with his Father; but we are adopted sons, made so. When he speaketh to his disciples, he saith not, Our heavenly Father, but 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things,' Mat. vi. 32; and John xx. 17, 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God;' clearly distinguishing his own interest from ours. And mark, Christ useth the argument of son and father to show that he was not therefore glorified because a son, but therefore a son because glorified. We may note hence—

1. That it is very sweet and comfortable in prayer when we can come and call God Father. It is a word of affection, reverence, and confidence; in all which the excellency of prayer consisteth. So Christ in all his addresses: 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' Mat. xxvi. 39. So also all his prayers are bottomed on this relation; ver. 5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self;' Mat. xi. 25, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,' &c. He hath taught us the same, to pray, 'Our Father which art in heaven,' Mat. vi. 9. The great work of the Spirit is to help us to speak thus to God; not with lips that feign, but from our hearts: Rom. viii. 15, 'Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.' We confine the Spirit's assistance to earnest tendencies and vigorous motions; the main work is, to help us to cry, Father, with a proper and genuine confidence. Now all cannot do this: a wicked man cannot say safely to God, My Father. Whosoever claims kindred of God, while he is unjust and filthy, it is not a prayer, but a contumely and slander: 'He that sanctifieth, and those that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,' Heb. ii. 11. Christ counteth none to be of his kindred but the regenerate. Pagans are strangers, and carnal men in the church are bastards; they had need study holiness that would claim kindred of Christ. Consider then what claim and interest have you in God? It is sad if we can only come as creatures, cry as ravens for food, out of a general title to his providence, or to cry, Father, and lie; to take his name in vain. It is sweeter to speak to God as a son than as a creature; 'Lord, Lord,' is not half so sweet as, 'Our Father.' This is a sweet invitation to prayer: Mat. vii. 9, 'What man of you, who if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?' Ver. 11, 'If ye then, that are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?' It is a consolation in prayer: Gal. iv. 6, 'Because ye are sons, he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' It is a ground of hope and expectation after prayer: 'Ye have received the spirit of adoption, to call God, Father.'

2. Christ was about to suffer bitter things from the hand of God, and yet he calleth him Father. In afflictions, we must still look upon God as a Father, and behave ourselves as children. Christ felt him a judge, yet counts him a father. God, as a judge, was now about to lay on him the sufferings of all the elect, yet Christ calls him Father, to declare his obedience and trust. The hour was come in which the whole weight of God's displeasure was to be laid upon him; yet, in this relative term, he acknowledgeth his Father's love, and manifesteth his own obedience. We should do so in all our afflictions:—(1.) Maintain the comfort of adoption; (2.) Behave ourselves as children.

1. Maintain the comfort of adoption. It is the folly of the children of God to question his love because of the greatness of their afflictions, as if their interest did change with their condition, and God were not the God of the valleys as well as the God of the hills. We have more cause to discern love than to question it. Bastards are left to a looser discipline: Heb. xii. 8, 'If ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.' To be exempted

from the cross is to be put out of the roll of children. The bramble of the wilderness is suffered to grow wild, but the vine is pruned. The stones that are designed for a noble structure or building are hewed and squared when others lie by neglected.

2. Behave ourselves as children, with patience and hope.

[1.] With a submissive patience. 'Father' is a word that implieth authority and love and care, all which are arguments of patience. Fathers have a natural right to rule; we must take it quietly and patiently at their hands. Isaac yielded to his father when he went to be sacrificed. It is said, Gen. xxii. 8, 'They both went together;' which noteth his quiet submission. But fatherly acts are not only managed with authority, but with love and care. Slaves may be corrected out of cruelty and hatred by their masters, but fathers do not deal so with children: Heb. xii. 9, 10, 'Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.' The apostle argueth *a minori ad majus.* None can be such a father as the Lord, so wise as he, so loving as he. God putteth on all relations: he hath the bowels of a mother, the wisdom of a father. He is a mother for tenderness of love: Isa. xlix. 15, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.' A father for wisdom and care: Mat. vi. 31, 32, 'Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? &c., for your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.' Earthly parents sometimes chastise their children out of mere passion, at least there is some mixture of corruption; but the Lord's dispensations are managed with much love and judgment. Therefore say, as Christ, John xviii. 11, 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink of it?' It is a bitter cup, but it cometh from the hand of a father: our Father gave it us, and our elder brother began it to us. We should love the cup the better ever since Christ's lips touched it.

[2.] With hope. When we are perplexed, we should not be in despair, but sustain ourselves under our great hopes: 1 John iii. 2, 'Now we are the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be.' We have the right of children, though afflicted; our estate and patrimony is in the heavens. An heir in his nonage is under tutors and governors; he is born to a great possession, but kept under a severe discipline.

The hour is come, ἡ ὥρα, that hour.

1. That hour which was defined in God's decree, set down and appointed by the council of the Trinity; not by fate, or any necessity of the stars, but by God's wise providence and ordination. No man could take Christ till his hour was come: John vii. 30, 'Then they sought to take him; but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.' But when this hour was come, the Son of God was brought under the power of men, and liable to the assaults of devils. Therefore he saith, Luke xxii. 53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness. No calamity can touch us without God's will.

The hour, the measure, all the circumstances of sufferings, fall under the ordination of God. It is not only a general ordinance that we shall suffer affliction; the apostle mentioneth that, 1 Thes. iii. 3, 'Let no man be moved by this affliction; for yourselves know that you were thereunto appointed.' It is the ordinance of God that the way to heaven should lie through a howling wilderness. All the saints in heaven knew no other road; afflictions seem one of the waymarks. But we speak now of another appointment, of determining all the circumstances of the affliction, the time, the measure, the instruments. It is the comfort of a christian that nothing can befall him but what his Father wills: 'A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father,' Mat. x. 29. The wise Lord hath brewed our cup, and moulded and shaped every cross. All the ounces of gall and wormwood are weighed out by a wise decree, and our cup is tempered by God's own hand. We storm many times because of such and such accidents, and circumstances of the cross, as if we would have God ask our vote and advice, and as if our opinion were a better balance wherein to weigh things than divine providence. Providence reacheth to every particular accident. Your doom was long since written: such a vessel of mercy shall be thus and thus broached and pierced; every wound and sorrow is numbered.

2. That hour which was determined and foretold in the prophecies. God doth all things in fit seasons; he hath his days and hours. Daniel 'understood by books the number of the years,' Dan. ix. 2; Hab. ii. 3, 'The vision is for an appointed time.' It easeth the heart of much distraction when we consider there is a period fixed. There is a clock with which providence keepeth time and pace, and God himself setteth it. It is good for us to wait the Lord's leisure. God himself waiteth as well as we: Isa. xxx. 18, 'He waiteth that he may be gracious.' He letteth the course of causes run on till the fit hour and moment of execution be come, when he may discover himself with most advantage to his glory and the comfort of his servants; and God waiteth with as much earnestness as you do (I speak after the manner of men): Isa. xvi. 14, 'But now hath the Lord spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned,' &c.; as the hireling waiteth for the time of his freedom, and when he is to receive his wages. Moab was a bitter enemy. Therefore let us wait: John viii. 7, 'Your times are always ready, but my time is not yet come.' We draw draughts of providence with the pencil of fancy, and then confine God to the circle of our own thoughts, as if he must be always ready at our hours.

3. The hour is come; the sufferings of God's people are very short. To our sense and feeling they seem long, because carnal affections are soon tired; but the word doth not reckon by centuries and years, but moments: Ps. xxx. 5, 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' All temporal accidents are nothing compared to eternity. The sorrows of our whole life are but one night's darkness: 'This light affliction, that is but for a moment,' saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Set time against eternity, and we shall want words to declare the shortness of it. Our hour will be soon ended. Wait a while and we shall be beyond fears. The martyrs in heaven

do not think of flames, and wounds and saws; these were the sufferings of a moment: John xvi. 21, 'A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world;' John xvi. 16, 'A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me.' To faith, the time between Christ's departure and his second coming is but as the time between his death and resurrection; for of that Christ also speaketh, as is clear by the subsequent context. We measure all by sense, and therefore cry, How long, how long; as men in pain will count minutes; but look to the endless glory within the veil, and it is nothing. We should especially take this comfort to ourselves in sickness and death; it is but an hour. Wink and thou shalt be in heaven, said a martyr.

4. The hour is come, saith Christ, and therefore prayeth. When the sad hour is come, the only remedy is prayer. We should not despond, but meet sorrows with a generous confidence. Now the only way is to pray. If we cannot look for a deliverance, we may pray for a mitigation, for shortening affliction: Mat. xxiv. 20, 'Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath-day,' when it may be tedious to body or soul. Pray that you may glorify God in sufferings, as Christ sueth out support in this request. Usually when evils are unavoidable we give over all addresses; yet our condition is capable of mercy. If the hour be come, beg that a spirit of glory may rest upon you.

5. Christ knew his hour. There was no traitor by; Judas was not present; the soldiers were not come to apprehend him; all was yet in the dark, and kept secret in the bosom of the priests and elders. It confirmeth us in the belief of the omnisciency of Christ. He knew the moment of his suffering before there was any appearance of it: 'All things are open and naked before him with whom we have to do;' and he 'seeth our thoughts afar off.'

6. Christ knew the hour was come, yet he seeketh not a hiding-place, or to avoid the storm by flight. How many natural and supernatural ways had Christ to escape! He could have smitten them with a beam of majesty. It noteth the willingness of Christ to suffer all this trouble and danger for our sakes as our conqueror. When Christ was to grapple with our enemies, he did not decline the battle, but with courage and confidence entered into the lists with death and hell. As our sacrifice, he went willingly to the altar, not like a swine, but like a sheep; not with howling and reluctancy, but with a ready patience.

7. The act of Christ's death was quickly over; it was but a short space of time; he calleth it an hour: Ps. cx. 7, *de torrente bibet*, 'He shall drink of the brook in the way;' a draught of death: 'He tasted death for every one,' Heb. ii. 9. At one draught he drunk hell dry as to the elect.

*Object.* But we were to suffer eternally, and Christ was to bear our sorrows.

I answer—Though Christ paid the same debt, yet, through the excellency of his person, it was done in a shorter time. A payment in

gold is the same sum with a payment in silver or brass; only, through the excellency of the metal, it taketh up less room.

8. The hour is come. By way of argument, he showeth the occasion of his prayer in this hour of sadness and ignominy. I am to be betrayed, condemned, buffeted, crucified; my majesty will be obscured, and my death, like a veil, drawn upon my glory: now, glorify me in this hour. Indeed, thus it was in all Christ's weakness and abasement, there was some adjunct of glory. In his incarnation, he is thrust out into a manger, a place for horses; but there he is worshipped. A star in heaven is hung up for a sign of that inn where Christ lay; a new bonfire to welcome that great, but poor prince, into the world. He is apprehended by the soldiers, but they are driven back, and twice checked in their rude attempt by the beams and emissions of his divine glory. He is tempted by the devil in the wilderness, but angels are sent to minister to him. He had not wherewith to pay tribute to Cæsar, but the sea payeth tribute to him, and a fish bringeth the money. When he was crucified and scoffed at, heaven itself becometh a mourner, and puts on a veil of darkness; the high priest did not rend his clothes, but the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. One thief scoffed him, but another proclaimed him king. When man denied him, the creatures preached up his glory. Thus Christ, in the saddest hour, is still glorified. And thus it is with the children of God. Afflictions on wicked men are evil, and all evil; but to the saints, a mixed dispensation: sweet experiences they have in the midst of sad calamities, and mercy in the midst of wrath.

'Glorify thy Son.'—This is the request itself: what is the meaning of it? Origen understandeth it of the very ignominy of the cross itself, which was to Christ a glory; *Gloria salvatoris, patibulum triumphantis.* The cross was not a gibbet, but a throne of honour; and Calvary to Christ was as glorious as Olivet. It is expressed by lifting up. But certainly this cannot be intended here, because it was the lowest act of his humiliation and abasement. This is made the motive and reason of his request: 'The hour is come,' by which, as we have seen, he intendeth that sad ignominious hour. In short, it is meant either of God's glorifying him *in* his sufferings, or God's glorifying him *after* his sufferings; as will appear by the sequel and two parallel places.

1. Glory in his sufferings. It is said, John xiii. 31, 32, 'Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.' The meaning is, now he is to show himself a glorious Saviour, by which God shall also be glorified, for which he will uphold and reward him. So, 'Glorify thy Son;' he intendeth those passages by which his glory is manifested to the world. And so he intends—

[1.] Miracles; while Christ suffered, the frame of nature seemed to be out of course: Mat. xxvii. 51, 'The veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;' and ver. 54, 'When the centurion, and they that were with him, saw these things, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.'

[2.] Support and strength. This was Christ's last combat, and he was to discover the strength and the power of the Godhead. Now he prayeth for those tokens and significations of the divine power in his death, to undeceive the world, and that the disciples might receive no scandal by his cross.

2. Glory after death; so it is said, John vii. 39, 'That the Spirit was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified.' Till his resurrection and ascension into heaven, he was not inaugurated into the headship of the church, and gave not out those royal largesses and gifts of the Spirit. So that by this prayer Christ intendeth the resurrection and all the consequents of it. His resurrection, by which his divinity was declared: Rom. i. 4, 'And declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' His ascension and invisible triumph: Col. ii. 15, 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it;' Eph. iv. 8, 'When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' The reception of his humanity to heaven, and his sitting down at the right hand of God: Phil. ii. 9–11, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' His inauguration into the throne, and authority over all things. The preaching of the gospel in his name, together with the success of it: Isa. lv. 4, 5, 'Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knewest not; and nations that know not thee, shall run unto thee; because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.' His return at the day of judgment, with power and great glory. The petition must be explained according to the event of all the glory that God put upon Christ after his passion. The meaning of the whole is, Hitherto I have laid aside my glory, and now lay down my life; sustain me by thine arm, that I may overcome death; and raise me again with triumph and honour, that I may go into glory, leading captivity captive, and receive the principality; that by the resurrection, publication of the gospel, and last judgment, the glory of my divinity may be known and acknowledged.

But how doth Christ pray, 'Glorify me,' when he saith elsewhere, John viii. 5, 'I seek not my own glory'?

I answer—Christ speaketh there of himself in the judgment of his adversaries, who thought him a mere man, and showeth that he came not as an impostor, to seek himself. God would well enough provide for his glory and esteem. There he disclaimeth all particular private aims, affections, and attempts; here he sueth out his right according to his Father's promise.

Observe hence—

1. Christ saith, 'The hour is come;' and then, 'Father, glorify me.' The true remedy of tribulation is to look to the succeeding glory, and to counterbalance future dangers with present hopes. In this prayer Christ reviveth the grounds of confidence. One is, 'Father, glorify

me.' This was comfort against that sad hour; and so it must be our course 'not to look to things which are seen, but to things that are not seen,' 2 Cor. iv. 17, to defeat sense by faith. When the mind is in heaven, it is fortified against the pains which the body feeleth on earth. Strong affections give us a kind of dedolency; a man will venture a knock that is in reach of a crown, 1 Tim. iv. 8. It is the folly of christians to let fancy work altogether upon present discouragements. Faith should be fixed in the contemplation of future hopes. It is a sad hour, but there is glory in the issue and close.

2. Observe again, first, Christ had his hour; then he saith, 'Glorify me.' Luke xxiv. 26, 'Ought not Christ to suffer, and then to enter into his glory?' Shame, sorrow, and death is the roadway to glory, joy, and life; the captain of our salvation was thus made perfect, Heb. ii. 10; and all the followers of the Lamb are brought in by that method. It is the folly of some that think to be in heaven before they have done anything for God's glory upon earth. You would invert the method and stated course of heaven. None is crowned except he strive lawfully, 2 Tim. ii. 5, 6: and ver. 11, 12, 'It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.' It hath the seal of a constant dispensation, it is a faithful saying. All the promises run, 'To him that overcometh.' We must have communion with Christ in all estates: Rom. viii. 17, 'If so be that ye suffer with him, that ye may be also glorified together.' It is a necessary condition: 'We are heirs, if so be that we suffer with him,' &c. We are too delicate; we would have our path strewed with roses, and do not like this discipline. Abel signifies mourning, and Stephen a crown, they were the first martyrs of either testament. If you want afflictions, you want one of the necessary waymarks to heaven.

3. 'Glorify me.' Christ seeketh not the empty things of this world, but to be glorified with the Father. We want some spiritual ambition, and are too low and grovelling in our desires and hopes: 'If you be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God,' Col. iii. 1. It is no treason to aspire to the heavenly kingdom: Mat. vi. 33, 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof;' and to seek a place on Christ's own throne. Neither is it any culpable self-seeking to seek self in God: John v. 44, 'How can ye believe, that receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God alone?' John xii. 43. They 'loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.' Here we may seek our own honour and glory without a crime. Oh! behold the liberality and indulgence of grace! God hath set no stint to our spiritual desires; we may seek not only grace, but glory.

4. Christ himself prayeth to be glorified; it noteth the truth of his abasement. He is the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8, and had a natural and eternal right: 'He thought it no robbery to be equal with God;' and yet Christ himself is now upon his knees. If he had said, Let them be glorified, that had been much, that he would open his mouth to plead for sinners; but he saith, 'Glorify me,' or 'Glorify thy Son;' which is a strange condescension, that he that had the key of David should now be knocking at the Father's gate, and receive his own

heaven by gift and entreaty. He might take, without robbery, glory as his due; yet, as our mediator, he is to ask. When he took our nature, he brought himself under the engagement of our duty.

5. Christ asketh what he knew would be given. So John viii. 50, 'I seek not my own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth.' The Father was zealous for the Son's glory; there was an oracle from heaven to assure him of it: John xii. 28, 'Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;' meaning, by strengthening him in the work of redemption. And yet now again, 'Glorify thy Son, that he may glorify thee.' Observe, providence doth not take away prayers. We are to ask, though our heavenly Father knoweth we have need of these things, and we know God will give them to us: John xvi. 26, 27, 'At that day ye shall ask in my name; I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you.' The meaning is, though there be need of my great instance, and I need not tell you I will make intercession; I pass by that now; I only tell you of that free access you have to God, and his great affection to you; yet still you must ask. Assurance is a ground of the more earnest request. When Daniel understood by books the number of the years, then he was most earnest in prayer; and when Elijah heard the sound of the rain, he prayed. Prayer is to help on providences that are already in motion.

'That thy Son also may glorify thee.'—Here is another argument. It is usual in prayer to speak of ourselves in a third person; so doth Christ here, 'That thy Son may glorify thee.' This may be understood many ways; partly as the glory of the Son is the glory of the Father; partly by accomplishing God's work; that I may destroy thy enemies, and save thy elect; partly by the preaching of the gospel in Christ's name, to the glory of God the Father. He doth, as it were, say, I desire it for no other end but that I may bring honour to thee.

From this clause—

1. Observe, that God's glory is much advanced in Jesus Christ. In the scriptures there is a draught of God; as coin bears the image of Cæsar, but Cæsar's son is his lively resemblance. Christ is the living Bible; we may read much of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We shall study no other book when we come to heaven. For the present, it is an advantage to study God in Jesus Christ. The apostle hath an expression, 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' Christ is the image of God, and the gospel is the picture of Christ, the picture which Christ himself hath presented to his bride. There we see the majesty and excellency of his person; and in Christ, of God. And ver. 6, the apostle saith, 'To give the light of the excellency of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.' In Christ, we read God glorious; in his word, miracles, personal excellencies, transfiguration, resurrection, we read much of God. There we read his justice, that he would not forgive sins without a plenary satisfaction. If Christ himself be the Redeemer, justice will not bate him one farthing. His mercy; he spared not his own Son. What scanty low thoughts should we have of the divine mercy if we had not this

instance of Christ! His truth in fulfilling of prophecies: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' This was most difficult for God to grant, for us to believe; yet rather than he would go back from his word, he would send his own Son to suffer death for a sinful world. All things were to be accomplished, though it cost Christ his precious life. God had never a greater gift, yet Christ came when he was promised: he will not stick at anything, that gave us his own Son. His wisdom, in the wonderful contrivance of our salvation. When we look to God's heaven, we see his wisdom; but when we look on God's Son, we see the manifold wisdom of God, Eph. iii. 10. The angels wonder at these dispensations to the church. His power, in delivering Christ from death, and the glorious effects of his grace; his majesty, in the transfiguration and ascension of Christ. Oh! then study Christ, that you may know God. There is the fairest transcript of the divine perfections; the Father was never published to the world by anything so much as by the Son.

2. Observe, our respects to Christ must be so managed that the Father also may be glorified; for upon these terms, and no other, will Christ be glorified: 2 Cor. i. 20, 'For all the promises in him are Yea, and in him Amen, to the glory of God by us;' Phil. ii. 10, 11, 'That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;' John xiv. 13, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' Look, as the Father will not be honoured without the Son: John v. 53, 'That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that hath sent him;' so neither will the Son be honoured without the Father. It condemneth them who, out of a fond respect to Christ, neglect the Father. As the former age carried all respect in the name of God Almighty, without any distinct reflection on God the Son, so many of late carry all things in the name of God the Son, that the adoration due to the other persons is forgotten. The wind of error doth not always blow in one corner. When the heat of such a humour is spent, Christ will be as much vilified and debased. Our hearts should not be frigidly and coldly affected to any of the divine persons.

3. Observe, it is the proper duty of sons to glorify their father: Mal. i. 6, 'If I be a father, where is mine honour?' Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.'

How must this be done?

[1.] By reverent thoughts of his excellency, especially in worship; then we honour him when we behave ourselves before him as before a great God; this is to make him glorious in our own hearts, when we conceive of him as more excellent than all things. Usually we have mean base thoughts, by which we straiten or pollute the divine excellency.

[2.] By serious acknowledgments give him glory: Rev. iv. 11, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'

Now this is not in naked ascriptions of praise to him, prattling over words; but when we confess all the glory we have above other men, in gifts or dignity, is given us of God, this is to make him the Father of glory: Eph. i. 17, '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.'

[3.] When we make the advantage of his kingdom the end of all our actions: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God;' Phil. i. 20, 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.' Christ had glorified him, yet he seeks now to do it more. Self will be mixing with our ends, but it must be beaten back. We differ little from beasts if we mind only our own conveniences.

[4.] By making this the aim of our prayers. We should desire glory and happiness upon no other terms: Eph. i. 6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' It is a mighty encouragement in prayer when we are sure to be heard: John xii. 28, 'Father, glorify thy name: then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' He begs that God would glorify his name in giving him the victory in this last combat. We ask of God for God: 'Those that honour me, I will honour them,' 1 Sam. ii. 30.

[5.] When we are content to be put to shame so God be honoured, to hazard all so we may glorify his name, though it be with the loss of life itself: Josh. vii. 19, 'My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him;' Mal. ii. 2, 'If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name' (that is, by an ingenuous confession), 'I will even send a curse upon you.'

[6.] When you make others to glorify God: 2 Cor. ix. 13, 'They glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ.' Christians are to be holy, for Christ's honour lieth at stake.

[7.] When we can rejoice in God's glory, though advanced by others, be the instruments who they will; as Paul did, Phil. i. 18, 'Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached, and I herein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.'

[8.] When we are affected for God's dishonour, though done by others.

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## SERMON II.

*As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*—JOHN XVII. 2.

HERE is the next reason of Christ's request; the former was the glory of God, and here is another, the salvation of men. Unless the Father glorified him he could not accomplish the ends of his office, which was to glorify the Father in the salvation of man; which could not be unless he were sustained in death, delivered out of death, and received

into glory: 'If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, and ye are yet in your sins,' 1 Cor. xv. 17. How should we know our discharge from sin, if our surety had not been let out of prison? Where should we have gotten an advocate to appear for us in the heavens, or a king to pour out the royal largess of gifts and graces to accompany the gospel, that it might be successful for our souls? From the context I shall observe two points:—

1. Observe, that, next to God's glory, Christ's aim was at our salvation. Christ doth not mention his own profit, but that 'thy Son may glorify thee,' and that he may give eternal life. These two were the scope of his sufferings and rising again to glory.

[1.] Of his sufferings: Dan. ix. 26, 'The Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself;' not for his own desert, nor his own profit; for no fault, no benefit of his own. So Rom. xv. 3, 'Christ pleased not himself; as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me.' The meaning is, he suffered the outrages of the wicked to promote the salvation of the elect; or the burden of our sins, by which God was dishonoured, fell on him. Christ sought not sweet things for himself; he had no respect to his own ease, but our happiness.

[2.] In his rising to glory he still eyed us; when he went to heaven he went thither on our errand, to seize upon it in our right, and to prepare it for our coming: John xiv. 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Not so much to be glorified himself, as to get us thither: Heb. ix. 24, *ἐμφανισθῆναι*, 'There to appear in the presence of God for us.' Christ went to heaven that we might have a friend in court. He is entered into the heavens to appear for us; as if that were all the business of Christ in heaven, to remain there as our advocate.

*Use* 1. To show us the great love and condescension of Christ. The cross was sad work; all the wages was the salvation of our souls. In the eternal covenant he aimed at no other bargain: Isa. liii. 10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands;' that he might be effectual to save souls. They told David, 2 Sam. xviii. 3, 'Thou art worth ten thousand of us: if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us.' Public relation makes kings more valuable. Christ's soul was worth millions of ours; and his life was more valuable than the life of men and angels; yet, to save ours, Christ layeth down his own, and he pleased not himself, that the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in our salvation.

*Use* 2. It teacheth us more self-denial, to do all for God's glory, and the good of the elect, both in life and death: Phil. ii. 17, 'Yea, and if I be offered up on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.' A man that mindeth altogether his own things, liveth but a brutish life, beneath grace and reason. Reason will tell us that man was made sociable, and not only born for himself: grace raiseth actions to the highest self-denial. To deny ourselves is one of the first and most glorious precepts of christianity.

2. Observe, that the comfort and salvation of man doth much depend upon the glorification of Christ: 'Glorify me, that I may give eternal life.' The ends of his office are much furthered.

[1.] His glorification is a pledge of ours. God would do everything first in Christ; elect him, adopt him, pour out the Spirit on him, raise him, glorify him, as the scripture everywhere manifests. Our nature is in heaven, as an earnest of our persons being there. He is called our forerunner, Heb. vi. 20, being gone before into heaven as a forerunner and harbinger, to take up room; and 'the captain of our salvation,' Heb. ii. 11. When the head is in heaven, the members will follow. Whole Christ must be there; he is not content with his heaven without us: John xiv. 3, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;' John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me.'

[2.] His glorification is a pledge of his satisfaction. Our surety is let out of prison; and when the surety is released, the debt is paid; all the work is accomplished and effected: John xvi. 10, 'He will convince the world of righteousness, because I go to the Father.' There is enough done to bring souls to glory, for Christ is received to glory; I am satisfied, I have found a ransom. So John xvii. 4, 5, 'I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self. Christ had never come out of the grave, never ascended, if anything else had remained to be done.

[3.] Christ glorified is a clearer ground of hope to the creature. When Christ was in the flesh he was poor, despised, crucified; the apostle calleth it 'the weakness of God.' Many looked for a kingdom from him; many believed in him when he was upon earth; the thief owned him upon his cross: 'Remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom.' If the thief could spy his royalty under the ignominy of the cross, what may we expect from Christ in his glorified estate? When David was hunted as a flea, or a partridge upon the mountains, there were six hundred clave to him, and had great hopes of his future exaltation; they might look for more from David on the throne. Christ is now exalted, and hath a name above all names; he still retaineth our nature, and that is an argument of love; we go to one that is bone of our bone: and he is glorified in our nature; that is an argument of his power.

[4.] Christ is really put into a greater capacity to do us good.

(1.) He hath seized on heaven in our right: John xiv. 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' God the Father prepared it by his decree; but Christ, by his ascension, went to hold it in our name; he took possession of it for himself, and his people, and ever since heaven's door hath stood open.

(2.) The advantage of his intercession: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' Christ is our advocate at God's right hand; we have a friend at court. Offenders hope to be spared if they have interest in any that have the prince's ear. Jesus Christ is now in heaven at God's right hand, representing his merits. How can our prayers choose but be heard? The Spirit is our notary to indite them, and Christ is our advocate to present them in court.

(3.) The mission of the Spirit. Christ carried up our flesh, and sent down his own Spirit; as to fit heaven for us, Mat. xxv. 34, so to fit us for heaven: Rom. ix. 23, 'Vessels fitted for glory;' vessels of glory seasoned with grace. Now the Spirit is not given but by Christ's ascension: Eph. iv. 11, 12, 'When he ascended, he gave first apostles, then prophets, then evangelists, then pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' This was his royal largess on the day of his coronation.

(4.) By his ascension all Christ's offices have a new qualification, and are exercised in another manner. Christ hath been mediator, king, priest, and prophet from the beginning of the world; but the administration is different before his incarnation, in the days of his flesh, and after his ascension. Before his coming in the flesh, Christ was the great prophet of the church, foreshowing what was to come; in his incarnation, pointing at what he did; after his glorification, working faith, by representing what was past. So a priest; before his incarnation, undertaking payment and satisfaction for our debts. In the days of his flesh, he made good his engagement; after his ascension, he representeth his satisfaction made by his intercession, he appeareth as a righteous mediator, not by entreaty. Christ was a king by designation; before he was incarnate, the old church had a taste of his kingly power; when he lived upon earth, he was as a king fighting for the crown, a king in warfare; after the resurrection, a king in triumph, solemnly inaugurated, he enters into his throne. Christ cometh into the Father's presence royally attended: Dan. vii. 13, 14, 'And I saw in the night visions, the Son of man with the clouds of heaven; and he came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and all people, nations, and languages, that should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, that shall not pass away.' After his resurrection, Christ is brought into God's presence, receiving all power in heaven and earth. Christ had this power from the beginning, but was not solemnly installed till then. As David had the power given him when anointed by Samuel, yet he endured banishment and tedious conflicts, and showed not himself till after the death of Saul, and till chosen by the tribes at Hebron; so Christ was a Prince and Saviour before his ascension; but it is said, Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted by his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour.' He was prince by eternal right, and by gift and designation. In the midst of his abasement, Christ acknowledged himself king, John viii. 37. But after his ascension, he solemnly exercised it, and administered it for the good of the elect.

Well, then, let us meditate on these things, and draw water out of the wells of salvation with joy. It is better for us that Christ should be in heaven, than with us upon earth. A woman had rather have her husband live with her, than go to the Indies; but yieldeth to his absence, when she considereth the profit of that traffic. We are all apt to wish for the apostles' days, to enjoy Christ with us in person; but when we consider the fruit of his negotiation in heaven, we should be contented. It is better for us he should be there, to plead with the Father, and send his Spirit to us.

I come to the words.

'As.'—Some take this particle, *συγκριτικῶς*, comparatively; others *αἰτιαλογικῶς*, causally. Comparatively; 'Glorify me,' *i.e.*, as thou hast given me a power over all flesh, &c., give me a glory suitable to the authority; handle me according to the power and command which thou hast given me, as the plenipotentiary of heaven. But it is rather taken causally, by way of argument. It is not *ὡς*, but *καθὼς*, which may be rendered *because*. Now the argument is double—(1.) It may be taken from a former grant of power, 'As thou hast given,' &c. Hitherto he had a right; now he pleadeth for possession, and a more full exercise of it; and (2.) From the end which that power is to be exercised for, the good of the elect, that he 'may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.'

1. I may observe something from that, 'As thou hast given him.' The memory of former benefits is an encouragement to ask anew. Experience begetteth confidence. The heart is much confirmed when faith hath sense and experience on its side; and the belief of what is to come is facilitated by considering what is past. We should believe God upon his bare word; yet it is an encouragement to have experience and trial. By former mercies we have a double experience; we know that he will and can do for creatures. Signal mercies are standing monuments of God's power: Isa. li. 9, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?' Rahab is Egypt, the dragon is Pharaoh; he that hath helped can and will. We should not entertain jealousies without a cause: 1 Sam. xvii. 37, 'The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.' Former mercies are pledges of future. *Deus donando debet*—God by giving becometh our debtor: Mat. vi. 25, 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?' He enticeth hope by former mercies: Judges xiii. 23, 'If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things.' God would not weary us altogether with expectation; something we have in hand, and therefore may expect more. Well, then, when your hearts are apt to faint, take the cordial of experiences: Ps. lxxvii. 10, 'I said, This is mine infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.' We are apt to indulge the peevishness of distrust after many deliverances: 1 Sam. xxvii. 1, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul;' though God had put him twice into his hands: Rom. viii. 32, 'He that spared not his own son, &c., how will he not with him also freely give us all things?' In common experiences, where we can have no absolute assurance, let us not baulk duty for danger: 2 Cor. i. 10, 'Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.' Paul would finish his ministry notwithstanding danger.

2. Observe again from this, 'As thou hast given;' *daturum te promisisti*—thou hast promised to give. God had promised to make over to him the plenary possession and administration of the kingdom; Christ pleadeth the grant and promise. It is an excellent encourage-

ment in prayer when we can back our requests with promises: Ps. cxix. 49, 'Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' It is a modest challenge. God alloweth it, 'Put me in remembrance, let us plead together,' &c., Isa. xliii. 26. We may argue and dispute with God upon his own word; *chirographa tua injiciebat tibi, domine*—show him his own hand. Lord, thou hast said this and that, let it be fulfilled.

'Thou hast given him.'—As he was man and mediator; for as he was God, he had an eternal right, and an actual visible right by creation and providence; but Christ, as mediator, was to receive a crown. By gift: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance.'

1. It noteth that Christ hath his kingdom by right, not by mere power. It is by the Father's grant he was solemnly invested and set upon the hill of Sion. They are rebels to God who do not acknowledge Christ to be King. There are several manners of possession. Satan is prince of the world, but he is a robber; he holdeth it not by grant from the Father, but by power; he hath actual possession of many nations, but no right.

2. It noteth what kind of right it is that Christ hath; it was by grant and donation. It is the great condescension of our Lord that he would hold all things by our tenure, by way of gift and grant from the Father. Free grace is no dishonourable tenure. Christ himself holdeth his kingdom by it. Why should proud creatures disdain this manner of holding? The lordship of the world was Christ's natural inheritance, yet he would hold all by grace.

'Power over all flesh.'—Flesh is chiefly put for men, though all creatures are under his dominion. We are sometimes expressed by our better, and sometimes by our baser part. By our better; every soul, that is, every man, Rom. ii. 9, and xiii. 1. Sometimes by the baser part: Isa. xl. 6, 'All flesh is grass;' Mat. xxiv. 22, 'No flesh would be saved;' and elsewhere. Here 'flesh' is fitly used; it is put for the nature of man in common, in opposition to those who are peculiarly Christ's by tradition and purchase. And by 'power over all flesh,' is meant a judiciary power to dispose of them according to pleasure; yea, of their everlasting estate. *Potestatem omnis hominis accepit, ut liberet quos voluerit, et damnet quos voluerit.* John v. 27, 'He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.' It is the style of God himself; he is called, Num. xvi. 22, 'The God of the spirits of all flesh;' and more express to this purpose, Jer. xxxii. 27, 'Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?' So that it noteth not a naked authority, but an authority armed with a divine power. Now because God will not give his glory to another, we may hence observe:—

1. That Christ is true God, for otherwise he could not have such an absolute power. It is proper to his divine nature, though, as it is a gift, his whole person God-man be invested with it. He is called the only God, not excluding the Father, who subsisteth with him in the same essence, but including the Son: Isa. xlv. 22, 23, 'I am God, and there is none else: I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall

bow, and every tongue shall swear;' which is applied to Christ, Rom. xiv. 11, and Phil. ii. 9–11. He is called the great God; the supper of the Lamb is called 'the supper of the great God,' Rev. xix. 17; 'the true God,' 1 John v. 20. It should fortify christians against those abominable opinions wherein the godhead of Christ is questioned.

2. Observe that Christ as mediator hath power over all flesh. All kings and monarchs have certain bounds and limits, by which their empire is terminated; but God hath set Christ higher than the kings of the earth. He is the true catholic king; his government is unlimited: Ps. lxxxix. 27, 'Also I will make him, my first born, higher than the kings of the earth;' Mat. xxviii. 18, 'All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth;' and Dan. vii. 14, 'There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.' There is some difference about the extent of Christ's mediatory kingdom.

[1.] It is not only confined to the elect. We must distinguish between Christ's power and his charge. He hath a power given him over all; but there are some given to him by way of special charge, which is given for the elect, as to all spiritual ends, to rescue them from the power of Satan, as in this verse. As Joseph in Egypt; the power of all the land was made over to him, though his brethren had a special right in his affections. The kingdom of Christ, as merely spiritual and inward, is proper to the elect; that kingdom where Christ hath no other deputy and vicar but his Spirit; but for his judiciary kingdom, that is universal: Ps. ii. 8, 'I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.' There is a reign over mankind, and those that do not subject themselves to Christ as a redeemer shall find him as a judge. Therefore, in Ps. ii., the judiciary acts of his power are only mentioned, 'breaking them with a rod of iron,' and 'vexing them in his hot displeasure.' He is lord over them in power and justice as God's lieutenant; they shall pay him homage and subjection as king of the world, or else they shall perish. He overruleth them as rebels, but he reigneth in the church as over voluntary subjects.

[2.] It is not confined to the church and things merely spiritual. This kingdom is as large as providence; and in the exercise of justice and equity magistrates are but his deputies. Christ is δεσπότης καὶ κύριος, 'the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' He is 'king of nations,' Jer. x. 7; 'king of saints,' Rev. xv. 3; 'head over all things to the church,' Eph. i. 22. Supreme and absolute in the world, but head to the church. He hath a rod of iron to rule the nations, and a golden sceptre to guide the church. In the world he ruleth by providence; in the church, by his testimonies: Ps. xciii., 'The Lord reigneth;' Ps. xxiv. 1, 'The earth is the Lord's.' And then, ver. 4, 'Who shall dwell in his holy hill?' I confess there is a question whether magistrates be under Christ as mediator? whether they hold their power from him? But I see no reason why we should doubt of it, since all things are put into Christ's hands; and that not

only by an eternal right, but given to him; which noteth his right as mediator. Christ hath a right of merit, as lord of all creatures. He is 'lord both of the dead and living,' Rom. xiv. 9. The whole creature is delivered up to Christ, upon his undertaking the work of redemption; he hath a right of executing the dominion of God over every creature. Christ, the wisdom of the Father, saith, 'By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles; even all the judges of the earth,' Prov. viii. 15, 16. And expressly he is said to be 'ruler of the kings of the earth.' Rev. i. 5.

*Use* 1. Comfort to God's children. All is put into the hands of Christ. A devil cannot stir further than he giveth leave; as the devils could not enter into the herd of swine without Christ's leave, Mark viii. When thou art in Satan's hands, the devil is in Christ's. Neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers can hurt. The reins of the world are in a wise hand: 'The Lord reigneth, though the waves roar,' Ps. xcix. 1. It was much comfort to Jacob and his children to hear that Joseph did all in Egypt. It should be so to us that Jesus doth all in heaven. He holdeth the chain of causes in his own hand. It will be much more for thy comfort at the last day. A client conceiveth great hope when one formerly his advocate is advanced to be judge of the court. Thy advocate is thy judge. He that died for thee will not destroy thee. Thy Christ hath power over all flesh, to damn whom he will, and save whom he will.

*Use* 2. An invitation to bring in men to Christ. Oh! who would not choose him to be Lord that, whether we will or no, is our master? He can hold thee by the chains of an invincible providence, that art not held with the bonds of duty. Oh! it is better to touch the golden sceptre than to be broken with the iron rod, and to feel the efficacy of his grace than the power of his anger. Christ is resolved creatures shall stoop. The apostle proveth the day of judgment: Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ: for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,' &c. Christ will bring the creatures on their knees; at the last day all faces shall gather blackness, and the stoutest hearts be appalled. Christ will have the better; it is better be his subjects than his captives.

*Use* 3. To magistrates, to own the mediator. You hold your power from Christ, and therefore must exercise it for him: Ps. ii. 10–12, 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth' (it is their duty chiefly to observe Jesus Christ); 'serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.' Acknowledge Christ your Lord, or else he will blast your counsels; you shall perish in the midway: when you have carried on your designs a little while, you shall perish ere you are aware: Christ will call you to an account.

Two things Christ is tender of, his servants and his truth.

His servants are weak to appearance, but they have a great champion: what is done to them Christ counteth as done to himself: 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Acts ix. 4, when he raged against the saints: Isa. xlix. 23, 'Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers,

and their queens thy nursing-mothers.' Christ hath little ones, that should be nursed and not oppressed.

But chiefly his truth. It is truth maketh saints: John xvii. 17, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.' You should own your Lord and master, and not be indifferent to Christ or Satan. To tolerate errors, especially directly against Christ's person, nature, and mediatory offices, is but sorry thankfulness to your great master. He did not give you a commission to countenance rebels against himself. Whilst you maintain the power and purity of his ordinances, Christ will own you, and bear you out; but when, for secular ends, men hug his enemies, they are in danger to perish in the midway, in the course of their attempts.

'That he should give eternal life.'—*That* signifieth the end why Christ received so much power for the elect's sake, that he might be in a capacity to conduct them to glory; which otherwise could not be, if Christ's power were more limited and restrained. I might—

1. Observe, that Christ's power in the world is exercised for the church's good: Eph. i. 22, 'He is the head over all things to the church.' All dispensations are in the hand of a mediator for the elect's sake, to gain them from among others, to protect them against the assaults of others.

[1.] To gain them: 2 Peter iii. 9, 'He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' If the elect were gathered, providence would be soon at an end. God's dispensations are guided by his decrees.

[2.] To protect them when they are gained. You must pluck Christ from the throne ere you can pluck a member from his body: John x. 28, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' By his conduct and government we are secured against all dangers; they may pluck joint from joint, but they cannot pluck the soul from Christ that is once really implanted into him.

2. Observe that eternal life is Christ's gift. It is not the merit of our works, but the fruit of his grace: Rom. vi. 23, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It is good to observe how the expression is diversified. Sin and death are suited like work and wages; but eternal life is a mere donative, not from the merit of the receiver, but the bounty of the giver. Works that need pardon can never deserve glory. Grace in us runneth as water in a muddy channel: the child hath more of the mother. It is true there is a concurrence of works, but not by way of causality, but order. God will first justify, then sanctify, then glorify. Justification is the cause and foundation of eternal life, and sanctification the beginning and introduction of it; and we have both by Christ. The first is obtained by Christ's blood, the second wrought by his Spirit. See Eph. ii. 8, 9, 'By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.' The instrument of salvation is faith, which requireth a renouncing of works; and faith also is of grace. The Papists, to excuse the gross conceit of merit, say our works do not

merit but as they come from the grace of God, and are washed with the blood of Christ. But neither salve will serve for this sore.

[1.] It is not enough to ascribe grace to God. All justiciaries will do so. The pharisee said, God, I thank thee I am so and so. You confound the covenants when you think we may merit of God by his own grace. God maketh us righteous by grace; and if by the exercise of it we deserve life, Adam under the covenant of works must then have been said to be saved by grace, because he could not persevere in the use of his free-will unless he had received it from God.

[2.] Nor as dyed in the blood of Christ, because faith disclaimeth all works as to the act of justification; and there is no merit if it be of grace. Learn then to admire grace with comfort and hope. Merit-mongers are left to be confuted by experience. Surely men that cry up works seldom look into their own consciences. Let them use the same plea in their prayers they do in their disputes: give me not eternal life till I deserve it: Lord, let me have no mercy till I deserve it. Or let them dispute thus, when they come to dispute with their own consciences in the agonies of death; then, *Optimum est inniti meritis Christi.*

3. Observe, the gifts that God is wont to give are not earthly riches, worldly power, transitory honours, but eternal life. This was the great end for which he was ordained by the Father. Many come to Christ as that man, Luke xii. 13, 'Master, speak to my brother, to divide the inheritance with me.' He looked upon him as *aliquem magnum*, one furnished with great power, fit to serve his carnal ends. Such fleshly requests are not acceptable to our mediator. The Lord loveth to give blessings suitable to his own being. He liveth for ever, and he giveth eternal life to the elect. Learn, then, how to frame your requests. Say, I will not be satisfied with these things: 'Remember me with the favour of thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation; that I may glory with thine inheritance,' Ps. cvi. 4, 5.

4. Observe, from the expression, 'eternal life.' Our estate in heaven is expressed by life and eternal life. This is a term frequently used to signify the glorified estate. Now it doth imply not only our bare subsistence for ever, but also the tranquillity and happiness of that state.

[1.] It is life: 'Heirs together of the grace of life,' 1 Peter iii. 7. Life is the most precious possession and heritage of the creature; there can be no happiness without it. All our comforts begin and end with life. Life is better than food: Mat. vi. 25, 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?' Poisons and cordials are all one to a dead man. Creatures base, if they have life, are better than those which are most excellent: 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' All creatures desire to preserve life. All the travail of men under the sun is for life, to prop up a tabernacle that is always falling: Job ii. 7, 'Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.' All our labour and care is for it; and when we have made provision for it, it is taken from us. It is called 'the life of our hands,' Isa. lviii. 10. We make hard shift to maintain it. This life is a poor thing, it is no

great matter to be heir to it: James iv. 14, 'What is your life? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.'

[2.] It is life eternal; not like the earthly life, which is but as a vapour, a little warm breath, or warm smoke, turned in and out by the nostrils. Our present life is a lamp that may be soon quenched; it is in the power of every ruffian and assassinate. But this is life eternal. In heaven there is a fair estate; the tenure is for life; but we need not take thought for heirs; we and our happiness shall always live together. The blossoms of paradise are for ever fresh and green: therefore if we love life, why should we not love heaven? This is a life that is never spent, and we are never weary of living. This life is short, yet we soon grow weary of it. The shortest life is long enough to be encumbered with a thousand miseries. If you live till old age, age is a burden to itself: 'The days shall come in which they shall say, We have no pleasure,' Eccles. xii. 1. Life itself may become a burden, but you will never wish for an end of eternal life; that is a long date of days without misery and without weariness. Eternity is every day more lovely. Well might David say, 'The loving-kindness of God is better than life.' Men have cursed the day of their birth, but never the day of their new birth. Those that have once tasted the sweet and benefit of God's life never grow weary of it.

[3.] This life is begun, and carried on by degrees.

(1.) The foundation of it is laid in regeneration: then do we begin to live when Christ beginneth to live in us; and we may reckon from that day when, in the power of his life, we began to advance towards heaven; for then there was a seed laid of a life which cannot be destroyed. The life of nature may be extinguished, but not of grace: Rom. viii. 11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' The Spirit cannot leave his dwelling-place. It is said, John v. 24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' The change is wrought as soon as we begin to be acquainted with God in Christ.

(2.) Presently after death there is a further progress made. As soon as the soul is separated from the body, it begins to live gloriously. It is with Christ: Phil. i. 23, 'I desire to depart and to be with Christ;' it is in Christ here, but not so properly with him. And it is in paradise: Luke xxiii. 43, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' In Abraham's bosom: Luke xvi. 25, 'He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.' And enjoyeth the fruit of good works: Rev. xiv. 13, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' There is not only a cessation from sin and misery, but an enjoyment of glory; and the body resteth without pain and labour till the resurrection, as in a bed: Isa. lvii. 2, 'He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.'

(3.) After, at the resurrection of the body, there is a consummation

of all joy. That is called 'the day of regeneration,' Mat. xix. 28. Body and soul shall be renewed perfectly, for immortality and glory. Then we live indeed. Therefore Christ saith, John xi. 25, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' All is consummate and full then; death hath some power till that day.

*Use* 1. To press us to labour after this holy life: John vi. 27, 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat that endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you.' Grace is the beginning and pledge of it. It is the beginning and seed of life; this is an immortal spark, that shall never be quenched: it is the pledge, 1 Tim. vi. 19; you may seize life as your right and inheritance. Oh! labour for it. This life is made bitter that thou mayest desire the other. Consider, all dependeth on thy state in this world; either thou art a child of wrath or an heir of life. Wicked men do die rather than live in the other world. It is better not to be than to be for ever miserable; to lie under the wrath of God, to be shut out of the presence of God for evermore.

*Use* 2. Bless the Lord Jesus Christ for opening a door of life for them that were dead in and by sin. The tree of life was fenced by a flaming sword: no creature could enter till Christ opened the way: 2 Tim. i. 10, 'By his appearing he hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.' Christ came from heaven on purpose to overcome death and take away the sting of it; and he is gone to heaven on purpose to make way for us. Our life cost Christ his death: John xvi. 5, 'Now I go away to him that sent me.'

'To as many as thou hast given him.'—Let us see the import of this phrase.

1. How we are said to be given to Christ.
2. Who are they that are given to Christ.

1. How we are said to be given to Christ.

[1.] By way of reward. There was an eternal bargain and compact: Isa. liii. 10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed,' &c. We are members of his body, children of his family, subjects of his kingdom. This is a ground of certainty to the elect: 'The Lord knoweth those that are his,' 2 Tim. ii. 18. He made no blind bargain; he had leisure enough to cast up his account from all eternity.

[2.] By way of charge, to be redeemed, justified, sanctified, glorified: John vi. 37–40, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.' When the elect were made over to Christ, it was not by way of alienation, but oppignoration; they were laid to pledge in his hands, and God will call Christ to an account. None given to him by way of charge can miscarry. You trust Christ, and God trusted him with all the souls of the elect.

2. Who are they that are given to Christ? I answer—The elect are intended in this scripture, as is clear: 'He hath a power over all flesh,' but, 'to give eternal life to as many as are given to him.' So ver. 24, 'I will that all they whom thou hast given me may be with me.' None but the elect are saved. So ver. 10, 'All mine are thine, and thine are mine;' where Christ's charge and the Father's election are made commensurable and of the same extent and latitude. They are opposed to the world: ver. 9, 'I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine.' I confess it is sometimes used in a more restrained sense, of the apostles and believers of that age; as ver. 6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word;' and ver. 12, 'Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.' These were ἐκλεκτῶν ἐκλεκτότεροι, the elect of the elect. I confess sometimes the word is used in a larger sense, for Christ's universal power over all flesh: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession;' not by way of charge, but by way of reward, they were given to him; or rather, a power over them was given to him. There is a peculiar difficulty, ver. 12, concerning the son of perdition, how he was given to Christ. But I shall handle it when I come to that place. Christ, having spoken of the apostles keeping his word, taketh occasion to speak of Judas his apostasy.

Note hence:—

1. That there was, from all eternity, a solemn tradition and disposition of all that shall be saved into the hands of Christ. All God's flock are committed to his keeping. This giving souls to Christ was founded in an eternal treaty, Isa. liii. 10. Christ received them by way of grant and charge; he hath a book where all their names are recorded and written: Rev. xiii. 8, 'All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;' Rev. xxi. 27, 'None shall enter in who are not written in the Lamb's book of life.' The book of life is there attributed to Christ, because he took this solemn charge upon himself, to conduct the heirs of salvation to glory. He is to see they come to him: John vi. 37, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.' He knoweth them by head and poll: Isa. xlix. 12, 'Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the land of the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.' Man by man they are told out to him.

2. He is to keep them and look after them. Though there be many thousands, yet every single believer falleth under the care of Christ; and accordingly he knoweth their names and their necessities: John x. 3, 'He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.' He knoweth his sheep by name, John, Anna, Thomas. As the high priest carried the names of the tribes upon his bosom, so Christ knows the names of all the flock of God. There is not a poor servant or scullion (who are despicable creatures in the world) but Christ looks after him: Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.' Poor soul! he is under such temptations, encumbered with such troubles, in such a task or

service. My Father gave me a charge of him, I must look to him. So many lambs as there are in the flock of Christ, there is not one forgotten.

3. Christ is to give an account of them unto God. He doth it by his constant intercession; of which this prayer is a copy: 'They have kept thy word: I am glorified in them.' Christ is speaking good words of them to the Father; he giveth you a good report behind your back. Satan is an accuser; he loveth to report ill of believers; but Christ telleth the Father how his lambs thrive. It is a grief to your advocate when he cannot speak well of you in heaven. But solemnly he will do it at the last day, when he is to present the elect to the tribunal of God: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me.' Oh! it is a goodly sight to see Christ and all his little ones come together to the throne of grace. There is not one forgotten in the presence of Christ and all his angels. Christ will not be ashamed to own a poor despicable boy, a manservant, or a maid-servant, so they be faithful: Luke xii. 8, 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.' I died for this poor creature, and shed my blood for him. This is intended: 1 Cor. xv. 24, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.' A kingdom is sometimes put for the form of government, sometimes for subjects governed. The kingdom, that is the church, is solemnly presented as a prey snatched out of the teeth of lions: Eph. v. 27, ἵνα παραστήσῃ, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' Christ will present his bride in triumph.

*Use* 1. Comfort to believers.

1. Concerning the safety of their eternal estate. Christ bargained for thee by name. That the Father and the Son should pitch upon such a forlorn and wretched piece of the creation as thou art, and they should talk together of thy heaven,[1] Son, this is one for whom thou must die! That thy name should be in the eternal register, written with the Lamb's blood in his own book of life. I must have a care of him. Ay! you will say, this were an excellent comfort, if I were sure I were one of them that is given to Christ. I answer—If he hath given Christ to you, he hath given you to Christ. God maketh an offer in the gospel. Are you willing to receive him for Lord and Saviour? Then you put it out of question: 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God.' You are fellow-heirs with Christ. Christ is given to you in time.

2. In your particular straits Christ hath a care of you. Do you think he will break his engagement? Christ hath plighted his truth to God the Father. Our groundless jealousies question the truth of Christ's word and solemn agreement. When we say, The Lord hath forgotten me, this is in effect to say, Christ is not faithful in his charge. The prophet chideth them: Isa. xl. 27, 'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?' God doth not take notice of my case: such mistrust is a lie against the care of Christ.

*Use* 2. To press us, especially humble sinners, you that walk in

[1] Qu. "thee in heaven"?—ED.

darkness, to come under these sweet hopes. God hath laid souls to pledge in the hand of Christ. Why should we be scrupulous? All the Father's acts are ratified in time by believers. He ordaineth, we consent; he chooseth Christ for lord and king: 'They shall appoint themselves one head,' Hosea i. 11. So he hath given souls to Christ, so should you.

1. Commit your souls to him by faith; this answereth to Christ's receiving the elect by way of charge: 1 Peter iv. 19, 'Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.' A man ventureth upon duty, and trusteth God with his soul: Ps. xxxi. 5, 'Into thy hands do I commit my spirit.' Paul knew Christ was an able and trusty friend: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' Committing the soul to God is a notion often used in the matter of faith, and doth most formally express the nature of trust and adherence. He is willing to receive your souls, and he is able to make good the trust. Therefore, in all times of distress and danger, when all things are dark to us, upon the warrant of the gospel, let us commit the soul to Christ, to be kept to salvation; refer yourselves to his care for pardon, defence, support, and glory.

2. Consecrate yourselves to Christ. Committing noteth trust; consecrating, obedience. You commit yourselves to his care, you resign and yield up yourselves to his discipline. Committing answereth the charge, but consecration the grant: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' By full consent a man embarketh with Christ, and is resolved no longer to be at his own keeping and disposal: Ps. cxix. 94, 'I am thine, save me, for I have sought thy precepts.' I am thine; Lord, I would not be my own, unless I be thine. As those who being denied protection by the Romans, offered up themselves and their whole estate to them. *Si nostra tueri non vultis, at vestra defendetis; quicquid passuri sumus, dedititii vestri patiantur*, &c.

## SERMON III.

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*—JOHN XVII. 3.

HERE our Lord declareth the way, means, and order how he would give eternal life to the elect; and so it is added as an amplification of the former argument. The words must be expounded by a metonymy. Such kind of predications are frequent in scripture: John iii. 19, 'This is the condemnation,' &c.; that is, the cause of it. Sometimes it signifies the outward means: John xii. 50, 'His commandment is life everlasting;' that is, his word is the most assured means of it. Sometimes the principal cause: 'Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life,' 1 John v. 20; that is, the author of it.

'This is life eternal.'—Some understand these words formally, as if they were a description of eternal life, which consisteth in a sight of God. But I suppose it rather layeth down the way and means, and showeth rather what is the beginning and original of eternal life, than the formality and essence of it. It is not in this eternal life consisteth, but by this means it is gotten and obtained.

1. Partly because the word γινώσκειν, which is here used, is proper to the light of faith; and so it is used ver. 7, 'They have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee;' and ver. 8, 'They have known surely that I came out from thee.' Vision is proper to the light of glory. It is more usually expressed by seeing than knowing: ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, ἵνα θεωρῶσι, that they may behold my glory.'

2. Christ is proving the reason, that unless he were glorified, he could not bestow eternal life; for there could be no knowledge without his ascension into heaven, and effusion of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and so by consequence no eternal life. So that the words must be explained, 'This is life eternal;' that is, this is the way to life eternal, or life eternal begun, and in the root and foundation.

'That they may know thee.'—That must be understood by way of apposition; this is life eternal to know thee: and knowledge is here put for faith or saving knowledge. It is a known rule that words of knowledge do imply suitable affections; as 1 Thes. v. 12, 'We beseech you to know them which labour among you;' that is, reverence them. Or, more clearly to the present case: 1 John ii. 4, 'He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. Our Saviour understandeth not naked and unactive speculations concerning God and Christ, or a naked map or model of divine truths. Bare knowledge cannot be sufficient to salvation, but a lively and effectual light. Faith is intended, as is clear by the mention of the double object—God and Christ. He that knoweth God in Christ knoweth him for his reconciled Father, and so leaneth on him. And affections and motions of grace are intended; for it must be such a knowledge of God as discerneth him to be the chiefest good and only happiness. They know not God that do not choose him for their portion: 'They that know thy name will put their trust in thee,' Ps. ix. 10. Again, suitable practice and conversation is implied; for surely St John knew Christ's meaning: 1 John ii. 3, 'Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.' So that in knowledge all the genuine effects of it are included—assent, affiance, practice, choice, necessary respect to God and Christ. Literal instruction is not enough to eternal life. A carnal man may know much of God and Christ, and yet be miserable. In point of the object, I know no difference between godly and carnal persons; all the difference is in the force and efficacy; as fair water and strong water differ not in colour, but only in strength and operation. I confess, in matters evangelical, nature is most blind; but by reason of common gifts they may have a great proportion of knowledge, as to the letter, more than many of God's children. But of this elsewhere.

'The only true God:' τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν.—Much ado there hath been about this clause, I shall endeavour to bring all to a short

decision. The doubt is, How can the Father be said to be the only true God, since the Spirit and the Son do also communicate in the divine essence?

1. Some to solve the matter, invert the order of the words thus, 'To know thee and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, to be the only true God.' But if the construction would bear it, what provision is there then made for the godhead of the Holy Spirit, which is also a fundamental article?

2. Some say that the Father is not to be taken strictly and personally for the first person, but essentially for the whole godhead. But this seemeth not so plausible an answer, for then Christ must pray to himself. He prayeth here as God-man, and all along to the Father. For my part, I think the expression is used for a twofold reason—(1.) To exclude the idols and false gods; (2.) To note the order and economy of salvation.

[1.] To exclude the idols of the Gentiles, foreign and false gods, such as are extra-essential to the Father; and to note that that godhead is only true that is in the Father; *σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν*—'Thee the only, thee the true God.' The Son and the Holy Ghost are not excluded, who are of the same essence with the Father. Christ and the Spirit are true God, not without, but in the Father: John x. 30, 'I and my Father are one:' John xiv. 30, 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me;' not divided in essence, though distinguished in personality. Such kind of expressions are usual in the scriptures, when any of the persons are spoken of singly; as Rom. ix. 5, where Christ is said to be 'God over all, blessed for ever.' And more expressly, he is said to be *θεὸς ἀληθινὸς*, 'the only true God,' 1 John v. 20; by which neither the Father nor the Spirit are excluded from the godhead. Many such exclusive particles there are in scripture, which must be expounded by the analogy of faith; as Mat. xi. 27, 'None knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son;' where the Spirit is not excluded, 'who searcheth the depths of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 10. One person of the Trinity doth not exclude the rest. So see Isa. xliii. 11, 'I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no Saviour;' which is applied to Christ: Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;' it only excludeth *λεγομένους θεοὺς*, those that are called gods, 1 Cor. viii. 5. There is no God but one. Many are called gods, 'but to us there is but one God, the Father.' As also it is the scope of Christ; he would lay down the summary of christian doctrine; the one member being opposed to the vanity of the Gentiles, the other to the blindness of the Jews.

[2.] To note the order and economy of salvation, in which the Father is represented as supreme, in whom the sovereign majesty of the deity resideth, and the Son sustaineth the office of mediator and servant: John xiv. 28, 'My Father is greater than I;' not in respect of nature or essential glory, for therein they are both equal: Phil. ii. 6, 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;' but in the order of redemption, in which the Father is the principal party representing the whole deity, because he is the

original and fountain of it. So 1 Cor. viii. 6, 'But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' God the Father is to be conceived as the supreme person, or ultimate object of worship, and the Son as lord and mediator.

'And Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent;' that is, Jesus Christ, not as the second person in the Trinity, but as mediator.

*Sent*, implieth—

1. Christ's divine original: he came forth from God; he is *legatus a latere:* John xvi. 30, 'By this we know that thou camest forth from God.' He was a person truly existing before he was sent into the world, and a distinct person from the Father; for he that sendeth and he that is sent are distinguished.

2. His incarnation: Gal. iv. 4, 'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman.'

3. It implieth his whole office of mediator and redeemer; wherefore he is called 'the apostle and high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1. *Apostle* implieth one that was sent. Christ was the chief apostle and messenger of heaven; 'the high priest and apostle.' The high priesthood was the highest calling in the Jewish church, and the apostleship the highest calling in the christian church; to note that the whole office of saving all the church, the elect of all ages, is originally in Christ. He is the great ambassador to treat with us from God, and the high priest to treat with God and appease his wrath for us.

The names of Christ are also of some use. Such scriptures are like gold, that may be beaten into thin leaves. In summaries and breviats every mark and letter is of use.

*Jesus* signifieth a saviour, as it is explained Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.' This is a part of our belief, to acknowledge Christ a saviour. Then *Christ* signifieth anointed.

We shall draw out the sum of all in a few points.

First, Observe, the beginning, increase, and perfection of eternal life lieth in knowledge.

[1.] The beginning of it is in knowledge. Knowledge is the first step to eternal life. In paradise Adam's two symbols were the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. As light was the first creature that God made, so it is in the new creation: Col. iii. 10, 'Put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.' By the enlightening of the Holy Ghost, the work of grace is begun, and the seed of glory is laid in the heart. The Holy Ghost representeth the pattern, and then conformeth us to it. Regeneration is nothing but a transforming light, or such an illumination as changes the heart: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God;' Eph. iv. 23, 'Be renewed in the spirit of your minds.' It maketh our notions of God and Christ to be active and effectual. The force of the new nature is first upon the mind; it taketh sin out of the throne. God, in the order of grace, followeth the order which he hath established in nature. Reason and judgment is to go before the will.

2. The increase of it is by knowledge: 2 Peter iii. 18, 'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' The more thou growest in knowledge, the more thou growest in life. All the gradual progress and increase of the spiritual life is by the increase of light: 2 Peter i. 2, 'Grace be multiplied unto you by the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord.' Heat doth increase by light, as a room is warmer at high noon than in a chill morning. I confess through corruption and literary airy knowledge, men grow more carnal and careless, as new light quencheth old heat; but by the light of the Spirit the heart is more quickened and enlivened; and as the judgment is made solid, so the heart is more gracious.

3. The perfection of it is by knowledge: Ps. xvii. 15, 'When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.' The heaven of heavens is to satisfy the understanding with the knowledge of God. One great end of our going to heaven is to better our notions and apprehensions. While the soul is prisoner in the body, we have but low and dark thoughts; but there we are illuminated on a sudden. One glimpse of God in glory will inform us more than the study of a thousand years.

*Use* 1. Is to show us the sad estate—

1. Of men without knowledge: Prov. xix. 2, 'Also that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good.' Fruit that hath but little sun can never be ripe. Men will say we are ignorant, but we hope we have a good heart. You can as well be without the sun in the world, as without knowledge and light in the heart. In all the communications of grace, God beginneth with the understanding; as strength to bear afflictions: Jer. xxxi. 19, 'After I was instructed, I smote on my thigh, and was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth;' James i. 5, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.' It is the perfection of the present life, and the foundation of the next. It is the perfection of the present life, the excellency of a man above the beasts; the more knowledge, the more a man; and the more ignorant, the more brutish: Ps. xlix. 20, 'Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish;' Job xxv. 11, 'Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.' If a man would glory in anything, it should be in the knowledge of God: Jer. ix. 24, 'Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.'

2. Of those that have only a washy weak knowledge, not a living light and knowledge, that is rooted in their own hearts; they talk like parrots: like the moon, they are dark themselves, though from others they shine to others; like vintners that keep wine, not for use, but for sale: the cellar may be better stored, but it is for others: 2 Peter i. 8, 'For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It is a disparagement to know Christ and never be the better for him. These are like the nobleman of Samaria, that saw the plenty of Samaria, but could not taste of it. Surely there are not greater atheists in the world than carnal scholars that have a great deal of light, but no grace. It is sad to hear of such a Christ and feel nothing: John xvii. 17, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is

truth.' They who are able to understand the word, but to no purpose, must needs doubt of the truth of it.

*Use.* 2. To press christians to grow in knowledge, that they may enter upon eternal life by degrees: Hos. vi. 3, 'Follow on to know the Lord.' There is a growth in knowledge as well as grace. It is not so sensible in the very increase and progress as that of grace is; because growth in grace is always *cum luctu*, with some strife, but the work upon the understanding is more still and silent. Draw away the curtain, and the light cometh in, and our ignorance vanisheth silently, and without such strife as goeth to the taming of lusts and vile affections; yet afterwards it is sensible that we have grown: 'Ye were darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,' Eph. v. 8; as a plant increaseth in length and stature, though we do not see the progress. We read of Jesus Christ that he grew in knowledge; we do not read that he grew in grace: he received the Spirit without measure, and nothing could be added to the perfection of his innocence. Yet it is said, Luke ii. 40, 'The child grew;' and ver. 52, 'Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man.' The Godhead made out itself to him by degrees. Oh! let us increase. It is notable that Moses his first request to God was 'Tell me thy name;' and afterward, 'Show me thy glory,' a more full manifestation of God. We should not always keep to our milk, our infant notions and apprehensions, but go on to a greater increase; it much advanceth your spiritual life, and will be an advantage to your eternal life. They have the highest visions of God hereafter, that know most of him here upon earth. They are vessels of a larger capacity; and though all be perfect, yet with a difference.

Now for means and directions, take these:—

1. Wait upon the preaching of the word. God appointed it, and hath given gifts to the church for this end and purpose. We should quicken one another: Isa. ii. 3, 'Come and let us go up to the house of the Lord, and he will teach us his ways.' God's grace is given in his own way. When men neglect and despise God's solemn institutions, they either grow brutish or fanatical, as we see by daily experience. Light as well as flame is kept in by the breath of preaching. By long attention you grow skilful in the word of righteousness. Men that despise the word may be more full of crotchets and curiosities, but that light is darkness. It is disputed which is the sense of learning, hearing or seeing. By the eye we see things, but must, by reason of innate ignorance, be taught how to judge of them.

2. You must read the word with diligence; that is every man's work that hath a soul to be saved. They that busy themselves in other books will not have such lively impressions: Ps. i. 2, 'His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night;' that must be our exercise, not play-books, stories, and idle sonnets. How many sacrilegious hours do many spend this way! *Castæ deliciæ meæ sunt scripturæ tuæ*—Augustine. Nay, good books should not keep from the scriptures. Luther in Gen. chap. xix. saith, *Ego odi libros meos, et sæpe opto eos interire, ne morentur lectores, et abducant a lectione ipsius scripturæ.* We should go to the fountain: 2 Tim. iii. 15, 'And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are

able to make thee wise unto salvation.' We put a disparagement upon the word when we savour and relish human writings, though never so good and excellent, better than the word of God itself. This is the standing rule by which all doctrines must be confirmed; and you do not know what sweet, fresh, and savoury thoughts the Spirit of God may stir up in your own minds; for word-representations are not so taking as our own inward thoughts and discourses; these, like a draught of wine from the tap, are more fresh and lively. It is necessary, as I said before, to wait upon preaching, to hear what others can say out of the scriptures; but it is good to read too, that we may preach to ourselves. Every man is fittest to commune with his own heart; and that conviction which doth immediately arise out of the word is more prevalent. A man can be angry with any preacher but conscience. In another, when a matter is expressed to our case, we are apt to suspect the mixture of passion and private aims; but read thyself, and what thoughts are stirred up upon thy reading will be most advantageous to thee. Besides, those that are studious of the word have this sensible advantage, that they have the promises, the doctrines, the examples of the word more familiar and ready with them upon all cases. It is said of one, that he was a living bible and a walking library, *βίβλος ἔμψυχος, καὶ μουσαίον περιπατοῦν;* such a christian is a walking concordance. And whereas other christians are weak, unsettled in comfort or opinion, these have always scriptures ready. And let me tell you, in the whole work of grace you will find no weapon so effectual as the sword of the Spirit, as scriptures readily and seasonably urged. Therefore no diligence here is too much. If you would not be barren and sapless in discourse with others, if you would not be weak and comfortless in yourself, read the scriptures, that you may bring *sic scriptum est* upon every temptation, and urge the solid grounds of our comfort. I speak the more in so plain a point, because I would make men more conscionable, both in their closets and families, in this point, that they may not only have recourse to learned helps, and books of a human original, but to the word itself.

3. The scriptures must be read with prayer. We must plough with God's heifer if we would understand his riddle; we must beg the Spirit's help. The Spirit is the best interpreter: *bene orasse, est bene studuisse.* Every minister findeth prayer to be his best comment. So should you pray before and after reading the scriptures, as you do before and after you receive your bodily food. You do not know how prayer will clear up the eyes: Ps. cxix. 18, 'Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' There is some excellency in the letter of the scriptures; but this is nothing to what we see by the Spirit; it will make a man wonder at the excellency, efficacy, consonancy of these truths; a man seeth far more than ever he saw before. The Spirit is needful both to open the heart and to open the scriptures: Luke xxiv. 32, 'Did not our hearts burn when he opened to us the scriptures?' compared with ver. 45, 'Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.' To understand the truth, and to give us an active and certain persuasion of it; 'to open the heart,' Acts xvi. 14, inclining it to obedience, giving in light, that works a ready assent and firm persuasion, bringing forward the heart with power to obedience. In dark

places and difficult cases, when you have no certainty, you should 'cry for knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding;' as the blind man that cried to Jesus, 'Lord! that I might receive my sight,' Mark x. 52.

4. Study the creatures. God is known out of his word, but his works give us a sensible demonstration of him. You have David's night and day meditation. His night meditation: Ps. viii. 3, 'When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy hands, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained.' Not a word of the sun, the most noble creature: Ps. xix. 5, he speaks of the 'going forth of the sun like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race;' that is his morning meditation. When we walk out in the night or morning, we may think of God, view his stupendous works. The heathens had no other bible. Consider that the huge weight of the earth hangeth on nothing, like a ball in the air: Job xxiii. 7, 'He stretcheth out the north upon the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.' Consider the beauty of the heavens, with their ornaments; the bounding of the sea; the artifice in the frame of the smallest creatures, the excellent ministries, and subordination of the services of the creatures one to another, &c.

5. Spiritualise every outward advantage, so as to raise your hearts in the contemplation of God. As when we observe the wisdom of a father, or the bowels of a mother, let us take occasion to exalt the love and care of God. As from a mother's bowels: Isa. xlix. 15, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.' From the wisdom of a father: Mat. vii. 11, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?' *Tam pater nemo, tam pius nemo.* So the centurion mentions his own command and government when he desires Christ to put forth his power: Mat. viii. 8, 9, 'Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.' As if he should say, All sicknesses are at thy beck, as well as these soldiers at mine. In your carriage to your children, and theirs to you, you may sublimate your thoughts to consider of that commerce between you and God. So in the work of your callings; a little is useful for bringing great matters to pass; think of providence. I press this, because it will be a double advantage; it will keep the heart heavenly, and you will serve faith out of common experiences, and so it will help us in our notions of God; for if limited creatures go thus far, how much more excellent is God!

6. Purge your heart more and more from carnal affections; these are the clouds of the mind, as in fenny countries the air is seldom clear: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,' Mat. v. 8. We usually look upon God through the glass of our own humours. Carnal men fancy the eternal essence as one of their society, and misfigure God in their thoughts.

7. The last is, in the progress of knowledge, or search of truth, beware of novelism: 2 Tim. iii. 14, 'Continue thou in the things thou

hast learnt and been assured of, knowing from whom thou hast learned them.' There is as great care to keep what we have, as to gain more knowledge. The devil taketh advantage of our changes; when we renounce old errors, he bringeth man to question truth; as in public changes, when men shake off the ordinances of men, he stirreth up others to question the ordinances of God. And I have observed that some, out of a pretence of growing in knowledge, put themselves upon a flat scepticism and wary reservation, holding nothing certain for the present, but waiting for new light; such as these the apostle intendeth, 2 Tim. iii. 7, 'Ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth;' they make profession of being studious in sacred things, but never come to any settlement, and are loath to hold to any principles, lest they should shut the door upon new light. New light is become a dangerous word, especially now in the latter times; now we have a promise that 'knowledge shall be increased,' Dan. xii. 4. Aims at knowledge is the dangerous snare of these times, as the Gnostics pretended to more knowledge. This is a great snare. Satan promised more knowledge to our first parents: Gen. iii. 5, 'God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil;' which example the apostle setteth before our eyes, 2 Cor. xi. 3, 'But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' And he telleth us, 'Satan turneth himself into an angel of light,' ver. 13, 14.

Now for your direction know:—

1. Progress in knowledge is rather in degrees than parts; not in new truths, but greater proportions of light. Light respecteth the medium, truth the object. I say, it is rather, not altogether. A man may walk in present practices which future light may disprove and retract; but usually the increase of a christian is rather in the measure of knowledge than difference of objects. Our old principles are improved and perfected: Prov. iv. 18, 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day.' To know God more, and Christ more, to be more practically skilful in the word of righteousness: Heb. v. 14, 'Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.'

2. That fundamentals in the scripture are clear and certain. God hath not left us in the dark, but pointed out a clear way to heaven, of faith and good works: Eph. ii. 10, 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.' It is a disparagement to the word to make it an uncertain rule. The way to heaven is beaten, and we may observe the track and footprints of the flock. It is a good observation of Chrysostom, that the saints do not complain of the darkness of the scripture, but of their own hearts: 'Open thou mine eyes,' not, 'Make a new law.'

3. These necessary doctrines must be entertained without doubt and hesitancy. It is dangerous when foundation-stones lie loose. We are pressed 'to stand fast in the faith,' 1 Cor. xvi. 13, and to hold the profession of it without wavering, Heb. x. 23; not to inquire after the gods of the nations, Deut. xii. 30; and Gal. i. 8, 'Though an

angel from heaven should preach any other doctrine to you than that which ye have heard, let him be accursed.' The notion of new light chiefly aimeth at undermining the old doctrine of the scriptures. For the main of religion, a man should be settled above doubt and contradiction. Till we have certainty there cannot be grace. The soul is not brought under the power of truth; for things that are controversial have no efficacy and force. The great hindrance of saving knowledge is that natural atheism, and those habituated doubts which are found in the heart.

4. We must be zealous for lesser truths when we have received them upon certain grounds. Every piece and parcel of truth is precious; a little leaven of error is dangerous: Gal. v. 9, 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' Error fretteth like a gangrene, and grows still higher and higher. Men think it is enough to be careful of fundamentals; all other knowledge is but *scientia oblectans*, for delight, not safety. Oh! it is dangerous to stain the understanding, though you do not wound it. There are *maculæ* and *vulnera intellectus*. It is dangerous to be wanton in opinions that seem to be of smaller concernment. Men that play with truth leave themselves open to more dangerous errors. Some say, Fundamentals are few; believe them, and live well, and you are saved. This is as if a man in building should be only careful to lay a good foundation, no matter for roof, windows, or walls. If a man should untile your house, and tell you the foundation, the main buttresses are safe, you would not be pleased. Why should we be more careless in spiritual things?

5. Take up no practices nor principles but upon full conviction. This imposeth a necessity of often change, or at least of frequent doubting. Men do not search, but act out of blind obedience, and then they are liable to seduction: 1 Thes. v. 21, 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' It is a pertinacy, not a constancy, when I have no clear warrant. A christian should be able to give 'an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear,' 1 Peter iii. 15; otherwise we shall never be able to secure our practices and opinions against the objections in our own hearts, and answer the sophister in our own bosoms.

Secondly, Observe that no knowledge is sufficient to life eternal but the knowledge of God and Christ. I am to prove—(1.) No other knowledge is sufficient; (2.) How far this is enough for such an end and purpose.

The scripture asserts both, for the words are exclusive and assertive; there is no other knowledge, and this is sufficient.

1. No other knowledge is sufficient to life eternal. I shall prove it by two arguments:—

[1.] Out of Christ we cannot know God. The Gentiles had τὸ γνῶστον, something that was known of God, Rom. i. 19, 20, which served to leave them without excuse, but not to save their souls. The apostle instanceth in such attributes as are obvious, but more terrible than comfortable, as eternity, power, &c. They had some loose thoughts of his Godhead and power, but no distinct view of his essence; that is reserved for the scriptures. The scriptures are the picture of Christ, and Christ is the image of the Father: 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of

God, should shine upon them.' God never made out himself to the world in that latitude and greatness as he hath done to the world in Christ. In Christ's person and kingdom the majesty of God is known; in the divine power of his operations, the strength of God; in the excellency of his benefits, the love of God. The wisest heathens, that hath no other glass than the book of the creatures whereby to dress up their apprehensions, could only see a first cause, a first mover, a being of beings, some great lord and governor of the order of the world, whom they mightily transformed and misfigured in their thoughts; they knew nothing distinctly of creation and providence, of the nature of worship, which is necessary; for whosoever is saved must not only know God's essence, but his will, for otherwise we shall but grope as the heathens did: Acts xvii. 27, 'That they should seek the Lord, if haply they should feel after him, and find him.' We cannot seek him to satisfaction.

[2.] Without Christ, no enjoying of God. It must be such a knowledge as bringeth God and the soul together. Now between us and him there is a great gulf; all gracious commerce is broken off between God and the fallen creature: John xiv. 6, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.' No free trade unto heaven but by Jacob's ladder: John i. 51, 'Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.' There is no access but by Christ; and so no salvation but by him: Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' In the fallen state of man there is need of a mediator. In innocency we might immediately converse with God: God loved his own image. What could a just and holy man fear from a just and holy God? But now, that of God's creatures we are made his prisoners, we can expect nothing of mercy, because he is just. Guilty nature presageth nothing but evil: Rom. i. 32, 'Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.' The great question of the world is, Wherewith shall I appease him, to give his justice content and satisfaction? Micah vi. 8. In all the inventions of men, they could never find out a sufficient ransom to expiate sin, to reconcile God, to sanctify human nature, that we might have commerce with heaven.

2. The sufficiency of this knowledge. For understanding of this, you must know that all breviates, where religion is reduced to a few heads, must be enlarged according to the just extent of the rule of faith; as in the commandments, where all moral duties are reduced to ten words; so in the summaries of the gospel, far more is intended than is expressed.

As for instance, there are two things in the text—the means and the object; the means, 'know;' the object, 'thee,' and 'Jesus Christ.'

1. The means, 'know.' It implieth acknowledgment, faith, fear, reverence, love, worship, and the glorifying God in our conversations. For it is easy to prove out of scripture the necessary concurrence of all these things in their order and place. For if I know God to be the only true God, I must fear, reverence, and obey him, or else I do not glorify him as God; as it is said of the heathens, Rom. i. 21,

'When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.' It is not a naked sight of his essence that will save a man: I must know him for a practical end, to choose him, and carry myself to him as an all-sufficient portion: I must honour him as the giver of all things; revere and worship him as the just governor of the world; and live purely, as he is pure; and worship him in a way suitable to the infiniteness, perfectness, and simplicity of his nature. A man is not saved by holding a right opinion of God. A man may be a christian in opinion and a pagan in life. So if I know Jesus Christ to be sent of God as mediator, I am to close with him, receive him as such by an active faith: Acts iv. 12, 'There is no salvation in any other;' not only *by* no other, but *in* him; it noteth union and close adherence, and not only that I should be of this opinion. As when a man is ready to perish in the floods, it is not enough to see land, but he must reach it, stand upon it, if he would be safe; so we must get into the ark; many saw it and scoffed, but all others were drowned in that general wrack that were not in it. There was no security for the manslayer till he got into the city of refuge: Phil. iii. 9, 'That I may be found in him.' It is not enough to cry, Lord, Lord; to have a naked opinion, or general and loose desires.

2. For the object, 'To know thee the only true God.' There are many articles comprised that are necessary to salvation; as that God is but one: Deut. vi. 4, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord.' One in three persons: 1 John v. 7, 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.' This God is a spirit: John iv. 24, 'God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.' He is holy, just, infinite, the creator of all things; that he upholdeth all things in his eternal decree, raising some to glory, leaving others, by their sins, to come to judgment: Rom. ix. 22, 23, 'What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?' All these articles concerning God. So concerning Christ, that he is the second person, incarnate, anointed to be a Saviour, 'to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment,' John xvi. 8. Of man's misery by nature, redemption by Christ, necessity of holiness, as a foundation of glory; all the articles of the practical catechism. It is a pestilent opinion to think that every man may be saved if he do in the general acknowledge Christ. It is said, Acts ii. 21, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved;' not 'on the Lord,' but 'on the name of the Lord.' By the name of the Lord is meant all that which shall be revealed to us of the Lord Jesus in the scriptures. The meaning is, whosoever doth receive, acknowledge, and worship Christ, according to what the scriptures do reveal and testify of him, shall be saved. Many think the differences of christendom vain, and this general faith enough; but if a general acknowledgment were enough, why hath God revealed so many things, and given us such an ample rule, if with safety to salvation we may be ignorant whether he were true God and true man; whether he redeemed us by

satisfaction, or justified us by works, yea or no? They seem to tax the scriptures of redundances, and the apostles of rash zeal, for disputing with such earnestness for the faith of the saints, as Paul against Justiciaries, James against the Antinomists and Libertines, if a general profession of Christ was enough. So they tax the martyrs of folly, that would shed their blood for less-concerning articles. So all be resolved into Christ, men think it is enough: we need not inquire into the manner of the application of his righteousness, the efficacy and merit of his passion; as if it were enough to hold a few generals, and the more implicit our faith the better. Whereas the Lord would have us to abound in knowledge; and if we persist in any particular error against light, or do not search it out, our case is dangerous, if not damnable. I shall not take upon me to determine what articles are absolutely necessary to salvation; it will be hard to define, and we know not by what rule to proceed. In the general, it is exceeding dangerous to lessen the misery of man's nature, the merit and satisfaction of Christ, or the care of good works; these are contrary to that doctrine which the Spirit teacheth and urgeth in the church: John xvi. 8, 'When he is come, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' All that can be certain is, that those opinions which are irreconcilable with the covenant of grace, or do overturn the pillar upon which it standeth, are irreconcilable with salvation.

*Use* 1. To confute them that say that every man shall be saved in his own religion, if he be devout therein, Turks, Jews, heathens; and among christians, Papists, Socinians, &c. You see this is life eternal; this, and nothing else—no religion but that which teacheth rightly to believe in Christ is a way of salvation. There is no salvation but by Christ: 1 Cor. iii. 11, 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;' Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' There is no salvation by Christ but by faith and knowledge. They cannot have benefit by him, as some say, if they live only according to the law and light of nature: Heb. xi. 6, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God;' and here it is said, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' The heathens had many moral virtues, but unless God did reveal himself to them by extraordinary ways, which we cannot judge of, all their privilege was *ut mitius ardeant*, their works being but *splendida peccata*. If any now may be saved without Christ, Christ is dead in vain, and we may want the whole gospel and yet be safe; the philosophy of Aristotle and Seneca would be the way and power of God unto salvation, as well as the gospel. We must have a care lest, by going about to make them christians, we make ourselves heathens.

*Use* 2. Let us bless God for the gospel, that revealeth God and Christ. Many nations are spilt on the world without any knowledge of God and Christ, and are as sheep, whom no man taketh up. Blessed be God for our privileges. When we look to the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, we shall find ourselves as barbarous as others. *Portenta diabolica pene Ægyptiaca numina vincentia*, saith

Gildas of our idols. God threateneth Israel, Hosea ii. 3, 'I will strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born.' If we should despise the gospel, abuse the messengers of it, God will return us to our old barbarism; and we that were so shy of letting in popery, should usher in atheism. When the professors of the gospel were banished Cambridge, and Peter Martyr heard the sacring bell, he said, There is the gospel's passing bell. It would be sad if we should hear such a sound. The ministry (I may speak it without arrogancy) are the only visible party that uphold the life of religion in the land: the Lord knows what may be the sad fruits of their suppression, if either these lights should be extinguished by violence, or be starved for want of oil. Methinks our message should make our feet beautiful. We preach God and Christ. If we be a little earnest for the faith of the saints, remember it is for the good of your souls; it cannot be zeal for our interests, for this is the way to endanger them. Bear with us, it is in a case of salvation or damnation: 'If we be besides ourselves, it is for Christ,' 2 Cor. v. 13. If we seem to hazard all, many nations to whom God hath denied the mercy, would welcome it with all thanksgiving; when God hath opened a door of hope to the Indians, it may be it will be more precious.

*Use* 3. Study God in Jesus Christ. This is the most glorious subject of contemplation; there we may find him infinitely just and yet merciful, pardoning sinners yet salving the authority of this law; there we may see God and man in one person, and the beams of divine majesty allayed by the veil of human nature. In the godhead of Christ we may see his power, in his human nature his love and condescension. He is our Lord, and yet our brother; a man, and yet God's fellow and equal: Zech. xiii. 7, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.' He would have a mother on earth, that we might have a Father in heaven; our relation and alliance to heaven groweth by him. In Christ only can we look upon God as a father: *Deum absolutum debent omnes fugere qui non volunt perire;* otherwise we shall perish, and be overwhelmed with despair. Again, *non solum periculosum est, sed etiam horribile, de Deo extra Christum cogitare.* In trials and temptations it is dangerous to think of God alone, to consider him out of Christ; but here infinite majesty condescendeth to converse with you. The Indian gymnosophists would lie on their backs, and gaze on the sun all day. Oh! how should we, by the deliberate gaze of faith, reflect upon this *μέγα μυστήριον*, 1 Tim. iii. 16, this glorious mystery, fit for angels to look into! Only get an interest in it, or else it will be more cold and comfortless; thy God and thy Christ, that is another thing when thou canst own God as thy father and Christ as thy brother. Luther saith, *Deus magis cognoscitur in prædicamento relationis quam in prædicamento substantiæ*—To know God in relation to us is far sweeter than to be able curiously to discourse of his essence: John xiv. 20, 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.' When we know God in Christ, and Christ in us, this is to know him indeed; not only by hearsay, but acquaintance, to know him so as to love him, and enjoy him.

*Use* 4. To press us to seek salvation in no other but in God through Christ. Come to Christ; you are in need of salvation, and there is no other way: Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour, 'able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him,' Heb. vii. 25; a plaster broad enough for every sore. Do you cast yourselves upon him; see if he will refuse you: John vi. 37, 'He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast off.'

Now I shall come to the particulars that are to be known concerning God and Christ.

First, Concerning God.

*Doct.* 1. That there is a God. This is the supreme truth, and first to be known: Heb. xi. 6, 'They that come to God must believe that he is.' The discussion is not needless. Though it be impossible to deface those impressions of the deity which are engraven upon our hearts, yet the drift of our desires and thoughts goeth this way, as if there were no God: Ps. x. 4, 'The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts.' All his thoughts are, There is no God: Ps. xiv. 1, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' Though he durst not speak it out, yet he saith it in his heart, he entertaineth some such suspicious thoughts and desires about this matter. Those that are guilty of treason would fain destroy the court-rolls; so carnal men would destroy all memorials of God. Yea, many of the children of God feel this temptation. Is there a God? It will not be lost labour to answer the inquiry. I shall pitch upon such arguments as are every man's money.

1. God is evidenced by his works:—

[1.] Of creation. The world is a great book and volume, the creatures are letters, the most excellent are capital letters. If you cannot read, the beasts will teach you: Job xii. 7, 8, 'Ask now the beasts, and they will teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?' The mute fishes, that can hardly make any sound, have voice enough to proclaim their creator. The apostle tells us, Rom. i. 20, 'The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.' Like Phidias, who in his image carved his own name, there is God engraven upon every creature. But how doth the world show that there is a God? There must be some supreme and infinite cause, for nothing can be cause to itself; then it would be before it is. Aristotle acknowledged *πρῶτον αἴτιον*, a first cause. Every house must have a builder, and this curious fabric an infinitely wise architect. Thou that deniest God, or doubtest of his being, look upon the heavens: Ps. xix. 1, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' His glory shineth in the sun, and sparkles in the stars. The sun is a representative of God in the brightness of his beams, extent of his influence, indefatigableness of his motion. All the motions of the creatures are so many pulses, by which we may feel after God.

[2.] By works of providence. The world is made up of things of different and destructive natures, and all that we now see would soon run into disorder and confusion were it not poised and tempered with a wise hand; and when we are stupid, and do not mind these things, providence discovereth itself in judgments and unwonted operations: Ps. lviii. 11, 'So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.'

2. From the confession and common consent of all nations, even those that have been most rude and barbarous, there is none without some worship. The pagan mariners, Jonah i. 5, 'were afraid, and cried every man unto his god.' Those that were most estranged from human society, those that lived in the wilderness without law and government, have been touched with a sense of a deity and godhead; which must arise from natural instinct. It cannot be any deceit, or imposition of fancy, by custom and tradition, falsehood usually not being so universal and long-lived. Men do what they can to blot out these notions and instincts of conscience. An invention so contrary to nature would have been long ere this worn out.

3. From our own consciences, that appal the stoutest sinner after the commitment of any gross evil. The heathens, that had but a little light, feared death: Rom. i. 32, 'They, knowing the judgment of God, that they that do such things are worthy of death,' &c.; and 'they had thoughts excusing and accusing one another,' Rom. ii. 14, 15. As letters written with the juice of a lemon, hold them to the fire, they may be read. What terrors are in the hearts of wicked men after the commitment of sins against light, as incest, murder, promiscuous lusts, contemptuous speaking of God or his worship! Though their sins were secret, hidden under a covert of darkness and secrecy, and not liable to any human cognisance, yet they still feared an avenging hand: their hearts have been upon them. Yea, atheists smitten with horror, what they deny in the day, they acknowledge in the darkness of the night, especially in distress. Diagoras, troubled with the strangury, acknowledged a deity. Or a little before death, their hearts are filled with trembling and horror.

4. From several experiences. The power of the word: 1 Cor. xiv. 25, 'Thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.' There is some God guideth these men. There are devils, and they would undo all were they not bound up with the chains and restraints of an irresistible providence. God suffereth them now and then to discover their malice, that we may see by whose goodness we do subsist. So there are virtues, which must be by some institution, or by comformity to a supreme being, or a sense of his law. They cannot be out of any eternal reason, which is in the things themselves, nor by the appointment of man's will; for then everything which man willeth would be good. Many arguments might be brought to this purpose, but I am shortly to handle this argument elsewhere.

By way of use.

1. Let us charge it upon our hearts, that we may check those private whispers and suspicions which are there against the being and glory of God. Many times we are apt to think that God is but a fancy,

religion a state curb, and the gospel but a quaint device to please fond and foolish men; and all is but talk to hold men in awe. Oh! consider, in such truths as these we do not appeal to scripture, but nature. You will never be able to recover your consciences out of this dread. The devils are under the fear of a deity: James ii. 19, 'Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.' The devil can never be a flat atheist, because of the fear of the wrath of God tormenting him; he is not an atheist, because he cannot be one, it cannot stand with the state of a damned angel; there may be atheists in the church, but there are none in hell. Humble thyself for such atheistical thoughts and suggestions. It is a sin irrational; all the creatures confute it: Ps. lxxiii. 22, 'So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee;' when he had an ill thought of providence. When you go about to ungod God, you unman yourselves. Common sense and reason would teach you otherwise. Thoughts and desires that strike at the being of God are thoughts of a dangerous importance. Oh! what a foul heart have I, that casteth up such mire and dirt! Wrath came upon the Jews to the uttermost for killing Christ in his human nature; but these are thoughts that strike at God, and Christ, and all together.

2. It reproveth those that wish down, or live down this principle. Some wish it down: Ps. xiv. 1, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' It is his desire rather than his thoughts. It is a pleasant thing for them to imagine that there is none to call them to an account. Guilty men would fain destroy the righteous God, which is an argument of the worst hatred. Some live it down: Titus i. 16, 'In works they deny him.' It is the real language of their lives that there is no God. There is no greater temptation to atheism than the life of a scandalous professor. One surprised a christian in an act of filthiness, and cried out, *Christiane! Christiane! ubi Deus tuus?*— O christian! christian! where is thy God? There are few atheists in opinion, more in affection, most in conversation of life. You live in deceit and cozenage, and yet profess to believe an omniscient God; and your privy walkings are full of sin and excess. There is blasphemy in your lives: Rev. ii. 9, 'I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.' Mr Greenham tells of one who was executed at Norwich for an atheist; first he was a papist, then a protestant; then he fell off from all religion, and turned atheist. How can you believe it is true that there is a God, when this truth hath so little power on the heart?

3. It presseth you to lay this principle up with care. All Satan's malice is to bring you to a denial of this supreme truth; it is good to discern his wiles. There are special seasons when you are most liable to atheism. When providence is adverse, prayers are not heard, and those that worship God are in the worst case; the Lord doth not come in when we would have him. The devil worketh upon our stomach and discontent; and when we are vexed that we have not our desires, we complain, as Israel, Exod. xvii. 7, 'Is the Lord among us or no?' when they wanted water. But still 'our God is in the heavens, and doth whatsoever he pleaseth.' The saints in their expostulation still yield the principle: Ps. lxxiii. 1, 'Truly God is good to Israel;' how-

ever the state of things are, yet he is resolved to hold to principles. So Jer. xii. 1, he layeth it down as an undoubted maxim, 'Righteous art thou, O God.' God is God still. So when we meet with oppression, men pervert judgment, others forswear themselves, our innocency doth not prevail, the devil abuseth the rage of passions in such a case. As Diagoras, a noted atheist among the heathens, became so upon this occasion: he saw a man deeply forswearing himself, and yet was not stricken with a thunderbolt. Consider, though this be a sure temptation, yet there is a God: Eccles, iii. 16, 17, 'I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.' What then? 'I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time for every purpose and for every work.' God will have a time to judge this matter ere long. Still recover your supreme principle out of the hands of the temptation. So in times of general oppression, when the innocent party are left as a prey to their adversaries: Eccles. v. 8, 'When thou seest the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' We may lose all outward supports, but not our God. *Attamen vivit Christus, et regnat.* So when second causes operate and accomplish their wonted effects according to their fixed and stated course, 'All things continue as they were,' 2 Peter iii. 4, they think the world is governed by chance or nature; so this proveth a snare. But you should see God at the other end of causes; he can change them as he pleaseth.

## SERMON IV.

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*—JOHN XVII. 3.

DOCT. 2. The next proposition is, that this God is but one, 'Thee the only true God.' Deut. vi. 4, 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one Lord.' The heathens multiplied gods according to their own fancies: they 'had lords many and gods many.' Austin in one of his epistles speaketh of one Maximius, a heathen, who excuseth the polytheism of the gentiles, that they worshipped but one supreme essence, though under divers names. *Ejus quasi quædam membra variis supplicationibus prosequimur, ut totum colere valeamus*—that they had several deities, that they might, as by so many several parcels, adore the whole divine essence. The truth is, nature hath some sense of it; for as it showeth there is a God, so it showeth there is but one God. Socrates was a martyr to this truth. The Platonics worshipped one supreme essence, whom they called ὁ βασιλεὺς. The philosophers sometimes called God τὸ ὄν, that being; sometimes τὸ ἓν, that one thing. Tertullian proveth that the soul was *naturaliter christiana*, as he speaketh, *O testimonium animæ naturaliter christianæ;* which he proveth from the forms of speech then in use. *Deus videt*, &c.—what God shall award; God seeth; let God determine of me,

and for me. And in troubles they cried out, O God! and in straits they did not look to the Capitol, the imagined seat of such gods as the Romans worshipped, but to heaven, the seat of the living God. Thus it is with the soul, saith he, when recovered out of a distemper. The truth is, it was the dotage and darkness of their spirits to acknowledge many gods, as drunkards and madmen usually see things double, two suns for one. But besides the consent of nations, to give you reasons: There is a God, and therefore but one God; there can be but one first cause, and one infinite, one best, one most perfect, one omnipotent. If one can do all things, what need more gods? If both be omnipotent, we must conceive them as agreeing or disagreeing; if disagreeing, all would be brought to nothing; if agreeing, one is superfluous. God hath decided the controversy: Isa. xliv. 8, 'Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no God, I know not any.' As if he said, If any have cause to know, I have, but I know none.

This point is useful, not only to exempt the soul from the anxious fear of a false deity, and to confute the Manichees, Marcion, Cerdo, and others, that held two sorts of gods, and those that parted the godhead into three essences, and the pagan fry. But practically—

1. It checketh those that set up other gods besides him in their hearts. If there be but one God, why do we make more, and give divine honour to creatures? A worldling maketh his money his god, and a sensualist his belly his god. Covetousness is called idolatry; and Phil. iii. 19, 'Whose god is their belly.' How is covetousness idolatry? and how can any make their belly their god? Who ever was seen praying to his pence, or worshipping his own belly? I answer—Though it be not done corporally and grossly, yet it is done spiritually. That which engrosseth our love, and confidence, and care, and choice, and delight, that is set up in the room and place of God; and this is to give divine honour to a creature. Now this is in worldlings and sensualists. For confidence, they trust in their riches for a supply, do not live on providence: 1 Tim. vi. 17, 'Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God;' Prov. x. 15, 'A rich man's wealth is his strong city;' he is provided of a defence against all the chances and strokes of providence. So for care; a man devoteth his time to his god, and the sensualist sacrificeth his estate, his health, his soul to his own gullet, many sacrilegious morsels to his own throat; every day he offereth a drink-offering, and meat-offering to appetite. O brethren! take heed of gods of man's making. He is as much an idolater that preferreth his wealth to obedience, his pleasures before God's service, as he that falleth down to a stock. It would be sad if on your death-beds God should turn you back, as he did the Israelites in their distress: Judges x. 14, 'Go and cry to the gods whom ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.' Go to your wealth, to your pleasures.

2. If God be but one, worship him with an entire heart. The story goeth, that the senate, hearing of the miracles in Judea, decreed divine worship to Christ; but Tiberius the emperor crossed it, when he heard that he would be worshipped alone. God is but one; our hearts should close with him as an all-sufficient portion: there is enough in one. The

scripture speaks of 'believing with all the heart.' Other comforts and confidences must be disclaimed. Sometimes carnal persons set their hearts upon other comforts; Christ is not their whole delight: they would have Christ for their consciences, and the world for their hearts; Christ in an extremity, but their affections go out to other things. Sometimes they will have other confidences: they would trust Christ for their eternal salvation, to salve conscience; but the world engrosses their care, as if they were to shift for themselves in temporal things, and be masters of their own fortunes; as it appeareth when temporal supplies fail; when visible supplies are absent, then they despair. It is a mere mistake and folly to think it is easier to trust Christ for pardon of sins and eternal life, than for daily bread; as Christ said, Mark ii. 9, 'Whether is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk?' The truth is, temporal wants are more pressing and urging than spiritual, and men are careless in the business of their souls.

*Doct.* 3. The next proposition is, that this God is one in three persons. This also is collected from the text. 'To know thee,' that is, the Father, with all the co-essential persons. They are undivided in essence, though distinguished in personality. Take a place of scripture: 1 John v. 7, 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.' Let me a little open the doctrine of the Trinity by some short observations.

This is a mystery proper to the scriptures. Other truths are revealed in nature, but this is a treasure peculiar to the church. There are some passages in heathens that seem to look this way; as Plato speaketh of *νοῦς, λόγος, πνεῦμα,* mind, word, and spirit; and Trismegistus, *πρῶτα θεὸς,* &c. But these were either some general notions, received by tradition from the Jews, and by them misunderstood, for they dreamed of three distinct separate essences, or else passages foisted into their writings by the fraud and fallacy of some christians, who counted it a piece of their zeal to lie for God. It is not likely that God would give the heathens a more clear revelation of these mysteries than he did to his own people, the church of the Jews. We find it but sparingly revealed in the Old Testament, though I might bring many places where it is sufficiently hinted; but more distinctly in the New, after the visible and sensible discovery of the three persons at Christ's baptism: Mat. iii. 17, 'The Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon him, and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' *Voce Pater, Natus corpore, Numen ave.* The whole Trinity were present at that solemnity. Some darkness there is still upon the face of this deep; we shall have more perfect knowledge of it in the heavens: John xiv. 20, 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.' Trinity in unity and unity in trinity still troubleth the present weakness of reason; but when we shall see God face to face, our knowledge shall be more satisfactory and complete. For the present, we must come to this truth with a sober mind, and adore it with a humble piety, lest we puzzle faith while we would satisfy and inform reason. There are many words which the church hath used in the explication

of this mystery, as unity, trinity, essence, person, consubstantial; which though they be not all found in the scriptures, yet they are the best that we can use in so deep a matter, and serve to prevent the errors and mistakes of those who would either multiply the essence, or abolish the persons. Some terms must be used, and these are the safest. They be three, and yet one; and the most commodious way to solve it to our understandings is, one in essence and three persons; for there being three in the divine essence, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, each having the whole divine essence, and yet the essence undivided, there must be some words to express the mystery. God, being one, cannot be divided in nature and being; and there being three, every one having the whole godhead in himself, distinguished by peculiar relative properties, what term shall we use? Three ways of existence there are in the nature of God, because of those three real relations—paternity, filiation, and procession. One they are, and distinct they are really. There is and must be a distinction, for the essence and particular way of existence do differ. Whatever is said of the essence is true of every person. God is infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; so is the Father, Son, and Spirit. But now, whatever is said of the existence, as existence, cannot be said of the essence; every one that is God is not Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I say, then, there being a distinction between the nature and particular existences, there must be some terms to express it. The Greek Church in the Nicene Council, some three hundred and sixty years after Christ, worded it thus: The occasion was this, some heretics said, If Christ be God, of the same substance and being with the Father, then, when Christ was incarnate, the Father was incarnate also. No, say the orthodox, though the *οὐσία*, the substance or essence be the same, it is not the same *ὑπόστασις*, the same subsistence in the godhead; and then began the public and received distinction of *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*: *οὐσία* signifying the nature or substance; *ὑπόστασις*, the several manners of existence. And the determination of the church was, that these were the fittest terms to explicate this mystery. Not but that these words were used before in this matter; as may appear out of divers authors that lived and wrote before that famous Nicene Council, but they were not so accurately distinguished, nor so publicly received. And indeed, though the word *οὐσία*, essence, be not in scripture, yet *ὑπόστασις* is. There is ground for *οὐσία*, for when the nature of God is expressed, it is expressed by a word equivalent to essence, 'I Am that I Am,' Exod. iii. 14. So *ὁ ὢν, ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, 'He that was, and is, and is to come,' Rev. i. 4. Then for *ὑπόστασις*, Christ is called, Heb. i. 3, *χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*, 'The express image of his person.' It cannot be rendered *essence*, but *subsistence;* for then Arius would have carried the day, and Christ would be only *ὁμοιούσιος*. And the Father's essence cannot properly be said to be impressed on the Son, since the very same individual essence and substance was wholly in him, as it was wholly in the Father; and the Son cannot be said to be like: but now 'the express image of his subsistence;' or, as we now render it, 'person,' doth provide for the consubstantiality of the Son; against Arius; and for the distinction of the subsistences, against Sabellius. Thus for a long time it was carried in the terms of *substance* and *sub-*

*sistence.* But how came the word *person* in use? I answer—The Latin Church expressed it by 'person,' upon these grounds: partly because they would have a word in their own language that might serve for common and vulgar use, and the right apprehension of this mystery; partly because *ὑπόστασις* and *subsistence* were ambiguous, and of a doubtful signification, being both often in common acceptation put for the same thing; and the Latin fathers, *timidius usi sunt eo vocabulo,* were shy in using that word; partly because this word is very commodious, as being proper to particular, distinct, rational substances. Whatever is a person must be a substance, not an attribute or accident, as white or black; a particular substance, not a general essence or nature. It must be living; we do not call a book or a board a person. It must be rational; we do not call a tree or a beast a person, though they have life; but only man. And it must not be a part of a man, as the soul; it must not be that which is sustained in another, but subsisteth of itself. So the humanity of Christ is not a person, because it hath no subsistence in itself, but is sustained by the godhead. Now a person in the godhead is an incommunicable subsistence in the divine essence, or the divine essence or nature distinguished by its incommunicable property; or more plainly, a diverse and distinct subsistence in the godhead. And the word is not to be taken in the extreme rigour, to infer any separation or division in the godhead. Three persons among men make three separate essences, three men; but not here three Gods; for in the godhead the persons are not separate and divided, but only distinguished by their relative properties; they are co-eternal, infinite, and may be in one another, the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, both in the Spirit. We are material, and though we communicate in the same nature, yet we live separate. In short, the word *person* is used to show that they are not only three acts, offices, attributes, properties, qualities, operations, but distinct subsistences, distinguished from one another by their unchangeable order of first, second, and third—Father, Word, and Spirit—and their incommunicable properties of paternity, filiation, and procession, or unbegotten, begotten, and proceeding, and by their special and personal manner of operation, creating, redeeming, sanctifying. Creation is by the Father, redemption by the Son, sanctification by the Spirit. More may be said, but when shall we make an end?

Let us apply it.

*Use.* Let us bless God that we have such a complete object for our faith. We can want nothing that have Father, Son, and Spirit, the co-operation of all the persons for our salvation; that we can consider the Father in heaven, the Son on the cross, and feel the Spirit in our hearts; yea, that the whole Godhead should take up its abode, and come and converse with us: 2 Cor. xiii. 14, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.' Oh! what a treble privilege is this! Grace, love, and communion; election, merit, and actual grace. This is a mystery, felt as well as believed. We have a God to love us, a Christ to redeem us, and a Spirit to apply all to the soul: 1 Peter ii. 3, 'If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' Our spiritual estate

standeth upon a sure bottom; the beginning is from God the Father, the dispensation from the Son, and the application from the Holy Ghost. The Father's electing love is engaged by the merit of Christ, and conveyed by the power of the Holy Ghost. There was a purpose by the Father, the accomplishment was by the Son, and exhibition is by the Spirit; it is free in the Father, sure in the Son, ours in the Spirit; the Father purposeth, the Son ratifieth, the Spirit giveth us the enjoyment of all. Oh! let us adore the mysterious Trinity; we are not thankful enough for this glorious discovery.

*Doct.* 4. That God, who is one in three persons, is the only true God, *σὲ τὸν ἀληθινὸν θεὸν*, 'Thee the only true God;' 1 Thes. i. 9, 'Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God.' All others are but idols and false gods; they are not able to avenge the contempt of them that wrong them, or to save those that trust in them: Gal. iv. 8, 'Then when ye knew not God, ye did service to them that by nature were no gods.' An idol is nothing but what it is in the valuation and esteem of men. Oh! then, let us not look upon religion as a mere fancy. God is, whether we acknowledge him or no. Usually, in great turns and changes, many turn atheists. Some turn short from gross idolatry to rest in superstition; others turn over, and lay aside religion itself, as if all were fancy and figment. Oh! consider, a God there is; who else made the world? And then, 'who is a god like unto the Lord our God?' Go, search abroad among the nations. It is some advantage sometimes to consider what a God we serve, above the gods of the Gentiles. God alloweth you the search for settlement and satisfaction: Jer. vi. 16, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' If you will make a serious comparison, see where you can anchor safer than in Christianity. Where can you have more comfortable representations of God than in the christian religion? And where can you have a purer representation of the christian religion than in the churches of the Protestants? All else is as unstable as water. Here God is represented as holy, yet gracious; and here you may meet with a strict rule of duty, and yet best for your choice. Let it confirm you in your choice; and bless God for the advantages of your birth and education. If you had been born among heathens, you had been liable to their darkness: 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart,' Ps. xix. 10.

*Secondly,* Now we come to speak to the second head of christian doctrine, what is to be known concerning Jesus Christ? I shall not wander and digress from the circumstances of the text.

Here are three things offered to our consideration:—(1.) That he is sent; (2.) That he is Jesus, or a saviour; (3.) That he is Christ, or an anointed saviour.

First, That he is sent. I in part opened this in the explication; now I shall open it more fully. It implieth—

1. Christ's divine original; he was a person truly existing before he came into the world, as a man must be before he is sent; he came forth from God: Gal. iv. 4, 'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law;'

ἐξαπέστειλεν, the word is a double compound, sent forth from God. Jesus Christ was in the Godhead; to note his intimacy and familiarity with God, he is said to be ἐν κόλπῳ πατρὸς, John i. 18, 'The only-begotten Son of God, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' He is not only *legatus a latere*, from the side of God, but from the bosom of God; so equals and dear friends are admitted into the bosom. Therefore he is said 'to come forth from God,' John xvi. 30. Not only to note the authority of his message, but the quality of his person, he came from out of the Godhead. No inferior mediator could serve the turn; such an errand required a God himself: nothing but an infinite good could remedy an infinite evil. Sin had bound us over to an eternal judgment, and nothing could counterpoise eternity but the infiniteness and excellency of Christ's person. He that came on such an errand must needs be God, both to satisfy God and to satisfy us. God could not be satisfied unless his sufferings had received a value from his person. To satisfy God offended there must be a God satisfying for the offence; therefore his blood is called 'the blood of God;' Acts xx. 28, 'Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.' The satisfaction must carry proportion with the merit of the offence. A debt of a thousand pounds is not discharged by two or three brass farthings. Creatures are finite, their acts are due, and their sufferings for one another, if they had been allowed, would have been of a limited influence. Merit is above the creature; no act of ours can lay an engagement upon God: 1 Sam. ii. 25, 'If a man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if he sin against God, who shall entreat for him?' The judge may accord a difference between man and man, and one man may make satisfaction to another; but to take up matters between us and God, a person must be sent out of the Godhead itself. So to satisfy us; he had need be able to grapple with divine wrath that would undertake our cause; he was not only to undergo it, but to overcome it. The creature would never have been satisfied if he had perished in the work; if our surety were kept in prison, and held under wrath and death, we should have had no assurance that the debt was paid: Acts xvii. 31, 'Whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' Christ's resurrection is our acquittance and discharge: John xvi. 10, 'Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.' Well, then, we see the reasons why a person of the Godhead is employed in this work. You need not doubt but that it is accomplished to the full, since it is in the hands of such an able surety. Besides, it showeth the greatness of our sin and misery, that a person of the Godhead must be sent to rescue us. Sin fetched the Son of God from heaven, and if we subdue it not, it will sink us into hell.

2. It implieth his distinct subsistence, that Christ is a distinct person from the Father; for he that sendeth and he that is sent are distinguished. Mark, I say, it implieth distinction, but not inferiority, against the Arians. Persons equal by mutual consent may send one another, as we see among men; and Christ was equal with God: Phil. ii. 6, 'Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;' he might take that honour upon him without

usurpation. Now this sending is ascribed to the Father; as John x. 36, 'Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world,' &c., and in other places. Partly because the Father in those places is not taken personally, but essentially; for the decree of the Father is the decree of the Son and Spirit; they are one in essence, and one in will, their actions are undivided. Partly because this peculiar personal operation is especially ascribed to the first person. The Father is said to send, and the Holy Ghost to qualify and fit him. It is ascribed to the Father, he sent the Spirit to accomplish it; to God the Son, who took human nature, and united it to his own godhead; to the Spirit of God, who formed, and sanctified, and furnished it with gifts without measure. In the economy of salvation, the original authority is made to reside in God the Father. So that here is a sensible argument to confirm the doctrine of the Trinity. Christ was sent, one of the persons took flesh by order and appointment of the whole Godhead. The distinction of the persons is by this discovered: Heb. i. 5, 6, 'For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.'

3. It implieth the incarnation of Christ: 'Sent into the world,' John x. 36. So Gal. iv. 4, 'God sent forth his own Son, made of a woman.' Christ's sending doth not imply change of place, but assumption of another nature. Now this was necessary, otherwise Christ neither ought to nor could suffer. Justice required that the same nature that sinned should be punished. If he had not been made of a woman he could not be under the law, the duty, or the penalty of it: Gal. iv. 4, 'He was made of a woman, made under the law.' Our sin was not to be punished in angels, or in any other creature that had not sinned, nor in man made out of nothing, or out of a piece of earth, or out of the dust, as Adam. God might have made Christ true man out of that matter, but he was made of a woman, one that was of our blood, of the same nature and essence with them that sinned. Our Saviour was not to be a sinner, but partaker of the same nature with them that sinned.

4. It implieth the quality of Christ's office; he is the messenger of heaven, and therefore called 'the angel of the covenant,' Mal. iii. 1. He is sent by God after lost sinners. He is called 'the apostle and high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1. God sendeth out a messenger to bring sinners to himself, as wisdom sent out her maids; but Christ is the chief messenger and apostle. And mark, he is called there not only the apostle but high priest; partly to show that in all ages of the church Christ is the chief officer, therefore the highest calling, both in the Jewish and christian church is ascribed to him; but chiefly to show that Christ, as he is the ambassador to treat with us from God, so the high priest to treat with God and appease his wrath for us. Christ is the messenger that goeth from party to party; if he had not been sent to us we should neither know God nor enjoy him; he came from God to men that he might bring men to God. There was no knowing of the Father without him: Mat. xi. 27, 'No man knoweth

the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him.' There is no coming to the Father without him: John xiv. 6, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.' He came from heaven on purpose to show us the way and to remove all obstacles. This is Christ's office.

5. It implieth the authority of his office. Jesus Christ had a lawful call. He was designed in the council of the Trinity; his holiness, miracles, and divine power are his commission: 'Him hath God the Father sealed,' John vi. 27; as every ambassador hath letters of credence under the hand and seal of him from whom he is sent. Christ is the plenipotentiary of heaven; he hath his commission under the seal of heaven; all is valid that he doth in the Father's name; he hath authorised the Redeemer. Which is not only for the comfort of our faith; Christ entered upon his calling by authority, which I shall improve by and by; but for moral instruction, to look to our mission: Christ came not till he was sent. It is not good to cast ourselves upon offices and places without a lawful call and designation of God. In ordinary functions, education and abilities are call enough, and there we must keep. It is a tempting of providence to think God will bless us out of our way. A desire of change usually proceedeth from disdain, or distrust, or a thirst of gain, all which are sinful. But now, in higher callings, there must be a solemn mission: Rom. x. 15, 'How shall they preach except they be sent?' They must be authorised by God, the rules he hath left in the church. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not glorify himself by intrusion; he had a patent from the council of the Trinity, indited by the Father, accepted by himself, and sealed by the Holy Ghost.

*Use.* It showeth three things:—

1. The love of God. Here are many circumstances to heighten it in your thoughts; that he would not trust an angel with your salvation, but send his Son; he is to come in person: 1 John iv. 10, 'Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' He thought nothing too near and too dear for us. Usually man's love descendeth, and all his happiness is laid up in his children. Again, God had no reasons; he was moved by his own goodness; he had reasons to the contrary. We were enemies, but he sent his Son for enemies: Rom. v. 10, 'If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,' &c. What was his Son sent for? Not to treat with us in majesty, but to take our nature, to be substituted into our room and place. Oh! praise the Father: Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;' 2 Cor. i. 3, 'Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.'

2. Christ's condescension. He submitteth to be sent: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' We could never have asked so much as God hath given. He would not only borrow our tongue to speak to us, but our bowels to mourn for

us, and our bodies to die for us. He layeth aside his majesty, and taketh on himself the condition of a servant. It is irksome to us to go back ten degrees in pomp or pleasure upon just and convenient reasons. Oh! the wonderful self-denial of Christ! He laid aside the majesty of God, and submitted to the greatest abasement and suffering.

3. The value of souls and spiritual privileges. If we despise them, we put an affront upon the wisdom of heaven, and undervalue Christ's purchase. Freedom from sin, justification, holiness, they are the only things. Christ was sent from heaven to purchase them. Gold and silver would not buy them; money is not current in heaven, though it doth all things in the world: 1 Peter i. 18, 'We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversations, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without spot and blemish.' Christ must come from heaven, and take a body, and shed his blood. Scourge your hearts with that question, Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' Sure we should be more serious, and think that worthy of our best endeavours and greatest earnestness which Christ thought worthy a journey from heaven, and all the pains and shame he suffered.

Secondly, The next thing in the text is that he is Jesus: Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.' It is there interpreted to signify a saviour; an angel himself is the expositor. So here Christ is sent to be a saviour; that is a principal object of faith, to look upon Christ as the Saviour of the world. A saviour properly is one that delivereth from evil. Now Christ doth not only deliver us from evil, from sin, the wrath of God, the accusations of the law, and eternal death, but positively he giveth us grace and righteousness and eternal life. He is a saviour to defend us, and a saviour to bless us: Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 'The Lord God is a sun and a shield; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' The mercies of the covenant are privative and positive. Many enter into a league that they will not hurt one another; but God is in covenant with us to bless us. If Christ had only procured some place for us, unacquainted with pain or pleasure, it had been much; but we have not only a ransom, but an inheritance; instead of horrors and howlings, everlasting joys. Again, many are called saviours either because of their subordinate subserviency to Christ, instruments in inward and outward salvation; but these saviours needed a saviour. Christ is the true Jesus, who saveth as an author of grace, not as an instrument and means of conveyance. Now Christ is a saviour partly by merit, partly by efficacy and power; he doth something for us and something in us: for us, he prevaileth by the merit of his death; in us, by the efficacy of his Spirit; all his work is not done on the cross. Both are necessary, partly in regard of the difference of the enemies; God and the law are in a distinct rank from sin and death, Satan and the world. God was an enemy; he cannot be overcome, but must be reconciled; the law an enemy that could not be disannulled, but must be satisfied. Sin, the world, and Satan assault us out of malice, they make themselves our enemies; the law and God are made enemies out of our rebellion; therefore Christ must satisfy as well as overcome. To reconcile God,

he shed his blood on the cross. Justice must have a sacrifice and the law satisfaction; the curses of the law are not to fall to the ground; somebody must be made a curse to keep up the authority of the law; the law was an innocent enemy, and therefore not to be relaxed or repealed. Partly in regard of the different fight of the other enemies, that are enemies out of malice. Satan is not only a tempter but an accuser. As a tempter, so Christ was to overcome him by his power; as an accuser, by his merit. When Satan condemneth, Christ is to intercede and represent his own merit; the plaster must be as broad as the sore; so far as Satan is an enemy, so far must Christ be a saviour and redeemer, by his power against the temptations, by his merit against the accusations of Satan. As the devil is an accuser, Christ is an advocate. Partly because Satan hath a double power over a sinner—legal and usurped. Legal, as God's executioner, by the ordination of God's justice: Heb. ii. 14, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Christ is to die to put Satan out of office usurped, as the god of this world. God made him an executioner, we a prince: John xii. 31, 'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.' Christ rescueth prisoners: Isa. xlix. 9, 'That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth.' He will rescue and recover the elect when by their own default they put themselves in Satan's hands. Partly for our comfort. By his own obedience and merit Christ giveth us a right and title, but by his efficacy and power he giveth us possession. He is to buy our peace, grace, comfort, and then to see that we are possessed of it.

Well, then, own him as Jesus, as the only Saviour. Acts iv. 17, the apostles were charged 'not to preach any more in the name of Jesus.' Rest upon his merit, and wait for his power.

1. Rest upon his merit. Troubled consciences, that think to help themselves by their own care and resolution, are like men that are like to perish in the waters, and when a boat is sent out to help them, think to swim to shore by their own strength. You would be a saviour to yourselves, your own Jesus, and your own Christ. God is very jealous of the creature's trust; and Christ saith, Isa. xlv. 5, 'I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no saviour besides me.' You would purchase your peace, conquer your own enemies, and then come to Christ. No money of yours is current in heaven; the jewels of the covenant are not sold for any price but Christ's blood and Christ's obedience. God saith, Isa. lv. 1, 'He that hath no money, let him come and buy wine and milk, without money and without price.' He sold to Christ, but he giveth to you; he asketh nothing of you but acceptance. Will you take it? They that refuse Christ and refuse comfort till they be holy in themselves, they have a show of humility, they would wear their own garments, spend their own money; but the spirit is never more proud than when under a legal dejection; we scorn to put on Christ's robes, and are better contented with our own spotted garments; as in outward things we prefer a russet coat of our own before a velvet coat of another's. This is peevish pride.

2. Wait for his power and efficacy in the use of means. It is bestowed on us by virtue of his intercession: 'We are saved by his life,' Rom. v. 10; 'If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by

the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.' We are reconciled by his merit, but saved by his life. He liveth in heaven, and procureth influences of his grace: 'Therefore he is' (said to be) 'able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us,' Heb. vii. 25. In heaven he accomplisheth the other part of his priesthood. He doth not work out a part of man's salvation, and leave the rest to our free will: the sacrificing part is ended, and by his intercession we get the merit applied to us. But we must not be idle, we must come with supplications, and present the case to Christ, that Christ may present it to God. Our groans must answer to the earnestness of his intercession, and then we shall receive supplies. The word is called, 'The power of God to salvation,' Rom. i. 16. Those that conscionably use prayer, and wait for Christ in the word, will find him to be a saviour indeed. The word is the effectual means to save men, how foolish and despicable soever it seem in the world. God would work with us rationally. We cannot expect a brutish bent, &c.

Thirdly, The next thing is that he is Christ, an anointed saviour. This fitly followeth the former. *Jesus* signifies his divinity, and *Christ* his humanity. We are not only to know his person, but his office: John i. 41, 'We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ,' or anointed. This is often expressed in scripture: Ps. xlv. 8, 'He is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows;' Isa. lxi. 1, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.' So Acts iv. 27, 'Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together.' So Acts x. 38, 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.' Out of all which places we see that Christ's anointing is not to be understood properly, but by a trope; the sign is put for the thing signified.

1. Who was anointed? Among the Gentiles, the wrestlers were anointed. Which may be applied to Christ, who was now to wrestle and conflict with all the prejudices and difficulties of man's salvation. But it is rather taken from the customs of the ceremonial law. Three sorts of persons we find to be anointed among the Jews:—Kings; as Saul, David, Solomon: 1 Sam. ix. 16, 'Thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel.' Therefore they were called, 'the Lord's anointed,' 1 Sam. xxvi. 11. Priests; all the priests that ministered in the tabernacle or temple, chiefly the high priest, who was a special figure of Christ: Exod. xxix. 29, 'And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them.' Prophets: 1 Kings xix. 16, 'Elisha the son of Shaphat shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.' As oil strengtheneth and suppleth the joints, and maketh them agile and fit for exercise, so it noteth a designation and fitness for the functions to which they were appointed. So Christ, because he was not to be a typical priest, or prophet, or king, therefore he was not typically but spiritually anointed; not with a sacramental, but real unction; not of men, but of God immediately. Therefore we shall inquire how Christ was anointed. It implieth two things:—

[1.] The giving of power and authority: Heb. v. 5, 'Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.' Therefore though Christ be of the same power and authority with the Father, yet as mediator he must be appointed. Christ took not on him the honour of a mediator, but received it of his Father. God needeth not to appoint a mediator; it was his free grace. To save sinnners is not *proprietas divinæ naturæ*, but *opus liberi consilii*. This counsel had its rise from the mercy and free grace of the Father; he might have required this punishment of ourselves. If any had interposed to mediate for us without God's will and calling, his mediation would have been of no value; a pledge whereof we have in Moses: Exod. xxxii. 32, 33, 'Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sins; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book of life. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.' And besides, where should we have found a sufficient mediator, unless he should have given us one? Therefore there is much in the Father's anointing or appointment; therefore is the mediation of Christ so effectual; it is made by his own will: John viii. 42, 'I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me;' John vi. 27, 'Him hath God the Father sealed;' as a magistrate hath the king's broad seal. Which is a great comfort; when we go to God, we may offer him Christ, as authorised by himself: Thou hast sent thy own Son to be a mediator for me. And we may plead it to ourselves in faith: God the supreme judge, the wronged party, hath appointed Christ to take up the controversy between him and me.

[2.] The bestowing on him the Holy Ghost, who might make the human nature fit for the work. So Acts x. 38, 'Him hath God anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power.' The human nature of Christ was fitted for the employment; for though it were exalted to great privileges, yet it could not act beyond its sphere; and sanctification is the personal operation of the third person. Now the work of the Holy Ghost was in the womb of the virgin, to preserve the human nature of Christ from the infection of sin. From a sinner nothing could be born but what was unclean and sinful; by this anointing Christ was made perfectly just, strengthened to all offices, especially to offer up himself: Heb. ix. 14, 'Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.' To overcome all difficulties and temptations: Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant whom I uphold, my elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him.' The work of redemption was a weighty work: Christ had to do with God, devil, and man, to bear the wrath of God for the whole world.

2. To what was Christ anointed? To the office of a mediator in general; particularly to be king, priest, and prophet of the church. To be a prophet, to teach us by his word and Spirit: Mat. xvii. 5, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; hear ye him.' God bespeaketh audience. To be a priest, to intercede and die for us, To be a king, to rule us by his Spirit, and to give grace and glory to us.

*Use* 1. Let us receive Christ as an anointed saviour. Christ is set over us by authority; let us come to him as a prophet, denying our

own reason and wisdom; as a priest, seeking all our acceptance with God through his merit. Let us plead, Lord, thou hast anointed Christ to offer himself a sacrifice for me. As a king, let us give up ourselves to the authority and discipline of his Spirit. God's anointing is the true reason and cause why we should come to Christ.

*Use* 2. Comfort; we are anointed too. Christ's ointment is shared amongst his fellows; he was anointed more than we, but we have our part: Ps. cxxxiii. 2, 'Like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment;' 1 John ii. 27, 'The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you.' We are made prophets, priests, and kings; prophets meet to declare his praises, priests fit for holy ministering, kings to reign over our corruptions here, and with Christ for ever in glory, as the queen is crowned with the king.

## SERMON V.

*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*—JOHN XVII. 4.

IN this verse there is another argument to inforce the main request of his being glorified; it is taken from the faithful discharge of his duty, and his integrity in it; it was all finished, and finished to God's glory; therefore it was not unjust that he should now desire to be glorified. When our work is ended, then we look to receive our wages. Now, saith Christ, 'I have finished the work;' and besides (which giveth weight to the argument), 'I have glorified thee.' The reason of Christ's request seems to be taken from the eternal covenant. Do your work, and you shall see your seed; and from those promises, 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'Them that honour me, I will honour;' Prov. iv. 8, 'Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.' Well, Christ showeth that his request is not unequal. Though this be the general relation of the context, yet it is good to note the particular dependence between this and the former verse. Christ said that it was eternal life to know him that was sent; now he showeth he had discharged that work for which he was sent.

From Christ's suing for glory upon this argument, I might note, that we may plead promises. God saith, 'Put me in remembrance.' There is difference between a plea and a challenge; hypocrites challenge God upon the merit of their works; believers humbly urge him with his own promises. Not as if God did need excitement to make good his word; but we need grounds of hope and confidence.

Again, because Christ asketh nothing but what God will give, I might observe, that when we have done our work we may expect our portion of glory. But I rather come to the particular discussion of the words.

The words may be considered in a mediatory or in a moral sense. In a mediatory sense; so they are proper to Christ; he prayed to the Father, 'That thy Son may glorify thee,' ver. 1. Now he saith, 'I

have glorified thee;' meaning, in the days of his flesh. By a moral accommodation they may be applied to every christian; every christian should say, as Christ, 'I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.'

First, and which is most proper, let us consider them in the mystical and mediatory sense. The first phrase is:—

'I have glorified thee.'—Christ glorified God many ways; by his person, as being 'the express image of his Father's glory,' Heb. i. 3. By his life and perfect obedience: John viii. 46, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' and ver. 49, 'I have not a devil, but I honour my Father.' By discovering his mercy: John i. 14, 'We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' By his miracles; when the sick of the palsy was cured, it is said, 'The multitude glorified God,' Mat. ix. 8; Mark xv. 31; at other miracles, 'They glorified the God of Israel,' Mark ii. 12. So his passion exceedingly glorified God's justice. In his doctrine, by discovering his glorious essence, and the purity of his worship. The system of divinity was much perfected and advanced by the coming of Christ.

*Doct.* That God was much glorified in Christ. God was much glorified in the creation of the world: Ps. xix. 1, 'The heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' The fabric of the whole world, especially of the heavens, declares his goodness, wisdom, and power. His goodness in communicating being to all creatures, life and motion to some; his wisdom, in making the creatures so various, and so excellent in their general kinds; his power, in educing all things out of the womb of mother nothing. God was glorified in his providences, especially in the great deliverances of the church from Egypt, and from the north; but mostly in Christ, redemption being the most noble work with which he was ever acquainted. It is notable that the Spirit of God in scripture often varieth the expression; at first it was, 'Blessed be God, that made heaven and earth;' then, 'I am the God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt;' then it is, Jer. xvi. 14, 15, 'It shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north;' then it is, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Eph. i. 3. In creation, the wisdom, goodness, and power of God appeared; there was no need of other attributes. In providence, the justice, mercy, and truth of God appears; but these in Christ in a more raised degree. In creation, the object was pure nothing; as there was no help, so no hindrance; but now in redemption, sin hinders; so that here is shown not only goodness, but mercy. In creation we deserve nothing; now we deserve the contrary. There was more wisdom seen in our redemption. The quarrel taken up between justice and mercy. Mercy would pity, and justice could not spare. In redemption there is more power; in creation, man is taken out of the earth; in redemption, out of hell. God's justice opposed redemption. Christ must be sent to satisfy justice, and the Spirit sent to take away unbelief. God made all with a word, he saved all with a plot of grace. In creation, man was made like God; in

redemption, God is made like man. No deliverance like this; Babylon was nothing to hell, and the brick-kilns of Egypt to the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. When God delivered his people out of Babylon, he had to do with creatures; when he delivered them from the wrath to come, he had to do with himself. Justice put in high demands against the compassions of mercy; his own Son must die with the wrath of God, and his own Spirit must be grieved in wrestling with the denials of men. Instead of our own obedience, we have the merit of Christ. Oh! here are depths of mystery and wonder.

*Use.* God loseth no honour by Christ. God hath more glory, and we have larger demesnes of comfort and grace to live upon. All parties are satisfied; we have a better portion; Adam had paradise, we have heaven; God hath more glory; the creatures are more acquainted with the infiniteness of mercy, power, and wisdom. Innocence continued had been a great benefit, but now it is more gracious and free; and it is not the greatness of a benefit that worketh on gratitude so much as the graciousness and freeness of it. Our heaven costeth a greater price, and it is not given to God's friends, but those that were once his enemies.

'On earth.'—This phrase signifieth that Christ did not increase God's essential glory, for that is incapable of any addition; his nature is infinite, and cannot be made more glorious and excellent; but only that Christ manifested his glory more fully to the world.

Observe, Christ came down from heaven to make men glorify God. We had lesson enough before us in creation and providence, but men were stupid. Things to which we are accustomed do not work upon us; in the gospel, God would set his praise to a new tune. God needeth us not, and our respects are due; and yet at what cost is God to purchase the praise of the creature! Blind and unthankful men, to dethrone the great God, and set up every paltry creature! Therefore God sent his Son to revive the notions of the Godhead, and to give us further manifestations of his glory. That was Christ's errand, to glorify him on the earth.

'I have finished the work.'—Christ's work was to manifest the gospel, and to redeem sinners; and how can he say, 'I have finished the work;' seeing the chief work of redemption was yet to come, the offering up himself to divine justice upon the cross? I answer—He had determined to undergo death, and it was now at hand; in the consent and full determination of his will it was done. So upon the cross, just before his death, he crieth, 'It is finished,' John xix. 30. It implieth—

1. The submission, faithfulness, and diligence of Christ; he never left doing of his Father's work till he had brought it to some issue and period, and doth not sue out his own glory till our redemption was first finished: Phil. ii. 7, 'He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,' the accursed death of the cross. Christ carried sinners in his heart to his dying day; he never repented of his bargain: John xiii. 1, 'Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.' When he had most cause to loathe sinners, then he loved them; in his bitter agonies, and the horrors of his cross,

Christ did not repent of his part. Plead the eternal covenant; you have God's oath that he will never repent of salvation this way: Ps. cx. 4, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck.' Christ was not weary of suffering for sinners, and God will not be weary of pardoning them. Again, Christ was faithful in the days of his flesh; he hath lost nothing by going to heaven; he will finish what he hath begun: 1 Thes. v. 24, 'Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it.' This smoking flax will be blown up into a flame. These infant desires are buds of glory; this decay of sin will come to an utter extinction.

2. It noteth the completeness of our redemption: 'All is finished.' When he had set all things at rights, then he departed. Christ hath not left the work imperfect, to be supplied by the merit of our own actions; we are not half purchased: Heb. x. 14, 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' Christ would not have died if the work had not been done; and if there were anything yet to do, he would die again. But Christ hath no more offering to make, nor suffering to endure, but only to behold the fruit of his suffering. He hath not purchased a possible salvation, whose efficacy dependeth on the will of the creature, nor the remission of some sins, and left others upon our score; nor made purchase of grace for a small time, but 'perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' Popish satisfaction, the loose, possible, pendulous salvation of Arminians, and the doctrine of the apostasy of the saints, are all doctrines prejudicial to the full merit of Christ. It is all finished; there is enough done to glorify God and save the creature; justice could demand no more for all engagements. Christ is not ashamed to plead his right at the bar of justice, and to avouch his work before the tribunal of God. This, 'it is finished,' is like Christ's seal to the charter of grace. Now take it, and much good may it do you! Oh! that we could rest satisfied with the merit of Christ, as divine justice is satisfied. What should trouble the creature when Christ hath entered his plea, 'Father, it is finished'? there is enough done. Christ hath no more to do but to sit at the right hand of God, and to rejoice in the welfare of the saints; there remaining nothing for us but to make our claim, and to live in joy and thankfulness. Christ did not compound, but pay the uttermost farthing: Rom. viii. 1, *οὐδεν κατάκριμα*, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;' there is not one curse left. When Israel was brought out of Egypt, it is said, 'A dog shall not move his tongue against you,' Exod. xi. 7. Neither the law, nor wrath, nor conscience, nor Satan hath anything to do with you; the prison is broken up, the book cancelled, the bill nailed to Christ's cross, that it may never be put in suit again. The devil may trouble you for your exercise, but bear it with comfort and patience; you have an advocate as well as an accuser. Oh! that we had a faith suitable to the height of these mysteries, that we could behold the salvation of God in our serious thoughts, and echo to Christ's cry, 'It is finished, it is finished!' It is not a full-grown faith till we break out into some triumph; the child may now play upon the cockatrice's hole. I am much indebted to justice, but Christ hath paid all.

'Which thou hast given me to do,' *δέδωκας*; it is the same word

with that, ver. 2, 'Thou hast given him power over all flesh;' and now, 'the work which thou hast given me to do.' God, that gave him his power, gave him his work.

Augustine interpreteth the word somewhat nicely, *non ait, jussisti, sed dedisti; ibi commendatur evidens gratia; quid enim habuit quod non accepit, etiam in unigenito, humana natura?* If you allow this interpretation, as certainly this rigour of the word will bear it, then we may—

1. Observe that the privileges of the human nature of Christ are by gift. Whatever the manhood of Christ was advanced to, by dwelling with God in a personal union, it was by the mere grace of God. The apostle referreth it to the Father's pleasure: Col. i. 19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' God would make free grace appear in none so much as in our head, and set out Christ as the example of his gracious election. Whatsoever honour the human nature of Christ had, it had it by grace and gift, it was chosen to this honour. Certainly we should ascribe all to grace, if Christ himself did, if he accounted it a gift, that his human nature was taken into the honour of the mediatory office.

2. We may observe, that work itself is a gift. Christ speaketh thus of the work of the mediatory office, which was sad work, labouring in the fire, in the fire of the divine wrath and displeasure. Elsewhere it is said of our faith and suffering, Phil. i. 23, 'Unto you it is given, on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.' It is given of grace; we should count duty an honour, and service a privilege: Hosea viii. 12, 'I have written to him the great things of my law;' *honorabilia legis meæ.*

But I rather interpret it of giving in charge: Thou hast put this office upon me of redeeming mankind, and this work I have done.

The note from hence is—

Observe that Christ had his work appointed him by God: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' It is a great condescension of Christ that he would come under a law, and as a servant take work upon his own shoulders. The apostle saith he came 'in the form of a servant,' Phil. ii. 7. He was a prince by birth, yet he came as a servant of the divine decrees. He spake of commandments that he received from the Father. He wholly devoted himself to his Father's will and man's benefit. Oh! admire the proceedings between the Father and the Son, by way of command and promise. The transactions of heaven are put into a federal form, and as our surety he is to receive a law.

Secondly, Let us consider the words in the moral sense and accommodation, and then in this plea which Christ maketh when he was about to die we may observe these circumstances:—

1. What he says, *I have glorified thee.*
2. Where, *upon earth.*
3. How, *I have finished the work thou hast given me to do.*

*Doct.* They that would die comfortably should make this their great care, to glorify God upon the earth, and finish the work which he hath given them to do in their several stations and relations.

Here I shall show—(1.) What it is to glorify God upon the earth,

&c.; (2.) Why this should be our chief care; (3.) That when we come to die, this will be our comfort.

*First*, What it is to glorify God upon earth, &c. Here—

1. *Quid?* What it is to glorify God.
2. *Ubi?* Upon the earth.
3. *Quomodo?* By finishing the work which he hath given us to do.

First, *Quid?* 'I have glorified thee.' God is glorified actively and passively.

1. Passively, which noteth the event, which cometh to pass by the wisdom and overruling of God's providence; and so all things shall at length glorify God in the event: Ps. lxxvi. 10, 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee.' In the Septuagint it is ἑορτάσεται, shall keep holy day: the fierce endeavours of his enemies do but make his glory the more excellent. So our lie and unrighteousness may commend the truth and mercy of God, Rom. iii. 5, 7. Pharaoh was raised up for God's glory; as the valour of a king is discovered by the rebellion of his subjects, the skill of the physician by the desperateness of the disease. But this is no thanks to them, but to God's wise and powerful government; it will not lessen their fault and punishment. A wicked man may say in the end, I have been an occasion that God hath been glorified.

2. Actively we glorify God when we set ourselves to this work, and make this our end and scope, that we may be to the praise of his glorious grace. Some learn their school-fellows' lessons better than their own; they would have God glorified, but look to others rather than to themselves. We would have God glorified, but do not glorify him, are more careful of events than duties. We are ready to ask, 'Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name?' but do not consider our own engagement, 'How shall I glorify God?'

But what is it thus actively to glorify God?

*Ans.* [1.] To acknowledge his excellency upon all occasions: Ps. l. 23, 'He that offereth praise glorifieth me.' Praising him for his excellencies, and declaring the glory of his attributes and works, is one way of glorifying him. God's glorifying of us is effective and creative, ours declarative and manifestive: 'He calleth the things that are not as though they were;' but we do no more but say things to be what they are, and that far below what they are. We declare God to be what he is, and are a kind of witnesses to his glory. He is the efficient and sole cause of all the good that we have and are, and bestows something upon us which was not before. This declaring the glory of God is expressed by two words, *praise* and *blessing:* Ps. cxlv. 10, 'All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord: thy saints shall bless thee.' Praise referreth to his excellency, blessing to his benefits; both must be done seriously and frequently, and with a deep impression of his goodness and excellency upon our hearts. Every address we make to God tendeth to this, that God may have his due praise understandingly and affectionately ascribed to him. Repentance and broken-hearted confession giveth him the praise of his justice; the exercise of faith, and running for refuge to the grace of the gospel, doth glorify his mercy; thanksgiving for benefits received, his benignity and goodness petitioning for grace, his holiness.

[2.] By a perfect subjection and resignation of our wills to his will. It is work glorifieth God more than words. Verbal praises, if destitute of these, they are but an empty prattle: Job xxxi. 20, 'If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep.' So 2 Thes. i. 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 you in him.' Many speak good words of God, but their hearts are not subject to him, as the devil carried Christ to the top of a high mountain, but with an intent to bid him throw himself down again. So many think to exalt God in their professions and praises, but they dishonour him in their lives. God is most glorified in the creatures' obedience, and submission to his laws or providence.

(1.) To his laws, when we study to please him in all things: Col. i. 10, 'That ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.' It is a great honour to a master when his servants are so ready and willing to please him: 'I say to one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh; to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it,' Mat. viii. 9. It is said of Abraham, God called him to his foot, Isa xli. 2. He went to and fro at his command. If God said, Go out of thy country, Abraham obeyed.

(2.) To his providence. It is an honour to him when we are contented to be what God will have us to be, and can prefer his glory before our own ease, his honour before our plenty. And so it was with Christ: John xii. 27, 28, 'Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name;' that satisfied him, so God might be glorified. So Paul, Phil. i. 20, 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.' As a traveller takes the way as he findeth it, so it will lead him to his journey's end. We must be as a die in the hands of providence; whether the cast prove high or low, we are still upon the square.

3. We glorify God rather by entertaining the impressions of his glory upon us than by communicating any kind of glory to him; and so we glorify him when we grow most like him, when we show forth his virtues: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' The children of God are a glass and image, wherein the perfections of God are visibly held forth; his perfections are stamped upon us, that all that see us may see God in us. But alas! most of us are but dim glasses, show forth little of God to the world. Thus the creatures glorify God objectively; there is somewhat of the wisdom, goodness, and power of God stamped upon them, somewhat of God to be seen in every thing which he hath made. So man much more. There are *vestigia Dei*, the footsteps of God in the creatures; but *similitudo et imago Dei*, the likeness and image of God in man, in his natural excellences, much more in the new creature, εἰς τὸ εἶναι, 'that we may be to his praise,' Eph. i. 12. There is more of God engraven

on us when a true spirit of wisdom, justice, holiness, truth, love prevaileth upon our hearts, and runneth through all our operations; when we live as such as converse with the great fountain of goodness and holiness. A christian's life is a hymn to God; his circumspect walking proclaimeth the wisdom of God; his awefulness and watchfulness against sin proclaimeth the majesty of God; his cheerful and ready obedience under the hardest sufferings proclaimeth the goodness of God; his purity and strictness, the holiness of God; the impression and stamp of all the letters of God's glorious name is imprinted upon his heart and life. A carnal christian polluteth his honour and profaneth his name: Ezek. xxxvi. 20, 'And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land.' But how can God be polluted by us? As a man that lusteth after a woman hath committed adultery with her in his heart, while she is spotless and undefiled, Mat. v. 28. Carnal christians are a scandal to religion; they are called christians *in opprobrium Christi.* Men judge by what is visible and sensible, and think of God by his worshippers, by those who profess themselves to be a people near and dear to him.

4. By that which is an immediate consequence of the former, by an exemplary conversation, when we do those things which tend to the honour of God's name, and to bring him into request in the world: 1 Peter ii. 12, 'Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you, as of evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation;' Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Our holiness must be shown forth for edification, not for ostentation; not for our glory, but the glory of our heavenly Father. It is the fruitful christian bringeth most honour to God: John xv. 8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' Glorifying God is not a few transient thoughts of God and his glory, or a few cold speeches of his excellences and benefits; this is not the great end for which we were made, and new made; but that we might be fruitful in all holiness, and show forth those impressions which God hath left upon us. In the impression we are passive; in showing it forth, active.

5. When we are active for his interest in the world. Our Lord took notice of it in his disciples: John xvii. 7, 'Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.' If we are agents for his kingdom, he will be our advocate in heaven. This is the method of the Lord's prayer, 'Hallowed be thy name;' and then, 'Thy kingdom come.' This is the first means of promoting the great end. Jesus Christ himself telleth us this was the end of his coming into the world: John xviii. 37, 'To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.' It belonged to him in a more especial way, as the great prophet of the church; he came out of the bosom of God to reveal the secrets of God; and for the same end we all came into the world: Isa. xliii. 10, 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom

I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he.' They that felt the comfortable effects of his promises and his truth can best witness for him. A report of a report is little valued; we are all to witness to God, by entertaining it in our hearts and showing forth the fruit of it in our lives; this is a witness to an unbelieving and careless world: John iii. 33, 'He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true;' Heb. xi. 7, 'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world;' Phil. ii. 15, 'That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.' When you are diligent in holiness, patient and joyful under the cross, full of hope and comfort in great straits, meek, self-denying, mortified, you sanctify God in the eyes of others; you propagate the faith by an open profession: Mat. xi. 19, 'Wisdom is justified of her children.' When we suffer for it in times of great danger, and seal it with our blood, it is a great glory to God: John xxi. 19, 'This said he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.' It is an honour to God when, in the midst of temptations and discouragements, we are not ashamed of his ways.

6. By doing that work which he hath given us to do. But what is that work which he hath given us to do? *Ans.*—(1.) The duty of our relations; (2.) The duty of our vocations and callings.

[1.] The duty of our particular relations. They that are not good in their relations are nowhere good. This is a rule, that whatsoever we are, we must be that to God. A heathen could say, *Si essem luscinia, canerem ut luscinia*, &c.—If I were a lark, I would soar as a lark; if a nightingale, I would sing as a nightingale. As a man, I should praise God; as such a man, in such a relation, still I should glorify God in the condition in which he hath set me. If poor, I glorify God as a poor man, by my diligence, patience, innocence, contentedness; if rich, I glorify God by a humble mind; if well, I glorify God by my health; if sick, by meekness under his hand; if a magistrate, by my zeal, improving all advantages of service, Neh. i. 11. If a minister, by my watchfulness; if a tradesman, by my righteousness. From the king to the scullion, all are to work for God; every man is sent into the world to act that part in the world which the great Master of the scenes hath appointed to him: Titus ii. 10, 'That ye may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.' As to husband and wife: Prov. xviii. 22, 'He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.' God expecteth that, in the catalogue of our mercies, we should bless God for our relations. Our relations are the sphere of our activity.

[2.] The duty of our vocation and calling. Every christian hath his way and place, some work which God gave him. But of this see more by and by.

7. When God is the great scope and end of our lives and actions; of all that we are, all that we do, all that we desire; God must be the ultimate end. In our ordinary actions: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether ye

eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Not offer a meat-offering and drink-offering to appetite. The apostle instances in these things, partly because in these natural actions we are most apt to offend. Such is the unthankful nature of man, that we forget God when he remembers us most; when he is most present in the fruits of his bounty, then he is usually banished from our hearts. Corruptions are most stirring when we are warmed with the liberal use of the creatures. Job sacrificed when his children feasted: Job i. 5, 'And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.' The devil bringeth his dish usually to our tables, disdain of the slenderness of our provision, quarrels, contentions, censures of the people of God, &c. Partly for greater emphasis. If in common actions we are to design God's glory as our end, much more in such actions as we make a business of. So in acts of grace; the creature cannot be the ultimate end, and God's goodness only a means thereunto. There is a great deal of learned folly and atheism vented, branding those as mystical divines that call upon men to mind things as God minded them, who aims at his own glory as his ultimate end, Eph. i. 6. They say man's ultimate end is his own happiness. Some cry up the principle of self-love. Then belike all the goodness of God is to be estimated by the felicity of man; this were to make man his own idol, and to measure all good and evil by his own interest. The fulfilling of God's will and promoting his glory should be the end of all obedience; otherwise we make not the creature for God, but God for the creature, and so make the creature better than God, as being the ultimate end of God himself, at least to us, as if the highest end of all his goodness were the felicity of the creature.

Secondly, *Ubi*? Where? On earth, 'I have glorified thee on earth.'

1. Where so few mind God's glory, where all seek their own things, their own honour, their own profit, their own personal contentment. A christian should walk in counter-motion to the generality of the world: Phil. iii. 20, 'But our conversation is in heaven;' Mal. iv. 1, 2, 'The day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, &c. But unto you that fear the Lord,' &c. He is an exception from the common use and practice of mankind.

2. On earth, which is the place of our trial, where there are so many difficulties and temptations to divert us. We must glorify him on earth if we expect that he should glorify us in heaven. Many expect to glorify God in heaven, but take no care to glorify God here on earth. The saints in heaven glorify God, but without any difficulty, strife, and danger, it costs them no shame, no pain, no trouble, no loss of life or limb; but here where the danger is, there is the duty and trial: Mat. x. 32, 'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.' Christ will remember them and their labour of love. When he cometh in his majesty, he is not ashamed of his poor clients and friends; these

owned me in my abasement, and I will own them in my exalted state. You cannot honour Christ so much as he will honour you: Mat. xix. 28, 'Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Ye who are here exposed to sorrows and sufferings for his sake. It is fond to think of glorifying God in heaven, and singing hallelujahs to his praise, when thou dost not stand to his truth on earth. *Esse bonum facile est, ubi quid vetat est remotum.* The trial of duty is self-denial.

Thirdly, *Quomodo?* 'I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do.'

1. It is work that glorifieth God; it is not words and empty praises, but a holy conversation: Job xxxi. 20, 'If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;' Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;' Ps. l. 23, 'Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God;' John xv. 8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples.' A godly fruitful life is the real honour, the other is but empty prattle. It is our work and actions, not our bare profession only; you may pollute God else, Ezek. xxxvi. 20, you may exalt him in profession, and pollute him in conversation. Many christians' lives are the scandal of their religion. Again, it is not wishes that glorify God, but practice. We would have God glorified, but do not glorify him. We would have him glorified passively, but do not glorify him actively, and are more careful of events than duties. We are troubled about God's name, and are more ready to ask, 'Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name?' than, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' A christian should rather be troubled about what he should do, than about what he should suffer.

2. That every man hath his work. Life was given to us for somewhat; not merely that we might fill up the number of things in the world, as stones and rubbish: not to grow in stature; so life was given to the plants, that they might grow bulky and increase in stature: nor merely to taste pleasures; that is the happiness of the beasts, to enjoy pleasures without remorse. God gave men higher faculties of reason and conscience, to manage some work and business for the glory of God, and his own eternal happiness. The rule is general, that all Adam's sons are 'to eat their bread in the sweat of their brows,' to follow some honest labour and vocation. Adam's two sons were heirs-apparent of the world, the one employed in tillage, the other in pasturage. The world was never made to be a hive for drones and idle ones. It is true there is a difference between callings; some live by manual labours, others by more noble employments, as magistrates, ministers, who study for public good. Manual labour is not required of all, because it is a thing that is not required *propter se*, as simply good and necessary, but *propter aliud*, as for maintenance and support of life, to ease others, and to supply the uses of charity: Eph. iv. 28, 'Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that

needeth.' When the ends of labour cannot otherwise be obtained, then handy labour is required. All others are 'to serve their generation according to the will of God,' Acts xiii. 26. As instruments of providence to serve the common good, to promote the welfare of their family, neighbourhood, country. Those that spend their whole life in eating, drinking, sporting, and sleeping, are guilty of brutish idleness, one of Sodom's sins: Ezek. xvi. 49, 'Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters.' And therefore those that are freed from service and handy labour are not freed from work and business. If any man must be allowed to be idle, then one member must be lost in the body politic. A man is born a member of some society, family, or city, and is to seek the good of it: he is *ζῶον πολίτικον*. We see in the body natural there is no member but hath its function and use, whereby it becometh serviceable to the whole. All have not the same office, that would make a confusion; but all have their use, either as an eye, or as a hand, or as a tooth. So in the body politic, no member may be useless, they must have one function or another wherein to employ themselves, otherwise they are unprofitable burdens of the earth. Again, every man is more or less intrusted with a gift, which he is to exercise and improve for the good of others, and at the day of judgment he is to give up his accounts; as you may learn from the parable of the talents, Mat. xxv. If he hath but one talent, it must not be hidden in a napkin. Well, then, if every man hath a gift, for which he is accountable to God, he must have a calling: 1 Cor. vii. 17, 'But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every man, so let him walk,' and choose his state of life. Besides, a calling is necessary to prevent the mischiefs of idleness, and those inconveniences that follow men not employed. Standing pools are apt to putrify, but running waters are sweetest. An idle man is a burden to himself, a prey to Satan, a grief to the Spirit of God, a mischief to others. He is a burden to himself, for he knoweth not what to do with his time; in the morning he says, Would God it were evening; and in the evening, Would God it were morning. The mind is like a mill; when it wanteth corn, it grindeth upon itself. He is a prey to Satan: 'The house is emptied, swept, and garnished; and then he goeth and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there,' Mat. xii. 44, 45. The devil findeth them at leisure. When David was idle on the terrace, he was tempted to adultery. Birds are seldom taken in their flight, but when they pitch and rest on the ground. He is a grief to God's Spirit: Eph. iv. 28, 'Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth;' with ver. 30, 'And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.' Idle men quench the vigor of their natural gifts, and lose those abilities that are bestowed on them. He is a mischief to others: 2 Thes. iii. 11, 'For we hear there are some that walk among you disorderly, *μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους*, working not at all, but are busybodies.' They that do nothing will do too much; no work maketh way for ill work, or for censure and busy inquisition into other men's actions, and so they prove the firebrands of

contention and unneighbourly quarrels. There must be a calling, and a work to do.

3. This work is given them by God. He appointeth to every one his task, and will be glorified by no works but what are by himself assigned to them in their station:—(1.) By his word; (2.) By his providence.

[1.] By his word. There is no calling and course of service good but what is agreeable to the word of God: Ps. cxix. 105, 'Thy word is a light unto my feet and a lamp unto my paths.' We must not settle in a sinful course of life. Men may tolerate evil callings, but God never appointed them. As for instance, if any calling and course of life be against piety, temperance, justice, it is against the word: Titus ii. 12, 'Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' Against piety; as to be an idolatrous priest, or to make shrines for idols, which was Demetrius his calling in Ephesus; and Tertullian, in his book *De Idololatria*, showeth this was the practice of many christians to get their livings by making statues and images and other ornaments to sell to heathen idolaters. Against justice; as piracy, usury, and other oppressive courses. Against sobriety; as such callings as merely tend to feed the luxury, pride, and vanity of men, so mountebanks, comedians, stage-players. It were endless to instance in all. In general, the calling must be good and lawful.

[2.] By his providence, which ruleth in everything that falleth out, even to the least matters; especially hath the Lord a great hand in callings, and appointing to every one his estate and condition of life. In paradise, God set Adam his work to dress and prune the trees of the garden, Gen. ii. 15; and still he doth not only give abilities and special inclinations, but also disposeth of the education of the parent, and the passages of men's lives to bring them to such a calling: Isa. liv. 16, 'Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work.' Common trades and crafts are from the Lord. The heathens had a several god for every several trade, as the Papists now have a tutelar saint; but they rob God of his honour, he giveth the faculty and the blessing: Isa. xxviii, 26–29, 'His God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him,' &c. He giveth the state, and appointeth the work. Your particular estate and condition of life doth not come by chance, or by the care, will, and pleasure of man, but the ordination of God, without whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground. In the higher callings of ministry and magistracy there is a greater solemnity.

But how should a man glorify God in his place and station wherein God hath set him?

*Ans.* [1.] Be content with it, God is the master of the scenes, and appoints which part to act. We must not prescribe to providence, at what rate we will be maintained, nor what we will do, but keep within the bounds of our place. If you do anything that is not within the compass of your calling, you can have no warrant that it pleaseth God. Christ would not intermeddle out of his calling: Luke xii. 14, 'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?' Uzzah's putting his hand to the ark cost him dear. If troubles arise, we cannot

suffer them comfortably, we are out of God's way. Most of our late mischiefs came from invading callings; as there are confusions in nature when elements are out of their places. God is glorified and served in a lower calling as well as in a higher; poor servants may 'adorn the gospel of God our Saviour in all things,' Titus ii. 10.

*Ans.* [2.] With patience digest the inconveniences of your calling. Affliction attendeth every state and condition of life, but we must go through cheerfully when in our way and place.

4. This work must be finished and perfected; we must be working till God call us off by death or irresistible providences. We must persist, hold out in God's way without defection: Rev. ii. 10, 'Be thou faithful unto the death; I will give thee a crown of life.' Get the gift of perseverance; happy are they that have passed such a tempestuous sea with safety. He was a foolish builder who laid the foundation of a stately fabric and was not able to finish it. Oh! when this is done, we may resign up ourselves to the mercy of God: 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing.' It is an excellent thing, after such a dangerous voyage, to come safe to shore. How sweet is it to enjoy our past lives, and yield up our spirits to God, saying, Lord, I have made it my study to glorify thee: Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.' Other souls are taken away, but yours are resigned.

Secondly, Why this should be our great care?

1. This is the end why all creatures were made: Rom. xi. 36, 'For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.' When God did make the world, he did not throw it out of his hands, and leave it alone to subsist of itself, as a thing that had no further relation to him; but so guides it and governs it, that as the first production and continued subsistence of all things is from himself, so the ultimate resolution and tendency of all things might be to him. The whole world is a circle, and all the motions of the creatures are circular; they end where they began; as rivers run to the place whence they came. All that issueth out of the fountain of his goodness must fall again into the ocean of his glory, but man especially. If God had made us to live for ourselves, it were lawful; but Prov. xvi. 4, 'The Lord hath made all things for himself;' all things are made ultimately and terminatively for God, but man immediately. Creatures are made immediately for us, and submit to our dominion, or are created for our use.

2. From God's right and interest in us: Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 'For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's;' we are his, and therefore for him. All that you have is God's, and by giving it to you he did not divest himself of his own right. God scatters his benefits as the husbandman doth his seed, that he may receive a crop.

His glory is not due to another; he made us out of nothing, and bought us: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, 'Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' If we had anything our own, we might use it for ourselves.

3. We shall be called to an account: Luke xix. 23, 'Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required my own with usury?' We must give an account, what honour God hath had by us in our relations, as magistrates, ministers, masters of families, servants, husbands, wives, parents, children; what honour by our estates, relations, &c. We are obliged so deeply by preceding benefits, that if there were no account to be given, we should be careful to use all things for his glory. Oh! but much more when there will be so strict and severe an account: 'The Lord of those servants will reckon with them.' What we enjoy is not *donum*, a gift, but *talentum*, a talent, to be improved for our master's use. Beasts are liable to no account, because they have not reason and conscience, as man hath, and are merely ruled with a rod of iron: they are to glorify God passively; but we are left to our choice, and therefore must give an account.

4. Because of the great benefit that cometh to us by it. God noteth it, and rewards it. He noteth it: John xvii. 10, 'And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.' Our Redeemer speaketh well of us behind our backs, and maketh a good report of us in heaven. And he rewards it in the day of his royalty. Christ will not be ashamed of his poor servants: Mat. xix. 28, 'Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

5. The end ennobleth a man, and still the man is according to his end. Low spirits have low designs, and a base end is pursued by base actions: Mat. vi. 22, 23, 'The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.' Men are properly such as the end that they aim at; he that pursueth any worldly interest or earthly thing, as his end is earthly, he becometh himself earthly; the more the soul directeth itself to God, the more God-like; their inclinations are above the base things of this world: Ps. xvii. 14, 'From men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasures.' The noblest soul is for the noblest object; others do but provide for the flesh, they drive on no greater trade; they may talk of heaven, wish for it rather than hell, when they can live no longer, but their lives are only for feathering a nest, which will quickly be pulled down. To rule a kingdom is a nobler design than to play with children for pins or nuts. A man that designeth only to pamper his body, to live in all plenty, what a poor life doth he lead! A beast can eat, drink, sleep, as they do: Phil. iii. 19, 20, 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things; but our conversation is in heaven,' &c. They make a great pother in the world about a brutish life, which will soon have an end.

6. God will have his glory upon you, if not from you, for he is resolved not to be a loser by the creature: Prov. xvi. 4, 'The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil;' Lev. x. 3, 'This is that which the Lord saith, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' He will have the glory of his justice in the day of wrath and evil, if not the glory of his grace in the day of his patience and mercy. Therefore either he will be glorified by you, or upon you. Some give him glory in an active, some in a passive way. If he have not the glory of his command, which is our duty, he will have the glory of his providence in the event. And how sad that will be, judge ye, when you serve for no other use but to set forth the glory of his vindictive justice.

7. It must be our last end, which must fix men's mind, which otherwise will be tossed up and down with perpetual uncertainty, and distracted by a multiplicity of ends and objects, that it cannot continue in any composed and settled frame: Ps. lxxxvi. 11, 'Unite my heart to fear thy name;' James i. 8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.' A divided mind causes an uncertain life, no one part of our lives will agree with another, the whole not being firmly knit by the power of some last end running through all.

Thirdly, That when we come to die, this will be our comfort, Christ hath left us a pattern here. And Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.' Oh! the comfort of a well-spent life to a dying christian! 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that shall love his appearing.' Then a man can run over his life with comfort, when he hath been careful for the matter and end to glorify God.

*Use.* Oh! then, consider two things:—

1. The end why you were sent into the world. Why do I live here? Most men live like beasts, eat, drink, sleep, and die; never sit down, and in good earnest consider, Why was I born? why did I come into the world? and so their lives are but a mere lottery; the fancies they are governed by are jumbled together by chance; if they light of a good hit, it is a casual thing; they live at peradventure, and then no wonder they walk at random.

2. What we shall do when our lives are at an end, and we are to appear before God's tribunal. Oh! that you would consider this, now you are in your health and strength: Deut. xxxii. 29, 'Oh! that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!' Much of wisdom lieth in considering the end of things. We are hastening apace into the other world, it is good to consider what we have to say when we come to die: Job xxxi. 14, 'What shall I then do, when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?' viz., at the latter end, when I am immediately to appear before God, when he summons us by sickness into his presence, and the devil is more busy at such a time to tempt and trouble us, and all

other comforts fail, and are as unsavoury as the white of an egg, then this will notably embolden our hearts: 2 Cor. i. 12, 'For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.' Oh! will this comfort you, that you have sported and gamed away your precious time, that you have fared of the best, lived in pomp and honour? Oh! no; but this, I have made conscience of honouring and glorifying God, of being faithful in my place, in promoting the common good there, where God hath cast my lot. Oh! then, go on, your comfort will increase. If hitherto you have been pleasing the flesh, idling and wantoning away your precious time, say, 1 Peter iv. 3, 'For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.' You have too long walked contrary to the end of your creation, in dishonouring God, and destroying your own souls.

## SERMON VI.

*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*—JOHN XVII. 5.

JESUS CHRIST, as God-man, in this chapter, prayeth to God. His prayer is first for himself, and then for his members. In all things he is to have the pre-eminence, as being infinitely of more worth and desert than all. His prayer for himself is to be glorified, which he enforceth and explaineth. He enforceth it by sundry reasons; the last that he pleaded was, that he had done his work, and therefore, according to the covenant and agreement that was between them, he sueth out his wages. In the suit, he explaineth how he would be glorified: 'I have glorified thee on earth, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.'

For the opening of this request, I shall propound several questions:—

1. According to what nature this is spoken?
2. What is this glory?
3. Why he seeketh of the Father, the first person? Could he not glorify himself?
4. Why is he so earnest for his own glory?

*Quest.* 1. According to what nature is this spoken, the divine or human? The reason of the doubt is, because to the divine nature nothing could be given, and the human nature cannot be said to have this glory which Christ had before the world was, for then it would remain no longer human.

I answer—The request is made in the person of the mediator. God-man is distinctly and separately to be applied to neither nature, but to the whole person. The person of Christ was hitherto beclouded during the time of his humiliation; now he desireth to be glorified, that is, that the divine majesty may shine forth in the person of the mediator; and that

laying aside the form of a servant, he might return to the form of God, and that he might appear in his whole person, the human nature not excluded, as he was before the foundation of the world.

*Quest.* 2. The next question is, What is this glorifying?

I answer—There is a twofold glorifying—(1.) *Per gloriæ manifestationem;* (2.) *Per gloriæ collationem;* by way of manifestation, and by way of gift and collation. Both are intended; the manifestation concerneth both natures, and the collation or gift only the human nature. It must be understood according to the properties of each nature. *Quæ in tempore Christo dantur, secundum humanam naturam dantur.*

1. For the divine nature, Christ prayeth that it may be glorified by the clearer manifestation of his godhead, for that cannot receive any intrinsecal improvement or glory. It is *ἀυτάρκης καὶ ἀμετάθητος;* but so far as it was humbled, so far it was glorified. Now Christ humbled himself, not by putting off his divine glory, but by suffering it to be overshadowed; as the light of a candle in a dark lanthorn, there is a light in it, but you cannot see it till the cover be taken away. Now Christ desireth that the cover and veil may be taken away. His glory was not lessened, but beclouded; the divine essence that was hidden under the weakness of the flesh was now to be manifested and made known to all men. But you will say, it is *παρὰ πατρὶ*, not *παρὰ ἀνθρώποις*, he desireth the glory he had with him might be restored, not the glory with men. I answer—

[1.] The glory which he had with him may be more clearly manifested to the world; he had it with the Father, yet beggeth it of the Father.

[2.] I answer again—There is somewhat more than manifestation in the world, for he saith, *παρὰ σεαυτῷ*, 'with thyself.' The Father was glorified by the Son, *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, 'upon the earth;' but now 'glorify thou me,' *παρὰ σεαυτῷ*, 'with thyself.' So John xiii. 32, 'If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself,' or with himself. So that he beggeth a full use and exercise of the divine power, from which he had abstained in the time of his humiliation and abasement. Now that time being finished, he prayeth that it may be restored, that he may be exalted in the full manifestation and exercise of his divine power; that his whole person might be exalted again at the right hand of majesty.

2. For his human nature. The flesh was not yet glorified, and taken up to God's right hand, that is, exalted to the fruition of eternal glory, as afterwards it was above all creatures in heaven and earth. The human nature was to have as much glory as it is capable of, by being united to the divine person, immortality, power, clarity, knowledge, grace; but not to have the properties of the divine nature really transfused, for then it would no longer be finite, nor remain a creature. It was to be raised to the full fruition of the glory of the divine nature, and freed from those infirmities to which, by the exigence of Christ's office upon earth, it was subjected. Thus what this glorifying is; but I shall speak more fully to it by and by.

*Quest.* 3. Why he seeketh it of the Father? Could he not glorify himself, and exalt his own person and human nature?

I answer—He could, but would not.

1. The Father is the fountain of the divinity; he is first in order, and so all such actions are ascribed to him. However, to show the unity of essence, Christ is said to do it as well as the Father: John v. 19, 'What things soever the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise.' The Father is said to 'sanctify the Son,' John x. 36, and the Son is said to 'sanctify himself.' The Father raiseth the Son from the dead. Eph. i. 10; and Christ saith, John ii. 19, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.' The Father placeth the Son at his right hand, Eph. i. 20; and the Son is said to 'sit down at the right hand of the Father.' However, because Christ came into the world to glorify the Father, and to show him to be the original and fountain of the divinity, therefore he saith, 'Father, glorify thou me with thyself.'

2. Because the Father is to be looked upon as judge and chief in the work of redemption. Man is the debtor, Christ the surety, and the Father the judge, before whose tribunal satisfaction is to be made. Therefore God the Father, after the price and ransom was paid, was to give Christ power and leave to rise from the dead, to ascend into heaven, and to govern and judge the world. And yet he raised himself by his own power. There is *potestas* and *potentia*, δύναμις and ἐξουσία, authority, leave, and power. Christ had power in himself, but he had leave from the Father: John x. 18, 'I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.' *Potentiam resurgendi Christus habet a seipso, sed potestatem a patre.* In this whole business, Christ is to be considered as the surety, that took our whole business upon himself, and rendered himself liable to the judgment of God so long, till the Father should declare himself to be satisfied, and so dismiss Christ from punishment. After full satisfaction, he was to raise him from the power of death, and to glorify him. As the Father delivered him for us, so the Father dismissed him, raised him again; he was not to break prison, but honourably to be brought out and rewarded by the judge.

*Quest.* 4. Why is he so earnest for his own glory?

I answer—All Christ's mediatory acts were for our sake, and so are his prayers.

1. To comfort his disciples against his sufferings; they were dejected, and therefore Christ in their hearing prayeth for divine glory: John xvii. 13, 'And these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.' There is not a more excellent way of gaining upon others than to commend them to God in prayer for that which they desire.

2. To give the world an instruction, that suffering for God is the highway to glory: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'Our light affliction, that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' as a necessary antecedent. We may suffer more for men than they are able to recompense, but there is nothing lost for God: 2 Peter i. 11, 'An entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' The whole scriptures witness the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; according to the measure of afflictions, there shall be a suit-

able weight of glory. There are notable passages in the story of Christ, to show the coupling of the cross and glory. The same disciples, Peter, James, and John, were the witnesses of his agonies, Mat. xxvi. 37, and of his transfiguration, Mat. xvii. 1. So where Christ began his passion there he began his ascension: Luke xxii. 39, 'He went out to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him;' and Acts i. 12, he ascended from Mount Olivet.

3. For the advantage of his members. Christ knew it could not go well with the church unless it went well with himself; it was for our profit. The holy ointment was first poured on the head of the high priest, then on his members, Ps. cxxxiii. 3. His glory and grace is an argument of ours. He is endowed with the Spirit without measure, that we might have an unction from the Holy One. We are glorified with him, and are said to ascend with him: Eph. ii. 6, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Christ's glorification is a pledge of ours; he is gone thither as our forerunner, to seize on heaven in our right: Heb. vi. 20, 'Whither our forerunner is for us entered;' and to 'prepare a place for us,' John xiv. 2. In heaven he is at God's right hand, and can procure it for us, and administereth and governeth the world for our good. He is in a greater capacity to do us good. He is our intercessor and the world's governor; all things necessary to salvation can better be despatched by his intercession and power.

These things premised, the words will be easily opened.

'Father, glorify thou me with thine own self;' that is, suffer me to return to the glory which I had in common with thee in the divine nature, by the resurrection of my body, ascension, and sitting down at thy right hand. *Παρὰ σεαυτῷ*, is opposed to *ἐδόξασα σὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, it is with thy self: John xiii. 31, 32, 'Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.' God was glorified by Christ as a servant, with an extrinsic glory in the view of the world. And now Christ prays to be glorified in or with the Father himself, with his own proper essential glory, the Godhead being restored to its full use and exercise, and the humanity being raised to the full fruition of the comfort of it.

'Which I had with thee before the world was.'—Grotius and others say, *Non reali possessione, sed divina prædestinatione*, that is, by thy decree, in thy purpose and predestination. But that is not all, because he speaketh here of that infinite and essential glory, which is one and the same in all the persons, and so Christ had it as God blessed for ever; and Christ having abstained from the use and exercise of it in a way proper to itself, now craveth a restitution.

The points are:—

*Doct.* 1. That Christ is God, true God, and hath an eternal co-equal glory with the Father before the world was. Before the world there was nothing but the eternal infinite essence, that was common to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Socinians seem to grant that he is of God, but not eternal God by nature; but here is a clear proof, 'Which I had with thee before the world was.'

*Doct.* 2. We may plead to God his own promises in deep and weighty

cases: 'Put me in remembrance,' saith God, Isa. xliii. 26; as when death approacheth, or difficulties come upon us. Christ himself takes this course.

*Doct.* 3. The ground of all sound hope is what was done before all worlds. Christ had glory actually, and we have a grant of it: 2 Tim. i. 9, 'According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.' There was a grant of heaven and grace, and Christ received it for us. So Titus i. 2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, hath promised before the world began.' There was a solemn promise, which Christ received on our behalf. The frame of grace was ancient; God sealed up a large charter, and indented with Christ before ever there were any men in the world. Let us not look for our happiness in this world; our comforts do not depend upon the standing of it; when the world is no more, you may be happy.

*Doct.* 4. The chief point which I shall handle is, that Christ, in the economy or dispensation of grace, was reduced to such an exigence that he needeth to pray to be glorified: 'Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' It is a matter of weighty consideration that Christ should pray his Father to bestow on him the glory which he wanted.

But how could Christ want glory, who was God-man in one person? To clear this, I shall a little state both his humiliation and his exaltation.

First, How far he humbled himself and wanted glory; what was, indeed, the utmost of his humiliation. Here I shall show—(1.) What glory he retained in the midst of it; (2.) What he wanted. Certainly though in his outward appearance he had no form and comeliness in him, yet inwardly he was the fairest of men; Isa. liii. 2, compared with Ps. xlv. 2.

1. What glory he was possessed of at the present. Christ had a double glory—the glory of his person, and the glory of his office.

[1.] The glory of his person. There was the union of the two natures; he did not lose his godhead though he took flesh; he was still the eternal Son of the Father, 'the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. i. 3; John i. 14, 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,' ἐσκήνωσεν, he pitched his tent, 'and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.' He was still co-equal with his Father; the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him; his flesh was taken into the fellowship of the divine nature as soon as it began to have a being in the womb of the virgin, the highest dignity a creature is capable of. The person of the Son was truly communicated to the nature of man, and the nature of man truly communicated to the person of the Son. He that was the Son of man was truly the Son of God, and he that was the Son of God was truly the Son of man; and by virtue of this union there was a communion higher than all other communions; the fulness of grace was subjectively and inherently in his human nature: 'He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' Ps. xlv. 7. And he is said, John iii. 34, 'to receive the Spirit without measure,' both for the essence and virtue of it, to all effects and purposes, for himself and others; so that there needed nothing to be added to his full happi-

ness. Christ was *comprehensor;* he perfectly knew upon earth what we shall know in heaven, and was perfectly holy and perfectly good.

[2.] The glory of his office was to be mediator between God and man; an office of so high a nature that it could be performed by none but him who was God and man in the same person; for he that would be mediator was to be prophet, priest, and king. As a prophet, he was to be *arbiter*, to take knowledge of the cause and quarrel depending between them; and as an *internuncius* and legate, to propound and expound the conditions of peace that are to be concluded upon. As he was a priest, he was to be an intercessor, to make interpellation for the party offending; and then to be a *fidejussor*, or surety, making satisfaction to the party offended for him. As he was a king, having all power both in heaven and earth, he was to keep and present the church of God so reconciled in the state of grace, and to tread down all enemies thereof. Here is a great deal of glory far above any creature.

2. What he wanted, that he should pray to be glorified. The glory of his person and office was yet but imperfect.

[1.] Of his person in both natures, it is said, Phil. ii. 7, 'He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man,' ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν; he made himself empty and void, not simply and absolutely, for then he would cease to be himself, and then he would cease to be God; but economically and dispensatively, veiling and covering his godhead under the cloud of his flesh, the beams of his divinity, as it were, wholly laid aside, only now and then it broke out in his works and speeches. Certainly he abstained from the full use and manifestation of it. He did not cease to be what he was, but laid aside the manifestation of it, and hid it in the form of a servant, as if he had none at all. The world could not discern him; to his own familiar friends he was now and then discovered, as occasion did require it. Otherwise in his whole course, his incarnation, nativity, obedience to the law of nature, to the law of Adam, law of sin, of Abraham, were a veil upon him. He suffered hunger, thirst, weariness, bitter agonies, shame of the cross, pain of death, ignominy of the grave; yea, he was not only in the form of a servant to God—'This commandment have I of my Father,' John vi. 38—but he was subject to worldly powers, 'a servant of rulers,' Isa. xlix. 7, wholly at their dispose. His human nature was subject to natural infirmities, hunger, thirst, fear, sorrow, anguish; he had not attained incorruption, impassibility, immortality, nor that glorious purity, strength, agility, clarity of body, which he expected, Phil. iii. 21, together with the fulness of inward joys and comforts in his soul. He lost, for a while, all sense and actual fruition of his Father's love: Mat. xxvi. 46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' So that though he had the Spirit without measure in holiness, and righteousness, yet he was still humbled with unpleasing and afflictive evils.

[2.] For his office. It was managed as suited with his humiliation, and all his actions of prophet, priest, and king, could not be performed gloriously, but in a humble manner, as suited with his present state. He was an ordinary prophet, teaching in the world; as a priest, hanging on the cross; as a king, but he had but few subjects; therefore it

is said, Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour,' as if he had not exercised any of his kingly office before, but he was but as a king anointed; he did not so evidently show forth the kingly office as afterward. Now he doth not overcome his enemies by force or by power. 1 Sam. xvi. 13: David was a king as soon as anointed, but for a long time he suffered exile and wandered in the wilderness before he was taken into the throne; so it was with Christ.

Secondly, His exaltation. What Christ prayed for might be known by the event. His exaltation begun at his resurrection, and received its accomplishment by his sitting at God's right hand. His exaltation answered his humiliation, his death was answered by his resurrection, his going into the grave by his ascending into heaven, his lying in the grave by his sitting at God's right hand, which is a privilege proper to Christ glorified. In the other we share with him, we rise, we ascend, but we do not sit at God's right hand. By his grave, though his body was freed from corruption, his human nature was discovered, but his body had not those glorious qualities as afterwards at his ascension.

Therefore, leaving his resurrection, let us speak of his ascension, and sitting on the right hand of God.

1. His ascension. Three things happened to Christ at his ascension.

[1.] The exaltation of his body and human nature; it was locally taken from the earth, and carried into heaven: Acts i. 9, 'While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight,' into the same heaven into which we shall be translated. They err who say that Christ's ascension standeth in this, that Christ is invisibly present everywhere, which destroyeth the properties of a body. There was not only a change of state, but a change of place; it was a created nature, still finite.

[2.] The glorification of his person, which is the thing spoken of in this text; then all the thick mists and clouds which eclipsed his deity were removed. Not that there was any deposition or laying aside of his human nature; that is an essential part of his person, and shall continue so to all eternity; but only of all human infirmities. He laid aside his mortality at his resurrection, and necessity of meat and drink, but was not restored to his glory till his ascension; his body was so bright, that it shall pass though the air like lightning, clearer than the sun. Upon the earth he was ignorant of something of the day of judgment; now he hath all wisdom, not only in habit, but in act. Before he grew in wisdom, which he manifested by degrees; now the glory of his deity shineth forth powerfully.

[3.] A new qualification of his office. Christ hath exercised the mediatory office from the beginning of the world till now, before his coming in the flesh, when on earth, and after his ascension.

2. The next thing we are to speak of in the glorification of Christ is his sitting at God's right hand: Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.' It is Christ's welcome as soon as he came to heaven. The angels guarded and attended him, and they brought him near the ancient of days: Dan. vii. 13, 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to

the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.' They, that is, the angels did it, they are his ministers: Heb. i. 6, 7, 'When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.' He cometh royally attended. Then the Father welcometh him with, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession,' Ps. ii. 8. As mediator, Christ was to have a grant of the kingdom by pleading his right, and then God seateth him on the throne, 'Sit thou on my right hand,' Ps. cx. 1. God doth, as it were, take his Son by the hand, and seat him on the throne.

This sitting on God's right hand implieth—

[1.] The giving of all power, or a restoration of him to the full use of the godhead. He had an eternal right, as the second person, but he was to receive a new grant: Mat. xxviii. 18, 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.' Christ, as God, hath all power, equal power with the Father by eternal generation; but as God incarnate, it is given to him. So Phil. ii. 9, 10, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;' to make all enemies stoop to him, that he might receive adoration from angels, men, and devils.

[2.] A grant of authority to rule according to pleasure. He is made prince of angels: Col. ii. 10, 'He is the head of all principality and power;' he is to be their sovereign Lord, and 'head of the church,' Eph. i. 22. Christ is to us the head of all vital influences, and judge of the world: Acts xvii. 39, 'He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' This is the sum of Christ's glorification.

The uses of the whole.

*Use* 1. In that Christ prayeth for glory, it presseth us—

1. To take heed of dishonouring Christ, now he prayeth to be glorified. It was a great sin that the Jews crucified the Lord of glory; but they have some excuse, in that they knew not what they did: 1 Cor. ii. 8, 'Whom none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.' His glory was not easily seen in his exinanition and abasement. But now we know more, and we cross his prayers, if we 'crucify him again afresh, and put him to open shame,' Heb. vi. 6. We cannot indeed crucify Christ really, but we may draw the guilt of his enemies that crucified him upon us. By your scandalous lives, you do in effect, as to your intentions, deprive him of his glory, and approve the act of the Jews against him; you live as if no such thing had been done to Christ as his translation into heaven.

2. Since Christ so earnestly sued for his glorification, it is our duty, by all means, to procure and further his glory. We cannot do anything as his Father doth; we cannot bestow anything upon him but praise, and magnify him by a steadfast faith, and by a holy life. Mortified Christians are the glory of Christ.

3. It is comfort against the reproaches and oppositions of men as to the kingdom of Christ. Though the Jews scorn it, the Turks blaspheme it, heretics undermine it, yet Christ's prayers will do more than all their endeavours; still he will appear God manifest in the flesh. Christ's glory cannot be hindered, he hath prayed for it.

*Use* 2. In that Christ was glorified (for he cannot be denied whatever he demands), it is useful for our comfort, for our instruction.

1. For our comfort.

[1.] Christ's glorification is the pledge and earnest of ours. Had not he risen and ascended, and been received up into glory, neither we; the gates of death had been barred upon us, and the gates of heaven shut against us, and we should have been covered with eternal shame and ignominy. But now Christ, like another Samson, hath broken through the gates, and carried them away with him, our head is risen, and we in him, we receive of his fulness, glory for glory, as well as grace for grace. *Nobis dedit arrhabonem spiritus, et a nobis recepit arrhabonem carnis.* We have livery and seisin of the kingdom of heaven already in Christ. We are ascended with him: Eph. ii. 6, 'And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' In contracts, pledges are usually taken and given. Our head is crowned, and shall not the members? The human nature is already placed in the highest seat of glory.

[2.] It is a sign God hath received satisfaction. The Lord sent an angel to remove the stone, not to supply any power in Christ; but as a judge, when he is satisfied, sends an officer to open the prison doors. Our surety is delivered out of prison with glory and honour, God hath taken him up to himself. What is done to our surety concerneth us. Christ hath perfectly done his work, there is no more to be done by way of satisfaction. God was well pleased with him, or else he had not been at his right hand. Certainly all the work of his mediation was not accomplished on earth, he is now in exaltation, performing those other offices that remain to be fulfilled by him in heaven.

[3.] Hence we have confidence in his ability to do his people good. He is now restored to the full use and exercise of the godhead; he can give the Spirit, and perform all the legacies of the covenant. There were many repaired to Christ in the days of his flesh, when he was under poverty, crosses, death; the thief on the cross said, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' What shall we not expect now he is entered into glory? Faithful servants follow their prince in banishment, but they have greater encouragement when he is on the throne. Those that adhered to David in the desert might look for much from him crowned at Hebron: Acts ii. 33, 'Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.' Not that then only he was endowed with the gifts of the Spirit; for whilst he was on earth, he was filled with the Spirit without measure; but then he received the accomplishment of the promise, of pouring out the Spirit upon us; for by promise is meant the accomplishment of the promise, for the promise was long before: Luke xxiv. 49, 'And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem till ye be endued with

power from on high;' Acts i. 4, 'And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem. but wait for the promise of the Father.' When he came to heaven, he received the fulfilling of this promise; for God did not bring Christ into heaven, as we are brought into heaven, merely to rest from labour, and to enjoy the reward of glory, but that he might sit in the throne of majesty and authority, to have power to send the Spirit, and gather the church, and condemn the world, and to apply to all the elect the privileges that he had purchased for them. There are effects of Christ crucified, and there are effects of Christ raised and exalted: Ps. lxviii. 18, 'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.' He gave gifts when he ascended, as kings do at their coronation. The humiliation of Christ hath its effects, in fulfilling the curses of the law, pacifying God's wrath and justice, the annihilation of the right which the devil had in elect sinners, purchasing a right of returning to God, and enjoying the grace of eternal life. The exaltation of Christ hath its effects, viz., the application of this righteousness, and to possess us of this right. When Christ was dead, it was lawful for those for whom he died to return to God, and enjoy his grace; but it was not possible, for they were dead in sins. Therefore God raised up Christ, and gave him authority to pour out the Holy Ghost, that we should seek in grace, not only the force of satisfaction, but of regeneration; that the effect of his abasement, this of his advancement. What a comfort this is, that Christ would not only die for us, but rise again, and pour out his Spirit, that his blood might not be without profit!

[4.] Here is comfort for the church; while our head is so highly magnified, and made Lord of all, he will rule all for the best; certainly no good shall be wanting to them that are his: Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' There shall come a time when the church shall have no enemies, so far shall it be from its being overcome by its enemies, that they shall curse themselves that ever they resisted the church.

[5.] Our sins shall not prejudice our happiness, seeing he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father to be our intercessor: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' We have a friend at court, a favourite in the court of heaven. If it were not for Christ's intercession, what should we do? Those that know the majesty of God, their own unworthiness, the pollution of their prayers, what should they do? The Spirit is our notary here: Rom. viii. 26, 'The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.' And Christ is our advocate in heaven: Rev. viii. 3, 'And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne.' Our prayers have an ill savour as they come from us.

2. For our instruction. It teacheth us to seek heavenly things:

Col. iii. 1, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God;' Phil. iii 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.' We should imitate Christ; whatever he did corporally, we must do spiritually. There is our treasure; if you are the children of God, he is your delight. There is our head; the inferior parts never do well when they are severed from the head. All that we expect cometh from thence, and therefore a natural desire of happiness carrieth the saints thither.

## SERMON VII.

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*—JOHN XVII. 6.

WE have now ended the first paragraph of this chapter, Christ's prayer for himself. Here he cometh to pray for others, the disciples of that age. When Jacob was about to die, he blesseth his sons; so doth Christ his disciples. Christ representeth their case with as much vehemency as he doth his own.

In this verse he useth three arguments—they were acquainted with his Father's name, belonged to his grace, and were obedient to his will. Or, if you will, you may observe—

1. The persons for whom he prayeth.
2. The reasons why he prayeth for them; which are three:—(1.) What Christ had done; (2.) What the Father himself had done; (3.) What they had done.

First, The persons for whom he prayeth, 'The men which thou hast given me out of the world.' Who are these? I answer—The disciples or believers of that age; not only the eleven apostles are intended, though chiefly; but it is not to be restrained to the apostles only.

1. Because the description is common to other believers; others were given him besides the eleven apostles. It is the usual description of the elect in this chapter, ver. 2, 'That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' So ver. 9, 'I pray for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine;' and ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am;' and in other chapters of this Gospel.

2. Because Christ had made known the name of God to more than the apostles; many of the Jews and Samaritans had received the faith. Acts i. 15, there a hundred and twenty met together in a church assembly presently after Christ's death.

3. Otherwise they had been forgotten in Christ's prayer; for afterwards he prayeth only for future believers: ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for them only, but for those that shall believe on me through their word.' Mark, 'that *shall* believe.' But though the apostles are not only intended, yet they are chiefly intended, as appeareth by that expression, 'through their word.' We have seen who are the persons.

Now they are described to be 'the men which the Father hath given me out of the world.' *Men*, to note the greatness of the blessing; though they were frail, miserable men, corrupt by nature, as others are, yet by singular mercy they are made familiar friends of Christ, and some of them doctors of the world.[1] 'Which thou hast given me' by way of special charge. There is a double giving to Christ—by way of reward, by way of charge: these were given to him as a peculiar charge. 'Out of the world;' that is, out of the whole mass of mankind: when others were left and passed by, God singled them out, and gave them to Christ.

I shall open the phrase more fully in the next clause.

The points of doctrine are these:—

1. Observe, in the business of salvation Christ would deal with us not by angels, but by men given him out of the world, that is the description of the apostles and doctors of the church in the text. 'To us he hath committed the word of reconciliation.' God could teach us without pastors, and manifest himself unto us by inward and secret illapses into the heart; but he useth the ministry of men, and that not out of indigence, but indulgence; not for any efficacy in the preacher, but for congruence to the hearer, as a means most agreeable to our frail state. There is mercy in this appointment.

[1.] It is most for the glory of God. God's honour cometh freely from us when the instruments are vile and despicable. We are apt to sacrifice to the next hand. Acts xiv., they brought oxen and garlands to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas. 2 Cor. iv. 7, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.' These are most apt to rival God, as children thank the tailor.

[2.] It trieth our obedience. We look for extraordinary miracles and ways of revelation; God would see if we can love truth for truth's sake, rather than for the teacher's sake, and take it from the meanest hand. It is not *who*, but *what* is delivered. Foolish man would give laws to God. Christ impersonateth our thoughts: Luke xvi. 30, 'If one went to them from the dead, they will believe.' Had Christ come in person, spake to us in an audible voice, or sent an angel, they would believe.' Foolish thoughts! God trieth you by Moses and the prophets. It is a deceit to think if we had more glorious means it would be otherwise with us. Christ came in disguise: John i. 11, 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not;' and the word is brought to us in earthen vessels. It is merited by God-man, it is dispensed by the power of God by man.

[3.] It is the most rational way. He doth not rule us with a rod of iron, by mere power and majesty, but draweth us by the cords of a man, by counsels and exhortations. He dealeth with us by those with whom we have ordinary converse, 'as a man with his friend,' Exod. xxxiii. 11. What should sinners do if God should come and thunder to them in majesty and glory? Exod. xx. 19, 'Let not the Lord speak to us.' He veileth it under the cloud of human weakness. There is no conversing with the terribleness of majesty but by intermediate persons. Men speak to us that have a feeling of our infirmi-

[1] Qu. "word"?—ED.

ties. Prophets are ὁμοιοπαθεῖς, 'Men of like passions with ourselves,' James v. 17. If angels should teach us, we would think the precepts too strict for men. Men know how to speak to us by speaking from the heart to the heart: Prov. xxvii. 19, 'As face answereth face in a glass, so doth the heart of man to man.' There may be lesser differences in regard of complexion and constitution, but they know the general nature of man.

[4.] It is the surest way. If men deceive us, they deceive themselves; we have experience of their fidelity in other things, and they confirm it by their own practice. They are subjected to the law of the same duties and necessities, sometimes seal the truth with their blood.

[5.] It is a comfortable way. Paul, a great sinner before conversion, Peter, a great instance of the infirmities and falls of the saints, yet, from their own experience of the power and comfort of the gospel, preach it to us. Well, then, scorn not God's institution, but admire the wisdom of it. We are bound to submit, though we could see nothing but folly: 1 Cor. i. 21, 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.'

2. Observe, again, it is a special privilege to be chosen to privileges of grace when others are passed by: 'Given me out of the world.'

[1.] There is a world of others, and they are left to themselves. Christ hath not the tithe of mankind: Jer. iii. 14, 'One of a city, and two of a tribe.' Christ doth not take them by dozens or hundreds, but by ones and twos. Grace falls on few. Christ seeketh out the elect, if but one in a town.

[2.] They were as eligible as we, only we were singled out by mere grace. The lot might have fallen upon them as well as upon you; thousands in the world were as eligible: Ezek. xviii. 4, 'Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine.' All were made by the same God out of the same mass of nothing: he is equally judge of all; all had sinned. Thy soul was as polluted as theirs, as liable to God's judgment, as deep in the same condemnation; yet such was his good-will and pleasure, to single us out. This is the glory of his grace, *miserabor cujus misertus fuero:* Mal. i. 2, 3, 'Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord, yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau.' Though all men be equal in themselves, yet mercy can make a distinction. The best reason is God's good pleasure. Well, then, apply this.

(1.) Look to the distinction. How many steps of election may we walk up? That we were not toads and serpents, but men, the same nothing was as pliable; not men only, but christians, within the pale of the church; not christians at large, but born there, where the mists and fogs of popery were dispelled; nor Protestants at large, but called to a stricter profession; still in every degree multitudes were cut off. That I was not a christian, but a minister, an officer in the church: 1 Tim. i. 12, 'He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.' Plato gave thanks for three things—that he was a man, not a woman; a Grecian, not a barbarian; not an ordinary Greek, but a philosopher. A christian may much more give thanks.

(2.) To the reason of this distinction: John xiv. 22, τί γέγονεν,

'How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?' Luke i. 43, 'And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?' When you have searched all you can, you must rest in Christ's reason: Mat. xi. 26, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' God's supremacy over all things in heaven and in earth maketh him free to choose or refuse whom he pleaseth. It is not because you were better disposed than others; many of a better temper were passed by: God raised up a habitation to the Spirit out of crabbed knotty pieces. A man in a wood leaveth the crooked timber for fuel. The young man that went away sad was of such a sweet natural temper, that it is said, Christ loved him.

*Secondly*, Let us now come to the reasons why he prayeth for them.

First, What he did: 'I have manifested thy name to them;' in which Christ intimateth his own faithfulness and their future usefulness. His own faithfulness; for this was one way of Christ's glorifying his Father on earth, by communicating the tenor of the christian doctrine to the disciples; so that some of them by the light received were to be special instruments of converting the world. *Ἐφανέρωσα*, 'I have manifested;' by outward teaching, and inward illumination. Outward teaching was necessary; the mystery of the gospel was but sparingly revealed by former prophets; but Christ, who was in the bosom of the Father, knew the depth and bottom of it.' John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;' and accordingly he revealed it to the disciples. And besides, by an inward light he gave them to understand it; for Christ preached publicly, but all did not understand him, but those to whom 'it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God,' Mat. xiii. 11. So much is intimated in the word *ἐφανέρωσα*. And herein Christ fulfilled that prophecy, Ps. xxii. 22, 'I will declare thy name unto my brethren.' The disciples of Christ, especially the apostles, are adopted into the privileges of co-heirs with Christ, and therefore to them he declared his Father's name, than which there could not be a greater privilege. Now by the name of God, some understand one thing, some another, according to the different acceptations of the word *name*. Largely, and more generally, we may understand, whatever is necessary to be known and believed to salvation concerning God's will and essence; that is his name; all by which the Father might be known, as men are known and distinguished by their names. The meaning is, that he had made known to them the whole doctrine concerning God's will and essence, teaching them that in one essence of God there are three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father begot the Son, his substantial image, by eternal generation, and sent him in time, that he might take a true human nature on him, that so he might become a mediator between God and us, by whom alone we have access to God, that we may obtain grace and life eternal. Now this he manifested in his doctrine, in the course of his life, and by the light of the Spirit, freeing them from all prejudices, contracted by their own darkness, or the obscure doctrine that was then taught in the church.

1. Observe Christ's faithfulness to his own charge. He opened all the mysteries of God's name, that is, of the true religion to them.

We that are ministers, and you that are masters of families, should learn of him. It is our duty to teach the flock committed to our charge: Acts xx. 20, 'I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, teaching you publicly, and from house to house.' We are to draw out all the truths necessary to salvation. It is not enough that ministers live honestly and unblamably, that they are hospitable and kind, but they must teach the people to read God's name. If you hire a man to prune the vineyard and he diggeth in the field, to fight in the battle and he watcheth the stuff, it is not the work you set him about. So to you that are masters of families; the apostles were Christ's own family; God expecteth it from you: Gen. xviii. 19, 'I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.' Do not disappoint the Lord; he reckoneth upon it; your family should be a little flock, a little church. Families are the fountains of church and commonwealth. Oh! how sweet will it be when we come to die, if we could say, as Christ, we concerning our flock, you concerning your families, 'I have manifested thy name to them that thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.'

2. Observe the earnest desire Christ had to glorify his Father, by living, teaching, dying;—thy name, thy word. Oh! that we would learn of our Lord to glorify our Father which is in heaven; to be contented to do anything, to be anything, so we might be to the glory of God!

3. Observe the excellency of the doctrine of the gospel; its certainty, its clearness.

[1.] Its certainty. It is not a doctrine forged in the brain of men, but brought out of the bosom of God into the breasts of the apostles, and from them conveyed to us. In this word you have the Father's heart; Christ told it the apostles: 'I have manifested thy name to them,' &c. Christ is the original author: Heb. i. 2, 'In these last times he hath spoken to us by his Son.' The Son of God is the first man in the roll of the New Testament prophets; the first was not an angel, but God's own Son, the messenger of the covenant, the apostle of our confession. Though Christ doth not speak to us immediately in person, yet he spake to us by the apostles; they have their light from Christ. Therefore he that readeth the word should seem to hear Christ speak. This was that which he whispered to the apostles in secret.

[2.] The clearness of the scriptures. Christ knew all the counsels of God, and he hath manifested his name to the apostles. There is a light shining; if we see it not, it is a sign we are lost: 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' What an advantage have we above the Gentiles and above the Jews!

(1.) Above the Gentiles. The doctrine of the essence and will of God cannot be known by the light of nature. Somewhat of his glory shineth in the creatures: Rom. i. 20, 'For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things

that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.' Some characters there are in conscience, though horribly defaced; but alas! the furthest reach of nature cometh short of salvation. Nature is blind as well as lame in things supernatural; there are some few remains of light to keep the law of nature alive in the soul, for the advantage of civil society and moral business. When nature putteth on the spectacles of art, still she is blind. There are many inventions to polish reason; to sharpen discourse, there is logic; for language, rhetoric; for government and equity, laws; for health, physic; for manners, ethics; for societies of men, politics; for families, economics; but for worship, nothing; their piercing wits were there blunt. Man is naturally wise for everything but to maintain a respect between him and God. They knew there was a God, and that this God ought to be worshipped; but what he was, and how he should be worshipped, they knew not; their knowledge was rather a mist than a light. His works told them that he was wise, powerful, and good; but they were unhappy in their determination of his worship; they sat abrood, and proved but fools: 'They professed themselves to be wise, but became fools,' Rom. i. 22. While they intended him honour, they carved to him the greatest contempt; whilst they would express him in the image of the creatures, they dishonoured him. Natural light is but small in itself, and corruption maketh it less. They knew nothing of the misery of man and the remedy by Christ; our fall in Adam, original sin, and the work of redemption were mysteries to them; they could not dream of these things; when they were revealed they counted them foolishness. They spoke of virtue as a moral perfection; of vice, as a stain of nature; but nothing of righteousness and sin, as relative to the covenant of God. God used the heathen as instruments to put nature to the highest extent. How may we pity them that they could go no further, and admire God's mercy to us that we, being weaker than they in natural gifts, are yet stronger in grace; that a boy out of a catechism should know more than they! Their misery was great in abusing the light of nature; our misery will be greater, and damnation double, if we abuse the light of nature and grace.

(2.) Above the Jews, whom God acquainted with his statutes above all other nations. They knew little of the name of God in comparison of what we know. Therefore Moses desires to know God's name, Exod. iii. 13; and it is said, Judges xiii. 18, 'Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret?' The divine glory was hidden and under a veil. In those appearances of Christ little was known in respect of what was known at his incarnation. It is spoken in reference to the present dispensation. Some notice they had of this mystery. God acquainted them with his name by degrees: as Exod. vi. 3, 'I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.' God had made himself known by other names; to the fathers by the name of God Almighty; the name Jehovah, that should be an appellation among his gathered people, giving a being to his people, and making good his promises. Afterwards, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob,' as more relating to the covenant. Afterwards, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, 'I will raise up to David a righteous

branch, this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' Then God will be known by his grace, justifying his people, and accepting them for Christ's sake. But in the New Testament all is open and clear; he is called 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Eph. i. 5. Then God the Father and the mediator were clearly made known. Alas! the Jewish church knew little of the doctrine of the Trinity, the distinction of the persons, the quality of the mediator, the way of salvation. What they knew was obscured, and the doctrine of the Messiah horribly depraved.

*Use.* Let us bless God for the word, and take heed unto it, as to a light shining in a dark place. What would be our condition if we had not the scriptures among us? We should be no better than savages in the wilderness, or as the body without the soul, the earth without the sun. God might immediately have revealed himself to man; he that made the heart can enstamp it with the knowledge of his will; but he would state his doctrine into a settled course, that we might not coin oracles to ourselves, or obtrude fancies on others: 'We have λόγον βεβαιότερον, a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place,' 2 Peter i. 19. He knoweth to what liberty we incline in preaching divine things. No more πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως of 'those divers ways and manners, wherewith God spake in times past to our fathers by the prophets,' Heb. i. 1. After the closing of a perfect canon there needed nothing but ordinary revelation. This is sufficient to salvation, if there were no book else; if the world were full of books, and this only were wanting, there were no certain way nor rule to heaven. Here is God's heart discovered to us, and our hearts to ourselves; it is a ray of the face of God in Christ: John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son of God, that lay in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' Satan hath been ever maligning this light, that he might more securely domineer in the world. Christ undertook he would declare God's name to his brethren, and here he hath done it. Oh! let it come with divine authority upon your hearts, in all the precepts, promises, threatenings of it, that you may come to a nearer sight of God and yourselves.

4. Observe the necessity of a divine light before we can understand the things of God: 'I have manifested thy name,' &c.

[1.] There must not only be an outward sure rule of doctrine, but an inward light. We can have no savoury apprehensions of the things of God till Christ himself become our teacher; the Son of God must always be the interpreter of his Father's will; he is the Word that speaketh to the heart. All men by nature are ignorant of the name of God, without any saving knowledge: Eph. v. 8, 'Ye were sometimes darkness;' not only in the dark, but darkness itself; 'but now ye are light in the Lord;' that is, enlightened by his Spirit. This is proper to the elect, those who are given to him. The church is Christ's open school, the scriptures our book, the ministers are the ushers, and Christ is the inward teacher. Some are only taught by the ministers, others are taken aside and taught by Christ himself in private. His public lectures are read to all hearers, but the elect are taught of God: John vi. 68, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal

life.' Others may hear the word, but they perish in their own blindness and unbelief. Some play the truants in Christ's school; they will not hear, they pass judgment on themselves: Acts xiii. 48, 'As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.' The whole city was met to hear, but none believed but the elect; and the apostle doth not say, 'As many as believed were ordained to eternal life,' but 'as many as were ordained believed.' It is not given to all: Mat. xiii. 11, 'It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.' All the difference is in the will of God; so that the scholars in this kind are 'the called according to his purpose.' Christ's teaching is of no larger extent than his Father's election. Some schoolmasters, besides their common care, do teach such children apart as they love most, they take them and point with the finger; so doth Christ manifest himself to those that are given him out of the world by the inward work of his grace. Moral suasion is common to all, but he taketh some aside and worketh on their hearts.

[2.] For the manner of this teaching; it is accompanied with force and power. There is always an operation that goeth along with this teaching: John vi. 44, 45, 'No man can come to me except the Father that hath sent me draw him. It is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God.' There is teaching and drawing; the inspiration and the impression go together. He is an incomparable teacher; he giveth the lesson, and a heart to learn it; with information he reformeth, and with the knowledge of our duty he giveth a will and power to do it. He teacheth the promise so as to make us believe it; the commandment so as to make us obey it. The soul is God's echo: Ps. xxvii. 8, 'When thou sayest, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek.' He reformeth by his light, and exciteth by the power of his grace. In short, it is a powerful teaching, joined with an inward working. His scholars are sure of proficiency, for he hath their hearts in his hands, and can move them according to his own pleasure. There is not only an illumination of the mind, but a bowing of the will. Corrupt nature in man is strong enough to resist anything of man, as he is man.

[3.] The necessity of this inward light; without it the word will not work. Many hear outwardly that are never the better: John vi. 44, 'No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.' There must be an inward light, an inward operation on the soul, or the word is without effect; the heart must be opened as well as the scriptures. As all the multitude that thronged on Christ did not touch him as the diseased woman did, who touched the hem of his garment: 'Who touched me?' saith Christ, 'knowing that virtue had gone out of him,' Mark v. 30. Many may come to an ordinance, but virtue passeth out to few. The outward minister can but speak to the ear; it is Christ works grace in the heart: unless the Holy Ghost come down, and open the mouths of preachers to speak, and the hearts of people to hear, all is to no purpose.

*Use.* Well, then, every time you come to the opening of the scriptures, look for this inward light to shine into your hearts, that you may have a saving knowledge of God in Christ. Remember you come to hear that doctrine which Christ hath brought down from the bosom of

the Father, and he must bring it into your bosoms. There are two sorts of hearers:—

1. Some are careless, that come hither, but scarce hear the minister; their bodies are in the sanctuary, but their spirits are in the corners of the earth. Their coming is made fruitless by the wandering of their hearts; they have experience of the power of Satan, not of Christ. The devil presenteth to their fancy such objects as carry their spirits from God and his work: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 'They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.' Carcases without a spirit are but carrion; clothes stuffed with straw, that were a mocking; so is a body present at hearing the word without a soul. What is the difference between an absent body and a wandering spirit? God knocketh at the heart, but there is none within to hear him.

2. Some hear the minister, but do not wait for the illumination of Christ, which sometimes God grants to us in the hearing of the word: Acts xi. 15, 'As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them;' this is to draw us to attention: Acts xvi. 14, 'Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to those things that were spoken by Paul.' When God disposeth us to hear his word attentively, he approacheth to us in mercy.

## SERMON VIII.

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.*—JOHN XVII. 6.

THE next argument is what the Father had done in and about believers; he disposed them into the hands of Christ: 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' Where is—(1.) His interest in believers; (2.) His act about believers.

First, His interest in believers: 'Thine they were.' How is this to be understood? Divers have framed divers senses; thine by creation, thine by election, thine by sanctification. The Father being first in order of the persons, all original works are proper to him; so creation is ascribed to him; so the Lord saith, Ezek. xviii. 4, 'All souls are mine,' all created by him. But this sense is not so proper to this place, because those for whom Christ prayed not might plead this interest; so Satan is God's, the wicked and all creatures are God's. By election; thine by free election, mine by special donation: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a peculiar people.' The first and highest act of grace is ascribed to him; they are his chosen and peculiar ones. These were eternally his, and by the continuation of the same purpose of grace they are always his. This is proper to this place; only sanctification may be included, which is, as it were, an actual election. As by original election the heirs of salvation are distinguished from others in God's purpose and counsel, so by actual

election they are visibly distinguished and set apart from others; so 'Thine they were,' by an excitement of thy Spirit and grace stirred up to follow me, and chose me in this special way of service. Sanctification is also ascribed to the Father: John vi. 44, 'No man can come unto me except the Father that hath sent me draw him;' and Jude 1, 'To them that are sanctified by God the Father.' The first effect of saving grace is ascribed to him, as the first rise of grace is from his love. I prefer the middle sense, and do only take in the latter as the effect: 'Thine they were;' they were chosen by the purposes of thy grace, and called, which is the effect of that grace passing upon their hearts.

From hence—

1. Observe that Christ pleadeth interest as an argument in prayer. It is meet, when we come to pray to God, that we can say, We are his. This way would Christ endear his own disciples to the Father's respect and grace: Ps. cxix. 44, 'I am thine; save me.' The great work of christians should be to discern their interest, that they may come to God with some confidence. Though you cannot say, I am thine, with respect to the purposes of his grace; yet at least you should say, I am thine, in your own dedication and choice. *Si nostra tueri non vultis, et tamen vestra defendetis.* Many a trembling christian dareth not say, He is mine; but he is resolved to say, I am his; that is the fitter argument with God. With our own souls, in our own straits, plead, He is mine: Ps. xlii. 11, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' But in prayer plead, I am his; though you cannot plead his choice, plead your own resignation. Consider, it is a forcible argument. Every one will provide for his own: 'He is worse than an infidel who will not provide for his own, especially those of his own household.' It is a comfortable argument. When we cannot speak of our works, we may speak of our interest: Lord, I am a sinner; but I am thine: I am a poor wretch; but I am one that would not be his own, unless I am thine. Oh! but says the poor soul, if I could say that I am thine, one that belongeth to the purposes of thy grace, there were some comfort. *Ans.* It is sweet, when we can say mutually, 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' But are you not willing to choose him, though you cannot say he hath chosen you? The choice of our portion discovereth our interest. Canst thou in truth of heart say? Lord, 'I have none in heaven but thee, none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee,' Ps. lxxiii. 25. If you can, in the sincerity of your hearts, call God to witness this, it is sweet. Though thou canst not apply Christ, canst thou resign thyself? Then we have the fruit of election, though we have not the sense of it. God certainly hath chosen us when, by the work of his grace, he maketh us choose him. Fallen man is not dainty in his choice, till a work of grace passeth upon him; he turneth from the creator to the creature; he saith to the world, Would to God thou wert mine! to riches, honours, pomp, Would thou wert mine! 'Happy is the people that are in such a case.' It is grace turneth us from the creature back again to God; God is our portion, because we are his; God cannot refuse that heart which he hath thus drawn to himself.

2. Observe again, that none are given to Christ but those that were first the Father's: 'Thine they were;' he had chosen them in the purposes of his grace, and disposed them into Christ's hands. Thine by election, mine by special donation. The acts of the three persons are commensurable, of the same sphere and latitude; those whom the Father chooseth, the Son redeemeth, and the Spirit sanctifieth. The Father loveth none but those that are given to Christ, and Christ taketh charge of none but those that are loved of the Father. Your election will be known by your interest in Christ, and your interest in Christ by the sanctification of the Spirit. All God's flock are put into Christ's hands, and Christ leaveth them to the care of the Spirit, that they may be enlightened and sanctified. In looking after the comfort of election, you must first look inward to the work of the Spirit on your hearts, then outward to the work of Christ on the cross, then upward to the heart of the Father in heaven: 1 Peter i. 2, 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. There is a chain of salvation; the beginning is from the Father, the dispensation through the Son, the application by the Spirit; all cometh from God, and is conveyed to us through Christ, by the Spirit.

Secondly, The Father's act about believers: 'Thou gavest me them.'

How are they given to Christ? Things are given to Christ two ways—by way of reward, or by way of charge.

1. By way of reward. So all nations are given to him by way of reward: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' He is Lord of all, Acts x. 36, even of the devils. All flesh are thus given to him, to be ruled by him. This donation is very large, and compriseth elect and reprobates. All nations are Christ's heritage in this sense, as well as the church. All power in heaven and in earth is given to him, to dispose of elect and reprobates according to his own pleasure. Only in this giving by way of reward there is a difference; some are given to Christ at large, to be disposed of according to his pleasure; others are given to him for some special ministry and service, as hypocrites in the church; and so Judas was given to him, as Christ saith, ver. 9, 'Of them which thou hast given me, I have lost none but the son of perdition.' Again, others are given to him by way of special and peculiar interest, to be members of his body, subjects of his kingdom, &c. So only the elect are given to Christ; the great bargain that Christ drove with his Father was an interest in souls; therefore it is said, Isa. liii. 10, 11, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.' This was all the gain that Christ reckoned of.

2. By way of charge. This again is proper to the elect, who are redeemed, justified, sanctified, glorified. The elect are made over to Christ, not by way of alienation, but oppignoration; none of them who are given to Christ by way of charge can miscarry: John vi. 37, 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and he that cometh to

me, I will in no wise cast out;' and ver. 39, 'This is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose none, but should raise it up again at the last day;' and John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' There is Christ's faithfulness and the Father's power engaged, therefore this must needs be proper to the elect.

Now, because both these ways are proper to the elect, that I observe is, that the Father's elect are given and committed to the Son, as his purchase and charge.

First, They are given to him by way of reward. Christ, by virtue of his purchase, hath many relations to believers: they are given to him as subjects of his kingdom, as scholars of his school, as children of his family, as the spouse of his bosom, as the members of his body. All these relations I shall insist upon; for this was the honour that was granted to Christ upon his obedience. It was much that Christ would be our king, more that he would be our master, more that he would be our father, more that he would be our husband, and yet further that he would be our head: he counted it an honour, and bought it at a dear rate.

1. We are given to him to be subjects of his kingdom. Christ is Lord of all the world, but he prizeth no title like that of king of saints, Rev. xv. 3, to rule as Lord in the church; no throne like the conscience of a humbled sinner. The heart is Christ's best presence-chamber; he loveth to have his chair of state set there. He had an eternal right together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, but he would come and suffer and be crowned with a crown of thorns that he might have a new right as mediator, and have the crown of glory put upon his head in the church: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour.' The Father promised it long before upon bargain and contract. There is never a subject that Christ hath but is bought, and with the dearest price, his sovereign's own blood: Mat. xx. 28, 'He gave himself, λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, a ransom for many.' Many subjects die in other kingdoms that the prince may be seated in the throne; but here the prince dieth for the subjects, that he may govern his spiritual realm with more peace and quietness. As the price was great, so the Father hath made him a large grant.

[1.] Christ's empire is universal, and spread throughout the world. He properly is the catholic king; there are no bounds and limits of his empire: Isa. liii. 12, 'Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.' Some of all nations are given to him: Isa. xlix. 12, 'Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim,' north, west, south, Jews and Gentiles. The Jews, that are now his enemies, shall appoint to themselves a head; as the tribes flocked to Hebron to crown David: Hosea i. 11, 'Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land.' There is no king like Christ for largeness of command

and territory. All monarchs have certain bounds and limits by which their empire is terminated; Christ's empire runneth throughout the whole circuit of nature; he hath a multitude of subjects.

[2.] Christ's empire is eternal: 'Of the increase of his government there shall be no end,' Isa. ix. 7. Kings must die, and then their favourites may be counted offenders. So Bathsheba said to David (who yet was a type of the reign of Christ), 1 Kings i. 21, 'When my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' But Christ liveth and reigneth for evermore. But you will say, Christ doth not reign for ever, but 'till he hath put all enemies under his feet, when he shall resign up the kingdom to the Father,' 1 Cor. xv. 24. I answer—In kingly dignity there are two things, *regia cura* and *regius honor*—kingly care and kingly honour. Kingly care, by which he ordereth and defendeth his subjects; and kingly honour, which he receiveth from his subjects. Certainly Christ shall be king for ever and ever: Luke i. 33, 'And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end;' because he shall always be honoured and adored as king and mediator. He shall resign the kingdom, that is, that way of administration; for when the elect are fully converted and sanctified, and their enemies destroyed, there will be no need of this care. Now thus we are given to Christ, that he might be a king universally and eternally. He ruleth us by a sweet covenant, he might rule us by power. Other kings find subjects, he maketh them. He might rule us, for he bought us, he hath an absolute right over us. As there was a covenant between the Father and Christ, so between Christ and the church. He propoundeth no less than a kingdom: Isa. x. 8, 'Are not my princes altogether kings?' Christ's title is by purchase, conquest, and consent. All Christ's subjects were vessels of wrath, vessels of hell, in their natural estate; he recovered us from the devil by power and conquest, he bought us out of his Father's hands by merit and price.

In short, concerning this kingdom, which belongeth to the second person, the Father appoints it, the Son merits it, the Holy Ghost as Christ's viceroy governs it. The Father chooseth a certain number of men, giveth them to Christ; the Son dieth for these men, ransometh them from the grave and hell, and committeth them to be ruled and governed to the Spirit, as Christ's vicar; the Spirit useth the ministry of men, we are the Holy Ghost's overseers, Acts xx. 28, by which grace is wrought, and so we are united to Christ. Our work by the power of the Spirit is to bring them to Christ, and Christ bringeth us to God the Father by his intercession and by final tradition, which is the last act of Christ's mediatory kingdom: 1 Cor. xv. 24, 'Then shall he deliver up the kingdom to the Father.' God giveth us to Christ, Christ to the Spirit, the Spirit uniteth us to Christ, and Christ bringeth us to God. So that if we would enter into this kingdom, we must go to God the Father, confess thou art a traitor and rebel, desire him not to enter into judgment with thee, but seek to be reconciled. If thou thus comest to the Father, he will send thee to the Son; as Job xlii. 8, God biddeth the friends of Job to seek his intercession: I will not be pleased with you but in Christ: 'If I did not regard the presence

of Jehoshaphat, I would not look to thee, nor see thee,' 2 Kings iii. 14. Go to the Son, reflect upon Christ's merit and intercession; say, Lord, appear for us before thy Father; were it not for thee he would not regard my face. The Son will send you to the Spirit: I cannot bring you to God in your impurity and rebellion; go to the Spirit of my Father, that he may wash you, and purge you. Plead the promise of the Spirit: John xvi. 13, 14, 'Howbeit, when he that is the Spirit of truth shall come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you.' When we come to the Spirit, he will send us to Moses and the prophets; hear them. The word is 'the rod of his strength.' By the word we are gained, by the sacraments we take an oath of allegiance, in prayer we perform our homages, in alms and acts of charity we pay him tribute; praise and honour are the revenues of this crown.

Thus I have showed the title, the largeness of the grant, and the manner of administration.

2. We are given to Christ as scholars in his school. He is the great prophet, and doctor of the church. Certainly Christ loveth the honour of this chair; he counteth it an honour to be our prophet. It is his title, Acts iii. 22, 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren.' Christ he came out of the bosom of God, to show his mind and heart; he is called 'the apostle and high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1. Christ taketh the titles of his own officers. Though he be Lord of the church, yet he is an apostle. He counteth it an honour to be a preacher of the gospel, God's legate *à latere*, the Son of God is first on the roll of gospel preachers. He laid the foundation of the gospel when on earth; he teacheth now he is in heaven; others teach for him. Christ counts it his liberty to teach; he is to be a light to the Gentiles. He doth not teach the ear, but the heart; he is still to nurture us, and bring us up. He is an excellent teacher; he doth not only set us our lesson, but giveth us a heart to learn. The scripture is our book, but Christ is our master, and we shall see wondrous things if he doth but open our eyes.

3. We are to be children of his family. A master is not so careful as a parent. This was the thing propounded to allure Christ to the work of redemption: Isa. liii. 10, 'He shall see his seed;' he shall have a numberless issue and progeny. Though all are Benonis, sons of sorrow, and Christ died in the birth, yet this was his privilege, 'He shall see his seed.' Jesus Christ hath a great family, take it altogether: Rev. vii. 9, 'A great company which none could number, redeemed out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.' Christ is wonderfully pleased with the fruitfulness of his death. It is his great triumph at the last day, Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me.' It is a goodly sight when Christ shall rejoice in the midst of them, and go with this glorious train to the throne of the Father. Jesus Christ is our brother and our father: by regeneration and the merit of the cross, our father; but in the possession of heaven, our brother. We are co-heirs with him.

4. We are given to him as the wife of his bosom. As a father giveth the daughter whom he hath begot to another for a spouse and wife, so doth God give his elect to Christ. Indeed, Christ hath bought her at his Father's hands; other wives bring a dowry, but Christ was to buy his spouse. As Saul gave his daughter to David, but first he was to kill Goliath, and to bring the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, 1 Sam. xvii. 25, and xviii. 25; so God gave Christ the church for a spouse, to be redeemed by his blood; the infernal Goliath was to be slain. Eve was taken from Adam when he lay asleep; so when Christ was a-dying, the church was, as it were, taken out of his side. He was willing to die that his spouse might live. Christ left his Father at his incarnation, his mother at his passion, to make the church his spouse, as a man leaveth father and mother, and cleaveth to his wife. This honour Christ getteth by the power of his Spirit; it costs him long wooing. David had bought Michal with the danger of his life, yet he was fain to take her away from Phaltiel, 2 Sam. iii. 13, &c. The devil hath gotten Christ's spouse into his hands; Christ by his Spirit is to rescue her, and oblige her to loyalty. Hereafter is the great day of espousals, the bride's, and the Lamb's hope. Christ's honour as well as our comfort is but incomplete now: 'Then he shall present the church to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish,' Eph. v. 27. Christ is now decking her against that time. We are to accomplish the months of our purification; odours and garments are to be brought out of the king's treasury, Esther ii. 12.

5. We are to be members of his body. Next to that of the Son of God, there cannot be a greater title than Head of the church. Poor creatures! that Christ will take us into his own mystical body, to quicken us, enliven us, and guide us by his grace! If he were a head to all things, that had been somewhat: Col. ii. 11, 'He is the head of all principality and power.' But he is their head for the church's sake: 'And gave him to be the head over all things to the church,' Eph. i. 22, over them to us; He counteth himself not perfect without us, 'Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all;' that we should be called the fulness of Christ! He esteemeth himself as maimed and imperfect without us. He treateth his mystical body with the same respect as his natural; that was raised, ascended, glorified; so shall we. For the present he is grieved in our miseries, as well as we exalted in his glory, and so he communicates to us and with us.

*Use* 1. Admire the love of God in this donation.

1. Of God the Father, that he should bestow us upon his own Son. As Christ pleadeth it to the Father, so should we plead it to ourselves: we were God's, and he gave us to Christ. Electing love is the sweetest; others were his as well as you: Ps. xxxvi. 7, 'How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!' That God should cast a look on you!

2. Of God the Son, that he should take us as a gift from the Father, and as a reward of all his services. Nothing could be more welcome than the tender of souls. Consider, nothing could be added to the greatness of him who was equal with the Father; the privileges

of the incarnation were but as so many milder humiliations; but his main reason was to gain an interest in souls: nothing else could bring Christ out of heaven into the manger, the wilderness, the cross, the grave. What was his reward for all his expense of blood and sweat? He came from heaven, took our nature, shed his blood; Christ is very thirsty of an interest in souls: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' This is enough; I do not begrudge my pains, my temptations, my agonies. A woman safely delivered after sore and sharp labour, forgetteth all her past sorrow for joy of the birth. Christ longed till his incarnation, feasted himself with the thoughts of his free grace: Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' Afterwards he longed for his passion: Luke xii. 50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and πῶς συνέχομαι, how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' His delight was with the sons of men.

3. Bless the Spirit for his attesting, witnessing, working the comfort of all this in all our souls. We have the Father in heaven, the Son on the cross, the Spirit in our hearts. We are given to Christ, but Christ is given to us by the Spirit; our interest is wrought and applied by the Holy Ghost. It is the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is his executor; he is to see Christ's will accomplished; he is Christ's vicar in his kingly and prophetical office.

*Use* 2. Let us consecrate and give up ourselves to Christ. Walk as his: 1 Cor. iii. 23, 'Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's!' Look for all from him, by dependence on him; be whatever you are to him, to his glory. You are given up to him, you are not at your own dispose; neither tongue, nor heart, nor estate is thine; God gave it, and if thou art a christian, thou hast given up thyself to him.

## SERMON IX.

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.*—JOHN XVII. 6.

SECONDLY, They are committed to him by way of charge.

In opening this I shall inquire—

1. Who are the persons that are thus given to Christ?

I answer—The elect, and no other. They are given to him out of the world, a selected company; as in the text, 'Those whom thou hast given me;' such as shall surely and infallibly be brought to grace, and conducted to glory: John vi. 37, 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me;' and ver. 39, 40, 'This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' And can the Father's will be disappointed? (I wonder what can men object against so plain a scripture!) And when they are come

they cannot miscarry: 'This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing;' not a leg, not a piece of an ear. Christ hath received a special charge.

But you will say, It is said, John xvii. 12, 'Those which thou hast given me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.' So it seemeth some may be lost which are given to Christ.

[1.] I answer—The word *given* is there used indefinitely, for those given to Christ by way of reward, as well as those given to him by way of charge. Hypocrites, because of their external vocation, are said to be given to Christ by way of ministry and service, but not by way of special charge. That is notable which Christ saith, John xiii. 18, 'I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth with me hath lift up his heel against me.' Where he showeth plainly that one of them was not of the number of the elect, and should not receive the privileges of his especial charge; though he was chosen to the calling of an apostle, yet not to eternal life. Christ knoweth the number of the heirs of salvation, and who only are given him by way of ministry and service of the church.

[2.] I may answer by interpreting the phrase εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπολείας. The words are not exceptive, but adversative; none of them is lost, but the son of perdition is lost; the words are not rendered 'except the son of perdition,' but, 'but the son of perdition;' it is not *nisi*, but *sed*. There is no exception made of Judas, as if he had been given to Christ, and afterward had fallen away. It is not *nemo nisi filius perditionis*, but when he had mentioned their keeping, he would adversatively put the losing of Judas. This phrase or manner of speech is often used in scripture; so Rev. xxi. 27, 'And there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life;' εἰ μὴ, where the words are not exceptive; for then it would follow that some which work abomination should enter into the kingdom of heaven; but adversative, these shall not enter, but others shall enter. So Mat. xii. 4, 'It was not lawful for him to eat, neither for those which were with him, but only for the priests;' εἰ μὴ, it is not exceptive, as if the priests were of David's company.

2. What was this charge? It will be opened by considering what the Father proposed concerning the elect, and what the Son undertook.

[1.] What the Father proposed. The words of Heaven are ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, 'unutterable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter, 2 Cor. xii. 4. Those secret ways of discourse and communication between the Father and the Son are to be adored with reverence and deep silence, were it not that the Spirit of God hath put them into such forms as are suitable to those transactions and intercourses which are between man and man. It is usual in scripture to put the passages between God and Christ into speeches: Ps. xl. 6–8, 'Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do

thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart;' Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession;' Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' The Father came to Christ, and did, as it were, say to him, Son, I am loath that all mankind should be lost, and left under condemnation; there are some whom I have chosen to be vessels and receptacles of my mercy and goodness; and because I am resolved that my justice shall be no loser, you must take a body and die for them, and afterward you must see that they be converted to grace, justified, sanctified, guided to glory, and that not one of them should miscarry; for I will take an account of you at the last day. It is easy to prove all these things out of scripture. That there are a certain definite number, see 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth those that are his.' There is no lottery nor uncertainty in the divine decrees; the number is stated, sealed; none can add to it, or detract any one person that Christ received a command to lay down his life for: John x. 18, 'This commandment have I received of my Father;' for them only I lay down my life, viz., for my sheep. That Christ is to see them converted to grace: John vi. 37, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' And without miscarrying, guided to glory: John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' That Christ is to give an account of bodies and souls: John vi. 39, 'And this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.' Which accordingly he doth: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.'

[2.] What Christ undertook. The whole proposal of the Father: Ps. xl. 8, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.' Christ consented to all the articles of the eternal covenant; not only to take a body to die, but to take a particular charge of all the elect; as Judah interposed for Benjamin, so doth Christ for the souls committed to him: Gen. xliii. 9, 'I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not to thee, and set him safe in thy presence, let me bear the blame for ever.' So doth Christ say concerning all the persons that fall under his charge. If I do not see them converted, justified, sanctified, conducted to glory, count me an unfaithful undertaker, and let me bear the blame for ever.

3. The ground of this charge, why the Father doth not save them by his own power, but committed them to the Son? I answer—

[1.] Partly in majesty; God would not pass out grace but by a mediator; and therefore, when he was resolved that he would not lose the whole race of mankind, but repair his image in some of them, and had selected whom he pleased out of the mass, yet in majesty he would not immediately communicate grace to them but by Christ. There is a difference between man in innocency and man fallen. Man in innocency had immediate communion with God; God was present with

his image: but now man fallen needeth a mediator; our approaches to God are unhallowed, his presence to us is dreadful: 1 Cor. i. 30, 'Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' The heathens were sensible of the necessity of intermediate powers (it is strange, you will say), or else what shall we make of that, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6, 'For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many): but unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.'

[2.] In justice. Though God were resolved to show mercy to the fallen creature, yet he would carry on his act of grace in such a way that justice might be satisfied for sin: Rom. iii. 25, 26, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' Therefore, for satisfaction of his justice, he sent his Son into the world, that, taking our nature on him, he might therein suffer for our offences, and mediate a peace between God and fallen man; and that not by bare entreaty, but by satisfaction; therefore we are given to Christ. I confess it is hard to say that God by any necessity of nature required this satisfaction; the exercise of his justice is free, and falleth under no laws; but it was most convenient to preserve a due sense and apprehension of the Godhead.

[3.] In love and mercy. God was resolved that the heirs of salvation should infallibly be conducted to everlasting life; he would not be defeated of his purpose, and therefore would have them quickened by virtue of that power and life that was given to Christ. God would now deal with us upon sure terms, and take order sufficient for attaining his end, and therefore he would not trust us with any but his own eternal Son, that nothing might be wanting. There is not only a command laid upon us, but a command and a charge laid upon Christ. Christ is a good depository; of such care and faithfulness, that he will not neglect his Father's pledge; of such strength and ability, that nothing is able to wrest it out of his hands; of such love, that no work can be more willing to him; he loveth us far better than we do ourselves, or else he had never come from heaven for our sakes; of such watchfulness and care, that 'his eyes do always run to and fro throughout the earth, that he may show himself strong in the behalf of them that trust in him.' Providence is full of eyes, as well as strong of hand. Were we our own keepers we should soon perish; but Christ is charged, who is a loving, faithful, able keeper, who is resolved to preserve us safe, till he doth at the last day present us to the Father.

*Use.* 1. It informeth us of two things:—

1. Of the certainty of the elect's salvation. If the elect should not be saved, Christ should neither do his work nor receive his wages. How can they miscarry that are Christ's own charge? He hath such power that 'none can pluck them out of his hands,' John x. 28. He had need of a stronger arm than Christ that must do it. When you can pluck him out of the throne then he may lose his flock. He hath

grace enough to convert them: John x. 10, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly;' and he hath power enough to keep them; John x. 28, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.' Shall we say that the Son, though he hath power, wants will? This is blasphemy. He came down from heaven with this resolution: John vi. 38, 'I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.' Now, this is the Father's will, that they should come, and that they should not be lost; and it is meat to Christ to accomplish it: John iv. 34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' Now it is a rule, *Qui potest et vult, facit.* He that can do, and will do, doth it undoubtedly.

2. It informeth us of Christ's distinct and explicit notice of the elect.

[1.] Of their persons, he knoweth the definite number, all their names; he lieth in the Father's bosom, knoweth his secrets: 'He is worthy to open the book,' Rev. v. 4, 5; and he hath a register of his own, wherein their names are recorded: Rev. xiii. 8, 'Whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life.' Man by man, name by name, they are all written there; as the high priest carried their names in his breast, so doth Christ; thy name is engraven on his heart: John x. 3, 'He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.' 'Clement also, with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life,' Phil. iv. 3. John, Anna, Thomas, Clement, they are recorded; and Christ takes such special notice of them as if there were none other in the world.

[2.] Their condition and necessities, how obscure and poor soever they be in the account and reckoning of the world: Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him!' Poor soul! he is liable to such temptations, overwhelmed with such troubles, he crieth to me to help him. It was the theology of the Gentiles, *dii magna curant, parva negligunt*—that the divine powers did only take care of the great and weighty concernments of the world, but neglected the lesser: Isa. xl. 27, 'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?'

*Use* 2. It persuadeth us wholly and absolutely to resign up ourselves into Christ's hands. The Father is wiser than we; he knoweth well enough what he did, when he commendeth us to his Son. Let us give up bodies and souls to Christ, all that we have. Faith is often expressed by committing ourselves to Christ; it answereth the trust the Father reposed in him: 1 Peter iv. 19, 'Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.' The apostle knew what he did when he trusted Christ with his soul: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' Is thy soul laid a pledge in Christ's hands? It is no easy work. That we may know what it is, let me open it a little.

[1.] You must chiefly commit your souls to him. Most men lose

their souls to keep the body. That which a man chiefly looketh after is his jewels and precious things, in a dangerous time, to commit them to the custody of a friend. So a christian, whatever becometh of him in the world, he is careful to lay up his soul in Christ's hands, that it may be kept from sin and the consequents of sin. Alas! while we have it in our own keeping it will soon miscarry. Now concerning this committing the soul to Christ, let me observe:—

(1.) That this act is most sensible in time of deep troubles and death, when we carry our lives in our hands, trust Christ with your souls: Ps. xxxi. 5, 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.' So Christ: Luke xxiii. 46, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' Can we trust Christ, upon the warrant of the gospel, when troubles are nigh and fears of death? Lord, take my spirit; as Stephen, Acts vii. 59, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' We must do it in our life, especially as often as we renew covenant; but then most sensibly when we come to die. Jesus Christ is always the depository of souls; but when we come to die, or are in special troubles, then we are chiefly solicitous about our souls; as when a house is a-burning we are not careful about our lumber, but run to fetch our jewels to put them in a safe hand.

(2.) Whenever we do it, it must be an advised act. A man must be sensible of the danger he is in, of the many temptations to which he is exposed, what a sorry keeper he is of his own heart (Satan could fetch a prey out of paradise, Judas out of Christ's company), what abilities Christ hath: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' Presumption is a child of darkness; it cometh from ignorance and incogitancy. Faith is deliberate and advised; a christian can venture his soul upon Christ's grace notwithstanding infirmities, upon Christ's power notwithstanding temptations; this precious thing is daily in danger, yet I can trust it in Christ's hands; he that made it can best keep it, and guide us by his grace, and direct us in this dangerous passage.

(3.) It must still be accompanied with some confidence. We must be quieted: 'I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him.' We should not distrust when we have resigned ourselves to the care and tuition of his Spirit. Christ's charge will be safe from danger. It is our weakness to be full of doubts and fears. We may be assaulted, but we are safe in the Father's purpose and the Son's protection. Too much confidence in sanctification, and too little in justification, will unsettle us.

(4.) There must be a care of obedience: 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' 'Commit your souls to him in well-doing,' 1 Peter iv. 19. Sins will weaken trust; an impure soul cannot be committed to Christ's custody. Would we commit dung to a friend to keep? There must be a giving up ourselves to him in love, as well as committing ourselves to him in faith: John xii. 26, 'If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be.'

(5.) It must arise from a chief care of your souls. Most men are negligent herein; they watch over their goods, but neglect their souls, and lose their souls to keep these trifles. What account can they

make to God at the last day? These live as if they had no souls, and can they be said to commit their souls to God?

2. We must give up our bodies to him, and the conveniences of the body, to let him dispose of us according to his pleasure. We shall have a body at the last day, and that body will have glory enough; that falleth under Christ's charge: John vi. 39, 'This is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.' He that cannot do the lesser, it is impossible he should do the greater; he that will not trust God with his earthly substance, credit, estate, how will he trust God with his soul for eternal salvation? 'Which is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, and walk?' Mark ii. 9. It is more difficult to believe for salvation, but bodily inconveniences are more pressing and sensible. The welfare of the body must not be committed to wealth or wit, but to Christ. A christian is not troubled what shall become of him; he leaveth himself to Christ's disposal, which is the way to allay his cares and fears.

Thirdly, The third argument is what they had done, in the next clause, 'They have kept thy word.' Here is another reason, their obedience. He had mentioned what the Father had done, now what they had done. His ministry with them was not without success and fruit. This phrase, 'kept thy word,' is very significant; it implieth not only outward hearing, but knowledge: Mat. xiii. 23, 'He that receiveth the seed into good ground, is he that heareth the word and understandeth it,' &c. Nay, not only knowledge, but assent and believing, embracing the promises of the gospel: Luke viii. 15, 'Having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.' Not only assent, but the fruits of love and obedience: 1 John ii. 4, 'He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' Not only single obedience, but constant profession and perseverance: Prov. xvi. 20, 'My son, keep thy father's commandments, and forsake not the law of thy mother.' They have not failed as Judas. Now there is a twofold keeping of the word—a legal keeping and evangelical. The legal keeping is absolute and perfect obedience; if there be but the least failing, Moses accuseth and condemneth you. The evangelical keeping is filial and sincere obedience. Those imperfections Christ pardoneth, when he looketh back and seeth many errors and defects in life, as long as we bewail sin, seek remission, strive to attain perfection. All the commandments are accounted kept when that which is not done is pardoned.

'Thy word.'—He doth not say *my* word, but *thine*. He elsewhere referreth his doctrine to the Father: John vii. 16, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.' So here he mentioneth the divine authority of his doctrine.

1. Observe, Christ speaketh good of his people to his Father.' Satan is an accuser, he loveth to speak ill of believers; but Christ telleth his Father how his lambs thrive. It is a grief to your advocate when he cannot speak well of you in heaven, and say, 'They have kept thy word, I am glorified in them.' How grievous is it when your very advocate is forced to be an accuser! Isa. xlix. 4, 'I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought.' I have sent my gospel,

and it doth no good. It is Christ's complaint against the obstinacy of the Jews. Again, whom will you imitate, Christ or Satan? To slander and accuse is the devil's property; we should be more tender in divulging the infirmities of the saints; it is the devil's work. Christ, when he prayeth for his enemies, he mollifieth their crime, and softeneth it with a gentle interpretation: Luke xxiii. 34, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.' Christ excuseth, Satan accuseth.

2. Observe again, 'They have kept thy word.' Christ speaketh good of them, though they had many failings. The disciples often miscarried, were of weak faith, passionate when they met with disrespect: Luke ix. 54, 'Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?' But Christ returneth this general issue, 'They have kept thy word;' so James v. 11, 'Ye have heard of the patience of Job;' yea, and of his impatience too, when he cursed the day of his birth; but the Spirit of God putteth a finger on the scar. It is a ground of hope, notwithstanding many weaknesses and failings, Christ loveth not to upbraid us with infirmities. We commend with exceptions, and when we seem to praise we come in with a *but*, like a stab under the fifth rib; yea, we blast much good with a little evil, as flies only go to a sore place.

3. Observe, it is the duty of God's people to keep his word. It is the greatest commendation Christ could give his disciples, 'They have kept thy word.' Mark, christians, it is not your duty to hear the word only, but to keep it; not to know the word only, but to keep it. Rickets cause great heads and weak feet. We are not only to dispute of the word, and talk of it, but to keep it. We must neither be all ear, nor all head, nor all tongue, but the feet must be exercised. Now, what is it to keep the word? We are said to keep it when we watch over it, that it be not lost by ourselves, nor taken away by others. It noteth three things—that it must be impressed on our hearts, expressed in our lives, retained in our conversations.

[1.] To keep the word is to feel the force of it in our hearts, that our hearts may be more bent and set towards God, for else the word is lost to ourselves. A man may better his knowledge by the word, but yet he doth not keep it, nor feel the virtue and force of it. The brains may be warmed when the heart is not, and we may keep the notion when the motion is gone and lost. Oh! consider, we know God as we love him, we know him aright when we know him as we are known; he knoweth us to love us, to choose us, to gain us to himself and to Christ. So should we know him for our portion, to have no rest till we have an interest in Christ.

[2.] It must be expressed in our life: Luke xi. 28, 'Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.' To keep the law is to live according to the prescript of it.

[3.] There must be a perseverance to retain it in our conversations: Rev. iii. 18, 'Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.' Do we thus keep the word? All dependeth on it: John xiv. 15, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments.' Christ conjureth us by all the love we bear to him, ver. 23, 'If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and

make our abode with him.' If there be any faith in the heart, by which we esteem Christ, we must not only keep it in memory, but keep it in faith. Do you honour him in your lives. Can we venture anything to keep the word when the world would take our crown from us?

*Use.* We may know when Christ will speak good of us; not when we hear, and when we are taught, but when we keep the word: yet this we must do, understand and keep his word, not customs, not traditions of ancestors, nor fancies; we must receive his word as his word: 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.'

## SERMON X.

*Now they have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee.*—JOHN XVII. 7.

IN this verse there is another argument why he should be heard for the apostles, which may be taken either from the towardliness of the disciples, or the fidelity of Christ. The one is implied in the other; the towardliness of the apostles in discerning the divine nature and mission of Christ; the fidelity of Christ in referring all to his Father; 'they know it,' and 'I have taught it them;' for he urgeth not only their proficiency, 'they have known,' but his own faithfulness, he had glorified his Father in his doctrine. Both which are arguments; they that have made such progresses are to be respected; and I that have been faithful have deserved it in their behalf.

I shall first open the words.

'Now.'—Heretofore they were ignorant, but now I can say this for them, 'they have known,' &c.; as a schoolmaster, when he hath taught a child, looketh for his reward when the work is done.

'They have known.'—Things above reason are known by faith and revelation; by my teaching and illumination they are brought to conceive and acknowledge it; for he saith before, 'I have manifested thy name to the men that thou gavest me out of the world.'

'That all things whatsoever thou hast given me.'—It doth not refer to what he had received from God by eternal generation as the only-begotten Son of God, but to what he had in commission as mediator; and he saith, 'all things whatsoever,' as implying his authority over the world: ver. 2, 'Thou hast given him power over all flesh.' His interest in the elect, 'Thine they were, thou gavest them me,' ver. 6. His doctrine; it was given him in charge by the Father; Christ taught no other doctrine but what he received from his Father: John vii. 16, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.' It was not of his invention, but delivered according to the instruction received from his Father. His power to work miracles, that it was not by magical imposture, or the help of the devil, but by the power of God.

The pharisees would not believe it: Luke xi. 20, 'If I by the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you:' Mat. xii. 28, 'If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.' The imposition of the mediatory office: John vi. 69, 'We believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God;' John i. 41, 'We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.' The union of the two natures: 'That I came out from thee, and was sent from thee,' ver. 8. And the apostles knew this: Mat. xvi. 16, 'Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.' The apostles knew Christ to be very God and very man in one person; the veil of his human nature and natural infirmities did not hinder their eyes from seeing him.

'Are of thee;' that is, ratified by thee as the supreme judge; invented or found out by thee as the supreme author; all is from thy sovereign favour and gracious decree, flowing from thee as the supreme cause and power. Of thee as an author, of thee as a cause, of thee as a judge.

Observations.

1. Observe Christ's faithfulness to his Father, in two things—in revealing his mind; in referring all things to his glory. In revealing his mind, he acted according to his instructions: 'The doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me,' John xii. 50; 'Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.' In referring all things to his glory: John vii. 18, 'He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.' Now, if we would glorify God, we should learn of our Lord and master, not speak from our own fancy, nor to our own ends; either way we may be false prophets, when we speak false doctrine, or for wrong ends; the one leads the people into error, the other into formality, or a dead powerless course; though usually both are coupled together: Acts xx. 28, 'There shall arise from among you men speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them.' Perverse doctrine and a perverse aim are seldom severed; as a bow that is warped can hardly shoot right.

*Use* 1. Be persuaded of the truth of what you deliver, and look to your aims; the best of us know but in part, and are apt to err; and we are renewed but in part, and are apt to warp, and to look asquint on our own interests. Little do you know what strugglings we have to satisfy our own souls, and then regulate and guide our aims.

2. It is useful also to hearers. If you would glorify God, you must learn of Christ; not live according to your own wills, nor for your own interests. The end falleth under a rule as well as the action. You are not to be led by fancy, but scripture; not to aim at your own profit, but God's glory. It is hard to say which is worst, to baulk the rule or pervert the end. He that doth evil with a good aim maketh the devil serve God, though ignorantly and sinfully; but he that doth good with an evil aim maketh God serve the devil; 'you make me to serve with your iniquities.' It is sad to wrong God, as the highest sovereign, by breaking a law upon any pretence whatsoever; and it is worse to wrong God as the utmost end: the one is the effect of

ignorance, the other of disobedience. Natural light showeth that the supreme cause must be the utmost end. A man may err in a positive law; but this is the standing law of nature and reason, that all our endeavours should be to God.

2. Observe, the proficiency of the apostles in Christ's school; they knew that all things whatsoever was given him, was of God. At first they were rude and ignorant; and Christ saith, 'Now they know;' and they had many disadvantages; they were conscious to all the natural weaknesses which Christ discovered in his conversation, his hunger, thirst, weariness; and yet 'they have known,' &c. How did they come to know this? I answer—Partly by the internal light of the Holy Ghost: Mat. xvi. 16, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;' ver. 17, 'And Jesus answered, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' The saving knowledge of Christ's person and offices cannot be gotten but by special revelation from God; we must see God as we see the sun, by his own beam and light. Partly by the consideration of his miracles, in which some beams of the Godhead did shine forth, and by which his human nature was, as it were, counterbalanced: John iii. 2, 'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost except God be with him.' Partly by special observation of the singularity and excellency that was in Christ's person, his conversation, miracles, doctrine, which made his testimony more valuable, and in a rational way served to beget respect to him, and a human belief that he was a person of great holiness and strict innocence, without partiality: Mark xii. 14, 'Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth.' With such fidelity as to God; he came not in his own name: John v. 42, 'I am come in my Father's name.' With such grace and authority: Mat. vii. 29, 'The people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' All he did was with heavenly majesty and authority; a sovereign majesty was to be seen in Christ's teaching, proper to himself. Besides his faithfulness as a minister, with such clearness, evidence, and demonstration, there was sufficient declaration to the world, at his baptism: Mat. iii. 17, 'Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' agreeing with the prophecy of him, Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect, in whom my soul delighteth.' At his transfiguration before three persons, that for the holiness of their lives were of great credit, Mat. xvii. 5. Before all his disciples, John xii. 28, 'Father, glorify thy name: then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' To the world, at his resurrection, Acts xvii. 31, 'Whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' To which resurrection the Jews were conscious. Those that reported it wrought miracles; these men sought not themselves, had no advantage, but visible hazards; their witness was agreeable to the writings of the prophets; the doctrine built on it very satisfactory; there is in it what every religion pretendeth to, though in a higher way. Though miracles are now ceased, yet it is

confirmed by the truth of the word; God continually confirmeth it by the seal of the Spirit, and there is an inward certioration, whereby believers are satisfied: John xviii. 37, 'For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth: every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice;' that is, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, receiveth and believeth it; but those that have a mind to wrangle, God will not satisfy. And then for his miracles, they were not miracles of pomp and ostentation, not destructive miracles, but actions of relief. When the pharisees said, 'He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils,' Mat. xii. 24, he proveth that his main aim was to cast out Satan: ver. 26, 'If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself.' Would Satan consent that his kingdom should fall? He would not go to dispossess himself. All his aim was to promote holiness and the kingdom of God.

I note this:—

[1.] That you may know that the apostles had sufficient means to convince the world of the certainty of the christian doctrine. The inward testimony of the Spirit, the apostles would not allege it; by miracles and rational probabilities they were fitted to deal with the world, and to appear as witnesses for him, when they were to give an account: Acts v. 32, 'And we are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.' This inward witness is proper to believers; the other may be alleged to infidels. By the Spirit is meant there a power to work miracles.

[2.] That you may know the way of God's working with men, usually all these three concur to the working of faith—there is the light of the Spirit, external confirmation, and the use of fit instruments.

(1.) The light of the Spirit, without which there can be no grace nor faith: 1 John v. 6, 'It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is true;' that is, that word which the Spirit himself hath revealed is truth, for he is not only the author and inditer of the word, but the witness; he worketh in the hearts of the faithful, so that he persuadeth them of the truth of the word.

(2.) There is external confirmation. Though miracles cease, yet we have the testimony and consent of the church, who by undoubted and authentic rolls hath communicated her experience to us, which is visibly confirmed by the providence of God, not suffering the truth to be oppressed.

(3.) There is the use of fit instruments, specially gifted for this purpose. Though the effect of the word doth mainly depend on the Spirit, yet there is a ministerial efficacy in the messengers: Acts xiv. 1, 'They so spake, that a multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.' Not that the faith of the hearers doth merely depend upon the excellency of the preacher; yet certain it is that one way of preaching may be more fit to convert than another, both in regard of matter and form. Pure doctrine, for the matter, is more apt to convert than that which is mixed with falsehood: as pure water cleanseth better than foul, and good food nourisheth better than that which is in part tainted. He that can divide the word aright, and prudently apply it, is more powerful to work than he that seeth by an half light, or presseth truth loosely, and not with judgment and

solidity. Not as if they could infallibly convert, but they are more likely; they do not carry the grace of conversion in their mouths. Then for the form, with more plainness, clearness, strength of argument. God hath given to some gifts above others, not to bind himself to them, but in the way of instruments they are more powerful, though the weakest gifts are not to be despised. And in the quality of the persons, holy persons are more polished shafts in God's quiver.

[3.] I observe it to press you to regard all these things—

(1.) The power of the Spirit, if you would profit in Christ's school. The watering-pot will do nothing without the sun, nor the word without his testimony: 1 Cor. iii. 7, 'So then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.' The Spirit is to confirm truth to you by way of witness and argument. By way of witness: 1 John v. 7. 'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.' There is a secret persuasion, especially when you are reading and hearing, that insinuateth itself with your thoughts; doubtless this is the word of God: Acts xvi. 14, 'Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to those things that were spoken by Paul.' By way of argument; working such things, from whence you may conclude it is God's word: John viii. 32, 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' When ye are freed from the bondage of sin, then ye are enlightened to see the truth of the gospel; by experience ye shall know the truth.

(2.) Take in the advantage of external confirmation. By miracles Christ's testimony was made valuable to the apostles. You have not only authentic records, wherein these miracles are recorded, which as a history may be believed, but the testimony of the church, which hath experience of the truth and power of the gospel for many ages; the lives of the godly, who are called God's witnesses, 1 Cor. xiv. 26; the providences of God in delivering his church, in their miraculous preservations: Ps. lviii. 11, 'Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.' Answers of prayer grounded on the word. Upon all these grounds practise upon this truth, that Christ came out from God.

(3.) Choose out to yourselves faithful teachers, such as Christ was, delivering the word with authority and faithfulness to God and men; such as do not seek their own things, fear no man's face, and come with the powerful evidence and demonstration of the Spirit. And indeed ministers should be careful to manifest themselves to the consciences of those with whom they deal, that they may have 'a testimony of Christ speaking in them,' 1 Cor. xv. 3, that he teacheth in and by them; they should be assured of their doctrine, that Christ brought it out of his Father's heart, not speaking by rote like parrots: 1 John i. 1, 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life;' that which our hearts have felt, that which we have not by rote, not by guess, but by experience: 1 Tim. vi. 13, 'Jesus Christ, witnessed before Pontius Pilate a good confession.'

3. Observe Christ's gentleness in bearing with their failings: 'Now they have known.' It was a long time ere they could be gained to a

sense of his divine power, therefore he chargeth them with hardness of heart, 'Mark vi. 52, 'They considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were hardened.' So Mark viii. 17, 'Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your hearts yet hardened?' And now, in his intercession to his Father, he mentioneth not their hardness, nor the obstinacy of their prejudices, nor their present weakness, but their knowledge: 'Now they know;' they have been obstinate, but he covereth that, at least doth but imply it. How willing is Christ to spread a garment on our nakedness! Past sins shall not hurt us when they do not please us. When a man turneth from grace to sin, then all his righteousness is forgotten: Ezek. xviii. 24, 'All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.' So he that turneth from sin to grace, or from grace to grace: ver. 22, 'All his trangressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him;' it is all undone by repentance and reformation. How do men differ from Christ! We upbraid men with past failings, when they are repented of. It is hard to put off the reproach of youth; when God maketh them vessels of mercy, they will not suffer them to be vessels of honour; *Hi homines invident mihi gratiam divinam.* As the elder brother upbraideth the reformed prodigal: Luke xv. 30, 'As soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.' This is an envious disposition, and cross to God; you go about to take off the robes of honour which God hath put upon them, and to despoil them as the spouse was of her ornaments.

4. Observe what is the chief object of faith; to believe the divine authority and commission of Christ, and that his power to dispense salvation to the creatures was given him from his Father. There is a world of comfort in this. The Father, being first in order of the persons, is to be looked upon as the offended party, and as the highest judge.

[1.] He is to be looked upon as the offended party. All sin is against God: Ps. li. 4, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.' He had offended Uriah, abused Bathsheba; the injury was against them, but the sin against God: 'against thee, thee only.' This may be referred to all the persons, but it chiefly concerneth the first person, to whom we direct our prayers, and who is the maker of the law. Christ, the second person, satisfied for the breach of it: 'It is against thee, thee only.' Now this is our comfort, that our guilt and sin was not cast on Christ's person without the Father, without his privity and consent; nay, it is his own plot and design; it was the Father's counsel, rather than the creature's desire. So that we may quiet our consciences by that promise, Isa. xliii. 25, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own name's sake.' God the Father would have you look to him as one that hath only to do in this matter. Sin is a grief to the Spirit, it is a crucifying of Christ; but in the last result of it, it is an offence to God the Father, because it is a breach of his law. God is the fountain of the divinity; yea, all that is done to the other persons redoundeth to the Father, as our Saviour reasoneth: 'He that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.'

[2.] The Father is the highest judge. All the persons of the Godhead are co-essential, and co-equal in glory and honour; only in economy or dispensation of salvation, the Father is to be looked upon as judge and chief. Man is the debtor, Christ the surety, and the Father the judge before whose tribunal the satisfaction is to be made; therefore Christ saith, 'My Father is greater than I.' And in the whole work of our redemption he is to be considered as a superior; therefore all the addresses, not only of the creatures, but of the Son of God himself, are to his Father for pardon, as if it were not in his own single power: Luke xxiii. 34, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.' If it passeth with God the Father, then the business is ended. So 1 John ii. 1, Christ is said to be 'an advocate with the Father,' as supreme in court, as the advocate is beneath the judge. So John xiv. 16, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you the Comforter:' pardon, comfort, and grace cometh from the Father. It is true, it is said, Mat. ix. 6, 'that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins;' but it is by commission from the Father, as we shall see anon. Well, then, the Father is the supreme judge: whatever passeth in his name is valid and authoritative. Now it is he that committed the work of redemption to Christ; he is the supreme judge. Eli saith, 1 Sam. ii. 25, 'If one man sinneth against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?' The meaning is, if one man hath trespassed against another, the magistrate may take up the controversy, by executing justice, and causing the delinquent to make satisfaction to the party offended; but who shall state the offence, and compose the difference between God and us? The sin is committed against the judge himself, the highest judge, from whom there is no appeal; no satisfaction can be made by mortal men, and no person is fit to arbitrate the difference. Therefore God himself is pleased to find out a remedy; and in all that the Son did, he hath a great hand and stroke in it. The Father's act is authoritative and above contradiction. If he had not given us a mediator out of his own bosom, we had for ever lain under the guilt and burden of our sins. This had its rise from the grace and mercy of the Father.

But let us see what the Father doth in the business of our redemption, that we may with comfort look upon Christ as a constituted authorised mediator by the decree and counsel of heaven.

(1.) As the supreme author, it was the Father's contrivance and motion to Christ to regard the case of sinners: I look, and there is no intercessor; I see there is none fit to go between fallen man and me. Son, you shall take their case in hand. And therefore he is said to give Christ: John iii. 16, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.' In the purpose of his thoughts to send Christ: Gal. iv. 4, 'When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.' I shall open it in the next verse. To sanctify him: John x. 36, 'Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world?' &c. To consecrate him for the great work of redemption; as when a thing is set apart for divine uses and purposes, it is said to be sanctified; so was Christ sanctified when he was set apart for the work of redemption. Nay, to seal him:

John vi. 37, 'Him hath God the Father sealed;' a metaphor taken from those who give commissions under hand and seal. Christ is a mediator confirmed and allowed under the broad seal of heaven. So Heb. x. 5, 'A body hast thou prepared for me;' and ver. 7, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God;' as if God had set down in a book a draft and model of his designs, and then showed it to Christ.

(2.) As the supreme cause, in whom divine power was eternally resident, he assisteth Christ in the accomplishment of this work, and qualifieth him for his office, with power and mercy. Christ in his own person would show us the fountain from whence all mercies do arise: Ps. xlv. 7, 'He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.' The Father is not only said to beget him, but to anoint him. His compassionate spirit he received from the Holy Ghost: Luke iv. 18, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel,' &c. God gave him tenderness and bowels to poor broken-hearted sinners. So for power and strength: John v. 19, 'The Son of man can do nothing of himself,' as separate and distinct from the Father; not out of any weakness, but because of the unity of the essence, as God, and on the federal agreement, as mediator.

(3.) As supreme judge, he appointeth his sufferings, and the measure of the satisfaction he was to make: Acts iv. 28, 'To do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' Whatever men did to him, it was by his hand and counsel. We must look to a higher court, from God's providence to God's decree. If it had been done without his knowledge and consent, nothing would have been done for our salvation: 'Him being delivered, ἔκδοτος, by the determinate counsel of God, ye have taken,' Acts ii. 23; a word taken from alms to beggars. We wanted a price for our redemption, and God gave it out of his own treasury: Rom. iv. 25, 'He was delivered for our offences;' a metaphor taken from a judge who delivereth up the malefactor into the hands of the executioner. Christ was delivered by God as our surety, one that by his decree was to be responsible to his justice for man's sin. The Father was to reward him for this by raising him from the dead, and to give him leave to return to his own glory; therefore he asketh leave to return to heaven, ver. 5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' After the price and ransom was paid, the Father was to give Christ a power to rise from the dead, and to go into heaven. There is *potestas* and *potentia*, δύναμις, ἐξουσία. Christ had power in himself, and leave from the Father; till the Father should declare himself to be satisfied, Christ was not to be dismissed from punishment. Our surety was not to break prison, but honourably to be brought out by the judge, for this was the assurance God would give the world: Acts xvii. 31, 'He will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' It is not only an effect of the divine power, but an act of divine justice. And being raised up, he is to be crowned with glory and honour, as having abundantly done his work for the salvation of creatures: Heb. ii. 9, 'We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and

honour.' The Father's heart was so taken with it, that he honoureth Christ for this reason. And again, he giveth power and authority to save sinners: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' He hath raised him up to be a prince of salvation. Here is the end of all, that Christ as mediator might be in a capacity to bring souls to heaven. And in this work there is a constant co-operation of the divine power; 1 Cor. i. 30, 'Of God he is made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' All the emanations of grace come originally from the Father, in and through Christ, to all his members.

*Use* 1. Comfort. What would have become of us, if the Father himself had not found out such a remedy? God had power to punish sins in our own person, he needed no mediator. To save sinners is not *proprietas divinæ naturæ*, but *opus liberi consilii;* it dependeth on God's appointment; and if Christ had been a mediator only by the vote of the creature, he might have been refused: Exod. xxxii. 33, 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.' There is much in the Father's act. Now God hath given Christ a faculty to this purpose; when we go to God, we may offer a mediator authorised by himself: Thou hast sent thy blessed Son to be a mediator for me: 2 John 9, 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son.' You may urge it upon your fears and suggestions of Satan. God is not only the wronged party, but supreme judge; it is no matter what Satan saith, or your own hearts say, if the Lord hath said he will accept sinners in Christ: Rom. viii. 33, 34, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.' Who can condemn? Satan may say, I can; and conscience, I can. God, whose act is sovereign, doth acquit. God hath so great an interest in Christ, that he can deny him nothing: John xiv. 31, 'That the world may know that I love the Father.' He will be the sinner's surety for his Father's sake.

*Use* 2. Glorify God the Father; it is the end of the whole dispensation of grace. Glorify him in your expectations; the Father himself loveth you. Glorify him in your enjoyments, all is 'from the Father of lights,' James i. 17. There is no defect in Christ: John xvii. 23, 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.' God hath loved him, not only as his own Son, but our saviour: John x. 17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.'

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## SERMON XI.

*For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*—JOHN XVII. 8.

CHRIST in this verse further explaineth the argument that was urged before, which was taken from their proficiency in his school, and that

they had a right sense of and faith in the dignity and quality of his person. This faith is set forth by all the requisites of it.

First, The means by which it is wrought; that is, the word, the doctrine given to him by his Father, and by him to his apostles: *for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.*

Secondly, The nature of faith, which consisteth in knowledge and acceptation: *they have known surely, and they have believed them.* Ἀῆψις and γνῶσις are the two acts of faith.

Thirdly, The object of faith, the mission of Christ, and his coming out from the Father: *that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou hast sent me.*

*First*, I begin with the means of faith: 'For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.' The only difficulty is how the word was given unto Christ. Some think it is meant of the divine and infinite knowledge and wisdom which was communicated to Christ by eternal generation; but that is very improper, *quœcunque Christo dantur, secundum humanitatem dantur.* It is meant of that giving which Christ had as mediator, as the ambassador hath his instructions according to which he is to act. Now saith Christ, I have taught them according to the instructions which I received as mediator. These are said to be given, to be infused and revealed to his human soul.

1. Observe, the word is the proper means to work faith. We see here the apostles had no other means of salvation than Christ's word; when Christ giveth an account of their faith, he doth not mention his miracles, but his doctrine. Again, he doth not speak only of the internal manifestation of the Spirit, 'I have manifested thy name;' but also of the outward revelation, 'I have given to them the words which thou gavest me.' We have a general saying, Rom. x. 17, 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' This is the usual method and way of grace's working; God will insinuate the efficacy of his Spirit by outward counsel and instruction, and by the ear transmit his grace to the heart, that he might work *fortiter, suaviter.*

*Use* 1. It reproveth the folly of two sorts of men; there are some that think the word cannot work unless it be accompanied with miracles, and others that think the Spirit will work without the word.

1. Those that think the word will not work without miracles, and therefore expect a reviving of miracles, to authorise that ministry which they mean to receive. Vain thoughts! In the primitive times, when miracles were in force, we read of some converted by the word without miracles, but of none converted by miracles without the word: Acts xi. 20, 21, 'Some of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.' They wrought no signs, only preached the Lord Jesus. There is not one instance in the whole word of any one converted by a single miracle. It is natural to us to idolise visible helps and confirmations. Those mentioned Acts xi. were not apostles, but private brethren, who in that extraordinary time used their gifts, and were successful.

2. Those that expect the illapses of the Spirit, without waiting upon the word. It is true God can work immediately, but the question is about

his will. God is not tied to means, but we are bound and tied. God may use his liberty, but this doth not dissolve our duty and obligation; we are to lie at the pool, if we expect the stirring of the waters. There is a great deal of difference between the want of means and the contempt of them. I should always suspect that grace that is wrought in us in the neglect of the means. The regular way of faith is by the word; it hath pleased God to consecrate it. God could have converted the eunuch without Philip, but we are to submit to his will. Paul that received his consternation miraculously, had his confirmation from Ananias; Christ had preached him into terror from heaven, but he sendeth him to Ananias for comfort.

*Use* 2. It stirreth us up to attend upon the word; it is God's instrument: Rom. i. 16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth;' the meaning is, it is a powerful instrument to work faith; as the first sermon that ever was preached, after the pouring out of the Spirit, converted three thousand souls. An angel could slay a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in a night by his own natural strength; but it is easier to kill so many men than to convert one soul. All the angels in heaven, if they should join all their forces together, they could not convert one soul to God; but yet this power will God discover in the ministry and co-operation of weak men. Those that do not delight to hear the word have no mind to see the miracles of grace. The power is of God, yet it is wonderfully joined with the word; it is not enclosed in it, but sent out together with it when God pleaseth. It is God's ordinance, and under the blessing of an institution.

2. Observe, again, the certainty of christian doctrine. The word delivered to the apostles was received from the Father by Christ. It was no invention of his own, but brought out of the bosom of the Father: John vii. 16, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.' So John xiv. 10, 'The words that I speak, I speak not of myself;' that is, not as mediator. It was prophesied of Christ, who was the great prophet of the church: Deut. xviii. 18, 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.' Christ said, 'his Father gave it him.' Christ was consecrated prophet of the church by the Trinity: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' There was the Father's voice, the Holy Ghost as a dove, and the Son was there in person.

*Use.* Which should stablish us the more in the truth, and is a pattern to ministers. It is excellent when we can say, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me;' or, as Paul, 'That which I received of the Lord I have delivered to you,' 1 Cor. xi. 23.

3. Observe, among the things which the Father gave to the Son, one of the chiefest is the doctrine of the gospel. Let us look upon it as a gift; the Father gave it, the Son gave it. Here is a double gift; it was a gift from the Father to Christ, and from Christ to the apostles: 'I have given them the word which thou gavest me.' Next to Christ the gospel is the greatest benefit which God hath given to men. He that despiseth the gospel, despiseth the very bounty of God, and men cannot endure to have their love and bounty despised. As when David

sent a courteous message to Nabal, and he was refused, he threatened to 'cut off from Nabal every one that pisseth against the wall.' Take heed you despise not God's special gifts. The preaching of the word, it was Christ's largest in the day of his royalty: Eph. iv. 8, 11, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;' as princes, when crowned, have their royal donatives. Those that grudge at the ministry, and count it a burden, they do in effect upbraid Christ with his gift, as if it were not worth the giving. Those that labour in the ministry, are his especial gift to us. They are but sottish swine that trample such pearls under feet. We should think of them as the special favours of Christ. I do not speak of the persons, but the calling. This disposition showeth no love to Christ.

*Secondly*, The next thing is the nature of faith. There are two things spoken of in the text—γνῶσις and λῆψις, 'they have received them, and have known surely.'

First, I begin with the latter, in order of words, as first in order of nature, ἔγνωσαν ἀληθῶς, 'they have known surely.' The word ἀληθῶς, which signifieth truly, surely, is used to exclude that literal historical knowledge which may be in carnal men.

1. Observe, faith cannot be without knowledge. It is not a blind assent: Rom. x. 14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' We must know what Christ is before we can trust him with our souls: 1 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed.' We must see the stay and prop before we lean upon it, otherwise we shall neither be satisfied in ourselves, nor be able to plead with Satan, nor answer doubts of conscience. He that is impleaded in court, and doth not know the privileges of the law, how shall he be able to purge himself? Fears are in the dark. The blind man spoke reason in that conference between Christ and him, when Christ asked him, 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?' John ix. 35, 36. We must know what God is. Till we have a distinct knowledge of the nature of God, and the tenor of the covenant, we shall be full of scruples. Well then—

*Use* 1. It discovereth the wretched condition of ignorant persons. We are not so sensible of the danger of ignorance as we should be. God will render vengeance 'to them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel,' 2 Thes. i. 8. Poor wretches! they live sinfully and die sottishly; they live sinfully, they are under no awe of conscience, because they have no knowledge; and when they come to die, they die sottishly; like men that leap over a deep gulf blindfold, they know not where their feet shall light. In their lifetime, at best they live but by guess and some devout aims; and when they come to die, they die by guess, in a doubtful, uncertain way.

*Use* 2. To press christians to gain more distinct knowledge, if you would settle your souls in a certainty of salvation. God may lay trouble of conscience upon a knowing person; but usually persons ignorant are full of scruples, which vanish before the light as mists do before the sun.

2. Observe, they know surely. In the knowledge of faith there is an undoubted certain light. It dependeth upon two things that cannot

deceive us—the revelation of the word, and the illumination of the Spirit. The knowledge of faith is less than the light of glory for clearness, but equal for certainty; it hath as much assurance from God's word, though not so much evidence as ariseth from enjoyment.

3. Observe, they know ἀληθῶς, truly, indeed. Every kind of knowledge is not enough for faith, but a true, sound knowledge. There is a form of knowledge as well as a form of godliness; Rom. ii. 20, compared with 2 Tim. iii. 5. A form of knowledge is nothing else but an artificial speculation, a naked model of truth in the brain, which, like a winter sun, shineth, but warmeth not.

But let us a little state the differences.

[1.] The light of faith is serious and considerate. Faith is a spiritual prudence, it is opposed to folly as well as ignorance: Luke xxiv. 25, 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have said!' Faith always draweth to use and practice. It is a knowledge with consideration: Eph. i. 17, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.' Many have parts, but they have not wisdom to make the best choice for their souls. There is a great deal of difference between knowledge and prudence; it is excellent when both are joined together: 'I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,' Prov. viii. 12. Wisdom is the knowledge of principles, prudence is an ability to use them to our comfort. Knowledge is settled in the brain, not the heart. When wisdom 'entereth into thy heart,' Prov. ii. 10, it stirreth up esteem, affiance, love. A carnal man may have a model of truth, a traditional disciplinary knowledge, such as lieth in generals, not particulars, and is rather for discourse than life. A vintner's cellar may be better stored than a nobleman's; he hath wines, not to taste, but sell; a carnal man hath a great deal of knowledge for discourse, not to warm his own heart.

[2.] The light of faith is a realising light, ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων, 'Faith is in the evidence of things not seen,' Heb. xi. 1; it maketh absent things present to the soul. But the light of parts is a naked, abstract speculation, it is without feeling, there is no sense and feeling of the things apprehended. True knowledge is expressed by tasting; 1 Peter ii. 5, 'If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' Tasting implieth more than seeing; there is not only apprehension, but experience: Phil. i. 9, 'I pray God that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, ἐν πάσῃ αἰσθήσει, in all sense. To others it is but an empty barren, notion: Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,' that is, experimentally. Carnal men have no feeling of the force of the truths they apprehend, only now and then some fleeting joys; it is not realising and affective. Strong water and running water differ not in colour, but in taste and virtue. They may know the same truths, but it differeth in relish; they know the things of God only as things in conceit, not in being.

[3.] The light of faith is wrought by the Spirit, this but a hearsay, knowledge gathered out of books and sermons; they shine with a borrowed light, as the moon that is dark in itself, and hath no light rooted in its own body. These shine with other men's light: John

iv. 42, 'Now we believe, not for thy saying, but we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' Men talk of things by rote after others, and are rather said to rehearse than understand; it is not written in their hearts, but only reported to their ears: Heb. viii. 10, 'I will write my law in their hearts.' Truth is written there by the finger of the Spirit, to others it is but traditional, learned as other arts by man. Now there is a great deal of difference between seeing God in the light of the Spirit, and seeing God and the things of God by the reports of men, as between seeing countries in a map, or book of geography, and knowing them by travel and experience.

[4.] It is a transforming light: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We all as in a glass beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Looking upon the image of Christ, we are changed into the same image and likeness, from glory to glory; as Moses his face shone. Conversing with Christ, it altereth and changeth the soul, which is hereby 'renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,' Col. iii. 10. That is no true light and knowledge of God that doth not bridle lusts and purify the heart; a wicked man's knowledge, it is light without fire, directive, not persuasive: 1 John ii. 3, 4, 'Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;' it is a lie and pretence; unactive light is but darkness. In paradise there was a tree of life and a tree of knowledge; many taste of the tree of knowledge that never taste of the tree of life.

[5.] The light of faith is an undoubted certain light, but in wicked men it is always mingled with doubting, ignorance, error, and unbelief. It is not convictive, but a loose, wavering opinion, not a settled, grounded persuasion; they have not 'the riches of the assurance of understanding,' Col. ii. 2; that dependeth on experience, and inward sense of the truth, and is wrought by the Holy Ghost. And therefore the apostle speaketh of the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit: 1 Cor. ii. 4, ἐν ἀποδείξει τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως, 'in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.' Ἀποδείξις is a clear, convincing argument, by which the judgment is settled; it cometh in upon the soul with evident confirmation.

Secondly, The next thing in the nature of faith is λῆψις: 'I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them.' There is a receiving Christ and a receiving the word. Sometimes the act of faith is terminated on the person of Christ; as John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name.' Sometimes on the promises; to show that as there is no closing with Christ without the promise, so there is no closing with the promise without Christ; first we receive the word of Christ, and then Christ himself, and in Christ life and salvation; that is the progress of faith: Acts x. 42, 'Through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.'

Observe that faith is a receiving the word of Christ. The notion is elsewhere used: Acts ii. 41, 'Then they that gladly received the

word were baptized.' Unbelief, it is a rejecting the counsel of the word, and faith a receiving it. Unbelief is thus described: Acts xiii. 46, 'Since ye put away the word of God from you.' So Luke vii. 30, 'But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves;' that is, refused the counsel of God, to their own loss and ruin. On the contrary, when Cornelius was converted, it is said, Acts xi. 1, 'The apostles heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.' So that we may describe faith with reference to this act, a motion in the heart of man, stirred up by the Spirit of God, to receive the whole word of God.

Let me open it a little.

1. Receiving is a relative word, and supposeth an offer. God offereth on his part, and we receive on ours. As in all contracts and covenants between party and party, one party offereth such an advantage or commodity upon such conditions, the other receiveth the offer, consenteth to the conditions, and expecteth that the covenant should be made good; so in the covenant of grace, Christ offereth remission of sins, and the whole blessings of the gospel, under the condition of faith and repentance. We are said to receive this word, or this gospel, when we consent to the conditions, and wait for the accomplishment of the blessing; we are willing to come to trust him for the grace of the covenant, and to come under the bond of the duty of it.

2. In this receiving, the soul must be convinced that it is the word of God, and that he will deal with creatures upon such a covenant. For in this covenant it is not as it is in other contracts; the party contracting doth not appear in person, but dealeth with us by officers and substitutes. God tendereth his covenant by the ministry of man. Now, whosoever would receive it in God's name, must be undoubtedly persuaded that they are commissioned and authorised by God to tender such a covenant to us. Therefore the apostle saith, 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'When ye received the word which ye have heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' A man that would profit by the ministry must settle himself in this persuasion, that the doctrines delivered in scripture have God for their author. We come in God's stead, to strike up a bargain with you for your souls; this bindeth the ear to attention, the mind to faith, the heart to reverence, the will and conscience to obedience. We are to entertain all the doctrines of the word, without any suspense of judgment and contradiction. We are to put to our seal to Christ's testimony: John iii. 33, 'He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.' Usually there is some privy atheism in us; we look upon the gospel as a golden dream, and well-devised fable. This is properly assent, and should be soundly laid. Lord, thou wilt not fail thy poor creatures, if they venture their souls on thy word.

3. The whole word must be received. In every covenant there is a precept as well as a promise. We mar the very form of it when we reflect on the promise, and neglect the precept. It is great error in them that think that receiving of the word is done when we apply the promises, as if nothing were needful to salvation but to say, I trust that my sins are forgiven me in Christ. The gospel hath not only

promises, but commands, conditions, and articles of the covenant, which are no less to be received than the promises. First, receive the commandment concerning repentance and conversion, with a resolution to cast thyself on Christ; and then be of good confidence, thy sins shall be forgiven thee. There is in faith not only an assent, but consent; assent to the truth of God, consent to the articles of the covenant; assent to the truth of the contract, consent to the terms, and affiance or confident waiting for the promise; all these are in faith. Hypocrites are said 'to receive the word with joy,' Luke viii. 13; but they received only the word of promise with joy. It is pleasing to the conscience to hear of pardon of sins. Men may have vanishing fleeting joys. A carnal man would have God's grace, but he would have none of his counsel.

4. This must be received with all the heart. The work of faith is not confined to the acts of the understanding; there are some motions of the heart. Philip puts the eunuch to this trial, Acts viii. 37, 'Believest thou with all thy heart? and he said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' God is as careful of the duty of the gospel as of the duty of the law; he that required that we should love him with all our hearts hath also required that we should believe in him with all our hearts; he required the whole heart in love, and he expecteth the whole heart in faith.

Now, because this is the critical difference between true faith and counterfeit, I shall apply this receiving to both the objects of faith, the word and the person of Christ, because the doctrine concerning both is of near affinity, and the one is opened by the other. In receiving the person of Christ, there is the same method of the acts of faith as there is in receiving the word of God. (1.) There is an offer. Faith receiving, presupposeth an offering; we do not snatch at Christ, but receive him. Sinners snatch at Christ sometimes, when God's hand is not open to give him. (2.) We must look at this offering as made by God himself. Faith taketh Christ out of his Father's hands. (3.) We must take whole Christ, as Lord and Saviour; and (4.) We must take him with our whole hearts.

Therefore I shall explain this receiving with the whole heart in reference to both objects, the word and Christ.

First, What is it to receive the word with our whole hearts? There is nothing so difficult as to draw the acts of faith into a method.

1. It implieth an act of the will; there must not only be knowledge and acknowledgment that the doctrine is true, but an actual choice and a willing acceptation. Faith apprehendeth the covenant made in Christ, not only as true, but good; and so answerably there is not only a believing with the mind, but a believing with the heart: Rom. x. 10, 'With the heart man believeth.' The faculty answereth the object: 1 Tim. i. 15, 'This is a faithful saying,' *πιστὸς ὁ λόγος*, and then, *πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος*, 'worthy of all acceptation,' &c. So that there is required some motion of the heart, besides intellectual assent.

2. This act of the will is accompanied with some sensible affection: Heb. xi. 13, *ἀσπασάμενοι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας*, 'they embraced the promises;' they hugged and clasped about, and embraced the promises. All acts of faith do necessarily imply answerable affections. The

children of God embrace the promises with delight, receive the threatenings with trembling and reverence, and the commandments with all cheerfulness: Acts ii. 41, 'Then they that received the word gladly,' ἀσμένως, not as a people that are overcome receive laws from the conqueror, or as Zipporah circumcised her child, with grudging and discontent, but with hearty and cheerful consent. I confess there is, and ever will be, an opposition of the flesh: a man doth not receive the whole word as a thirsty man receiveth sweet drink, but as a sick man, or one that is thirsty after health receiveth physic, or a bitter potion, with an earnest serious desire, though his appetite loatheth it. There is a hearty consent to God's terms, because they know it will be for their welfare; as Laban, when he heard Jacob's proposals, 'What shall I give thee? the speckled and spotted among the flocks.' Gen. xxx. 34. Laban said, 'Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.' Oh! would to God that this were my share, that God would take up the quarrel between himself and me!

3. This affection is accompanied with a pursuit, or serious making after those hopes. There is a care and anxiousness of obedience, or taking the next course to speed, that we may find him, and feel him in our consciences: 'They received the word gladly, and were baptized,' Acts ii. 41. In every contract where the parties are agreed there is a signing and sealing; so 'they received the word,' and 'were baptized;' that was the next course to come under these hopes. A contract lieth void and dead if there be consent yet no performance. So 'faith without works is dead.' Faith is a consent to God's covenant, yet because there is no answerable obedience, this consent is void, and to no effect. Now this is the utmost extension of the will, in motions and addresses towards Christ. Faith is expressed by coming to Christ, *qui se dat in viam.* A man putteth himself into the way of salvation, upon a search and inquiry after Christ. We know not what will come of it, but we will continue seeking: 'I will go to my father.'

4. These endeavours are supported by affiance, or a resolution to wait upon God till the blessings of the covenant be accomplished and made good. Though they meet with difficulties, they keep wrestling with God: Gen. xxxii. 26, 'I will not let thee go unless thou bless me.' There is an obstinate purpose: Job xiii. 15, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' So they will have Christ, whatever it cost them: Phil. iii. 8, 9, 'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is after the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Faith may be shaken, but it will not lose its hold; as a tree groweth though it be bended with the wind. Thus you see what it is to receive the word with our whole heart: not only to acknowledge the truth of it, but to choose and accept it as our direction, with all cheerfulness, and accordingly make out after the hopes of christianity, resolving not to be discouraged, whatever entertainment we meet with from God and the world.

Secondly, There is a receiving Christ with the whole heart. Art thou willing to take Christ upon these terms? Yes, saith the soul,

with all my heart. This answer were enough, if it were simple and genuine. But because we profane and prostitute these words to every slight matter, the deceit is not so easily discovered. We are wont to say of every trifle, I love such a thing with all my heart; I will do it with all my heart; whereas these words are of a sacred sound and importance; and did not we adulterate them so often as we do, but keep them consecrate to God, to whom alone they are proper, the very pronouncing of them would awaken conscience; we could not give such an answer but conscience would give us the lie. Let us then inquire into the thing, and see a little in the nature of the thing (for there is no trust in the expression), what this believing in Christ with all the heart, or receiving Christ with all the heart, doth imply. I answer—

1. It implieth that your whole and sole dependence must be entirely carried out to him. God will have no rivals in the trust and confidence of the creature. A king in his progress, that takes up an inn, will have it wholly to himself, much less will he have any to share with him in his own bedchamber. So here, you must trust Christ alone with your welfare. We believe with our whole heart when we have such a persuasion of his sufficiency that we durst venture all in his hands; in matter of remission of sin we mind no confidence but in his grace: Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,' *ἀληθινῇ καρδίᾳ*, a heart that doth not secretly run out to other props and confidences. Truth and sincerity in believing is there intended, not in obedience. Faith is a simple single trust in God's mercy; the heart is very deceitful. Christ beareth the name, but the confidence is secretly built on our own merits; as those women in Isaiah, chap. iv. 1, 'We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name.' People will say they trust in Christ alone, and yet secretly rest on their own innocency and good meanings. But most sensibly this perverseness of trust is discovered in matters of providence; those that put half their trust in Christ, and half in the world, do not believe with their whole hearts. They pretend they can trust Christ for pardon, grace, and glory, and yet cannot trust him for a morsel of bread; they find no difficulty in believing in Christ for salvation and remission of sins, and yet cannot believe that he will give them daily bread. What should be the reason? Heaven and pardon of sins are greater mercies, and, if conscience were opened, we should see the difficulty to obtain them to be greater. There are more natural prejudices, but bodily wants are more pressing to a conscience not sufficiently convinced. And here faith is presently to be exercised with difficulties. In matters of grace, men are more slight and inconsiderate, and content themselves with some general cold persuasions, and therefore do not believe with their whole hearts. Alas! temporal salvation is more easy. Can you look for heaven, who cannot trust him for a crust of bread? Do you know what it is to venture your souls in Christ's hands, notwithstanding sins, notwithstanding death, and yet soon despond in time of danger, and when outward means of preservation fail?

2. To receive Christ with the whole heart is to receive him as an all-sufficient saviour, when every faculty seeketh contentment in Christ.

We ought not only to acknowledge him to be the true mediator, but to choose and receive him for our all-sufficient portion. Worldly men look to Christ as fit for their consciences, but look to the world as an object for their affections. Now Christ should not only pacify the conscience, but satisfy the heart. We should come to him, not only as a physician to heal our wounds, but as a husband to satisfy and content our love, as a meet object for our affections. The whole soul is to clasp about him. He is not only good in a way of profit, but amiable in a way of excellency; therefore the whole heart is to be given him. The things of the world are good but for one thing; food is good to satisfy the appetite, yet we must have clothes to warm the back. But Christ is good for all things; he is not only the physician of the soul, but the beloved: Ps. lxxiii. 25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee;' since there is none so fit to match and wed their affections.

3. To receive him with the whole heart is to make after him with the earnest motions and lively affections of the soul, as desire and delight. Carnal men have a naked imaginary persuasion, but no lively affections to Christ, unless it be for a very small while. They never felt the bitterness of sin, and so have not such vehement and strong motions of heart towards Christ. Conviction of conscience differeth much from literal assent. Carnal men have a literal assent, and a speculative delight in contemplation, but not such labour and travail of soul to get an interest in Christ. Swimming is for life and death; it is not a work proper for him that standeth on firm land, but for those that are ready to be swallowed up of the waves. Nor have they such delight; a stomach always full knoweth not the sweetness of bread. Christ relisheth only with troubled consciences.

*Use* of the whole. Well, then, you see that there is required to faith, γνῶσις and λῆψις, knowledge and receiving.

1. *Γνῶσις*, knowledge. There is a knowledge before faith, in faith, and after faith. Before faith; a man must know what he believes, or else he cannot believe. See scriptures: John x. 38, 'That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;' 1 John iv. 16, 'We have known, and have believed the love that God hath to us;' John vi. 69, 'We know and believe that thou art Christ.' We must first know before we can believe. In faith there is a knowledge, an apprehension as well as discourse, a pregnant apprehension. Faith is a clear light, it freeth the soul from the mists of prejudice, by representing God in the all-sufficiency of grace and power: Heb. xi. 3, 'Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God.' It puzzled the philosophers, but faith maketh all clear. After faith, 2 Peter i. 5, 'Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge.' Faith is the fruit of knowledge, knowledge is the fruit of faith. So Ps. cxix. 66, 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments;' that is, a fuller manifestation. First we receive the word by faith, then we know more. *Oportet discentem credere.* First we know that it is, then how it is. The ground of faith is that they are revealed. How or what they are we learn by more acquaintance and experience. Light is always increasing, most necessary to the christian life. Faith is as knowledge is, more or less

explicit, yet not so explicit but that there is some implicitness in it, as long as we live here: 1 John iii. 2, 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' We have not a particular account, not a reason of the thing, but we have a reason why we believe it.

2. *Λῆψις.* This is a proper act of faith. God is always on the giving, and we on the receiving hand; we receive the word, we receive Christ, and we receive remission of sins, and glory; the main of our duty is but a receiving.

Let me press you to receive the word, to receive Christ.

1. Receive the word, give it a kind entertainment. There is an act of consideration; meditate upon it seriously, that truth may not float in the understanding, but sink into the heart: Luke ix. 44, 'Let these sayings sink down into your hearts.' Believe it: the truth is a sovereign remedy; but there wanteth one ingredient to make it work, and that is faith: Heb. iv. 2, 'The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' There is an act of the will and affections, which is called, 'a receiving the truth in love,' 2 Thes. ii. 10. Make room for it, that carnal affections may not vomit and throw it up again. Christ complaineth that 'his word had no place in them,' John viii. 37, *οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν*, like a queasy stomach possessed with choler, that casts up all that is taken into it: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'A natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.' Let it lodge, and quietly exercise a sovereign command over the soul.

2. Receive Christ in the word. In a contract, there is not only a receiving a bond, but, by virtue of the bond, an inheritance conveyed to us. So you must not only receive the word; we are not saved by giving credit to any maxim of religion, *fides non est assensus axiomati.* Not they that saw the ark—many saw it, and scoffed—but they that were in it, were saved from drowning. When a man is ready to perish in the floods, it is not enough to see land, but we must reach it, stand upon it, if we would be safe. It is not a naked contemplation, but a real implantation into Christ. Now, if you will know it, whatever was in Christ in the history, must be in you in the mystery. You are adopted sons, 1 John iii. 1. Christ must be formed and conceived in you, Gal. iv. 19. You must suffer, and be crucified to the world and sin, Rom. vi. 6. You must be buried and raised up again, Col. ii. 12. All is to be done in a spiritual manner. I speak not this to turn all scripture into an allegory, but every act of Christ hath some spiritual accommodation.

So much for these two acts or parts of faith, they have known surely, and have received thy word.

Before I go off from this clause, there are two or three observations to be raised, especially if we compare this verse with John xvi. 27–31, 'For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do

ye now believe?' From whence I observe, that this was but a late acknowledgment: ver. 30, 'Now we are sure, and by this we believe, that thou camest forth from God.' And presently, within an hour, Christ commendeth it to his Father, 'They have known surely, and have believed.'

1. Observe, how ready Christ is to take notice of the good that is wrought in us. He watcheth for an occasion to commend us to God. Satan and his instruments, they watch for our halting: Jer. xx. 10, 'All my familiars watched for my halting, peradventure he will be enticed.' Let us watch, say they, we may have matter against him. The devil is a spy, that lieth upon the catch that he may frame an accusation against you before God—(a dog doth not wait for a bit from his master's trencher, more than he doth for a passionate word)—some evil gesture and practice, whereof to accuse us; so his instruments watch to defame you in the world. But now Jesus Christ looketh after matter of praise and commendation. 'Now we know verily, and believe;' and Christ presently telleth his Father of it. Oh! what an encouragement should this be to press us to grow in knowledge, and to abound in every good work! You furnish your intercessor with matter of praise, and give your advocate an advantage against your accuser. Christ watcheth for a good action as the devil doth for a bad. He is a swift witness, not only against his adversaries, but for his people: Mal. iii. 5, 'I will come near to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers,' &c. He cometh to convince them sooner than they are aware; none of their sins are unknown to him, and they are brought in court before they dream of it. And the godly have a witness in heaven too. So Job xvi. 20, 'Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.' And he is a swift witness; we reap the fruit of many actions as soon as they are performed. A continual experience we have of this disposition of Christ in the speedy answer of prayers: Isa. lxiv. 24, 'And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' He is more ready to answer than we to crave. So it is said to Daniel, Dan. x. 12, 'From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard.' See God's readiness to accept the services of his people; in the first day of the three weeks he had set apart, ver. 2. Daniel thought it would be long work, and God heard him the first day. Certainly God delighteth in the graces of his children, when he doth so readily take notice of the first act and exercise of them.

2. I observe, by comparing that place with this, that the apostles' faith was weak, not only imperfect, but inconstant, and subject to wavering, and yet Christ commendeth it to his Father: John xvi. 30, 31, 32, 'We are sure thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should tell thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? behold, the hour cometh, and now is, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.' Yea, and indeed, if we look into the history of the gospel, we shall find their faith was very weak. It is true they did receive him for the Messiah, and did acknowledge that he was the Son of God, his natural and only Son, which they knew by his baptism,

by his transfiguration, by his miracles; they believed that he was the Lamb taking away the sins of the world, that he was the living manna that came down from heaven; but all this while their faith was weak; they had but a confused sight of his godhead, of his eternal generation by the Father; they knew little of his death, were leavened with the thoughts of a terrene kingdom and pompous Messiah; understood not his predictions of his death and passion. Peter gave him advice to the contrary, and at his death denied him. So that though they knew him to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, yet the manner of his death and passion they knew not: 'We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel,' Luke xxiv. 21. Observe how Christ commendeth weak faith. Certainly he loveth to encourage poor sinners when he praiseth their mean and weak beginnings: Mat. xii. 20, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he send forth judgment unto victory.' Christ will not despise weak beginnings, though there be more smoke than flame, but little strength. Certainly we should not despise the day of small things, nor discourage learners, and blast the early blossoms with reproach and censure: Cant. ii. 13, 'The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.' Christ taketh notice in his garden of the green figs; the green knots or buds are acceptable to him, though they want ripeness and sweetness, as well as the softer clusters, the imperfect offers of the spring. We should learn hence to do our best in believing; Christ will help you against weakness, and pardon imperfection.

3. Observe again, from Christ's mentioning their obedience, their knowledge, their faith. The Father knew for whom Christ prayed; neither was there need to set forth their faith and obedience in so many words, but that in the hearing of the apostles he would draw forth the grounds of their thankfulness, and the evidences of their interest. Well, then, this is the use we should make of our graces and duties, to praise the Lord, and to look upon them as so many arguments and evidences of his love; partly to show them what kind of persons God will hear, such as know, and believe, and obey, though in a weak measure.

*Thirdly,* The next thing in the text is the chief object of justifying faith, and that is the authority of Christ's mediation.

Observe, the sum of christian doctrine is to show that Christ was sent by God to save sinners. This is the ground of all hope and firm confidence; he came out from the Father to purchase grace, and went back again that we might receive it.

But let us consider the parts.

1. 'They have surely known that I came out from thee.'—This may be expounded two ways:—(1.) From thy essence, by eternal generation; (2.) By thy command, as mediator. If you take the former sense, it showeth that the authority of Christ and of his Father were equal; he came out from him. If you take the latter, it denotes their equal charity and love; the Father sent him; and out of the same love, the Son came out from the Father; he assumed flesh, emptied himself, and performed the office of a mediator, committed to him by the Father.

Which is to be preferred? Some say the first, *παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον*, it is a word proper to the natural generation of the Son: Micah v. 2, 'Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.' The Spirit's procession is expressed by *ἐκπορεύεται*, as the generation of Son by *ἐξέρχεται*. It is said of none of the saints that they come out from God. But though this eternal generation must not be excluded, yet that which is chiefly intended here is that he came out by the command of God as mediator, as is clear by that place, John xvi. 28, 'I came forth from my Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go unto the Father.' It is applied to his appearing as mediator before God.

Observe the great love of Christ, in that he came out from God for our sakes.

[1.] Consider from whom he came, from the Father, from his bosom, from the full fruition of the godhead, from the centre of rest, the seat of blessedness. We shall know what place the bosom of the Father is, when we shall come to heaven, and shall be glorified with Christ.

[2.] How he came; not in pomp, or the equipage of a prince, but in the form of a servant. He was lord of all things, but he came now as the servant of God's decrees: John vi. 38, 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' He was God's servant, not upon terms of grace; his covenant was a covenant of works: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' He was subject to worldly powers, 'a servant of rulers,' Isa. xlix. 7. He voluntarily submitted himself to worldly powers. Nay, he came to be our servant: Mat. xx. 28, 'Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' He came to serve in the ministry of the gospel, to lay aside all the interests of his human nature: Rom. xv. 3, 'Even as Christ pleased not himself.'

[3.] For whom he came, for wretched men, to seat us in the vacant places of fallen angels.

2. 'And they have believed that thou hast sent me.'—There is a mission on God's part, as well as obedience on Christ's.

Observe the love of God in sending Christ, and giving him a charge concerning us. This sending implieth distinction, but not inferiority. Persons equal by mutual consent may send one another. The Father sent him because in the business of salvation the original authority is said to reside in God the Father. God would not trust an angel with your salvation, but sent his own Son: 1 John iv. 9, 10, 'In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' He thought nothing too dear nor too near for us. His Son was not sent to treat with us, but to take our nature, to be substituted into our room and place. But this point, of God's sending Christ, hath fallen under our consideration in handling other verses of this chapter.

## SERMON XII.

*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*—JOHN XVII. 9.

CHRIST, having urged several arguments on the behalf of the disciples, cometh now to limit his prayers to them, which is a new argument: 'I pray for none but those which thou hast given me;' not for obstinate persecutors and perverse rebels, but for thine own, thy charge put into my hands. If I had prayed for any which belong not to the purpose of thy grace, thou mightest deny me; but 'I pray not for the world, but for thine,' therefore hear me.

In the words you have:—

1. The object of Christ's prayer.

2. The object limited, *I pray for them;* which is amplified negatively by a refusal to pray for others, *I pray not for the world.*

3. The reasons, *thou hast given them me,* and *they are thine;* mine by oppignoration, not alienation, thy charge put into mine hands. I have a charge over them, and thou hast a right in them. Christ was tender of his charge, and the Father still loved and owned them. Thy right and propriety is not lost by thy donation, but confirmed, *for they are thine.* It is not only a reason of the donation, but an argument that Christ useth in prayer.

First, The great matter, that needeth not so much to be cleared as to be vindicated, is Christ's refusal to pray for the world. It needeth not to be cleared, because Christ doth expressly limit the persons, 'I pray for them;' he doth not only explain it, whom he meaneth by *them,* 'those which thou hast given me;' which explication, if nothing else had been added, would have been exclusive, and would have amounted to them, and only them; but he doth himself exclude the world from having any share in his prayers. By the *world,* he meaneth the reprobate world, not only the unregenerate elect, who are sometimes called the world, but *reprobos amatores sæculi,* as the Carthusian, the reprobate perverse world.

But some object, and it is fit they should be heard:—

1. That the apostles only are here intended, and that there is not a distinction between the elect and reprobate, but between the apostles and others; for afterwards Christ prayeth for others 'that shall believe through their word,' ver. 20. I answer—

[1.] The apostles are chiefly intended, but not only; elsewhere doth he pray for the disciples and believers of that age; there were more than the eleven apostles, and if they be excluded, they have no name in Christ's prayer.

[2.] All others besides the apostles could not be reckoned to be in the world; now here is a perfect distribution of men into two ranks —those that were given him, and the world.

2. Others say that the words are not to be taken as utterly exclusive, but only that he prayed not for the world in this place; the requests of fatherly protection, the gift of the Spirit, love and concord, being only proper to them that did actually believe: elsewhere, they

say, they find Christ praying for the world. They bring that place for one, Luke xxiii. 24, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do;' where he prayed for his persecutors, some of which never were converted. I answer—

[1.] We must distinguish the prayers of Christ as a holy man, and the prayers of Christ as mediator. So *Camero. Owen*, p. 44, &c.; *Gomarus in locum*, and *Rainoldus de Intercessione*, &c. As he was a holy man, he was to lay aside all show of revenge. This was not a prayer by virtue of his office as mediator, but in answer to his duty, as he was subject to the law, and a private person. Those things which he did in obedience to the law as a private person were not acts of mediation; they were acts of the mediator, but not as mediator. He taught us to pray for enemies: Mat. v. 44, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.' Revenge is forbidden, and pardon and prayer enjoined.

[2.] Christ did not pray for all his persecutors, and every one of them, but only for those that sinned out of ignorance, as the words imply; chiefly for the standers-by, rather than the priests and pharisees, many of which came rather out of curiosity than despite. Yea, this supplication was effectual and successful to all the elect intended. This prayer brought in three thousand, Acts ii. 41, who are charged with Christ's death, ver. 23 and 36, and again five thousand, Acts iv. 4, who are charged with ignorance in this matter: Acts iii. 15, 'And killed the prince of life;' ver. 17, 'I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.'

3. Again, they urge, ver. 21, 'That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.' Some say that by the *world* is meant the unregenerate elect. This, though it blunteth the force of the objection, yet I think it not so full an answer.

[1.] Because it is not directly made for them. Mark, it is not a prayer, but a reason of prayer; Christ would have prayed more directly for the unregenerate elect.

[2.] He would have prayed for a more effectual means of conversion than the beholding the unity and concord of his church: 'That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may know that thou hast sent me.'

[3.] The word *world*, in this whole chapter, is taken for the reprobate world, or those which are opposed to them which are committed to him by his Father.

[4.] The substance of that prayer is for the elect not yet converted, for Christ prayeth for 'all that shall believe through their word,' ver. 20. And then, 'that they may be all one,' &c., 'that the world may believe that thou hast sent me;' so that the unregenerate elect are not intended. Well, but then doth Christ pray for the reprobate world, that they may believe? I answer—No; faith or believing is there taken for a more full conviction, that they may be convinced and rendered more inexcusable. It is not taken in a strict sense, for a saving comprehension and receiving of Christ, but for a conviction and acknowledgment. Divisions in the church usually breed atheism in the world; all is false when so many ways and differences. So think

they Christ is an impostor, the word a fable. Now this kind of conviction is not only termed believing in scripture, but explained, ver. 23, 'That the world may know that thou hast sent me.' Nay, let us grant that faith is taken in the highest and strictest sense; yet there is a difference between praying for such a thing as may be a likely means of working faith, and praying that they may believe. Christ only prayeth 'that his people may be one,' that the world may not plead prejudice; at most, he doth but obliquely reflect upon the world in that prayer, that they may have means of conviction, but not grace. Christ denieth that the world either hath, or ever shall have, the grace of faith: ver. 25, 'O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.' And the special reason why the elect have known, though the world have not known, is rendered, ver. 26, 'I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it;' by which is meant the special manifestation of his grace given to believers of all ages, which was given to the disciples of that present age, and will be given to all future believers. A serious consideration of the context will refute all these sophisms. Thus I have taken off the objections.

Let me handle one doubt more. But if they were absolutely predestinated, why doth Christ pray for them?

I answer—Predestination includeth all things that are necessary to the salvation of the predestinated; and so the prayers of Christ must be taken in as well as other means.

Take an argument or two why Christ did not, could not, doth not pray for the reprobate world. This prayer must either argue:—

1. A nescience of his Father's decrees, which cannot stand with the unity of his person, especially as now in glory. While upon earth he knew it, and approved it, that God by an immutable decree had left some to be justly hardened to their own ruin: Mat. xi. 25, 26, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' Or—

2. A contradiction to his will and express decree. It is true we do not sin by asking a thing contrary to God's decree; as when I ask a parent's life, whom God hath determined to cut off by such a sickness, which I know not; but if I did, it is no rule to me. But now God's decree was a rule to Christ in his mediatory actions, as the moral law was a rule to his moral actions; and therefore when the decree of God called for one thing, and the moral law for another, Christ was both to show his moral affections and mediatory obedience: 'Father, let this cup pass; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt,' Mat. xxvi. 39. There was an innocent desire of nature, but an express submission to his Father's will.

3. Because all Christ's prayers were to be grounded on a promise. There was an indenture drawn up between him and his Father; he had the assurance to be heard in whatsoever he asked: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' John xi. 42, 'I knew that thou hearest me always.' Therefore he must needs exclude the reprobate world out of his prayers.

Observations.

First, Let us look upon it as a mediatory action.

1. Observe, here was the first solemn offer of Christ's mediation between God and man, and therefore upon this place we may ground the doctrine of his intercession, 'I pray for them.'

Here I shall speak of—(1.) The person who is the intercessor; (2.) The nature of the intercession; (3.) The privileges and fruits of it.

1. The intercessor, 'I pray.' The Syriac twice repeateth the pronoun; I, even I, pray for them; it is not an ordinary high priest, but I; I that am thy beloved and only-begotten Son, co-eternal, and consubstantial with thyself; I that have glorified thee upon earth, and done thy work; I that am holy and harmless; I whose prayers thou hast promised to hear; I who am an authorised mediator, sent into the world for this purpose. There are all these advantages in the intercession of Christ, let us go over them a little briefly. I shall refer them to these heads—the dignity and dearness of his person, the sublimity of his office, the value of his satisfaction, the articles of the covenant, or the promise of being heard.

[1.] The person of Christ; and there you have—

(1.) His dignity, he is God-man, and so fit for this office: Job ix. 33, 'Neither is there any daysman between us, that might lay his hand upon us both.' He communicates with God in the same nature, and we with him; he is our brother, and God's fellow. Our kinsman is in the court of heaven, pleading for us; he appeareth there in our nature, to set on our salvation. We need not be ashamed to go to him, nor he to go to God. He is of near alliance to us, and to God himself, God's own natural Son; which doth not only give him a power to prevail with God, but a sufficiency to do us good. None but Christ could serve our turn in this matter. Who can know all our needs, all our sins, all our thoughts, all our desires, all our prayers, all our purposes, and wait upon our business with God night and day, that no wrath break out upon us, but Jesus Christ, who hath his constant residence in heaven at his Father's right hand? There is an all-sufficiency required to intercession, as well as oblation.

(2.) The dearness of his person, called, 'his dear Son,' Col. i. 13, the Son of his love, one with him. God bids him ask what he will: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' When Christ came first into heaven, he was to make his demand. He proclaimed it on earth when Christ was baptized, consecrated to God for the priesthood: Mat. iii. 17, 'Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.' There was such perfect love and consent of mind between God and Christ, that if he had never died, God could not have denied him anything.

[2.] The value of his satisfaction. Christ is an intercessor not by entreaty, but by merit: John xvii. 4, 'I have glorified thy name on earth, I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do.' The greatest work that ever could be done, if you respect the importance of it. The creating of a thousand worlds would not bring in such a revenue to heaven as this one work of redemption; or the difficulty of

it, the Son of God to be made flesh, sin, a curse, states most abhorrent from the felicity of the divine nature; or his willingness to undertake it, 'Lo, I come to do thy will.' He longed to be at it; though he had infinite complacency in the bosom of the Father, yet as soon as God had made a habitable world, Prov. viii. 30, 31, 'There I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' He longed for that time when he might leave the company of angels and dwell among us, and feasted himself with the thoughts of his own grace. And with so much faithfulness: I not only finished the work, but glorified thee; all he did was for his Father's glory. This could Christ plead as the ground of his requests; he hath paid for all that he asketh, not only made satisfaction for sin, but given a price for glory. He cannot out-ask his own merit; his blood speaketh if Christ should hold his peace: Heb. xii. 24, 'And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel's.' As clamorous as Abel's blood for vengeance. It doth not speak against us, though we have made him to serve with our iniquities, but speaks the more for us, to pacify his wrath, to pardon us, and to do us good.

[3.] The sublimity of his office. It is an authoritative act. God hath always refused such mediation as is not authorised by himself. When Moses interposed for the children of Israel, said God, Exod. xxxii. 10, 'Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them;' because he would reserve this honour for him who alone hath this office under the broad seal of heaven. So it is very notable that Christ refused all mediation to him in the days of his flesh. As of his apostles: Mat. xv. 23, 'His disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us,' &c. But Christ would show that he was solicitous enough for the welfare of sinners, he needed no intercessors. So his own mother, when she interposed for the honour of the wedding: John ii. 4, 'Woman,' saith he, 'what have I to do with thee?' As if he had said, Cannot I do it without your intermeddling? In these answers, Christ would show that he would have sinners come of themselves, without any mediation of their fellow-creatures, they being no authorised mediators. God alloweth no other mediator of redemption but Christ, and Christ no other mediator of intercession but himself. It is sacrilege in the Papists to set up others; none is worthy to appear before God but Christ; and how unworthy soever we are, Christ will have us to come to himself. God hath set him up for this purpose, and no copartners are allowed. As it was said to Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 18, 'It pertaineth not to thee to burn incense, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense.' Incense could be offered by no other but a priest, and our prayers by none but by Christ: Heb. vii. 28, 'The law maketh men priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.' Christ is consecrated by an oath to abide overmore in the office, which oath is renewed and confirmed upon his return to heaven: Ps. cx. 4, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck;' compared with ver. 1. God will

never repent of dispensing grace in and through him to sinners; as long as Christ's consecration lasteth, none must meddle with his office.

[4.] The articles of the covenant, or the promise of being heard. Therefore Christ speaketh with such confidence: John xi. 42, 'I know that thou hearest me always;' and Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,' &c. There was a covenant drawn up between God and Christ; the Lord promised him, as the fruit of his labours and sufferings, that he should obtain all manner of grace for his people. All these things show us the advantages of having such a mediator and intercessor.

2. The nature of Christ's intercession. It is a part of his priestly office, of which there were two acts—oblation and intercession. Oblation was made once on the altar of the cross, and intercession is the continuation of his sacrifice, or the presenting it in heaven. It must be explained by analogy to the priests of the law. The sacrifice was slain without the camp, and then the priests were to enter with the blood within the veil, into the holy of holies, with sweet incense, and so to cause a cloud to arise over the mercy-seat. 'But Christ being come, an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us,' Heb. ix. 11, 12. Jesus Christ having offered up himself upon the cross, where he was both priest and sacrifice, he is gone within the veil, 'Not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 24. It is not a vocal, but a real intercession. Christ is gone into heaven, and there presents his person, both in our nature and his own, together with his merits, lifting up desires which are as a cloud of incense before the mercy-seat, for our comfort and salvation: Rev. viii. 3, 'And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne.' The high priest entered not for himself, but for the people, having the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast and shoulders; so Christ is entered on the behalf of us all, bearing the particular memorial of every saint graven upon his heart. The high priest staid within the sanctuary for a short time, and so came out to bless the people; Christ entered within the veil at his ascension, and we must wait till his coming out to bless us, which will be at the day of judgment. All this while he hath his residence in heaven, and then he will open to us and give us entrance. So that Christ's intercession is 'A constant representation of his merit for the pardon of our sins, and for our acceptance; together with strong desires conceived in the human nature for the good of the creature, for all their exigencies and employments, that so his whole purchase may be applied to us, and we may receive grace to help in time of need.' It is a representing of his own merit, the worthiness of his person. As God-man, he is the Son of God, yet the creature's advocate; and the merit of his obedience and passion: 'I have glorified thee upon the earth;' as one that was to plead for his life showed *cubitum sine manu*,

his hand lost in the service of the state. All this is to the Father, who being appeased, all the rest of the persons are appeased; for they are one, and agree in one. He pleads with God for the application of good things procured by his oblation, especially in deep exigencies and conflicts. Christ hath knowledge at other times, but then he hath a fellow-feeling: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' His heart is entendered by his own experience.

3. The fruits and benefits of this intercession. They are many; I shall name the chiefest.

[1.] This secures our justification and the pardon of our sins. Christ watcheth against what objections justice makes, and against Satan's wiles, and that we ourselves, by our daily breaches, may not cast ourselves out of the favour of God. He justifieth us against the accusations of enemies, covereth our sins from the sight of God: Rom. viii. 34, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' So Zech. iii. 1, 2, there is our advocate and accuser: 'He showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee.' When we are summoned by the justice of God to defend ourselves against the exceptions and complaints which are preferred against us, our attorney appeareth in our name and behalf; so when Satan accuseth us day and night, he makes up all the breaches that fall out between God and us: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous.' When we have mudded the stream, Christ maketh all clear again.

[2.] The acceptation of all our persons, works, and services: 1 Peter ii. 5, 'We are made an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' We communicate with Christ in all his offices; we are spiritual priests, consecrated to him by baptism. The ordinary priests were first consecrated in the great laver before they were to offer sacrifices; so we are purified and cleansed in the laver of regeneration, and then offer to God these sacrifices. As Christ was temple, priest, and sacrifice, so are we. God dwelleth in us as in a temple: 2 Cor. vi. 16, 'Ye are the temple of the living God;' 'As the godhead dwelt in Christ bodily,' Col. ii. 9. We are consecrated to be priests to God, being sanctified by him, cleansed in the laver of his blood, our persons received into favour. And then we offer ourselves, bodies, services to God; and so we perform duties acceptable to him; because when we act the priest, Christ acteth it over again, presents our services to God in his censer: Rev. viii. 3, 'Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.' He puts no filth nor dross into his golden censer. As the priests under the law were to examine the sacrifice before it was offered to the Lord, so doth Christ examine our services, not to reject them, but to better them in

his own oblation; and so by his intercession our duties and all the good works of our lives are recommended to God.

[3.] It encourageth us to come to the throne of grace with boldness. God would have prayer in heaven to encourage us to prayer on earth; Christ is always with God to set on every request. This is the copy of Christ's intercession. Besides, you have the groans of the Spirit in your hearts: Rom. viii. 26, 'The Spirit itself maketh intercession in us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.' Christ is our advocate, the Spirit our notary, we the solicitors: Isa. lxii. 6, 7, 'Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give him no rest,' &c. We may know what Christ is doing for us in heaven by the work upon our hearts. Oh! then, let us never rest till we have an interest in his intercession. This is the great prop of our faith and confidence, to know that we are comprehended in Christ's prayers. You have a friend in court, he hath liberty of immediate access, he is a favourite, the Father loveth him, and you for his sake. Our friend prayeth to our dear Father for his own children. When Joab saw the thing was pleasing to David, he interceded for Absalom, 2 Sam. xiv. 1. God can deny him nothing; if you have ten thousand accusers it is no matter, your advocate will answer all their accusations. Never leave till you get it evidenced that it is your privilege; choose him, go to God by him, ratify God's appointment by your own choice. Faith is a consent; wait for the Spirit's intercession; those groans will end in joys. It is the great comfort of the church that we have such a mediator, who will effectually plead our cause with the Father.

We may look upon it as a moral, as well as a mediatory act, an act of Christ's love to his own disciples, chiefly the apostles, who were, as it were, his family and special charge.

Out of this example of Christ let us learn to pray one for another; it is a spiritual act of love. You may discern the hypocrisy and sincerity of your love to others by your carelessness or seriousness in prayer for them; for if we desire a thing, we will pray for it with importunity. By this the saints have communion with one another at a distance.

Chiefly this concerneth ministers for their charge; they should be of Samuel's temper; though he had received affronts from Israel, 'God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you,' 1 Sam. xii. 23. Their sin doth not exempt you from the duty you owe to them for God's sake; they look to a higher obligation than civil respects and an interchange of kindness. But especially are we bound to pray for them if, as the apostles here, they are gained to any degree of faith, knowledge, and obedience: 2 Thes. i. 11, 'We pray always for you, that God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.' What encouragement hath a minister to go to God for such, not only when you send for him in times of sickness, but always, as the apostle saith, 'in every address to God.' It is sweet to give an account of the thriving lambs, and to desire the Lord to perfect his work. And it argueth in the minister sincerity to take pleasure in their gracious estate, and to account it, as it were, his own benefit that God hath any way blessed them with grace, which moveth him again to commend

their case to God. Certainly if we have but any portion of the unity of the Spirit, or any share in the communion of saints, or any respect to God's glory, thus it would be.

Again, it concerneth masters of families. Your family is your charge, given you of God; pray for them in the bowels of love. You are to make an errand to the throne of grace, not only for yourselves, but your children and servants; as the centurion came to Christ for his servant, Mat. viii. 6. If we did not want hearts, we could never want an occasion of recourse to God. By virtue of our relation we are to espouse the interests of our family, and to plead with God on their behalf, as we would on our own. Job is an excellent pattern: Job i. 5, he 'rose early, day by day, and offered burnt-offerings for his children,' in the time of their feasting. His great care was to keep his children in the favour of God; he knew no hurt in their feasting, had heard none by information; yet because miscarriages are usual in the heat and license of feasts, the family should not be without a daily sacrifice: 'For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.' Up then betimes, as Job did, and milk out a blessing for your families; not only in general, as men will put up cursory prayers, out of custom and use, for their families; they pray God to bless their families; but bring them forth by head and poll, and set them before the Lord, as 'Job offered sacrifices according to the number of his children;' or as Christ here, 'I pray for these,' pointing to the apostles; Lord! for these, and every one of them. The occasion of Job's prayer is not manifest. If you do but suspect that a child hath such a disease, you will go to a physician. Should we have less care of their souls? Christ says they live in an evil world, ver. 11, therefore he prays for them.

Again, look on this prayer of Christ not only as an act of love to his charge and familiars, but as an act of prudence as to the apostles, who were to bring others to believe by their word: 'I pray for them; I pray not for the world,' &c. These that are designed for the great work of the gospel, chiefly for them: they had to do with obstinate Jews and idolatrous Gentiles, and they had need take the blessing of Christ's prayers along with them. Ministers and dispensers of the mysteries of salvation above all men need the help of your prayers. How affectionately doth Paul call for this everywhere! 1 Thes. v. 25, 'Brethren, pray for us.' It is a duty you owe, and it may be not only of great comfort to us, but of great profit to yourselves. God would have all orders and estates in the church to be obliged to one another; you for our instructions, we for your prayers: 'The head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee,' 1 Cor. xii. 21. Our calling is encumbered with the more difficulties, and that we may be acquainted with all sorts of Satan's enterprises, our persons may be exposed to more temptations than yours. The many things requisite to make our ministry useful call for your prayers; abilities, the right use of them; fruit and success, that we may be able pastors, faithful, successful; that we may have abilities, which are a common gain; whatever gifts are bestowed on ministers, are for the people's profit; that out of love of ease, or love of the world, or error, we may not mislead you, nor be disheartened for lack of success. Instead of praying for ministers,

many now pray against them; the calling is repined at, as if it were some heavy plague and judgment sent upon the world. But therefore you have need to pray the more: 2 Thes. iii. 2, 'That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for all men have not faith.' Pray that the lights of the church be not eclipsed; pray for our standing amidst the assaults of Satan. It is not enough to give us love and maintenance, but we must have your prayers.

So much for the object of Christ's prayer.

Secondly, Now for the limitation of that object: 'I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me.' Many things may be inferred out of this limitation.

1. Universal redemption is disproved; for those for whom Christ prayed not, for them he died not. These two offices of the priesthood must not be severed. Christ doth not only profess to pray for these, but denieth to pray for the world. His intercession is of the same latitude with his redemption; they are acts of the same office, and of the same extent and latitude. All men were not intended in his passion and intercession. See sermon on 2 Cor. v. 16.

2. The weakness of the world, notwithstanding all their outward props and supports; although they be strong, and have many on their side, yet they have not Christ on their side. He hath left the world out of his prayers; he will not so much as take their names into his lips. Therefore, Rom. viii. 31, 'If God be for us, who shall be against us?' What will that party do that have God against them? Against how many will you set me? said Antigonus. You may shake your spear, and bid defiance against all the powers of darkness; they have not Christ among them, he will not speak one good word for them; they may have riches, honours, friends, countenance in the world, but God will never take their part.

3. The dangerous and sad condition of worldly men. Oh! it is a sad thing not have a name in Christ's prayer. There is a great number left out; and if you will know who they are, they are called 'the world.' It presseth us to come out of that state where we are in this danger. Men that are now worldly may be in the roll of God's election, but it is no comfort to them. 'I pray not for the world;' so it is expressed; and as long as thou art worldly, thou canst take no comfort in Christ's intercession. Certainly this should be an effectual consideration with the people of God, to cause them 'to keep themselves unspotted from the world,' James i. 24. These have the benefit of Christ's prayers. A christian should never be quiet till he be clearly out of that number which is excepted. Christ hath a constant enmity and antipathy against mammon; there must be a separation from the world, and a contempt of earthly things, before we can have an interest in him. The world maketh a sport of these things; but what can be more terrible than to be shut out of Christ's prayers? He curseth those for whom he doth not pray; and that is the reason why men that are besotted with the world do always wax worse and worse.

4. The excellency of Christ's love to the saints: 'I pray for these, I pray not for the world.' Christ's separate love to us heightens his kindness and our duty. It is not every one's mercy to be remembered in Christ's prayers; millions are passed by, as many as may be called

a world: John xiv. 22, 'Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?' So we may say, How is it that thou wilt pray for us, and not for the world? Others that are better accomplished are left out, and we taken in. Man is taken with nothing so much as with privileges; common favours seem to be a right of nature. It was certainly a sweet consideration to Noah, though he seemed to be buried alive in the ark, that he and his family were saved when all the world perished in the waters. At the day of judgment, how many millions of thanks shall we owe to Christ, when all the reprobates are gathered together, to consider, God hath chosen me, and not all these; nay, of those reprobates, some are more excellently accomplished, and yet God hath chosen me, and not Cato, me and not Socrates, me and not Plato, not the most excellent among the heathens! When Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shore, Exod. xiv. 30, it heightened their deliverance. If God had saved all, it had been an infinite mercy; but now many are damned, it is the more cause of thanksgiving to those that are saved. The sun is glorious and beautiful, but if every star had so much brightness, it would not be so admired. Chrysostom saith, It is a great means of thankfulness now and then to go into the spittals, and to look on the poor creatures that are rough-cast with sores. So it commends Christ's love, and should raise in us thankful acknowledgments, to consider Christ prayed for us, not for the world.

5. By the example of Christ we should embrace them, and show special love to them, that are chosen out of the world. Christ saith, 'I pray for these; I pray not for the world;' we should specially remember them in our prayers. The apostle saith concerning alms, Gal. vi. 10, 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith.' Christ saith, Ps. xvi. 3, 4, 'My goodness extendeth to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Their sorrows shall be multiplied, that hasten after another God; their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer; nor take up their names into my lips.' Christ will not mention them. Some think it is to be applied to the idols; rather to the persons; the whole psalm is applied to Christ.

But here ariseth a doubt: Are we not to pray for wicked men, yea, the impenitent, the persecutors of the church, contemners of the word? I answer—

1. Yea; partly because we know not the secret purposes of God's grace. Christ, in the light of his divinity, knew the elect and the reprobate; but we know not, therefore we are to 'pray for them that persecute,' Mat. v. 44. Paul once breathed out threatenings against the church; Christ received gifts for the rebellious. Partly because many wicked men are considerable in their station, therefore, at least, we pray for temporal blessings for them, though we have little hopes that ever they shall be gained to the knowledge of the truth. Thus we are to pray for wicked rulers, for the conversion of human society; they may serve as a thorn hedge about a garden of roses. Thus it is said, Ezra vi. 10, 'That in the temple they should pray for the life of the king, and of his sons;' meaning the king of Babylon, Darius, at least for temporal favours.

2. We have not such encouragement to pray for them as for the saints. For the saints we pray out of the unity of the spirit; for wicked men, out of common charity; for the saints, we pray out of a delight in their graces; for wicked men, out of a loose possible hope: Heb. xiii. 18, 'Pray for us, for we trust that we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.' These should have the greatest share of our prayers; we have the more encouragements and hopes of them, which should be an engagement to us to pray for them.

3. Conditionally we may pray against the obstinate, and them that sin of malicious wickedness. There are many imprecations in Psalm cix., which are not to serve our private revenge, but by us to be conceived conditionally. Those curses are uttered against Judas in a prophetical spirit, and therefore not to be drawn into example, to justify any heats of revenge and private passion: 1 John v. 16, 'If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.' It is a tempting of God to intercede for that sin, seeing he hath declared his will; the irremissible sin is that sin, though it be hard to be found out. Therefore it is good to keep to the conditional form. When a man, after the profession of religion, falleth to an utter revolt and deadly hatred of it, it is a shrewd presumption they have committed that sin.

4. We feel sometimes a restraint upon our prayers. God by oracle forbade the prophet to pray for the people: Jer. vii. 16, 'Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee.' When he was resolved to put his wrath in execution, he would not have his people's prayers lost; and still the same spirit that stirreth up to prayer searcheth out the deep counsels of God. So that there is a kind of prophetical light in prayers; God suspendeth the fervency and actual assistance, by which we are carried on at other times. I would not justify every private passionate conceit; but yet we must look upon the Spirit of God as the interpreter of God's counsel, and that he will not stir up prayers to no purpose. Yea, sometimes we feel that, after much striving, we have no heart to pray for them, which is a very great mark of God's displeasure upon any person, when God's people, yea, even after much struggling with themselves, have no heart to pray for him.

Thirdly, The reasons why he prayed for them.

1. Because they were given him by the Father.

2. Because he could say to the Father, 'They are thine.'

How they are given unto him of the Father we showed before. I shall only now consider the last reason, which is more formally expressed, 'For they are thine.'

1. Observe, the elect are so given to Christ that they are still the Father's. Though they are mine by grant, yet thou hast lost no part of thy right and propriety in them. They are given to me by way of oppignoration, not by way of alienation; as the father that giveth his daughter in marriage to another doth not lose his fatherly propriety; she is her husband's, and she is her father's. God hath given every elect soul as a spouse to Christ, and yet they remain his; yea, they were given to Christ that God's right might be preserved. All men,

by right of creation, are his; but they are especially his who are redeemed by Christ and sanctified by the Spirit, because the destination and tendency of their lives is still to the Father's glory. Others are his in right, but in the use and course of their lives they are the devil's; God hath lost them, as it were. But those that are given to Christ are not lost, but his still; partly because of Christ's aim, who still worketh in them to preserve the Father's right: John xiv. 13, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' The persons glorify one another: John xvi. 14, 'He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.' They are Christ's members, that the Father may be glorified in the purposes of his grace. Partly in regard of the course and tendency of their conversations: John xv. 8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' The Father is glorified by our fruitfulness.

*Use* 1. It is an engagement to believers to walk so that God may not be ashamed to own them for his, the Spirit not ashamed to dwell in them as temples; that they be not as stables of filth, but as temples of the Holy Ghost; nor Christ ashamed to own them as members;—he will not be the head of an ulcerous body;—nor God the Father ashamed of his choice. If ye bring forth much fruit, he is glorified, he hath not made an unworthy choice. But otherwise, 'you grieve the Spirit,' Eph. iv. 30; 'you crucify Christ,' Heb. vi. 6; you shame the Father. But if you are sanctified and holy, the Spirit will own you, and work in you with joy: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.' By the innocency and holiness of your lives you make it appear what manner of spirit is in you; he can own you with glory. Then Christ will not be ashamed of you: Heb. ii. 11, 'He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' Christ will count it no disgrace to himself to reckon you of his kindred and family; he is not ashamed to say, 'They are mine;' my brethren, my kindred, my family, my spouse; he is not ashamed of his purchase. And God the Father will not be ashamed of you: Heb. xi. 16, 'God is not ashamed to be called their God.' The Father will avow himself to be their portion, and they to be his, that for his sake do renounce the world. God will think it no dishonour to himself.

*Use* 2. To disprove their claim—

1. That only can make their claim by creation: 'The Lord knoweth who are his.' God's special interest is founded in grace. People say, He that made them, shall he not save them? God will not own his creature that is disguised by sin: I know you not, you are none of mine: 'He that made them will show them no mercy, and he that formed them will show them no favour,' Isa. xxvii. 11. No; you are none of mine; all his are given to Christ; the interest comes not by nature, but by grace.

2. Those that build their hopes on Christ, but do not walk as the Father's. Christ never chose a member that would not honour his Father: John xv. 16, 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that

your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.' Christ will not allow their claim who do not walk worthy of his Father's love, that they may have free and confident access to him in prayer.

*Use* 3. See the felicity and dignity of those that believe in Christ. Christ saith to the Father, 'They are thine,' his peculiar and special portion: Exod. xix. 5, 'Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.' The world is God's possession, but you are his treasure. A man may have lands that he visiteth now and then, but he taketh a particular care of his treasure. God loveth them as much as a covetous man can love his treasure. We value men by their riches, but God valueth them by grace: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a peculiar people,' λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν. God hath bought them at a dear rate. We were his before we were our own; God had a thought of us before we had any being, and in time he made this distinction: Titus ii. 14, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people,' λαὸς περιούσιος, his people of treasure, his most precious substance, picked and chosen by election, beautified with the righteousness of Christ, distinguished from others by grace. God looketh on them as the objects of his own choice, the fruits of his Son's purchase, and the workmanship of his own Spirit, set apart from all others for his own glory.

2. Observe again, that nothing moveth God to mercy so much as the consideration that we are his. This is Christ's own argument, 'For they are thine.' And interest is elsewhere pleaded by the church: Isa. lxiv. 8, 9, 'But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.' When we come to God, though we cannot plead merit, yet we may plead interest. As bad as we are, yet we 'are thine;' our enemies have used us at pleasure, yet thou hast been pleased to enter into covenant with us; Lord, wilt thou not cast one glance and eye of favour upon thine own children? Oh! it is sweet when we can come into the presence of God with this confidence: Eph. ii. 19, 'Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;' as some of his own household, and so sue out our allowance. A stranger is one that cometh, and his occasions being served, returneth to his own home; a foreigner is one that dwelleth in a place, but is not privileged with the immunities and franchises which the natives enjoy. But now we are denizens, free of God's house; have the liberty not only of servants, but of children; therefore we may urge it in prayer. All the difficulty will be to get the interest evidenced. It is not confidence, but impudence, when some men say to God, We are thine; a wicked man slandereth him when he saith, Our Father. The great evidence is consecration. Did you ever give up your whole selves to God? Do you walk as his, as having nothing of your own, at your own disposal? Didst thou ever make this surrender? When there are factions, to which hand do you cleave? Do you say, I am God's, I am Christ's? God doth, as it were, say, Who is on my side? Who?

## SERMON XIII.

*And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*—JOHN XVII. 10.

WE have, in the former verse, the first solemn offer of Christ's intercession or mediation between God and man; and therein he doth professedly refuse to pray for the world. His reason was, he would pray for none but those that were dear to his Father and to himself. Now of the elect he might say, They are not only mine, but thine. They are given him by the Father, not by way of alienation, but oppignoration; the Father lost no right by his grant and donation. The gift of the Father to Christ differeth from all the gifts of men. When men give, they alter the property of the thing given, or certainly are not so careful about it. When you give your son to be a servant or an apprentice to another, or when a scholar is put out to school, you lessen your care towards him; or, to instance in a relation less mercenary and servile, when you give your daughter in marriage, you think there is a child bestowed, your fatherly title and propriety is not abolished, but your care is lessened. But now, though God hath put believers into Christ's hands, yet he hath not put himself out of possession, but hath still reserved his own right and care; for the establishment of the creature's comfort, Christ is taken in with himself. Christ hath a title proper to his distinct and personal operation to involve him in the care: Christ hath a title by purchase and redemption, and the Father hath a title proper to his personal operation by election: 'I pray for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.' The joint possession and care of the Father, together with Christ, is proved by a general assertion, built on that perfect communion that was between them: 'All mine are thine, and thine are mine,' &c.

The sentence is applicable to things and persons:—

1. To things: *Τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα σὰ ἐστι, καὶ σὰ ἐμὰ*, the original will bear it; so the fathers generally understood it of the concreated[1] and infinite riches of the Godhead, which all the persons had in communion. Epiphanius confuting the Sabellians, moveth this question: *Τί δὲ ἐστὶν τὰ τοῦ πατρὸς?* and answereth, *Θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ; θεὸς ἐγω εἰμι: ζωὴ ὁ πατὴρ; ζωὴ ἐγὼ εἶμι.* The parallel place seems to countenance this exposition: John xvi. 15, 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.' Christ had spoken of his departure, his absence was to be supplied by the Spirit; now lest this should seem to derogate from himself, he saith, 'He shall take of mine;' he shall enrich the church with the treasures purchased by me; I bought them with a dear price, and in the way of grace will distribute them. Now lest this should derogate from the Father, he addeth, 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine;' the same fulness of the Godhead, majesty, perfection, essence, blessedness. It is the Father's Spirit and mine. Christ came in as an heir to the Father, and the Spirit as executor to Christ of his last will and testament. I cannot utterly exclude this sense, yet I think it is not the formal intent of this place.

[1] Qu. 'uncreated'?—ED.

From hence we may gather the unity, and yet the distinction of the divine persons, they have their distinct right and title, and yet they all communicate in the same essence, dignity, and privileges.

2. To persons; and so it implieth not the uncreated riches of the Godhead, but their created goods and possessions. Believers are the created treasure of the divinity, and every person hath a distinct right. Christ saith to the Father, 'They are thine,' and again, 'They are mine;' and the Spirit is not to be excluded, though he be not mentioned, as appeareth in the parallel place but now quoted. They are God's children, Christ's members, and the Spirit's temples.

But to come more closely to the words: 'All mine are thine, and thine are mine.' How are believers Christ's? how the Father's? The first title Christ hath to us is the same that he hath to all things else; all things are God's and Christ's by creation and preservation. So the whole Godhead saith, Ezek. xviii. 4, 'All souls are mine.' God is the maker and judge of all. But that sense is too large for this place. Christ useth it as a special argument why he prayed for his own and not for the world. Another sort of creatures must be understood; by creation the beasts are theirs as well as men: Ps. l. 10, 'For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.' But there is a peculiar heritage in which they delight, of which it is said, 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knows those that are his.' There is a number of men whose names are written and sealed; now these are the Father's, the Son's the Spirit's. The text speaketh only of the two first persons, and so I shall mainly carry on the discourse. The distinct possession must be understood according to the personal propriety of each person; thine by election, mine by redemption. All that I am to redeem, to make intercession for, that are to have benefit by me, are God's elect; and all God's elect are to have benefit by me.

The point which I shall handle is, the commensurableness of the distinct propriety of all the persons in believers; election, redemption, and sanctification are of the same sphere and latitude. They are one joint possessor, Lord and maker: 'All mine are thine, and thine are mine.' All that the Father electeth the Son redeemeth; and I may add (because he communicateth in the same unity of essence) the Spirit sanctifieth. So the apostle, 1 Peter i. 2, 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,' the same persons are interested in these personal operations of the same Godhead. Election is ascribed to God the Father, sanctification to the Spirit, and reconciliation to Jesus Christ. The beginning is from God the Father, the dispensation through his Son Jesus Christ, and the application through the Holy Ghost. This is the chain of salvation, and never a link of this chain must be broken. The Son cannot die for them whom the Father never elected, and the Spirit will never sanctify them whom the Father hath not elected nor the Son redeemed.

*Reason* 1. From the unity of essence. They are one; and if any person be interested in them, all must; otherwise men might be beholden to Christ that were never beholden to the Father nor the Spirit. They are ὁμοούσιοι and ὁμότιμοι, of one essence and of equal dignity; none

shall be beholden to one that are not beholden to the other. It is very notable that when Christ speaketh of his own flock, and the certainty of their conversion and the sureness of their estate, he saith, John x. 27–30, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand: I and my Father are one. He is greater than me as redeemer. If I acknowledge them for mine, they must have grace, and cannot miscarry. We are two persons, but one God; he is a joint-cause working together with me, one in power, one in counsel.

*Reason* 2. From the unity and agreement in will and design. They are one, and agree in one; the persons are resolved to glorify one another. In man's salvation the Father will have the honour of electing, that the Son may have the honour of purchasing, and the Spirit the honour of sanctifying. It is said of the Spirit, John xvi. 14, 'He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you:' and Christ saith, John xiv. 13, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' The Son came into the world to make good the purposes of the Father: John viii. 50, 'I seek not my own glory;' and the Son sendeth the Spirit. God sendeth the Son, and the Spirit anointeth Christ: Acts x. 38, 'God anointeth Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.' There is a perfect agreement, mutual missions between them.

*Use* 1. To condemn them which put asunder those operations which God hath joined together, the Arminians in doctrine, the common people in practice.

1. The Arminians in doctrine, by dividing Christ from election, or election from Christ; as if Christ were to die for those that were never elected and chosen to life, equally as for those that were; or as if he expected glory from and designed salvation unto all alike. These trouble the links of the chain of salvation. How can it be said, 'All thine are mine, and mine are thine,' when God would never own them, and the Spirit would never sanctify them?

2. The common people, that sever the election of God and redemption of Christ from the sanctification of the Spirit. They say Christ died for them, when there is no evidence of it; or that God loveth them, when there are no fruits of his love. The fruit of the Father's love is sending of the Spirit, and 'he that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his,' Rom. viii. 9. If God had chosen thee, thou wouldst be sanctified. Sanctification it is as it were an actual election; John xv. 19, 'Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' As by election we are distinguished from others in the counsel of God, so by sanctification we are actually set apart. If Christ had died for thee, thou wouldst have the whole fruit of his purchase: Eph. v. 25, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.'

*Use* 2. Information how believers come to be possessed of such excellent privileges. All that are God's are Christ's, and all things

that are Christ's are ours by faith. There is the same communion between us and Christ as there is between Christ and God: 1 Cor. iii. 23, 'All are yours, for you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' We have it from the Father's love by the Son's purchase. Christ was God's natural heir; he made a purchase that he might adopt heirs, and take them in with himself: by faith we are taken in. We may say between us and Christ, 'All mine are thine, and thine are mine;' 'I am my beloved's, and he is mine;' Cant. ii. 16.

*Use* 3. To show us the comfort of the faithful. God and Christ have an equal interest in them: the Father loveth them as Christ's, as his own; Christ careth for them as the Father's, as his own: 1 John i. 3, 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.' God made the elect members of Christ's body, that he might redeem them. Christ made them children of his family, that he might love them. The Father saith, 'They are mine;' the Son saith, 'They are mine.' The power of God issueth through Christ for their salvation: 2 John 9, 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son.' We may expect the fruits of elective love and the fruits of Christ's purchase. Two are better than one; we have the Father to love us, the Son to redeem us, the Spirit to sanctify us, and bring us to God; it is a great advantage: John xvi. 27, 'The Father himself loveth you.' When Joab saw the thing was pleasing to David, he interceded for Absalom: 2 Sam. xiv. 1, 'The king's heart was towards Absalom.' We have more confidence to speed in our prayers: he loveth us for his own sake, and for Christ's. Christ hath satisfied the justice of God, and God is reconciled; we have more boldness of access to him; we need not fear his justice, we have a double claim, and may lay hold with both hands.

1. We have God on our side, who is the supreme judge, the offended party, the first cause and fountain of blessing.

2. By Christ we have a near relation to God: we are Christ's more than angels; they are ministering spirits, not the spouse of Christ's bosom, nor members of his body. God hath given us to him, as he brought Eve to Adam; we are near to God: John xiv. 20, 'I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you;' as a woman married to the king's son by the king's consent. The whole blessings of Christ's purchase are ours; we have God in our nature working righteousness, making atonement, meriting blessedness, sending the Spirit as purchased by him.

'And I am glorified in them.'—So we render it, that it may lie indifferent to any sense, though the word properly signifieth, I have been glorified in them. It relateth not only to their past, present, but future endeavours for Christ's glory.

But how was Christ glorified by his disciples?

*Ans.* 1. Passively, as he glorifieth himself in them, by comforting, refreshing their hearts, doing good to persons so despicable and unworthy, and manifesting the riches of his glory in them.

2. Actively, by their faith, by their ministry, by their life and conversation.

[1.] By their faith. To glorify any one, is to have a good esteem of him. Those that did not believe did as it were obscure the dignity

of his person, rejecting him as a contemptible man. Now the apostles do everywhere express their faith in his godhead, and their sense of the dignity of his person and office, as I cleared in opening the 7th and 8th verses.

[2.] By their ministry. Christ was by them made known, and was yet to be further manifested. After the resurrection they were his heralds, to proclaim his triumphs for him over death and hell; and his ambassadors, to go out into the world and gather subjects for his kingdom.

[3.] By their life, and so by the constancy of their profession, when others shrink in the wetting: John vi. 66–68, 'From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.' By their self-denial: Mat. xix. 27, 'Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee;' fathers, mothers, nets, trades, &c. So by their holiness and fruitfulness of conversation, they were such a company of which Christ was not ashamed.

This is a new argument that Christ urgeth for their respect with the Father; whence I observe:—

*Doct.* That the more we desire to glorify Christ, the more confidence we may have of his intercession for us.

1. It is the evidence of our interest in the Father, and the Son, and Spirit. Interest is the ground of audience; none can hope to speed with the Father but his own, those that are God's and Christ's.

[1.] It is an evidence that we have an interest in the Father; he acknowledges them for his that glorify his Son, them and no other: John xvi. 27, 'The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.' God's love can have no cause but itself; our love to Christ is a certain sign of God's love to us. It is not the principal reason why he loved them, but the argument whereby Christ would prove that his Father loved them. So that this is the evidence, if we would have any confidence of our interest in God, and speeding at the throne of grace. Do you glorify Christ by love and faith? Christ is his beloved, and he loves all them that love Christ. So again, John v. 23, 'That all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father: he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.' Every man naturally is touched with a reverence towards the Godhead. Now God the Father commandeth we should yield a like reverence to the Son, who is his living and perfect image. He that doth not worship Christ and honour Christ doth but worship and serve an idol; for he doth not honour God in that way wherein he will be honoured, and hath revealed himself, because they are in the unity of the Godhead, neither of them can be worshipped without the other.

There is a noted story of Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium; when the Arians, who denied the godhead of Christ, had freedom of their meetings and lectures and disputes, under Theodosius the Great, to the great disturbance of the church, and the emperor could by no means be drawn to suppress them, Amphilochius, after he had tried all other means without effect, found out a way worthy of record, saith

Theodoret, whereby to make the emperor sensible of the evil of his toleration. One day as he came into the palace, and the emperor and his son Arcadius were standing together, whom he had lately made joint-emperor with himself, Amphilochius saluteth the father with accustomed reverence and humility; but when he cometh to the son, he speaketh to him as to a private child, and stroking his head, saith, How dost thou, my child? without other expression of civil honour and reverence. The emperor was exceeding angry at the contempt, and that he had not given his son equal honour with himself, and therefore, after many rebukes, causeth him to be dragged out of the palace with disgrace; and as they were pulling and haling him, he, turning to the emperor, said, O emperor! after this manner, and infinitely more, is God the Father angry with those that do not honour his Son equal with the Father, but make him less in nature and dignity. By this sensible conviction the emperor was touched in conscience, and with tears embraceth the good old man, and presently maketh a law against the Arians, in which, under a great penalty, he forbiddeth their public meetings and lectures against the godhead of Christ, and by the blessing of God was confirmed in the true religion, in which before he staggered and wavered.

All this is brought to show that God will not own us unless we honour Christ, and glorify him as we glorify the Father.

[2.] It is the evidence of our interest in the Son. Those that mind Christ's glory, he mindeth their salvation. He is interceding for you in heaven when you are glorifying him on earth; he is doing your business in heaven when you are doing his business in the world; he is your advocate, and you are his bailiffs and factors: Mat. x. 32, 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.' When you own Christ in the world, and avow his name and truth in the world, you shall lose nothing. When you come to pray, Christ will own you: Father, hear him, this is one of mine. You cannot honour Christ so much as he will honour you. When carnal men come to pray, Christ saith, 'I know them not.' Oh! it is sad to be disowned in the court of heaven, when Christ disclaimeth any interest or intendment in his purchase for us, they are nothing akin to me, are none of mine. When we do all things for by-ends, we disclaim God for a paymaster, and therefore must look for our reward elsewhere.

[3.] It is a sign of your interest in the Spirit: John xvi. 14, 'He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you;' that enlightening, quickening comfort and refreshing which we have, when it is used to the glory of Christ, it is a sign the Spirit dwelleth in us.

2. Because the glorifying of God in Christ is the great condition of the covenant of grace. God hath made a bargain with believers to give them grace, and by way of return he expecteth glory. All the privileges of the covenant are leased out to the heirs of the promise, and this is the rent and acknowledgment which God hath reserved to himself. See the form of this contract, Ps. l. 15, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' In all experiences of grace God will be glorified. Glory and praise are the

revenues of the crown of heaven, and all the persons of the Godhead are joint-possessors; the Father will be glorified, the Son and the Spirit will be glorified too. Well, then, they that expect all comfort, and do not regard duty, they mistake the tenor of the covenant. God must needs be angry when we deny him his rent and acknowledgment; you forfeit your lease and charter, and how will you do to pray with confidence? It is notable in the covenant of grace, what God doth to us in a way of mercy, the creatures return to God again in a way of duty. God justifieth, sanctifieth, glorifieth the creature, these are the great blessings of the covenant; and in our way we are to do it again to God to justify, sanctify, and glorify God. To justify God: Luke vii. 29, 'And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.' To sanctify God: Isa. viii. 13, 'Sanctify the Lord of hosts in your hearts;' and here, 'I am glorified in them.' We are to justify God, his ways against the cavils of the world, the riches of grace against the prejudices of our own hearts; to sanctify God, to set him aloof in point of fear and trust, above all the powers and excellences in the world, as to sanctify is to set apart from common use; and then we glorify him when we advance him in our thoughts, and faith, and esteem. Our best thoughts are but a disgrace to the Godhead; he is advanced far above all blessing and praise; yet God counteth he hath another throne when he is exalted in thy heart.

3. Because we gratify the aim of God. God's great end in all his dispensations is to glorify his Son, and in his Son himself; God seeketh his own glory by glorifying Christ in our nature. We had neither had word, nor gospel, nor Christ, nor grace, but for his glory. It is said, Prov. xvi. 4, 'The Lord hath made all things for himself;' that is, for the manifestation of his glory; for God, being so perfect as he is, can no other ways be advanced; it must be, therefore, to make himself known. He made the world that he might be glorified, and for the same reason he made us in Christ: Eph. i. 12, 'That we should be to the praise of his glory,' εἰς τὸ εἶναι; all that we are in religion is for this end. We had need respect God's glory, for we owe all that we have to it; God is set upon it: 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'They that honour me, I will honour.'

*Use* 1. Information. We lose nothing by glorifying Christ; it is a pledge of our interest in his intercession. We shall have this honour and comfort, that Christ will be our advocate. In the world we are like those six hundred that were David's companions in the wilderness, they had hard service and little wages; but when David was crowned in Hebron, they were all advanced to offices and places of power and trust. In the world, if we glorify Christ indeed, we shall meet with hard entertainment, but you will not repent of it when Christ appeareth in the day of his royalty. Nay, for the present you will lose nothing; worldly losses are made up in spiritual comforts, and that is a good exchange. Do but observe Peter's question and Christ's answer: Mat. xix. 27, 28, 'Peter said, Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?' In Peter's question we may observe, that albeit we suffer little for Christ, we think much of it. Peter's case was poor and slender. Alas! what did he leave? A poor cottage, a net, a fishing-boat; he had no lands nor heritage: from a

fisherman he was made a disciple. The loss is little; but we think it a great matter if we part with our superfluities, with the tenth part of a child's portion for Christ's cause, and owning Christ's interest, or the propagation of religion. Nay, if we suffer but a disgraceful word, or discountenance, or a small inconvenience in our name, or estates, we are apt to say with Peter, 'What shall we have therefore?' Thoughts of merit are natural, and we put a high price upon our petty services; what shall we be the better? But observe Christ's answer: 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Pray mark, Christ pardoneth the infirmity of the demand; there was somewhat of pride in it, and somewhat of fleshiness, in having respect to a carnal reward; the dreamed-of earthly honours, that Christ would share and divide among them; but Christ passeth it over, and gives a gracious answer. Nay, mark, Christ promiseth a greater reward than Peter could expect, 'a kingdom to each of them in the regeneration.' I shall not examine that expression, that doth not so suit with my purpose; but I observe, that though the things we do and suffer for Christ be not worthy to be spoken of, yet the least thing, if done in sincerity, will be highly esteemed and richly rewarded; Christ will intercede for thee, and plead for thee with his Father, and if once he openeth his mouth, thou canst never miscarry. The apostle saith, Heb. vii. 25, 'He is able to save to the utmost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Christ, when he hath begun to intercede, doth not give over till thou hast honour enough for honouring him; 'He will save thee to the utmost.' Oh! why should we be prejudiced against the service of Christ? Certainly we shall be no losers in the end. Christ will not be behind hand with you; he is making way for your everlasting glory by his constant intercession. Now therefore be not troubled; you need not seek another paymaster than Christ; we have something in hand, there is present comfort, besides what we have in hope.

*Use* 2. Exhortation; to press us to glorify Christ. Order your lives so that Christ may plead, 'Father, I am glorified in them.' I do not press you now to glorify God in general, but to glorify Christ as mediator.

But what is it to glorify Christ? I answer—

1. You will glorify him by faith. Christ is glorified, when you acknowledge his person and office, as revealed to you in the word, and accordingly build your hopes and comfort on him. Now faith hath a double office—it accepts Christ from God, and presents Christ to God; it accepts Christ in the word, and maketh use of him in prayer.

Let us speak of both these.

[1.] It accepts Christ. When men slight the offers of Christ which God maketh to them, they dishonour him exceedingly; it is a contempt cast upon the Son of God, as if he were not worth the taking: Acts iv. 11, 'This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.' God made him a glorious foundation of hope and comfort, and you pass him by as nothing

worth; it is a high scorn put upon the choice of God, and the excellency of Christ. You look upon him as rubbish, not worth the regarding, and God sets him out as a precious stone: Mat. xxii. 5, 'But they made light of it, and went their ways; one to his farm, another to his merchandise,' ἀμελήσαντες; they would not take it into their care and thoughts. A careless disregard of the offers of the gospel offendeth God exceedingly; you slight the wisdom of the Father and the love of Christ. God employed all his wisdom in the contrivance of grace; the gospel is the masterpiece of heaven. The Father discovereth the riches of his wisdom, and Christ paying a ransom, obeying and dying, discovered the riches of his love and grace; and when this is offered to you, you will not take it into your care and thoughts; it is the greatest dishonour you can cast upon him. But now, 'To them that believe, Christ is precious,' 1 Peter ii. 7. τιμὴ; they can see nothing so worthy their study, and time, and care, and thoughts. This is the sum of their desires, that they may take Christ as God offereth him; all other things are but σκύβαλα, dung and dog's-meat in comparison of the excellency of him, 'that I may be found in him,' Phil. iii. 9. By this esteem and care Christ is exceedingly glorified.

[2.] It presents Christ. In all our endeavours to God we must build our acceptance on the merits of Christ: John xiv. 1, 'Ye believe in the Father, believe also in me.' There is a belief in God and a belief in Christ, in his merits. We should never go to God but we should take Christ along with us; in all your addresses make use of him. Whenever you have to do with God, you must go to him in Christ; and you must go to him with a confidence that you shall speed the better for his sake: Eph. iii. 12, 'In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him.' A man may use some liberty and freedom with God when he hath Christ on his side, and offer up his prayers to God in the mediation of his beloved Son. Out of Christ we can see nothing but majesty armed with wrath and power; but now, when you make use of Christ as a mediator, you may take hold of God with both hands; justice and mercy are on your side, you have merits to urge as well as requests. But, alas! how little do we glorify Christ in our addresses to God. We come with little hopes, with little confidence, our best is but guess and conjecture. Thus by faith should we glorify Christ. Low and base apprehensions that men have of Christ dishonour him.

2. By the holiness of your conversations. Every christian should walk so as remembering that Christ's honour lieth at stake. It is not a moral life that I persuade you to, but a christian life, such a life wherein Christ may be specially honoured.

[1.] For the manner; your practice should be elevated according to the height of your privileges in Christ. A christian should do more than a man: 1 Cor. iii, 3, 'Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' We expect that he should go faster that rides on horseback than he that goeth on foot. In christianity, duties are elevated to a greater proportion; the laws are the same, but we have higher engagements. Wherein do ye differ from others? There should be a singularity of holy life. There should be something more in your lives than if ye

came out of the school of a philosopher, or Jews, or Turks, or moral heathens, that know not Christ.

[2.] For the principle; Christ must be honoured. You must make him the principle of your obedience to God. You must make use of Christ not only in point of acceptance but assistance: Phil. iv. 13, 'I can do all things through Christ, that strengtheneth me;' Gal. ii. 20, 'Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' He will be honoured by dependence, as the cause of all our spiritual being. Whatever we have, life, sense, and motion, it is derived from him our head, to us his members. You rob him of his chief glory if you do not depend upon him, and make him the principle and head of every vital influence.

[3.] For the end; you must make his interest the great end of your lives: Phil. i. 21, *Ἐμοὶ τὸ ζῆν, Χριστὸς*, 'For me to live is Christ.' He would not have life for any other end but to advance Christ; all is done with a pure eye to him: Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 'For no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's.' A regenerate man must not live as his own man, but as the Lord's, as one that is wholly given up to Christ, not wedded to his own interest, but altogether for Christ's glory.

[4.] The motive must be gratitude to Christ; all must be done for Christ's sake: 2 Cor. v. 14, 'For the love of Christ constraineth me.' God's love in Christ should be the great swaying motive. Shall I not do something for him that died for me? Christ is exceedingly honoured when there are such kind of arguings and workings in the heart.

3. We must glorify Christ in our enjoyments. When we think of our title to anything, think, This I have by gift, be it justification, sanctification, glorification, comfort of the creatures. Whatever privilege we look upon as ours, we must see Christ in it: 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23, 'All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' All mercies swim to us in his blood; he purchased them of God, and conveyed them to us, that we might be sensible that we have all in and by Christ. He did not only purchase them, but began to us in every privilege: Christ first had them and then we; he was elected, justified, sanctified, rose again by covenant, ascended, and was glorified; in all these things, Christ would show himself to be the heir of all things. He was the elder brother, and had the pre-eminence as the heir; he would possess, and then make the testament. It is true, in the comforts of the world, Christ possessed little, but he had a right and title, which he hath made over to us. To declare his right, the creatures, one time or another, did him homage; the angels ministered to him, the devils confessed him, the winds and seas were at his beck, a fish paid him tribute. Well, then, look upon Christ in every enjoyment; he was the purchaser, and he was the first heir and possessor.

4. We glorify Christ by doing and suffering for the advancement of his interest and kingdom. Never were there such a zealous parcel of men as in the first days of the gospel; they seemed to some as if they were even mad for Christ: 2 Cor. v. 13, 'For whether we be besides ourselves, it is to God;' much in spirit, much in labours, much

in afflictions. Primitive zeal is much decayed. Many are like the carbuncle; if you look upon it afar off, you would think it all on fire; but touch it, and it is key-cold. Religion is turned into a mere prattle and talk; few mind the interest of Christ. A christian should be always devising how he may lay forth himself for Christ, for the advancement of his ordinances, enlargement of his kingdom; and to this end we should neither spare body nor estate, nor life itself. You should honour him with your substance: Prov. iii. 9, 'Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase;' it is but a tribute to the King of the church. Now miracles are ceased, God will propagate the gospel by the bounty of those that have tasted the sweetness of it; if the Lord hath need of it, why should we stick at anything? Honour him with your relation. As a magistrate; magistrates must improve the interest of Christ by discountenancing error; they who reign by Christ must reign for him; see if God doth not reckon with Gallios. As a merchant, honour him with thy traffic, to promote religion by trade: Deut. xxxiii. 18, 19, 'And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar in thy tents. They shall call the people unto the mountain, there shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasure hid in the land.' Every affair should be cast into the mould of religion, or we do not act as christians. Jesuits and papists will rise up in judgment against us. So in your private sphere, do something for Jesus Christ in your families. A christian should not have any relation but he should make some advantage of it for the honour of Christ. So for suffering, Christ is glorified in the courage of those that bear forth his name to the world. Let it not be grievous to us; it is much to be active for God, but it is more to be passive. Let glory to Christ be written, though it be with our blood; only with these cautions:—

[1.] We must think ourselves to be honoured by this service, how grievous, disgraceful, and troublesome soever it be: 2 Cor. v. 9, *φιλοτιμούμεθα*, 'Therefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' We labour, that is, we strive after this honour, to labour with ambition. The meanest service about princes is honourable, if it be a groom, or any other inferior employment. A servant of the Lord is a higher honour than the prince of the power of the air; Satan's title is windy and lofty. To do for Christ, saith Ignatius, is a greater honour than to be a monarch of all the world. Christ is such an excellent person, that anything that is done in and about him reflecteth an honour upon the person that doeth it. The second temple exceeded Solomon's because of Christ's presence: Hag. ii. 9, 'The glory of the latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.' Bethlehem was 'little among the thousands of Judah,' Micah viii. 2, yet there Christ was born. So hardship with Christ, brown bread with Christ, shame and disgrace with Christ, is honourable: Acts v. 41, 'They went away from the presence of the council, rejoicing, *ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθῆναι*, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Jesus Christ;' it is, that they were honoured to suffer dishonour for Christ. Service is an honour,

suffering a privilege: Phil. i. 29, 'To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake.' Unless you have this mind, it is but a factious obstinacy, not a religious suffering and doing for Christ.

[2.] There must be a sense of your unworthiness: Luke xvii. 10, 'When you have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.' A poor unworthy creature. Alas! what have we done? Christ is doubly honoured—by a direct aim and tendency of the endeavour, and by your humble profession. David prepared for the temple with all his might: 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 'Now behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold, and an hundred thousand talents of silver,' &c.; a poor gift for the great God! We are apt to overvalue our services and endeavours, therefore it is very good to retain a humble modest sense of them. Poor creatures! what do we do, that have received, not only life and breath, but grace and glory, and all things from Christ? It is good to be humble for what we do, and to acknowledge it to be a thing wholly unworthy of God.

[3.] You must ascribe all to Christ's glory; as Joab, when he had conquered Rabbah, sent for David to take the honour; so must we do for Christ. This is still doubling of honour and glory: 1 Cor. xv. 10, 'By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; for I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' The pen doth not deserve praise if the writer draweth a fair letter: Gal. ii. 20, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.' The stars disappear when the sun shineth in its strength. The work is enough, let God take the honour: 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 'But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.' David never speaketh in that strain, but on the occasion of a singular mercy. David ascribeth all to God, the ability, the will, the goods, the mind. So in all our engagements for Christ, he must have the praise; as one man in a press or crowd lifteth up another, and he only is seen, when the other is lost in the throng.

5. By being zealous for his institutions; then you honour Christ, by giving the wisdom and power of a lawgiver to him. The highest power of a prince is legislative. When you keep to Christ's laws, you count him faithful in his house, and acknowledge him king in his church. But now, when we set up our threshold by God's threshold, Christ is dishonoured, as if he were not faithful in his house: Mat. xv. 6, 'Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions.' By the traditions of men ye make void the law of God, ἠκυρώσατε, ye unlord the law, so the word signifieth.

6. By taking some solemn time to meditate of and admire the excellency of his person and the fulness of his redemption. In heaven this will be our great work, there they praise the Lamb for evermore: Rev. iv. 10, 11, 'The four-and-twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to

receive honour, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.' They do not slight their glorious work. All the glory they have is God's mere bounty; they hold it by grace, and magnify it by grace. So Rev. v. 8, 'The four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.' There is the employment of the church militant and triumphant. Harps, which are instruments of praise, belong to souls already glorified; as vials full of odours belong to believers on earth. The earth is the true place of prayer, as in heaven we shall be employed in eternal thanksgivings. All the church is yielding homage to Christ; it is the study of saints: Eph. i. 16, 'I cease not to give thanks for you.' It was Paul's constant practice, he breathed nothing but Christ: 1 Cor. ii. 2, 'I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' Our thoughts of Christ should be sweet to us; we should have ravishing apprehensions of him from day to day, ravishing thy heart with the excellency of Christ.

*Use* 3. Is consolation to them that desire to glorify Christ. It is a singular prop in your prayers, in every address you have an interest in Father and Son: 'They are mine,' saith the Lord; I loved them with an everlasting love. 'They are mine,' saith Christ; I redeemed them with an everlasting redemption. And will not God provide for his own, and Christ for his own? Can he that hath the Father and Son miscarry and doubt of audience? You have the Father, who is the original fountain of blessing; and you have Christ, who is the golden pipe and conveyance. But especially in your last address, when you lie on your deathbed; you know Christ's own plea, John xvii. 4, 5, 'Father, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work that thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was.' It is a sweet evidence. What doth God look for from the creature but glory?

*Object.* 1. But you will say, I cannot glorify Christ in my addresses to God, and cannot come with an assurance becoming his purchase. I answer—

1. When we cannot apply, let us disclaim: Lord! we come not in our own names, our own worth and desert, which is none at all; we come in the merits of Christ; we know 'there is no other name under heaven;' Hosea xiv. 3, 'In thee the fatherless findeth mercy;' that is, every person that wanteth a guide, relief, and support. Though we cannot say, Father, yet we can say, we are fatherless, we have none to help us.

2. If we cannot speak of the love that he beareth to us for Christ's sake, yet let us plead the love that he beareth to him. Christ's name is very dear and precious in heaven, being God's beloved Son: Lord, for the love that thou bearest to Christ. We are his clients, though we cannot say we are his members. Though I cannot say, Thou art mine, yet I may say, He is thine, a mediator of thy setting up. God might have refused us, if Christ had not letters-patents from heaven, and his commission under the broad seal of God: John vi. 27,

'Him hath God the Father sealed.' Lord, he is thy own authorised mediator. Moses was refused, that interposed of his own accord, Exod. xxxii. 32, 33. I have nothing to bring thee but a mediator of thine own. It is a prevailing argument.

*Object.* 2. Alas! there is little that I do for God; my station is private: those in the magistracy and ministry, that are in an eminent sphere of activity, they may glorify Christ, they do his work upon earth; but what do I do? I answer—

1. God will be glorified by every man in his way and place: John xvii. 4, 'Father, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work that thou hast given me to do.' We must not speak of our rank, Christ is glorified by thy diligence and faithfulness in thy private place, a man-servant, or a maid-servant: 1 Cor. vii. 22, 'He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free man;' being redeemed from the thraldom of Satan, and servitude of sin, he doth glorify Christ: Titus ii. 9, 10, 'Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.' Godly servants, what an ornament are they to the gospel! By the first inlets of religion into a family, it is made beautiful and lovely in the eyes of carnal men, who esteem the doctrine by the life and practice of the professors of it. Servants in those days were bought and sold like beasts. The Lord doth not esteem men by the places they hold, but by their carriage in them.

2. There is no station so private but thou mayest do something for Christ, to bring up thy children in the nurture of the Lord, to instruct thy servants, thy neighbours, thy fellow-servants. Zeal is like fire or like leaven, it will spread and diffuse itself.

*Object.* 3. I have laboured, but to little purpose.

*Ans.* Success is not thy work, but God's. We must mind our duty, and leave the success to God; we shall not be responsible for lack of success, but want of endeavours: Isa. xlix. 4, 'Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.' It was a complaint of Christ himself; his ministry was without fruit, yet not without reward. We may have the crown of faithfulness, if not the fruit. A minister is like a fountain that always runneth, 'whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.' So you must act in your families.

*Object.* 4. I was never called to martyrdom. I doubt I shall not glorify him.

*Ans.* 1. Wish not for troubles, but leave them to God; and when they come, take up his cross. Simon of Cyrene was compelled; we must not choose our cross, but bear it. Christ himself did not carry his cross till it was laid upon him; we must not seek it, but take it up; not brew our cup, but drink it. When a cross meeteth us in our way, which we cannot escape without sin or breach of conscience, we must bear it.

2. There is seldom a time when religion is not difficult, and doth not put us on some inconvenience, if not upon the displeasure of a magistrate, yet of carnal friends; if not for some main truths of chris-

tianity, yet for some of Christ's lesser institutions; present truths usually go cross to interests.

3. The less trouble abroad, the more at home; if you do not conflict with a naughty world, yet with a naughty heart. There are doubts in point of comfort, difficulties in point of obedience. A christian, in good earnest, never meeteth with a sleepy lazy time, all calm and rest. It is good to be jealous of ourselves; it doth not weaken our confidence in Christ, but our fleshly security.

*Object.* 5. But I have many self-ends, and do what I can, they will be interposing; and I can do nothing for Christ, but am ready to be biassed by some carnal aims.

*Ans.* It is impossible to think to be without failings, as to our ends and principles, as well as the manner of duty; but a christian is judged by his main scope and purpose of his life. If this be the main thing, Christ will own you, and intercede with God for you.

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## SERMON XIV.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*—JOHN XVII. 11.

HITHERTO Christ had argued with the Father, and showed many reasons why he would pray for the disciples. Now he cometh from arguments to requests. Here the prayer itself beginneth. His first request is, that God would have a care of them when he was gone from them; as a father, when he is about to die, commendeth his children to the care and tutelage of a near friend; so doth Christ commend his disciples to God: 'And now I am no more in the world,' &c.

The circumstances notable in the verse are these—

1. The occasion of the prayer, wherein there is a new cause and reason why he commendeth them to the Father, 'And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.'

2. The compellation of the party to whom the prayer is made, 'Holy Father.' Titles are suited to requests: Rom. xv. 13, 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.'

3. The matter of the prayer, for perseverance in grace, 'Keep through thine own name.'

4. The parties prayed for, 'Those which thou hast given me;' an argument often urged before.

5. The end of the prayer, or of the blessing asked in prayer, 'That they may be one;' which is amplified by the exemplary pattern, 'as we are one.' Or rather, the whole is a new request; two matters are prayed for—conservation from evil, and perfection in good. Christ prayed for *conservationem a malo, et perfectionem in bono.*

In this verse there is a large field of matter. Let me explain the words, and then raise some practical observations.

*First*, I begin with the occasion.

'I am no more in the world;' that is, by and by I shall be no more. Christ was yet in the world; for he saith, ver. 13, 'These things I speak in the world;' still subject to the miseries of it; his passion was not over, his sorest combat was at last, and that was nigh at hand; but Christ went to it with such a resolved mind, that he seemed already to be exempted from a worldly condition. But how 'no more in the world,' since he saith, 'I am with you to the end of the world'? He is spiritually still with us, but he was about to withdraw his corporal presence.

'But these are in the world.'—I am almost on shore, but these are still to remain at sea, floating upon the waves; out of the duty of their calling, they are to stay behind, and must expect tempests, labours, dangers, and persecutions, infirmities within, and temptations without. The world is a step-mother to the saints; Christ pitieth their case that they are to stay in the world, as those that are in the haven pity their fellows that are left behind at sea in the midst of the storm.

'And I come unto thee.'—An explication of what he said before, 'I am no more in the world;' only it addeth something more. 'I am no more in the world,' implieth only his death; but 'I come to thee,' his ascension. It is expressed before: John xvi. 5, 'I go my way to him that sent me: I go to the Father,' ver. 10. I am about to enter into the glory of the Father. It doth not signify, as Lyranus would have it, I come to thee in prayer, by way of address and supplication; but, I come to be with thee in glory. Mark, there was a great deal of time yet to pass, forty days after the resurrection. Faith presents things future as present; in this sense we enter heaven before our time.

In this clause, the occasion, I observe three things:—

1. Christ's ascension, *Father, I come to thee.*

2. The necessary ceasing of his corporal presence by virtue of that ascension, *I am no more in the world.*

3. Christ's care to make up that defect to his people; it is the occasion of the present address to God.

Of these in their order.

First, Of Christ's ascension, 'I come to thee.' Here is—(1.) The history; (2.) The reasons; (3.) The benefits; (4.) The use that we may make of it.

1. The history of Christ's ascension. There are many circumstances; I shall touch upon them briefly.

[1.] The time when he had finished his work, not only of doing and suffering, but giving sufficient instructions to the apostles about his kingdom: Acts i. 3, 'He was seen of them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.' As Hezekiah was to 'set his house in order before he died,' Isa. xxxviii. 1, so Christ would not ascend into heaven till he had set all at rights upon earth. Christ would have his house well governed after his death, and therefore stayeth forty days to give instructions.

[2.] The place from whence he ascended; from the Mount of Olives, Acts i. 12. A mount, a high and eminent place, to ascertain them of the truth of his ascension; he did not withdraw himself secretly, as at other times, but in open view. The place is yet again notable: the

Mount of Olives was the place from whence he went to be crucified; the same mountain yielded him a passage to his cross and his crown; there his pains and torments began, in the garden of that mount, and thence he ascended. How often doth the Lord make that place that hath been the scene of our sorrows to be the first steps to our rising and advancement! Wherever the saints die, they have their Olivet, in the prison, on the scaffold, their sick beds, where they have been racked with tormenting pains. As sometimes with wicked men, the place of sin is the place of vengeance. So Ahab's dogs licked up his blood in the same place where he shed the blood of Naboth.

[3.] The place to which, the third heaven. The tabernacle figured the church, the temple heaven. In the temple were three partitions; the court, where was the altar of burnt-offerings; the holy place, where was the table, candlestick, shew-bread, and the altar of burnt-incense; then the holy of holies, where the high priest came once a year. So in that vast space which the scriptures call heaven, there are, as it were, three storeys—the etherial heaven, the starry heaven, and the heaven of heavens; into this Christ, as our high priest, is entered. There was not only a change of his presence, but a translation of his body into the high and holy place.

[4.] The witnesses, the eleven apostles; these were his choice witnesses, not the whole company of believers.

[5.] Another circumstance was his last action a little before his ascension: Luke xxiv. 50, 'He blessed his disciples;' nay, it is added again, to put the greater emphasis upon it, ver. 51, 'And while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.' It is the fashion of good men to die blessing; Jacob and Moses, when they were to take their leaves of the world, they blessed the tribes. Christ, before he would go, would first leave his blessing; nay, the last act with which he would close up his life was an act of blessing, to show that now the curse was removed, and he was going to heaven to convey the blessing to all the heirs of salvation: Acts iii. 26, 'Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities;' as God blessed Adam and Eve, when his work was done.

[6.] The manner: Acts i. 9, 'When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' The cloud answered to God's appearance in the tabernacle. When we look on the clouds, this was Christ's chariot; he will come again in like manner.

[7.] In his ascension he went to heaven as a conqueror, he triumphed over his enemies, and gave gifts to his friends: Eph. iv. 8, 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' As glorious conquerors lead their chief enemies fettered in iron chains. So Col. ii. 15, 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it,' *ἐν αὐτῷ, non sudore et sanguine aliorum, ut quondam imperatores solebant.* There is some difficulty about the exposition of that place; those seem too literally to interpret it that think there was some open pomp and show. The Papists say he went to the *limbus patrum*, and took Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other holy men of the Old Testament, along with

him in triumph to heaven; but then he should have taken the devils. Zanchy thinks there was some real visible triumph, visible not to all, but to God, angels, and men, leading the devils through the air. Still it seemeth too gross, and to be asserted without warrant. But this must be interpreted suitably to the other acts of his office; this triumph must be referred to his ascension. Christ fought for heaven, and struck the last stroke on the cross, seized on the spoil at his resurrection, led them in triumph at his ascension, and by his quiet sitting on the throne his subjects enjoy the benefit.

[8.] Christ's entertainment by the angels. Some were left to comfort the apostles: Acts i. 10, 'While they looked steadfastly towards heaven, two men stood by in white apparel.' These two men were two angels in the shape of men. When the husband is to go a long journey, he writeth to the wife from the next stage, whilst her grief is fresh and running, and giveth an account of his welfare. Christ despatcheth two messengers out of his glorious train, which message being done, they accompany him with other angels into heaven: Dan. vii. 13, 'I saw one like the Son of man, with the clouds of heaven, and they brought him near before him.' They, that is, the angels; the Son of man, that is, Christ, as appeareth by the next verse, they wait upon him, and guard him into the presence of God. Certainly if the angels came so cheerfully to proclaim his incarnation when born, what triumph is there by that blessed company in heaven at his ascension! Still the angels are in Christ's company; when he cometh to judgment, the angels shall come with him. Christ coming into the presence of the Father, is royally attended; his entrance into heaven is glorious, with glorious applauses and acclamations: Ps. xxiv. 11, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in;' viz., at the coming of his humanity; so Justin Martyr, Basil, Euthymius. But clearly there is an allusion to the bringing the ark into the place prepared by David for it; a figure of Christ's entrance into heaven. They applaud him as mighty in battle, as newly returned from the spoils of his enemies. The entrance of a victorious and triumphant captain is there described, and so it is proper to Christ. Once more, the blessed saints have the like applause. Isaiah describes it, Isa. lxiii. 1–3, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me,' &c. There is a dialogue, as before, to express the saints' acclamations to Christ; the church is brought in there wondering at Christ's glorious triumph over all his enemies, as returning victorious from some bloody fight, like a great commander in goodly rich robes, besprinkled with the blood of his enemies.

[9.] The last thing is his welcome from God: Ps. ii. 8, 'I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,' &c.; Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;' compared with Mat. xxii. 44. In the day of his inauguration God will say, Welcome, Son; sit at my right hand; all the

kingdoms of the earth are thine. Christ doth not only enter as a conqueror, but as a favourite: Son, thy work is well done; sit at my right hand; that is God's first word to him; and then, Ask what thou wilt, it is thine. It is a fashion among great princes, when they would show great affection or extraordinary liking to any, they bid them ask what they would; as Herod to Herodias's daughter: Mat. xiv. 6, 7, 'When Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod: whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.' And Ahasuerus to Esther: Esth. v. 3, 'What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom.'

2. The reasons why. Christ would not have gone, if it had not been expedient: John xvi. 7, 'Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.' A woman had rather have her husband live at home than go to the Indies, but when she considereth that it is to do her good, to enrich the family by traffic, she yieldeth her consent, it is a profitable voyage. So it is expedient that Christ should go to heaven. In the infancy of the church Christ was present as a nurse, but he would not have them always hang on the teat. The reasons of Christ's ascension are these:—

[1.] He is gone that we may look upon him as in a greater capacity to do us good. All weakness is now removed from him, his human nature glorified, and placed in heaven, his majesty restored; we may now reflect upon the glory of his person with comfort; he is now a king on the throne, a king in his palace, and a place of royal residence. David was king as soon as anointed by Samuel, but when he was crowned in Hebron then did he actually administer the kingdom. Christ had his followers in the days of his flesh, as David had his four hundred companions in the desert. The thief owned Christ upon the cross, and Christ tells him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' Luke xxiii. 43. What may we not expect from Christ now in heaven! Every office is royally exercised; as a prophet he sendeth out his Spirit; as a king, he ruineth his adversaries; as a priest, he intercedeth with God.

[2.] To prepare a place for us: John xiv. 2, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' It is good to consider how Christ prepareth heaven for us by his ascension. It was prepared before the world began, by the decree of God the Father: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' This was an inheritance intended for the heirs of promise; by a free choice he designed the persons, and their particular portion and degree of glory. But because we are to hold heaven, not only by gift, but by purchase, Christ came from heaven to prepare it, and went to heaven again to prepare; yet further to open the door that was before shut up; as our head, he went to seize upon it in our right; as our legal head, he possesseth heaven in our names; as a guardian taketh up lands for the heir, Christ holdeth heaven in our right; till we be ready for it, he keepeth possession. And as our mystical head and author of grace, he dispenseth the Spirit, and maketh us fit for that place, making intercession for us, that our sins be no impediment. He is called our forerunner: Heb. vi. 20, 'Whither the forerunner is for us entered,

even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.' His going is to make way for us; as our harbinger, to take up rooms and lodgings for us. As the captain of our salvation, he hath taken up quarters for himself and all his company: Heb. ii. 10, 'It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings.' Christ hath opened heaven's door that was shut up; there was a guard set upon paradise, but Christ hath removed it. He is gone to fit all things for our entertainment, as Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare for Jacob. Die when we will, our place is ready; there is nothing to keep us out. The church is tossed with waves, but Christ is gone ashore, and hath secured for us a landing-place; and his ascension is a pledge of ours, as he rose as the firstfruits of them that slept. It is the meritorious, exemplary, efficient cause of our ascension.

[3.] To represent his satisfaction. The Levitical priest was to enter into the sanctuary with blood, so doth Christ into heaven, to show that he had done his work. The apostle hath an expression which needeth opening: Heb. viii. 4, 'If he were on earth, he should not be a priest.' What is the meaning? Was not Christ a priest when he was on earth? I answer—Yes. Why then doth the apostle say that 'if he were on earth he should not be a priest?' that is, he could not discharge the whole office of the priesthood; for the high priest once a year carried the sacrifice through the court before the sanctuary, and there killed it, and there took the blood thereof into the holiest of all, and presented himself before the Lord to intercede for the people: so Christ carried his sacrifice out of the city, offered it up to God, and then entered into the heavenly sanctuary, where he liveth for ever to intercede for us, and his blood always runneth fresh; and therefore, if he were on earth he could not discharge the whole office of a priest. So Heb. ix. 24, 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,' ἐμφανισθῆναι. As the high priest entered on the behalf of the people, with the names of the twelve tribes on his breast and shoulders, so Christ is entered on the behalf of us all, bearing the memorial of every saint on his heart. Mark, the apostle saith, 'Now to appear,' not only once. The high priest stayed not within the sanctuary, but Christ is our constant lieger in heaven, all the time from his ascension unto this day, constantly, still, while it is called *now*.

[4.] To pour out the Spirit; John vii. 39, 'The Holy Ghost was not yet given, for Christ was not yet glorified.' When the husband is wanting, then he sendeth tokens; so when Christ is glorified, then he giveth out the Spirit; as Elijah, when he ascended, let fall his mantle. Proper acts have their proper fruits. Christ in earth established our right, and in heaven he puts us in actual possession; the purchase was by Christ's exinanition, the application by his advancement. It was not meet Christ should use a royal act till his advancement, and till he went to the Father; he ascended then, that his blood might not be spilt in vain, but that he might be in a capacity to execute his own testament; unless Christ had ascended, we needed not this supply.

3. The fruits and benefits of his ascension.

[1.] It is a sign God hath received satisfaction. His resurrection was a pledge of it, then our surety was let out of prison, the Lord sent an angel to remove the stone; not to supply any power in Christ, but as a judge when the law is satisfied, sendeth an officer to open the prison doors with power and authority: Heb. xiii. 20, 'The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus.' Christ was not to break prison. While the surety lieth in prison, the debtor can have no discharge. But now Christ's ascension gives a further degree of assurance. Christ is not only taken out of prison, but taken up to God with glory and honour. God hath taken up our surety to himself, and rewarded him. Christ hath perfectly done his work, or else he had never been taken out of the grave, much less taken up to God. God is well pleased with him; he hath not only a discharge, but a reward. Christ is said not only to ascend, but to be received into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16, *ἀνέβη, ἀνελήφθη*, an active, and a passive word; the one noteth the power of his godhead, the other noteth the grant of the Father. Christ took upon him the quality of our surety, and he must pay every farthing ere he can go to his Father. It is a sufficient pledge: John xvi. 10, 'Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more.' Thus there was an everlasting righteousness established; he was never to see God's face more if he had not perfectly done his work: Gen. xliii. 5, 'Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.' He is God's favourite.

[2.] It is a pledge of our ascension: John iii. 13, 'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man that is in heaven.' *Ascendit solus, sed non totus.* Head and members must be together; our head being there before, the members must follow after. Christ speaketh as if he were not content with his own heaven without us: ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.' Christ took our flesh to heaven, and left his Spirit, which is an earnest of our glory: 2 Cor. v. 5, 'He hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.' God never taketh anything from his children, but he sendeth them a better thing in the room of it.

[3.] We have an intercessor at God's right hand, a favourite in the court of heaven: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous;' as when offenders have a favourite in court. We need a mediator in heaven; he is gone to disannul all Satan's accusation. The sacrificing part is done and ended, and his intercession now taketh place. We have these two great advantages in prayer—Christ is our advocate, and the Spirit our notary.

*Use* 1. Information.

1. It informeth us of the privileges of God's children. When a child of God dieth, he doth but go to his Father. Christ and we have the same relation: John xx. 17, 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' He is no more in the world, but still he is. He doth not say, 'I am no more,' but 'I am no more in the world;' they do not leave life, but the world. As Christ was the Son of God by nature, they are the sons of God by grace, and when they die, they go to their heavenly Father, to a sweet rest, to the bosom

of God. The same entertainment Christ had, we shall have, a joyful entertainment, a sweet welcome when we come to heaven, and the conduct of angels thither: Luke xvi. 22, 'The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.' God will take us as it were by the hand, with a 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' Mat. xxv. 21.

2. It informeth us that all that Christ did was for a believer's use and comfort; if he cometh into the world, it is to merit; if he ascendeth into heaven, it is to apply. He descended from heaven for the redemption of man; after that work is accomplished, he ascendeth thither again to bestow it on us; and at the last day he will come again and fetch his bride; as when all things are ready, the heir cometh in person to fetch the bride into his father's house. Going, coming, staying, still Christ is ours. He was born for us, he lived for us, he rose again and ascended for us: it is for our good that he went away; whatever he did, in his abasement and exaltation, it was for our good.

3. It informeth us that the greatest comforts may be supplied, Christ's corporal presence by the presence of the Spirit: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'That as our sufferings in Christ Jesus have abounded, so our consolation also hath abounded through Christ.' They should lose nothing by his departure: John xiv. 16, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.' He would not leave them orphans. We cannot be made unhappy by the want of any outward comfort; we have the more of God, the less we have of these outward helps. If the corporal presence of Christ can be recompensed by the presence of the Spirit, certainly lesser supports of life will be recompensed.

*Use* 2. Exhortation.

1. To all sorts of persons to get an interest in Christ, and to clear it up to their souls. How sweet would it be if when we are no more to be in this world, we could say, 'Holy Father, I come to thee!' We all affect this, 'Let my latter end be like his,' as Balaam spake. *At oportuit sic vixisse.* An evidence of this is, if you ascend with Christ: Eph. ii. 6, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Head and heart ought to be together. Your head is in heaven; if your heart be there too, you are members of his mystical body. How shall a man know that he is ascended with Christ?—

[1.] If the things of the world seem small; as when we are in a high place, men seem as ants. Worldly glory will appear to be small, and worldly profits small. But when we are upon earth, heavenly things seem small, as stars appear but as spangles.

[2.] If you behave yourselves to him as to a glorified person. Do you serve him? John xii. 26, 'If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.' Carnal men crucify him again.

[3.] If you keep yourselves 'unspotted from the world,' James i. 26. No unclean thing shall enter into heaven. The world is a defiling thing; that filth that cleaveth to our fingers in telling of money is an emblem of the filthiness of the world. A man that looketh to

be like Christ in glory certainly would not defile himself in the world. If a prince marry a mean woman, would he endure to see her live like a scullion? Christ hath married our nature. A man that loveth the world, and would always live here, is like a scullion that lieth among the pots. Would you yourselves hug nastiness, and embrace the dunghill?

2. To press God's children to be holy and heavenly in their minds, to wean their affections from the world. We should be where Christ is: Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;' Col. iii. 1, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.' Who would not desire to be in heaven now Christ is there? As the loadstone draws iron to it, let us be present in heaven, as Christ is present on the earth by the Spirit. Though our bodies are tied with the fetters of the flesh, yet let our souls ascend, let our minds be there, our wishes, our desires there; by these means we walk in heaven before our time. A stone, though it breaks to pieces by the fall, will move to its centre; though we naturally abhor death, we should desire it to be with Christ. It is a shame that a stone should be carried with greater force to its centre than we to Christ.

*Use* 3. Comfort. We have Christ for us in the heavens: Heb. iv. 14, 'Seeing therefore that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.' We have Christ always for us in heaven; he hath a part of his office to perform there. His absence doth not hinder us from having a right to him, or a spiritual possession of him. He is ours, and he hath his residence in heaven, and hath power to open it to us and give us entrance. His high honour doth not hinder him from the discharge of his office to do us good. He is at God's right hand, and yet 'a minister of the sanctuary.' Christ hath a ministry, and part of his service to perform in heaven; is our faithful agent: Heb. viii. 1, 2, 'We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary.' For all his glory, Christ is called τῶν ἁγίων λειτουργὸς, a minister of holy things; he taketh care of all holy things which we present to God, and to convey holy and spiritual things to us. Christ is not stately: many forget their poor friends when advanced; Christ regardeth his poor church as much as ever. The butler, when he was advanced, forgot Joseph: but he remembereth us; he disdaineth not to look after every poor christian: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' His heart is not changed by his honour, but he in a greater capacity to do us good. Having such a friend in heaven, we need not fear a foe upon earth. Heaven is open for us: Heb. x. 19, 20, 'Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh.'

*Use* 4. Direction in the sacrament. If we have anything to do with Christ, we know where to seek him: 'Blessed are they that believe, and have not seen,' John xx. 19. Those that are far from court never saw the king. God hath removed Christ out of sight that we might behold him by faith. Let us look for him in the sacrament,

not for his bodily presence. How can he be there bodily, when he is received into glory? But for his spiritual presence, the influences of his grace, and a derivation of virtue from his person.

Secondly. The next point is the necessary ceasing of his corporal presence upon his ascension: 'I am no more in the world, but these are in the world.' Let us see the reason why he will be no more with us. Now the reasons why Christ would withdraw his bodily presence from us are these:—

1. That he might try the world, and yet in a way suitable to his glorious estate. Christ, when he came to try the Jews, he came in disguise, not as the Son of God, in majesty and glory: John i. 11, 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.' Still to try men's obedience there must be some veil. If he should be present in the world, in a glorious way becoming his majesty and empire, there would be no trial; and therefore in a manner he still cometh in disguise, his glory is veiled under the ministry of men, and carried on in a spiritual manner. If he should appear in glory and power, sinners durst not quack, and so the wickedness of man would not be discovered, nor would the faith of his people be exercised with such praise and honour if he were personally and gloriously present. This is the commendation and praise of christianity, that they can 'walk by faith' when they cannot 'walk by sight;' 2 Cor. v. 7, 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' They see not Christ, because he is absent in body; yet they believe in him, and love him, and send their hearts after him. So 1 Peter i. 8, 'Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' Faith is eagle-eyed, and can look above the clouds. The absence of Christ did not prejudice their comfort and hope. Faith contenteth itself with an intellectual sight and certainty. This is a trial of christians, when they can believe in Christ, and rejoice in Christ as if they did see him with their bodily eyes, and hear him with their bodily ears. *Ibi figunt desiderium, quo nequeunt inferre conspectum,* saith Leo—They fasten their hearts upon him, though they cannot fasten their eyes. Faith is sight enough. Thus would Christ try the world; but yet, as I said, in a way suitable to his glorious estate. If he should still have continued his body among us in that state of weakness wherein he conversed in the world, his holy body would still be subject to abuse, and the injuries and scorn of wicked men, which would not agree with his glorification; and therefore, after his resurrection, he only showed his body to some few chosen witnesses, and so departed into heaven, that it might be no more seen, till he cometh to the last judgment with glory and power. So Christ himself saith, Mat. xxiii. 39, 'Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;' that is, till ye be compelled to say so, though now ye are angry at the children that welcomed me in this manner: Mat. xxvi. 64, 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' Never till then, after I am taken down from the cross and buried.

2. That way might be made for his spiritual presence. Some presence of Christ there must be for our comfort and safety: 'I will not leave you comfortless, *ὀρφάνους*, but will come unto you,' John xiv. 18.

That Christ is still spiritually present with the church is clear by those promises to the apostles and to believers. To the apostles and their successors: Mat. xxviii. 20, 'I am with you always, to the end of the world.' Into whatsoever place and time of the world our lot is cast, we may have an assurance of Christ's presence, that is, of his assistance and blessing, as much as if he were actually and corporally present with us. To ministers: now if they improve their interest, they might have Christ in their company, as the apostles had; they are taken into the same patent and charter. So also to all believers: Mat. xviii. 20, 'Wherever two or three are met together in my name, I am present in the midst of them.' Whenever we are met together in any religious work and business, Christ's gracious presence is with us; in this sense he will never depart from believers. Now this gracious presence was not vouchsafed till his corporal presence was removed. Partly because Christ will do nothing unnecessarily. When he was personally present, to solve their doubts, to instruct them in all cases, the Spirit was not poured out in such abundance; as it is usual still with God to make up to us in spiritual supplies what we want in outward helps. Partly because his disciples had carnal thoughts of his bodily presence, and rested in it, which was to be confuted by his absence. Partly to make way for his unlimited universal influence; his bodily presence could only be in some places; but now he is ascended, 'he filleth all things,' Eph. iv. 10. As the sun, if it should come down and shine on one particular field, it could not diffuse its beams far and near; but now it is fixed in the firmament, nothing is hidden from its light. So Christ exalted, scattereth his beams and influences everywhere, into all parts and corners of the world. Partly because it was meet that Christ should enter into his glory and kingdom, before he declared his efficacy to men by the more plentiful pouring out the Spirit; as princes use at their coronation to give gifts and send abroad ambassadors. So when Christ was in his royal palace, 'he gave gifts unto men, and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers,' Eph. iv. 8–11.

*Use* 1. For confutation of the Lutherans, who, to establish their doctrine of consubstantiation, make Christ's ascension to be, not a local remove, but only a change of the manner of his presence; they say he is still corporally present, but not visibly; as if the human nature of Christ were made invisibly omnipresent, and not locally removed and carried into heaven. This is a doctrine contrary to scriptures; for it is expressly said, Acts i. 11, that 'he was taken up into heaven.' And by virtue of this taking up he is no more in the world, no more in the earth, nor in any place thereof; for it is said, Acts iii. 21, 'That the heavens must contain him till the time of the restitution of all things;' there is his personal presence fixed. And therefore 'if any say, Lo here, or Lo there, believe him not.' It is flatly contradictory to scripture that Christ should be corporally present on earth till he cometh to judgment; and it is contrary to the truth of Christ's body; though it be glorified, it is not deified; a body cannot be omnipresent and without quantity, for then it is no more a body. And it is a doctrine barren, and of no use; the presence of Christ's

body is not so absolutely necessary to the comfort of a christian: John vi. 63, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.' Nearness or distance of place doth not help or hinder his presence with us or efficacy upon us. The degree of his gracious operation doth not depend upon the degree of his personal presence; as if Christ were like the sun, shining more or less hot according to the difference of his posture and situation. Christ doth not work like a natural agent, by contact, but according to his free pleasure, and the wise dispensation of his own will; and our communion with him is wholly spiritual and mystical, not gross and carnal: 'The flesh profiteth nothing.' Yea, it is against our comfort. Christ hath business to do for us in heaven, and it is our advantage that he is no more in the world. If he were not in heaven, he were not a priest: Heb. viii. 4, 'If he were on earth, he could not be a priest.' And again, Heb. vii. 26, we had need of a priest 'who is made higher than the heavens;' that is, that is ascended into the third heaven, those ἀχειροποίητα ἅγια, 'those holy places not made with hands, now to appear in the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 24. But to leave this.

*Use* 2. To press christians to look for the spiritual presence of Christ, though they do not enjoy his bodily. You may make use of Christ, now he is in heaven, as the disciples did on earth, to ask him questions, to seek his counsel, to commend your prayers and persons to God. It is no disadvantage to faith that Christ is removed out of sight, but only an occasion given whereby it may discover itself with more praise. Therefore let us believe in Christ, though we see him not; we shall one day see him in the heavens to our comfort, and to the terror of the wicked; in the meantime, let faith serve instead of vision. It will be your commendation, 'whom having not seen, ye love,' 1 Peter i. 8. God hath removed Christ out of sight, to make way for the exercise of faith and love; and it is much better by faith to converse with him in heaven, than by sight to see him upon earth: John xx. 29, 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe.' Thomas would make his senses the judge; he must feel the wounds, and put his finger in the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side; which discovered the weakness of his faith. Faith is not grounded on sense, but testimony. Be not discouraged, though you never saw him in the flesh, you shall one day see him in heaven; though you could not hear his gracious words, yet you have whispers and counsels from his Spirit. You saw him not hanging on the cross, yet 'he is crucified before your eyes,' Gal. iii. 1. In the word and sacraments he is notably and plainly laid forth to faith. The gospel is a magical glass, as it were, wherein God will have the soul look, that we may see our absent friend, *sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat;* there are the very postures of Christ. Therefore let us make use of our present advantages; you may expect as powerful influences from him as if present in person; as the sun doth not come down from heaven, but only his influence. There is a derivation of virtue from his person; yea, Christ is not like the sun; the farther absent from us in body, the more powerful is his influence: Eph. iv. 10, 'When he ascended up on high, he filled all things.' Briefly then, if you have anything to do with Christ, you know where to seek him. Those

that live far from court, never saw their king, yet they enjoy the benefit of his government, and are bound to allegiance. Christ is as meek, as gentle, as easy to be entreated as ever.

*Use* 3. For the conviction of them that please themselves in fond wishes and excuses; they think that if they had lived in the days of Christ's flesh, and had heard his words, full of grace and wisdom, it could not have been but they should have believed in him; they would never have crucified him, as the carnal Jews, and never have rejected his person and doctrine. Thus they bind the efficacy and virtue of Christ to his corporal presence; as if it would have been a greater advantage to them than his spiritual. A great deceit of the heart! This plea proceedeth upon a false supposal, as if Christ's virtue depended upon the nearness and distance of place. If there be any difference, now in heaven he is most apt to work, because he is entered upon his royalty, and the actual exercise of his kingdom. The apostles themselves, when they had Christ's presence, were more gross, dull, and carnal; but afterwards they savoured nothing but heaven and life eternal. And again, it is usual for men to dislike present dispensations, and betray their duties by their wishes. Alas! if Christ were now present in the form of a servant, what sorry entertainment would most give him! We think we should not have done what the Jews did; in probability we would have done worse: you grieve his Spirit as much as they did affront his person; the malice of the Jews was more gross, but ours is as inexcusable. Besides, there is a natural reverence that even hypocrites will bear to their godly ancestors: Mat. xxiii. 29, 30, 'Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Dead things and persons do not exasperate and cross present interests; the prophets, that lived in their ancestors' days, were out of sight, no eyesore to present practices, their speeches were not personally directed to them. The worst men usually honour the dead, but are injurious to the living. As much as we detest the memory of Annas and Caiphas, so do they of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The name of Judas is not more odious to us than Ahab to them; therefore our detestation of the Jews, or longing for the person of Christ, is no argument of great devotion to him.

## SERMON XV.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*—JOHN XVII. 11.

THIRDLY, The next point is taken from that clause, 'But these are in the world.' Christ's apprehensiveness of the danger of believers in their worldly state.

In managing this argument—(1.) I will open the danger; (2.) Why God permitteth it; (1.) Christ's apprehensiveness of it.

1. To open the danger. There is danger from within and from without; within are lusts, and without are temptations; they are subject to many infirmities, and exposed to infinite dangers and temptations.

[1.] From within. If we could live as fish in the salt sea, fresh, without any taint of saltness, without receiving a savour from things without, the danger would not be so great: 2 Peter i. 4, 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust;' the root of the matter is within us. The world without would do no harm were it not for the world in our own hearts. Pleasures, honours, profits are dangerous snares, but not to an angel. When John reckoneth up the contents of the world, he doth not reckon up the objects, but the lusts: 1 John ii. 16, 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Satan is our enemy, the world is the bait, but our heart is the traitor. Baalam could not hurt Israel till he corrupted them by whoredoms. The worst enemy is within us; we carry the danger in our own bosoms. We must look for blows in the world, but inward ulcers are worse than wounds, because the evil is inward, and the constitution of the body helpeth it. Sins are more dangerous than troubles, because they are aided by nature.

[2.] From without. The world is an evil place, both in regard of sin and misery; we are sure to be vexed or defiled, to be corrupted by the favours or discouraged by the frowns of it. In the world we have a great many enemies; there is the god of the world, and the powers of the world, and the men of the world, and the things of the world.

(1.) There is the god of this world. This country in which we dwell, it is the kingdom of Satan, Christ's bitter enemy. He is called 'the prince of the world,' John xii. 31, not by right, but the world hath made him so. Can God's children live long in peace in the kingdom of Satan? He cannot endure to lose one corner of his empire, therefore frowns and flatters, and seeks to corrupt or discourage the saints: 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not.' Titles are suited to the matter in hand. Satan blindeth most, as the god of this world; the creature is but suborned, Satan is at the back of it, and lieth in ambush to surprise our souls; 'Is not the hand of Joab in all this?' The devil is in the snare. The world is Satan's chessboard; we can hardly move back or forth but the devil sets out one creature or another to attack us, either by fear, causing us to draw back, or by the love of some worldly creatures alluring us out of the lists wherein we should walk.

(2.) The powers of the world; usually they are set against Christ, and therefore at the latter end of the world they shall be broken and dashed to pieces. The world is a country wherein the church is a stranger; every man fearing God is like a strange plant brought from a far country, hath much ado to grow. The wicked are like nettles and thistles, that grow without ploughing or watering, because they grow in their own place; but the soil and air of the world doth not

suit with the saints; one time or other they are nipped, here is no kindly weather for them. A christian is not only a stranger, but an unconformist to the world: Rom. xii. 2, 'And be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your minds.' In every age there is something or other started up for his trouble and exercise. In his Father's house he is taught to do otherwise, and this putteth him upon trouble. If God giveth the church a little rest, it is but like a well day out of the fit of an ague, to recover strength for the next trial; a mortified saint, that is drawn up to heaven, and would live by the laws of his Father's house, must look for frowns: 'Yea, and all those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12. Christ's grapes must expect the winepress; all their care should be to yield good liquor. It is a statute, like the laws of the Medes and Persians: Acts xiv. 22, 'That through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.' Neither doth experience cross that rule; the apostle saith, Rom. viii. 35, 36, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' The world is the slaughter-house and shambles of the saints; here Christ was slain, all his witnesses butchered. Christ's lambs must look to have their throats cut. There is an old enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; it lasteth from Abel till the day of judgment. Jacob's and Esau's quarrel began from the day of their birth: Ps. cxxix. 1, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say;' from my youth upward, ever since Christ had a seed in the world. The world would not be the world, nor you christians, if the world did not hate you. Satan cannot change his nature, and the world waxeth worse and worse. Instead of marvelling to see the children of God afflicted and persecuted, we should marvel to see it otherwise. If one should tell you that your way lieth through a stony country, full of bushes and briars, you would think yourselves out of the way if you should meet with nothing but green and pleasant plains. The roadway to heaven is through a howling wilderness; if you have a foot of good land, it is God's blessing.

(3.) The men of the world. A man cannot hold any communion with them, but he shall be the worse for them: 1 John v. 19, 'We know we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.' The men of the world are sooty dirty creatures; we cannot converse with them, but they leave their filthiness upon us. It is hard to touch pitch and not be defiled: Acts ii. 40, 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation.' We grow in a wilderness, and there are many crooked trees that are like to twine about us, and to hinder our growth towards heaven. To disentangle ourselves, there must be a great deal of care. So 2 Tim. ii. 21, 'If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour.' 'From these;' from what? In a great house, there are vessels of gold and vessels of earth, some to honour, and some to dishonour. There are carnal seducers that are apt to pervert us by their enticement and example, as black pots leave their soil upon those that touch them; so base per-

sons and carnal heretics infect us with their sinful pollutions. By converse we are tainted unawares; as antinomian doctrines make the children of God less strict; though they do not pervert their judgment, yet they weaken their care and strictness. Nature is more susceptible of evil than of good. We easily catch a sickness, but we do not get health from one another. Ears of corn do not catch and hang upon men, but thorns do: Phil. ii. 15, 'We live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,' that are as briars and thorns, very catching.

(4.) The things of this world. The world is the valley of snares, and so to the children of God it often proveth the valley of sorrows. Frequency of converse maketh the snare more easily to insinuate. It is hard to be much conversant in any matter, and not to receive some tincture from it. These things, honours, pleasures, profits, they are accustomed objects, they are bred up with us; we must of necessity be conversant with meats and drinks and worldly substance, and insensibly they leave a taint upon the soul, especially where we have them at full. Worldly prosperity is a great snare to the saints; and things are better preserved in brine than honey. How soon is the soul corrupted. The warm sunshine maketh the weeds grow as well as the flowers. I observe great alterations in David's spirit; in adversity he spared his enemy, when he found Saul in the cave; in prosperity, he killed his servant, when he plotted Uriah's death; when he threatened Nabal in affliction, he bore with Shimei. God's children have a better country when they have the world's best advantages. Some fruits are not natural in England; though the weather be good, they do not agree with the soil.

2. Why God permitteth them to be in the world; he might have taken them to himself, and glorify them as soon as sanctify them, or else have gathered them into some island, some obscure angle and corner of the world, out of harm's way. But I answer—That doth not suit with God's dispensations: John xvii. 15, 'I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' The Lord hath some ends to be accomplished. He can at first conversion make us perfect and glorified saints; it is his wisdom to take a time; as Absalom was not to see the king's face presently, so we must wait our time.

[1.] For his own glory. The sweetness and power of grace is more discovered in this worldly estate. It is more wonder to maintain a candle in a bucket of water than in a lanthorn, or a spark in the midst of the sea: 'God's power is made perfect in weakness,' 2 Cor. xii. 9; that is, it is more gloriously discovered. Excellent things suffer a kind of imperfection till there be an occasion to discover them; therefore the apostle would glory in infirmities, as they occasioned a greater exercise of the divine grace. In this worldly estate, grace is discovered not only by its operation, but by conquest and victory; not only as it worketh, but as it fighteth: 1 John iv. 4, 5, 'Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world: they are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.' There is a spirit that worketh in the saints, and a spirit that worketh in the world; these two are conflicting; the world is the lists and place of battle, but Satan is

beaten in his own territory: 'Stronger is he that is in you than he that is in the world.' The saints may be molested, but not overcome. Still God hath his elect, and Christ his members, though Satan hath so many factors and agents for his kingdom. Look, as Israel was sent into Egypt that God's power might be made known—'For this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth,' saith God to Pharaoh, Exod. ix. 16—so we are in the world that his power may be known. We had missed many wonderful passages of providence if Israel had not been in Egypt. God will have us take many experiences of the sweetness and power of grace along with us to heaven. As travellers at night talk of the foul way and the dangers of the journey, so in heaven we shall discourse of the praises of our Redeemer, and his wise and powerful conduct. God would have us take these frequent experiences of grace along with us.

[2.] To try us. Were it not for the worldly state, there would be no place for temptation, nor room for the exercise of grace. He will not glorify us as soon as convert us; neither can we expect to go singing to heaven, and without blows: Heb. vi. 12, 'Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises.' Never any went to heaven, but there was a time to exercise both his faith and patience; we are to run and fight, this is common to all the saints. In the way to heaven many things will befall us, that will make it seem unlikely that we shall ever come thither; so we have need of faith; and troubles must have their turn ere heaven be possessed, so we have need of patience. Why should we look for a peculiar privilege? 1 Peter v. 9, 'The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.' All the saints are troubled with a busy devil, a naughty world, and a corrupt heart. Name but one saint of God that hath been excused, that went to heaven without trials and temptations. That quiet estate which you dream of is without precedent. The cross is the badge of this society; as Elijah said, 'Am I better than my fathers?' You are not better than all the saints, than your other brethren that are in the world. You should be ashamed to be alone, and never called out to exercise. There is a measure of sufferings appointed, and every member must take his share. It is distributed by a wise hand, so much for the head, so much for the shoulders, so much for hands and feet: Col. i. 24, 'Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.' Would we only be irregular, and refuse to take our burden? Briefly, there would be no temptation, no trial, were it not for the worldly estate, but here we must look for it. The skill of a mariner is known in a storm, and so is our fortitude and other graces tried and discovered. I have read in the lives of the fathers of a devout man that being one year without any trial, cried out, *Domine, reliquisti me, quia non me visitasti hoc anno*—Lord! thou hast forgotten me, and for a whole year hast not put me upon any exercise. Those whom God will make most perfect, he putteth them upon the greatest trials. Abraham had never been represented as the father of the faithful if he had not been exercised so much, with so many hazards and temptations.

[3.] To convince the world by their example, their strictness, patience, fortitude. They are in the world, but not of the world. If a christian were not a member of the world, he would never be the wonder of the world. They have flesh and blood as others have, and have not divested themselves of the affections and interests of nature; the same bodies, the same interests; yet they can deny all, and upon the convenient reasons of religion abhor the pleasures and dear contentments of this life, and become weaned, mortified, strict, holy; and this raiseth the world's wonder: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to all excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' They are so bewitched with these things that they wonder how any can resist the temptation. Godly men are to walk up and down the world as God's witnesses: 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord,' Isa. xliii. 11. They testify that there is a reality in religion, and how it worketh, by the strictness and mortification of their lives. They are to be examples to the world: 2 Cor. iii. 3, 'Ye are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.' By your lives God writeth his mind to the world; you are a living rule, a walking Bible.

[4.] To fit them for glory. We do not commence *per saltum*. Vessels of honour must be seasoned: Col. i. 12, 'Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' What should an unmortified man do in heaven? Heaven would be a prison to him, the company of God and the communion of saints a burden. We do not come into God's presence hot and reeking from our lusts; we are first set in the garden of the church before we are transplanted to the upper paradise; they grow a while in the land of grace, that they may take kindly with the soil.

(1.) Partly to weaken our desires to the world. The stones were to be hewed and squared before they were to be set in the temple; there was no noise of axe or hammer heard there. So during our worldly state we are humbled with many afflictions, that we may be weaned by degrees from the world and worldly objects: Gal. vi. 14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.' The world doth not suit with the saints, as children are weaned from the teat by wormwood: when men are pleased in the world they forget their country. We stir liquors and syrups that are over the fire, that they may not stick and burn to. As Esther, when she was chosen for Ahasuerus's bride, was 'to accomplish the months of her purification' before she was presented to him, Esther ii. 12; so some days are to be spent in our purifying and sanctifying before we are presented to God.

(2.) Partly to make us long for glory. Our worldly estate is cumbersome; here are sins and afflictions, that we may long for a better estate: Ps. cxx. 5, 'Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!' As the Israelites' task was doubled, that they might long for Canaan and cry out for the land of rest. The inconveniences of our pilgrimage make the everlasting estate more sweet; troubles without us, diseases upon us, and sins within us, and all to make us long for home. Notwithstanding all the hard usage and entertainment in the world, how difficultly are we weaned!

3. Christ's apprehensiveness of this danger. You shall see it is a circumstance often mentioned: a little before his death, at his death, now in heaven.

[1.] A little before his death. We have two instances—one when he was about to wash his disciples' feet and institute the supper: John xiii. 1, 'Jesus having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.' Christ was then thinking that he should shortly depart; his thoughts were not on his own glory so much as our danger. If Christ would have thought of his own, he might have thought of the angels and glorified saints. Cyril and Chrysostom observe that he did not think of angels and glorified saints, but of his own in the world, those that were left to the miseries and temptations of an evil and unquiet world. No question it was sweet to Christ to think of the glorified saints and angels; but they were safe, and now was a time to show pity rather than delight. The other instance we have in his prayers in this place, from the 11th to the 17th verse. I might mention many passages in his sermons. Christ, when he was about to leave us, he had the affection of a father to his children, or of a dying husband to his wife; he was careful of our estate after his departure.

[2.] So at his death. A great thing that was in the eye of Christ was victory over the world: Gal. i. 4, 'He gave himself for us, to redeem us from the present evil world.' Certainly Christ is willing to help you, when he suffered so much that he might help you. When you love the world, you cross the end of Christ's death; his whole life was but a renouncing the world. The poverty of Christ upbraideth our aspiring projects and pursuits of worldly greatness. We seek to join house to house and field to field, and 'he had not a place whereon to lay his head.' But in his death he would make all sure. One thing that he purchased of the Father is grace to subdue the world. When he was to die, he said, Lo I give myself, upon condition thou wilt give them grace; let them be freed from the bondage of carnal fears and carnal desires. There is not a thing more answerable to the design and aim of his death than this is.

[3.] After his death and ascension into heaven, he is tenderly affected toward believers in the world; he still retaineth his human nature and his human affections, the same heart and the same pity: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' Christ, though he be exalted, is tenderly affected towards those that are left behind; he is still tenderly affected towards you in all your straits and troubles and infirmities. Christ's exaltation hath made no change in his bowels; he carried his love with him, not only into the grave, but into heaven; he is our Lord, but still our brother: as God, he knoweth our infirmities; and as man, he feeleth them; his love is most at work when you are in danger. Oh! what a comfort is this in all your temptations! There is one in heaven that seeth and feeleth all this; let us bear it the better, and ride out the storm. If a man were persuaded that his friends on shore knew what tempests he endured at sea, and were praying for him, it would be a great comfort to him in his distress. Christ's heart worketh towards thee; he who is always heard is now praying for thee in heaven; he

is touched with a feeling of thy infirmities. How should this comfort us! They have many snares and many enemies; Lord, help them!

The reasons of this apprehensiveness and tender feeling are his interest, love, charge, and experience: they are his own: John xiii. 1, 'Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them to the end.'

(1.) His interest. Christ hath a share going in every believer. As when there are ships at sea in which you have a share, you pray for their safe return, and are tenderly affected when you hear they are in danger. Christ is loath to lose his share; he had but now pleaded his interest with the Father: ver. 10, 'All thine are mine, and mine are thine.' We are a part of his goods; the world would weaken the estate of Christ. Believers are his treasure, and they are in danger of rocks and pirates; and therefore he prayeth to the Father. Now Christ hath an interest in them, not only by the Father's grant, but their own dedication; they are his, and all that they suffer is for his sake: ver. 14, 'I have given them thy word, and therefore the world hateth them.' Let a man go on in a wicked, carnal, ungodly way, and the world will not vex him. Let a man once be zealous for Christ, and then he must expect trouble enough. They endure all this for me, and shall I not be sensible? If a child should inadvertently break his leg or arm, you would pity him; but if he should break his leg or arm in your service or defence, to rescue his father, you would pity him more.

(2.) His love: John xiii. 1, 'Jesus having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.' Those whom we love, we are troubled about their welfare. A careless father may die, and never be troubled what shall become of his children; but love is very solicitous. Alas! poor orphans, they are without a guide and guardian, left to snares and temptations, and shall it not pity them? Hugo crieth out, *O charitas, quam magnum est vinculum tuum! Deum in terram traxisti, cruci affixisti, sepulchro clausisti!* &c.—O love, how great is thy power! it was love that brought Christ from heaven, that nailed him to the cross, that laid him in the grave, that carried him again to do our business with God. Had it not been for love he had never come from heaven, and left the bosom of the Father for the lap of the virgin, the form of God for the veil of flesh, the glory of heaven for the darkness of the grave. Had it not been for love, he had never died to deliver us from this present evil world, he had never been sensible of our state and condition. Love is jealous and sensible of all the dangers of the party beloved; the same love of Christ that exposeth us to troubles and hazards for Christ's sake, the same love maketh Christ compassionate of our miseries and sorrows. We are jealous of his honour, and he is jealous of our safety.

(3.) His charge. Christ hath taken an office upon him, to defend, pity, and guide the elect through all temptations to salvation. Now Christ cannot be unfaithful in his office: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' He that is passed into the heavens is still our high priest. Give me leave to admire that expression, Heb. viii. 2, λειτουργὸς τῶν ἁγίων, 'a minister of the sanctuary.' When he was upon earth he

came in the form of a servant, and now he is in heaven he is still a servant. We may speak what Christ hath spoken for us, he is our officer and minister even in heaven, not only in the state of his abasement, but in the state of his exaltation. Our Lord would be ours, not only in love but duty, that so we might have the greater assurance. Till all the saints come to heaven, Christ looks upon himself as bound in point of office, they are his charge; he cannot be loving to the church, nor faithful to the Father, if he should do otherwise.

(4.) His experience: Heb. iv. 15, 'He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.' Pray mark, 'in all points.' Christ hath had experience of all trials whereinto any of his servants can fall, poverty, forsaking of friends, exile, imprisonment, hunger, nakedness, watching, weariness, pain of body, heaviness of heart, desertion as to sense, wrath and curse of God. Christ hath carried his feeling with him into heaven; he knew what poverty meaneth, what trouble of conscience, what heaviness of spirit meaneth. Christ could not so experimentally pity us, so feelingly pity us, if he were not like us in all things; his heart was entendered by experience, as a man that hath felt the gout and felt the stone. Israel knew the heart of a stranger; Christ knew the heart of a man that is left to the world's frowns and snares. He took a communion of our nature and miseries, as a pawn and pledge that he will pity us and help us: Heb. ii. 10, 'The captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings.' Christ, though he was perfect, he received the Spirit without measure, yet he lacked one thing which his office required, to be a perfect mediator, till he had an experimental feeling. So Heb. ii. 18, 'In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' Christ was able as soon as he came from heaven. As God, what could he not do? But there is an ability of sufficiency, and of idoneity, an experimental ability. Christ had experience, though not of sin, yet of temptation to sin; he is not only able, but willing; he knoweth what it is. Christ would borrow our nature to make experiments.

*Use* 1. To teach us to walk with caution, and in a continual dependence upon God. We are continually assaulted, and live in the midst of snares. A man that cometh into the world, saith Luther, is like a traveller that cometh into an inn where there dwell none but thieves. Now he that carrieth jewels about him had need to take heed; the diversity, the frequency, the continuation of temptations should make us wary. The diversity; there are baits for every temper, honours for the ambitious, wealth for the covetous, and pleasures for the sensual. The devil hath a diet to feed every distemper; some are sullen, not bent to pleasures, but Satan is not at a loss to fit them with a temptation, there are profits for them; others are facile and more easy, they have pleasures; others would be great, they have honours; and when Satan knoweth the lust, he suiteth the bait; he is an old sophister, well skilled in the tempers of men. Therefore, seeing that in every business, in every bit of meat, in every recreation, there are snares, we we had need feed with fear and trade with fear. When there is an enemy in the country, we keep constant watch and ward. Then, for the frequency and continuance of temptations, they are always about us.

Long suits prevail at last. From the first use of reason till the hour of death, as long as God continueth our abode in the world, we are in danger. There are many baits; Satan is crafty, and the world is spiteful, and our hearts are naught. We are now upon our trial, the great work of religion is to walk in a constant watchfulness and dependence. Alas! many are as if they were in the haven already; so negligent, so careless, as if they were in the midst of paradise, out of temptations.

*Use* 2. To press us to grow weary of the world; it is a place full of snares; here we have many snares and many enemies. If we have a mind to sin no longer, why should we desire to live in the world? The world is a step-mother to the saints; why should we desire to hang upon the dug? He that would always live here is like a scullion that loveth to lie among the pots. In heaven we have pure company, and are out of the reach and danger of temptations. The devil, when he was not fit for heaven, was cast out into the world, a fit place for misery, sin, and torment; it is Satan's walk and circuit. Here is antichrist, the devil's eldest son; here are *terriculamenta et irritamenta*, fears and snares. It is a dirty odd corner of the universe; we can hardly walk up and down but we shall defile our garments. Here are briars to hitch us, snares and baits to entice us. There is a more excellent country above, where we shall have the company of God and the fellowship of the saints, saints without corruption, other manner of saints than here. There is no tempter there, there should be your country. In a pet we long for heaven, but it should be out of a resolved judgment. Men fight in the world as long as they are able, and then make heaven their refuge. It should not be a melancholy wish; we should desire heaven, not as weary of work and service, but as weary of temptation.

*Use* 3. Examination. What kind of temper have we? There are 'children of this world,' Luke xvi. 8. The world is their own mother, they love to lie hanging on the dugs and teats. And there is a spirit called 'the spirit of the world,' 1 Cor. ii. 12, a genius that suiteth with present conveniences; there is 'their portion,' Ps. xvii. 14; 'Their names are written in the earth,' Jer. xvii. 13; that is their happiness. The nature of the world's sons is all for the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life; to go fine, to feed high, to shine in worldly pomp, affect honours and great places. Too many christians are baptized into this spirit. There is a use of the things of this world, but we should use them with fear; they cannot smell the rose of the field, Christ hath no scent or savour. Oh! it is a sad character to be a child of this world; one that hath the nature of the mother in them, one of the world's breed. A child of God is a pilgrim and stranger: Ps. cxix. 19, 'I am a stranger in the earth.' Abraham purchased but a sepulchre; that is all the faithful can lay claim to on earth. He looketh on himself as born and bred in another land; his mother is a princess, the bride, the Lamb's wife; and his Father is in heaven; he is in the world, but not of the world.

*Use* 4. Comfort. Christ is apprehensive of your danger. All trials you meet with do either better your hearts or hasten your glory. Christians must expect danger, but need not fear it. *Formido sublata est, non pugna.* You are not absolutely freed from molestations of the world, but you have a sanctified use of them: John xvi. 33, 'These

things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.' The victory consisteth not in not suffering and not fighting, but keeping what we fight for: 2 Tim. iv. 18, 'The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work;' not from the lion, but sin.

*Use* 5. The example of Christ. When we die, let us be mindful of the danger of our relations that we leave behind us, our families, church, ministry; commend them to God. Dying christians should be best at the last; dying Moses left a song. Do not leave the world without a testimony of your love and zeal: 2 Peter i. 14, 15, 'Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.'

## SERMON XVI.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*—JOHN XVII. 11.

SECONDLY, I come to the compellation of the party to whom the prayer is made, 'Holy Father.' This compellation is to be observed. Titles of God in scripture are suited to the requests made to him; as 2 Thes. iii. 16, 'The God of peace give you peace always by all means.' So Rom. xv. 5, 'The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another.' He prays for brotherly forbearance and sweetness.

In the several paragraphs of this chapter, Christ speaketh to his Father in a different style, according to the nature of the address. Ver. 1, 5, it is 'Father' only; in ver. 28, it is 'righteous Father,' because of the truth and equity which he observeth in his gracious dispensations; and here it is 'holy Father.' When he beggeth things suitable to his commutative justice, then it is 'righteous Father;' but when he asketh things suitable to his holiness, it is 'holy Father.' Certainly it is a great relief to faith in prayer to pitch upon such a name and title in God as suiteth with the nature of the request; it begetteth a confidence that he both can and will do us good. When we call a man by his name, he will look about upon us; and when we ask things according to his nature, he will pity us.

But why doth Christ use this title at this time?

I answer—Some take *holiness* more largely, for the general goodness and perfection of the divine essence; a branch of which is his veracity or truth in keeping promises; and conceive the argument thus: the holy God cannot break his word, nor be stained with any unfaithfulness; therefore unless God should deny himself, he will 'keep them through his own name.' But I rather think it is specially put for his purity. Christ goeth to his Father as a pure fountain of grace, for sanctification for his disciples. Holiness, it is the object of God's

approbation, the effect of his operation; he worketh holiness, and he delighteth in it. 'Holy Father,' that art holy in thy essence, holy in thy influences, holy in thy dispensations, 'sanctify them by the truth;' thou that abhorrest all that is evil, workest all that is good, 'keep them from the evil.' God hateth sin as much as we do, and infinitely more; and therefore it is some hope that he will help us against it.

*Doct.* When we deal with God in prayer, especially for grace and sanctification, we must look upon him as a holy Father.

1. I will open the holiness of God. Holiness implieth a freedom from sin and defilement; ἅγιος, from the privative particle ἀ and γῆ, *terra* in whom there is no earth, no pollution, but all heavenly purity. When God speaketh to us he crieth out, Jer. xxii. 29, 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.' We are earth in our understandings, in our affections, in our practices. But when the seraphims speak to God, they cry, 'Holy, holy, holy;' as if it were said, 'Without earth, without earth, without earth.' Briefly, God's holiness is an attribute by which we understand his essence to be most perfectly just and pure; at the utmost distance from sin and weakness; loving and liking himself above all, and the creatures, as they do more or less partake of his glory. Now God is called, 'The holy one;' not *an* holy one, but *the* holy one: 1 Sam. ii. 2, 'There is none holy as the Lord.' He doth not say, There is none holy but the Lord, but there is none holy *as* the Lord. Therefore let us see the difference between the holiness of God and the holiness of the creatures. This is an argument fit for a seraphim; it becometh an angel's mouth rather than man's; the angels, that come nearer to God in essence, can best proclaim his holiness. But our ear hath received a little thereof. 'None is holy as the Lord;' because God is essentially holy, infinitely holy, and originally holy.

[1.] He is essentially holy. God is not only holy, but holiness itself, goodness itself; it is his very essence. The creatures, when they are holy, they are holy according to the law; the holiness of angels or men is a conformity to the law of their creation; as we say he is holy whose heart and life doth exactly agree with God's law. But God's will is his rule, his essence is his law, and therefore all his actions are necessarily holy. The divine *esse* and being, as it is the beginning of all beings, so it is the rule of all moral perfections. All created holiness is but a resemblance of God's, either a conformity to God's nature, or a conformity to God's will. Habitual holiness is a conformity to God's nature, actual holiness is a conformity to God's will; his will is the rule, his nature is the pattern. But now God is a rule to himself; there are no eternal reasons of good and evil beyond God. Things are not first holy, and then God doeth them; but God doeth them, and therefore they are holy; he himself is his own rule. Any one may err that hath not the rule of righteousness in himself; God's act is his rule, therefore he cannot sin. The hand of the artificer faileth often in cutting, because his hand is not the rule by which he worketh; there is a rule or line without him; sometimes he striketh right, sometimes wrong. If the hand of a man were the rule, it were impossible he should work amiss. There is a rule prescribed to angels and men; their will is one thing, their rule another, for no creature is holy by its

own essence. This notion is of practical use; there is holiness in all that cometh from God; when he afflicteth us, and our friends, or sufferеth us to be unjustly afflicted by men; when he spareth our enemies, multiplieth our sorrows, his act is his rule; God's will is the supreme reason of all things. Again, holiness in us is an accessary quality, a superadded gift; our essence may remain when holiness is gone. Now holiness in God is not a quality, but his essence. The angelical essence continueth when holiness is lost, as in the devils. So the man remaineth when the saint is fled; but in God, his essence and his holiness are the same. This is of practical use to humble the creature. Sin is contrary to the very nature of God; it is not only contrary to our interests, but to God's nature. A man hateth that exceedingly which is contrary to his nature. Now in our corrupt natures there is a direct contrariety to the nature of God. Actual sins are but a blow and away. Original sin is a standing contrariety; there is a settled enmity between God and us. Similitude is the ground of likeness;[1] the aversation of a man from a trade, and other antipathies are but a faint resemblance of this.

[2.] God is infinitely holy, *super-purissimus*. The faithful in this life are holy, but imperfectly; but 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,' 1 John i. 5. Of all creatures, light is the most pure and defecate; therefore it is put to resemble God's holiness. Our life is a chequerwork of light and darkness. Adam, in his innocency, though he had no corruption, yet was mutably holy; he might commit evil; though he were not *peccator*, a sinner, yet he was *peccabilis*, one that might sin. But God is at the greatest distance and elongation from sin and weakness: James i. 13, 'God cannot be tempted with evil, ἀπείραστος κακῶν, neither tempteth he any one.' Once more, the blessed spirits and angels, though they are perfectly holy in their kind, yet finitely and derivatively; they do not love God as much as he might be loved. God loveth himself as much as he can be loved; there is as much purity in his love as there is perfection in his essence. The creatures' holiness is limited; we cannot love God so much as he is to be loved. God loveth the lowest saint with a higher love than the highest angel can love God. The good angels, though they have been God's constant menial servants, without the least spot or taint of sin in nature or life; and though they be confirmed in their happy estate, either by the merit of Christ, or their many years' experience and communion with God, yet there is folly in them in comparison of God, because of that essential mutability that is in any creature: Job iv. 18, 'He chargeth his angels with folly.' It is spoken of good angels, who are opposed to dwellers in houses of clay. It were too easy a charge for the apostate spirits, to charge them with folly; the angelical nature, though it be pure, yet because it is mutable, hath some kind of folly in it, it was once liable to rash attempts against the dignity and empire of God. Briefly, the holiness of God cannot be lessened nor increased, being always infinitely perfect. The regenerate creature must still be increasing to further degrees, till it come to the measure of the stature in Christ; the blessed spirits, though separated from all defilement, yet infinitely come short of that glorious holiness which agreeth to the nature of God, and God is still raising it higher

[1] Qu. 'liking?'—ED.

and higher in the saints on earth. Their holiness riseth and groweth like Ezekiel's waters; but God is always equal in holiness, because in infiniteness there are no degrees.

[3.] God is originally holy. God is the fountain, the everflowing, the overflowing fountain of holiness. Ours is but a stream, a derivation, a ray of the father of lights; as little children, we can defile ourselves; but we should still lie in our filth if God did not cleanse us. The creature can no more make itself holy than it can make itself to be. God is the original both of natural and moral perfection: Lev. xx. 8, 'I am the Lord which sanctify you.' He is *summum bonum*, the chiefest good, as well as the first cause. *Quod vivamus, deorum munus est; quod bene vivamus, nostrum;* a wicked speech of Seneca! It is by the influence of God that we are holy. Grace is called 'a participation of the divine nature,' 2 Peter i. 4. It is a weak ray of the father of lights, who is in Christ the fountain cause. The saints that have communion with God have some faint lustre, which should make us careful to maintain holiness; it is a work of God.

2. Why must we thus look upon him in prayer?

[1.] It is the way to beget humility and godly fear. 'Holy Father,' there is a word to beget confidence, and a word to beget reverence. This mixed affection is the fittest temper of soul in our addresses to God, confidence and reverence; he is a father, but a holy father. Nothing driveth the creature to such self-abhorrency as the consideration of God's holiness; we have to do with him who hath an infinite displeasure against sin and sinners. The more good any one is, the more he hateth evil; since therefore God is infinitely good, he doth infinitely hate sin. The angels, that have lively and fresh thoughts of God's holiness, they are abashed in his presence: Isa. vi. 2, 3, 'Each one of the seraphims had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.' And the prophet having a sight of it in vision, he crieth out, ver. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips.' A thorough sight of God's holiness would drive us to our wits' ends. So when God had testified his displeasure for the violation of one circumstance in religion, looking into the ark, fifty thousand threescore and ten men were smote, 1 Sam. vi. 20. The men of Bethshemesh said, 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?' Certainly we that are made up of imperfections should tremble more than we do, when we have to do with the holy God. So Peter, when Christ had discovered his glory in a miracle: Luke v. 8, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' God, that doth infinitely love his own holiness, doth as infinitely hate sin. Did we consider this hatred, we would more loathe and abhor ourselves, we would be more ashamed than we are in our confessions. To speak thus much of ourselves to a man would make us blush; and yet man hath but a drop of indignation against sin. God hath an ocean. God's children have a daunting power in their appearance. Guilty consciences, when they come into the presence of one that walketh closely with God, are terrified. Herod feared John Baptist, 'knowing that he was a just man and an holy,' Mark vi. 20.

[2.] To make us prize Christ. Our best works would stink in the

nostrils of the most holy God if they were not accepted in and for Christ. Nothing can be acceptable to infinite purity but what is pure: Hab. i. 13, 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.' We should not have one good look from God were it not for Christ. To salve this attribute was Jesus Christ sent into the world. We think that Christ was only sent to satisfy justice; God hateth sin out of holiness, punisheth it out of justice, and executeth that punishment by his majesty and power; so that we dread God for his wrath, power, and justice; but all these are awakened by his holiness, there is the root of all. So that the consideration of God's holiness maketh us to prize Christ. Alas! what should vile creatures do before a holy God out of Christ!

[3.] It is God's principal glory: Exod. xv. 11, 'Thou art glorious in holiness.' God is mighty in power, rich in grace, glorious in holiness. It is good to mark the distinctness of expression in all the attributes. God, that he might show us how much we should prize grace, would be glorious in nothing so much as in holiness. This is seraphical divinity; the angels would teach us no other divinity and notions of God but 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,' Isa. vi. 3. This is most pleasing to God, profitable to men. Christ taught us to pray first of all, 'Hallowed be thy name.' This should be the chiefest thing that we should think of in our addresses to God. So when the Angel Gabriel came to give notice of Christ: Luke i. 35, 'That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' *Prius sanctum quam Dei filium nominavit*, saith one of the fathers. You cannot call God nor Christ by a better title, it is his darling attribute. So the saints in heaven, Rev. iv. 8, 'They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.' It is nine times in Plantius's edition, as if they were delighted with the mention of it; they take a sweet content in the work, holy Father, holy Son, holy Spirit. In heaven they bless and praise God; praise him for his excellences, bless him for his benefits. We praise him for his holiness, we bless him for his mercy in Christ; this will be our employment in heaven: Ps. xcix. 5, 'Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.' God counteth it his chiefest glory, that he might teach the creature that moral perfections are to be preferred before natural; it is better to be wise than strong, to be holy than wise.

3. Why especially must we thus look upon him when we deal with him for grace and sanctification?

[1.] Because it is a relief to faith when we represent God to ourselves as the fountain of holiness. He is 'the holy one of Israel,' and Christ calls him 'Holy Father;' Jude 1, 'To them that are sanctified by God the Father.' There is enough in God: when we come for pardon, he is rich in mercy; when we come for holiness, he is glorious in holiness; he is the God of grace; you may have enough, if you be not wanting to yourselves. Men are willing to spare out of their fulness; the holy God is as able as willing to sanctify you, it is a work that he delighteth in. Joab interceded for Absalom, 'when he perceived the king's heart was towards Absalom,' 2 Sam. xiv. 1.

[2.] It may be a means to enlarge your spiritual desires. You are to be 'holy as he is holy,' 1 Peter i. 15. The children, if they be of

the right stock, they should have some resemblance of their father. Now you ask holiness of God that you may be as God in some degree of conformity, though not in exact equality. *Assequi non possumus, saltem nunquam sequi desinamus.* We cannot overtake God, but we should never cease to follow him. We have a high pattern, that we might not be content with any low measures of grace. When you are asking, it is good to be thinking of your pattern, that you may enlarge your spiritual desires. Lord, wash me thoroughly; Lord, make me holy, as thou art holy; I forget the things that are behind; it is nothing that I have already.

*Use* 1. Information. It informeth us:—

1. How greatly they sin that deride men for their holiness, which is the express image of the glorious God. God is glorious in holiness; therefore they that despise holiness, they despise God himself. 'Holy brethren' should no more be a disgrace than 'holy Father;' 'That is your scorn which is the divine glory, one of the chiefest excellences in the Godhead. You hate God more than you do the saints; holiness in them shineth with a faint lustre.

2. How much we should prize holiness. It is the glory of God and the glory of holy angels (the devils also excel in strength), and the glory of the saints: Eph. v. 27, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' This is the glory of the church; the church, that are a distinct people from all the world, should have a distinct excellency. Other societies are made glorious by their policy, their pomp, their trade; the church is a society for holiness, and therefore it is called 'The fairest among women,' the best of all societies, though it hath little of worldly pomp and splendour: Ps. xciii. 5, 'Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever.' Some ordinances became God's house for a time; ceremonies, and sprinklings, and the veil, and the covering of badgers' skins, &c.; but holiness is a standing ordinance So private christians 'are changed from glory to glory;' 2 Cor. iii. 18, it is from grace to grace, for the apostle speaketh of our being changed into the likeness of Christ. The world counteth purity and strictness a base thing, *religio ignobilem facit;* but the word is quit with the world, and calls a wicked man 'a vile person,' Ps. xv. 4, and 'the basest of men,' Dan. iv. 17.

*Use* 2. It presseth us to draw nigh to God as unto a holy Father. Worship must always be proportioned to the object of it. Conformity maketh way for communion: John iv. 24, 'God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' As he is a God of peace, he will not be worshipped with wrathful affections: 1 Tim. ii. 8, 'I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.' A living God must have a lively service; so a holy God should have a holy worship; this doth make us fit to enjoy God in the way of a sweet and gracious communion.

1. We must be in a holy state. If we be accepted by God, we must be like him, 'holy as he is holy, partakers of a divine nature.' The majesty and glory of God we are not capable of. God would not have us to imitate his power and majesty, but his holiness. We enjoy him most when we are like him: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men,

and holiness, without which no man can see God;' χωρὶς οὗ, the masculine article, referreth to ἁγίασμος; though they have not peace with men, whatever entertainment they meet with in the world, they are sure to have the favour of God, peace with God. That 'seeing God' referreth to the enjoyments of the other world; the degrees of vision are according to the degrees of sanctification: 1 John iii. 2, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;' but it holdeth good also in the present world. A dusky glass cannot represent the image so distinctly; we cannot have such a sight of God, we cannot expect any communion and intimacy with him, till we be holy. It is said, Ps. v. 4, 'Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.' The idols of the heathen are stained with filthy practices; God is not such a one. Likeness is the ground of delight; God loveth himself for his own holiness, and they are best loved and liked that are most holy. For others, God professeth he will have no intimacy with them; he will have nothing to do with sinners, nor be of their fellowship and communion; and they shall have nothing to do with him: Ps. l. 16, 'What hast thou to do to declare my statutes? or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?' Nay, God will not afford sinners one good look: Hab. i. 13, 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and canst not look upon evil.' As the prophet, to profess his detestation of that profane prince, said, 2 Kings iii. 14, 'Were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.' God would not look towards a congregation were it not for his people in it.

But what shall we do? and who can say, 'My heart is clean'? and 'who is able to stand before this holy God?' I answer—God hath provided a remedy in the gospel; in the gospel sense he only is pure who is purged and washed from the guilt of his sins in the blood of Christ. In a child of God there are many failings, but God in Christ giveth him an acquittance. But this is not all; there must be a habitual disposition of purity, and a man must enter into a true course of sanctification, if he would be accepted in God's eyes: 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' The work of the Spirit and the merit of Christ are inseparable. There is a relative and a real change, not only a judicial abolition of sin, but a real. If you would come to God as your holy one, you must be his holy ones; as David was called God's holy one, Ps. xvi. 10. Somewhat answerable there must be to God's nature before he can take pleasure in you, You will find it—

[1.] By a hatred of sin. Where God doth change a soul, he breedeth a disposition in it in some sort like himself. Those sympathies and antipathies that God hath, the soul hath. Now God is a holy God, he cannot endure sin; so it is with a holy heart. What have I to do with sinners? saith God; and, What have I to do with sin? saith the soul. The displacency is keen and strong; they have a nature put into them like God's, and therefore hate what he hateth. It is said, Ps. xcvii. 10, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.' In what measure we love God, we hate what is contrary to God. In grace there is a love to the chiefest good, and a hatred of the chiefest evil;

the one, as well as the other, is natural to the saints. Let us never talk of love to God, except there be a zeal to reform what he hateth. It is true we have a mixed nature, there is the divine nature and the carnal nature; a believer is partaker of both flesh and spirit; there will be slips and failings, but the prevailing part of the soul abhorreth sin. It is the evil which we hate, and though a child of God falleth into sin, yet he cannot rest in it. A fountain may be troubled, but it will work itself clean again. The needle in the compass may be joggled, but it rests not till it turns to the pole. A neat man may be dirtied, but he cannot endure any filthiness should lie on his clothes. Impure men are in their own element; if they abstain from sin, their unholy nature likes it, they forbear it, but do not abhor it; as Phaltiel forsook Michal only for fear of David's displeasure. Sinful affections continue in their full force and strength when the act is suspended.

[2.] By an act of duty and conformity to God's will and nature: Eph. iv. 24, 'That ye put on the new man, which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness,' ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας. There is a counterfeit holiness and true holiness; the true holiness is such a holiness as God's is, answerable in quality, though not in equality. Now what is God's holiness? Such an attribute by which he loveth himself above all things, and all other things as they do more or less partake of his nature. So when we are holy in truth, we love God out of a principle of the new nature. God is lovely, not only for his benefits, but for his essence, as he is *diligibilis natura;* it is eminently in him what is in us in a weaker degree. So there will be a delight in the saints, because of the resemblance they bear to God: Ps. xvi. 3, 'To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.' Certainly they have cause to question their holiness to whom good company is a prison and a burden; they have not such dispositions as God hath. So they delight in duties as they exhibit much of God, and they delight in the practice and growth of holiness, as it maketh them more like God. Thus, christians, should you strive to come up to the divine pattern more and more. You will think a child incapable of learning, when the longer he hath been at the writing-school the more he swerveth from the copy; and certainly that holiness that doth not grow up into a greater likeness and resemblance of God is to be suspected. Thus must you look to come in a holy state.

2. With holy and prepared affections. You should remember you have to do with the holy God: Josh. xxiv. 19, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God.' Do you know what it is to worship him? Rash entering upon the worship of God is not without sin; and to come reeking from your sins into God's presence, it is but as Cain's approach from blood to sacrifice. Before worship there must be a special purging. When Joseph came before Pharaoh, he changed his garments and shaved himself. When the children of Israel came to hear the law, they were sanctified, and washed their clothes, Exod. xix. 14. Under the law, there was a laver stood near the altar, and they were to wash before sacrifice; therefore David saith, Ps. xxvi. 6, 'I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.' So James iv. 8, 'Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh

to you; cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' These washings were frequent among the heathens before they went to worship; so there must be a special purgation and exoneration, and disburdening of the soul of those sins which we have committed.

3. We must converse with him in a holy manner: Lev. x. 3, 'I will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto me.' God will be sanctified upon us, or by us; here we are to sanctify him in our hearts, with special reverence and holiness of mind. Those that served before the heathen gods were clothed in white, an emblem of purity and innocency; and our communion with God in heaven is thus expressed, Rev. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white.' So should we here, as much as we can, walk with God in white, with heavenly pure souls, put up holy prayers in a holy manner, and in the time of worship be at the greatest distance and elongation from sin. Many men, out of a natural conscience, will be devout in time of duty. You would be ashamed if a holy man should know what thoughts you have in time of worship, and darest thou conceive them in the presence of a holy God? What odious creatures should we be if our thoughts were as audible, and as liable to public notice, as our words! Alas! God knoweth thoughts as well as words; all your carnal, unclean, vain thoughts are known to him; therefore take heed, how will your holy Father brook this?

4. We should go away the more holy from worship. You have been with a holy God; what of his holiness do you carry away in your hearts? They that have looked on the sun go away with a glaring in their eyes, and they seem to see the sun in all that they look upon. You should carry away the enlightenings of worship along with you. When Moses came from God, his face shone; he had been conversing with the God of glory, and he went away with some rays of glory in his face. We should not be as the beasts in Noah's ark, to go in unclean and come out unclean. God's people are most full of indignation against sin when they come from God: Exod. xxxii. 19, when Moses had talked with God in the mount, at his return, seeing them sacrifice to the calf, he brake the tables. The more communion we have with God, the more shall we hate what is contrary to God. When Isaiah saw God in his glory, he began to loathe himself: Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.' And those who have effectually conversed with God in meditation and prayer, they come away from him with a perfect hatred of sin; for a sight of God worketh an abomination of what is contrary to him. In a shop of perfumes you carry away the scent in your clothes. You wonder that a man should come away cold from the fire; and it is as great a wonder to come away from the holy God with vile affections. Here you come to make experiments whether God be a holy one, yea or no, whether he be originally, effectually holy. The Syrians, that were strangers to God's dispensations, could speak of him only by hearsay: 'We have heard that the God of Israel is a merciful God;' but the Israelites, that were acquainted with him, could speak of him by experience; we know it. As a man that hath

never been acquainted with the use of fire may say, I have heard that the fire will warm; but he that hath been at the fire, he knows and feels it; so others can only discourse notionally of God's holiness. In duty we come to him for real experiences: Lord, we know that thou art a holy God.

## SERMON XVII.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*—JOHN XVII. 11.

THIRDLY, The matter of the prayer, for perseverance in grace.

'Keep through thine own name.'—*Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου τήρησον αὐτούς*; it may be rendered 'in thy name,' or 'by thy name,' or 'for thy name's sake;' *ἐν*, as ב among the Hebrews, may be thus rendered, 'by thy name,' Heb. xi. 2. *Ἐν ταύτῃ*, 'by which the elders obtained a good report.' 'For thy name,' Eph. iv. 32, 'As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you;' *Θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ*. So Rom. xvi. 2, 'Receive her in the Lord,' *ἐν κυρίῳ*; that is, for the Lord's sake. (1.) If it be 'in thy name,' then the meaning is, in the knowledge of thy truth; for by the name of God is meant anything by which he is made known. The doctrine of the gospel in this chapter is called, 'his name,' ver. 6; 'I have manifested thy name to them;' meaning the whole doctrine of godliness. So Christ prayeth, 'Keep them in thy name;' that is, in the constant profession of the truth; let them not be cheated out of it by Satan, nor affrighted out of it by persecutions; but let them constantly hold it forth, defend and propagate it to the world. (2.) 'By thy name;' so God's name is himself, and himself is his name. So Exod. xxiii. 21, 'My name is in him;' that is, he is of the same essence and glory with me. So 'by thy name,' is by thy self, thy power, mercy, goodness, truth, *διὰ τῆς σῆς βοηθείας*—Chrysostom; by thy gracious assistance. (3.) 'For thy name's sake,' to show forth thy mercy, truth, faithfulness. These expositions may be compounded—Keep them in thy truth, or the worship and profession of thy name, by thy power, for thy name's sake, to discover thy mercy and truth; thy mercy, in taking them into a state of grace; thy truth, in preserving them in the state of grace. The points are two:—

1. That the perseverance of the saints, or their conservation in the state of grace, is sure and certain.

2. That we are kept in the state of grace by God's name, by his power, for his glory.

*Doct.* 1. That the perseverance of the saints, or their conservation in a state of grace, is sure and certain.

1. I shall show how I build the certainty of perseverance on this place.

2. I shall handle the doctrine, confirming it by other grounds.

*First*, How this doctrine of the certainty of the saints' perseverance is built on this place. Christ hath begged it, and he beggeth it for

all the saints. Christ hath begged it, and the prayers of Christ, who is God's beloved Son, cannot possibly return in vain, there being such an absolute conformity and consent between the will of God the Father and the Son: John xi. 42, 'I know that thou hearest me always.' Christ cannot be denied audience and acceptance in the court of heaven, especially in a request upon which his heart is set. His people are so wonderfully dear to him, that he would not lose one of them; and then Christ is so wonderfully dear to God, that he must needs speed in all his requests. Therefore if Christ hath mediated for the conservation of the saints, the Father will grant what he asketh. Yea, the Father himself loveth the saints; the thing is pleasing to him. It is notable that when Christ had spoken of the perseverance of the saints, he adds, John x. 30, 'I and my Father are one;' as noting not only the unity of essence, but the consent of will, that was between them in this work. Well, then, look, as Christ redeemeth us because the Father required it, the Father will love us and preserve us because the Son asketh it. If Christ bear any respect to the Father's command, or the Father to Christ's prayers, the elect are sure to be saved. Christ hath engaged God's name to keep us. What can be objected against this? They say that Christ prayed conditionally, Keep them if they will. But here is no condition expressed. Christ absolutely prayeth, Keep them; and such a condition would make the gift of God to depend upon man's will; and so to persevere would rather be man's act than God's gift, the determination being on man's part. Nay, the main thing which is to be kept is our will, and so the condition would destroy the very nature of the request. They say, Christ prayeth only for the apostles. I answer—It cannot be restrained to the apostles; it is the common privilege of all the saints: 'Those which thou hast given me.' Christ explaineth himself, and extendeth it to believers of all ages: ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for those which shall believe in me through their word.' Christ's prayer is every way as good as a promise.

*Secondly*, Let me handle the doctrine itself. The doctrine of perseverance is much impugned, but the earth is never the more unsettled because to giddy brains it seemeth to run round. Let me state, and then confirm it.

First, State it.

1. Seeming grace may be lost: Mat. xxv. 29, 'From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath;' compared with Luke xviii. 18, 'Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.' Blazing comets and meteors are soon spent, and may fall from heaven like lightning, while stars keep their orb and station; sandy building will totter. The hypocrites 'shall be discovered before the congregation,' Prov. xxvi. 26.

2. Initial or preparative grace may fail: Heb. vi. 4, 5, 'They who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, may fall away;' such as illumination, external reformation, temporary faith, some good beginnings. Some die in the pangs of the new birth, and are still-born. Plenty of blossoms doth not always foretell store of fruit.

3. True grace may suffer a shrewd decay, but not an utter loss. In temptations it may be sorely shaken; the heel may be bruised as Christ's was, but 'his seed remaineth in him,' 1 John iii. 9; as Peter denied Christ, though he did not fall from grace: Luke xxii. 32, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.' The leaves may fade when the root liveth. Chrysostom saith concerning Christ's prayer for Peter, *οὐκ ἔρει ἵνα μὴ ἀρνήσῃ, ἀλλὰ ὥστε μὴ ἐκλείπειν τὴν πιστὶν*—He doth not say, that he might not deny him, but that his faith might not fail and altogether vanish.

4. Such grace as serves to our well-being in Christ may be taken away, joy, peace, cheerfulness. A man may be living though he be not lively; a man may have a being when his well-being is lost; he is a man, though a bankrupt. So a christian, the operations of grace may be obstructed for a great while; a fit of swooning is not a state of death; there may be no acts, and yet the seed may remain, this may last; for a long time David did not recover himself, it was near a year after his sin: 1 Sam. xii. 14, 'The child that is born of thee shall surely die;' compared with Ps. li., title, 'A psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.'

5. Grace indeed, if left to us, would be soon lost; we showed that in innocency. But it is our advantage that our security lieth in God's promises, not our own strength, that we are not our own keepers. God would not trust this jewel but in safe hands. Perseverance is God's gift, not man's act; he is engaged in Christ to maintain it: John x. 28, 29, 'I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. My Father that gave them me, is greater than I; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands;' they neither shall nor can be taken out of God's hands. God and Christ is engaged in the keeping of them; Christ by God's command, as mediator, God by Christ's merit; and therefore he that separateth us from God must tug with Jesus Christ himself, and be too hard for him also, or else he can never pluck them out of his hands. If they should question Christ's power, because of the ignominy of the cross, the Father's hands are also engaged for our greater assurance: 'None is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands.' God never made a creature that should be too hard for himself.

6. We do not plead for any wild assurance and certainty of perseverance. We do not say that he that neglects means, and grieves the Spirit, do what he will, yet he is sure he shall not miscarry; that is against the nature of God's dispensation, and the nature of this assurance, and therefore but a vain cavil.

[1.] It is against the nature of God's dispensation; for whom he maketh to persevere, he maketh them persevere in the use of means. Hezekiah had assurance of life for fifteen years, yet he takes a lump of figs, and applies it as a plaster to the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 5, compared with ver. 21. Or more clearly, Acts xxvii. 22, 'There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship.' But yet, ver. 31, 'Except the shipmen abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' We are bound to get food and raiment, if we would live. It is the devil's divinity, Thou art sure not to fall, therefore neglect means; it was Satan's cavil against God's protection over Christ: Mat. iv. 6, 'If thou be the Son of God, cast

thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' Thou learnest this doctrine from the devil—Thou mayest do what thou wilt, thou art sure to be saved.

[2.] It is against the nature of assurance; he that hath tasted God's love in God's way cannot reason so. He that hath a good father, that will not see him perish, shall he waste and embezzle his estate, he cares not how? A wicked child may presume thus of his father, though it be very disingenuous, because of his natural interest and relation to his father; the kindness which he expecteth is not built on moral choice, but nature. But a child of God cannot, because he cannot grow up to this certainty but in the exercise of grace; this certainty is begotten and nourished by godly exercises. And the thing itself implieth a contradiction; this were to fall away, because we cannot fall away; you may as soon say that the fire should make a man freeze with cold, as that certainty of perseverance in grace should make a man do actions contrary to grace.

7. Again, we do not say a believer is so sure of his conservation in a state of grace as that he needeth not be wary and jealous of himself: 1 Cor. x. 12, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' There is a fear of caution that is warrantable. There is a difference between the weakening of the security of the flesh, and of our confidence in Christ. None more apt to suspect themselves than they that are most sure in God, lest by improvidence and unwatchfulness they should yield to corruption. Christ had prayed that Peter's faith might not fail; yet, together with the other apostles, he biddeth him watch, Luke xxii. 40, 46. The fear of God is a preserving grace, and taken into the covenant: Jer. xxxii. 40, 'I will never depart from them to do them good,' and 'I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.' God's love will not let him depart from us, and fear will not let us depart from God. This is a fear that will stand with faith and certainty; it is a fruit of the same Spirit, and doth not hinder assurance, but guard it; this is a fear that maketh us watchful against all occasions to sin and spiritual distempers, that we may not give offence to God; as an ingenuous man, that hath an inheritance passed over to him by his friend in court, is careful not to offend him; there is a cautelous and distrustful fear.

8. Again, this certainty of our standing in grace doth not exclude prayer: Luke xxii. 46, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Perseverance is God's gift, and it must be sought out in God's way, by Christ's intercession, to preserve the majesty of God, and by our prayer, that we constantly profess our dependence upon God, and renew our acquaintance with him. Besides, by asking blessings in prayer we are the more warned of our duty; it is a means to keep us gracious and holy. As those that speak often to kings had need be decently clad, and go neat in their apparel, so he that speaketh often to God is bound to be more holy, that he may be acceptable to him.

9. Once more, and I have done with the state of the question. It is not a discontinued, but a constant perseverance that we plead for. Not as if a child of God could be quite driven out of the state of grace;

though he be saved at length, he cannot fall *totus, a toto, in totum,* from all grace and godliness, in the whole man, with full consent; he may sin, but not fall totally, no more than finally. There is something remaineth; a seed: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him;' an unction: 1 John ii. 27, 'But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you.' There is a root in a dry ground, that will bud and scent again.

Well, then, this we hold, that true grace shall never utterly be lost, though it be much weakened, but by the use of means shall constantly be preserved to eternal life.

Secondly, Having stated the point, let me now confirm it. The grounds of perseverance are these:—

1. On the Father's part, there is an everlasting love and all-sufficient power. His everlasting love; God doth not love for a fit, but for ever: Ps. ciii. 17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him;' before the world was, and when the world is no more. There can be no change in God's counsels, because they are accompanied with infinite wisdom and power. God never repented in time of what he purposed to do before time: Rom. xi. 29, 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' By *gifts* are meant gifts proper to the elect, remission of sins, grace and glory, and by *calling* is meant effectual calling, such as is κατὰ πρόθεσιν, 'according to his purpose,' Rom. viii. 28. God never repented of it; he is never ashamed of nor sorry for his choice; though men be unworthy, it is the reason why he brought them under the grace of the covenant. His all-sufficient power and almightiness is engaged in the preservation of grace: John x. 29, 'My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands.' As long as God hath power we are safe; and this power is engaged by his love and will.

2. Then on Christ's part there is his everlasting merit and constant intercession.

[1.] For his merit: Heb. ix. 12, 'By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' Legal expiations did but last from year to year, but Christ's is for ever and ever. The Levitical priest, once every year entered into the holy place, but Christ is once gotten into heaven, his redemption is eternal; not only as it is of use for all ages of the church, but in respect of every particular saint. Those who are once redeemed by Christ, they are eternally redeemed; not for a time, to fall away again, but to be saved for ever. So Heb. x. 14, 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' He hath not only purchased a possibility of salvation, but hath perfected them, hath made purchase of all that we need to our full perfection; it is not for a certain time, as if afterwards they could be taken out of his hands, and so perish, but for ever; and this for all those that are sanctified, separated by God's purpose and decree, and afterwards renewed and sanctified in time, set apart to be vessels of honour to God.

[2.] Then for his constant intercession, a copy of which we have in this place. It is said, Heb. vii. 25, 'Wherefore he is able to save unto

the uttermost all that come unto God through him, seeing he liveth for ever to make intercession for us.' He is interceding with God, that the merit of his death may be applied to us, and that is salvation to the uttermost. The heirs of salvation need not to fear miscarrying; Jesus Christ, who is the testator, who by will and testament made over the heritage to them, he liveth for ever to see his own will executed. Though he died once to make the testament, yet he liveth for ever to see it made good. Christ is risen from the dead, and dieth no more, and therefore a believer cannot miscarry.

3. On the Spirit's part, there is a continued influence, so as to maintain the essence and seed of grace. The Father's love is continued by the merit of Christ, that he will not depart from us, and we are preserved by the Spirit of Christ, that we may not depart from him. He doth not only put into our hearts faith and fear, and other graces at first, but he maintaineth and keepeth them, that the fire may never go out. Our hearts are his temples, and he will not leave his dwelling-place. There is a continued influence. Now this he doth to preserve the honour of Christ and the comfort of believers; he glorifieth Christ, and is our comforter. It is to preserve the glory of Christ. Christ hath received a charge from the Father: John vi. 39, 'This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day;' nothing, neither body nor soul. In point of honour, and that he may be true to his trust, he sendeth his Spirit as his deputy or executor, that his merit may be fully applied; therefore, for the honour of Christ, wherever the work is begun it is continued. Christ is called, Heb. xii. 2, 'The author and finisher of our faith.' Wherever the Spirit is an author he is also a finisher; when the good work is begun, he will also perfect it, and continue his grace to the end. It was said of the foolish builder, 'He began, and was not able to make an end.' This dishonour cannot be cast upon Christ, because of the power and faithfulness of the Spirit; he doth *κατεργάζεσθαι*, go through with the work which he hath begun: Phil. i. 6, 'Being confident of this, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Christ.' The Spirit is to fit vessels for glory; he doth not use to leave them half carved, but finish them for the honour of Christ. The Spirit is faithful to Christ, as Christ is to the Father. The Father chooseth the vessels, Christ buyeth them, and the Spirit carveth and fitteth them, that they may be vessels of praise and honour. He is our comforter; working grace, he puts us into an expectation of comfort and glory; and therefore, to make it good, he carrieth on the work without failing: Rom. viii. 23, 'And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;' 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' We have the taste and the pledge of it; it is good, it is sure. The first degree of grace is conferred as a pledge of eternal life; he giveth it as an earnest or pledge, assuring us of a more perfect enjoyment of him. It is a pledge of the whole crop; as an earnest, hereby God assureth us that he will pay the whole sum. An earnest is a pledge whereby we confirm a bargain; it is a piece of money

whereby we are assured he will pay the whole. Grace, it is the livery and seisin of glory; as soon as a real change is wrought in us, we have a right that is indefeasible; it is engaged by promise. Therefore, that the Spirit may be faithful, when he hath given us the first-fruits, the earnest, shall he not give us the inheritance?

*Use* 1. It exhorteth us to persevere with the more care: 1 John ii. 26–28, 'These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, you shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, ye may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Since we have so many advantages of standing, let us not fall from him. Oh! how great will your sin be if you should fall and dishonour God! We pity a child that falleth when it is not looked after; but when a froward child wresteth and forceth itself out of the arms of the nurse, we are angry with it. You have more ground to stand than others, being brought into an unchangeable estate of grace, being held in the arms of Christ; so that God will be very angry with your slips and fallings. Mercy holdeth you fast, and you seek to wrest yourselves out of mercy's arms. Never any can sin as you do; there is much frowardness in your sins. You disparage the Spirit's custody, the merit of Christ, and the mercy of the Father: Heb. iv. 1, 'Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.' Some seem to stand, and do not; and some seem to fall utterly, and do not. A child of God indeed cannot come short, but he should not seem, nor give any appearance of coming short. Our course in religion is often interrupted, though it be not broken off; this is a seeming to come short of it. Hereby you bring a scandal upon the love of Christ, as if it were changeable; upon the merit of Christ, as if it were not a perfect merit. Though we do not fall so as to break our necks, yet we may fall so as to break our bones.

*Use* 2. If you fall, be not utterly discouraged. As the spinster leaveth a lock of wool to draw on the next thread, there is somewhat left when you are departed from God; you have more holdfast in him than an unregenerate sinner. A child, though a prodigal, will go to him, and say, Father: Ps. cxix. 176, 'I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.' Through natural weakness I have gone astray like a sheep, but I seek thy commandments; there is some grace left yet: Isa. lxiv. 8, 'But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou art the potter; we are all the work of thine hand.' The church pleadeth thus: nay, God is angry when we do not plead so: Jer. iii. 4, 'Wilt thou not from this time cry, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?' You have an interest in God yet. Thus do, and your fall will be like them that go back to fetch their leap more commodiously.

*Use* 3. When you stand, let it incite you to love and thankfulness. Nothing maketh the saints more love God than his unchangeableness. His mercy made you come to him, and his truth will not suffer you to depart from him. Mercy and truth are like Jachin and Boaz: Micah

vii. 20, 'Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers, from the days of old.' The covenant was made with Abraham, and made good to Jacob. You may rejoice notwithstanding your weakness and Satan's daily assaults; as Daniel in the lions' den, to see the lions ramping and roaring about him, yet their mouths muzzled: 2 Sam. ii. 9, 'By strength shall no man prevail;' that is, by his own. That any of us have stood hitherto, let us ascribe it wholly to God: we might have been vile and scandalous, even as others. Many of better gifts may fall away, and thou keepest thy standing. What is the reason? We have done enough a thousand times to cause God to depart from us: Deut. xxiii. 14, 'If he see any unclean thing among thee, he will turn away from thee.' And is it not strange that the Spirit of grace should yet abide with us hitherto, when there is so much uncleanness in every one of us? The great argument of the saints why they love and praise him is the constancy and unchangeableness of his love: Ps. cxxxvi., 'For his mercy endureth for ever;' and Ps. cvi. 1, 'Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.' No form more frequent in the mouths of his saints.

*Use* 4. If any fall often, constantly, frequently, and easily, they have no interest in grace: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;' *οὐ ποιεῖ ἁμαρτίαν*, he maketh not a trade of sin, that is the force of that phrase. God's children slip often, but not with such a frequent constant readiness, into the same sin. Therefore he that liveth in a course of profaneness, worldliness, drunkenness, 'his spot is not the spot of God's children,' Deut. xxxii. 5. You are tried by your constant course: Rom. viii. 1, 'That walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' What is your road and walk? I except only those sins which are of usual incidence, and sudden surreption, as anger, vanity of thoughts; and yet for them a man should be more humble. If it be not felt, nor striven against, nor mourned for, it is a bad sign. What is your course and walk? There is a uniformity in a christian's course. It is nothing to have some fits and good moods and motions.

*Use* 5. It provoketh us to get an interest in such a sure condition. Be not contented with outward happiness; things are worthy according to their duration. Nature hath such a sense of God's eternity that the more lasting things are, it accounteth them the better. The immortal soul must have an eternal good. Now all things in the world are frail and passing away, therefore they are called 'uncertain riches,' 1 Tim. vi. 17, compared with Prov. viii. 18, 'Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness.' The flower of these things perisheth, their grace passeth away; in the midst of their pride and beauty, like Herod in his royalty, they vanish and are blasted. The better part is not taken away: Luke x. 42, 'Mary hath chosen the better part, which cannot be taken away from her.' A man may outlive his happiness, be stripped of the flower of all. Worldly glory is sure to end with life, that is transitory; and still they are uncertain riches, uncertain whether we shall get them, uncertain whether we shall keep them. By a care of the better part, we may have these things with a blessing: Mat. vi. 33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of

God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you.' Gifts, they are for the body, rather than the person that hath them. Men may be carnal, and yet come behind in no gifts. Judas could cast out devils, and yet afterwards was cast out among devils: 1 Cor. xii. 31, the apostle had discoursed largely of gifts, but saith he, 'Yet I show you a more excellent way,' and that is grace, that abideth. Many that have great abilities to pray, preach, discourse, yet fall away; according to the place which they sustain in the body, so they have great gifts of knowledge, utterance, to comfort, direct, instruct others, to answer their doubts, to reason in holy discourse, and yet may fall foully: Heb. vi. 4, 5, 'They may be once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' They may have a great share of church gifts. Nay, gifts themselves wither and vanish when the bodily vigour is spent: 1 Peter i. 24, 'All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.' Whatever excellency we have by nature, wit, knowledge, strength of natural parts, nothing but what the Spirit of God worketh in us will last for ever. So for seeming, unsound grace, as false faith, such as beginneth in joy, will end in trouble; it easeth you for the present, but you shall lie down in sorrow. General probabilities, loose hopes, uncertain conjectures, vanishing apprehensions of comfort, all fail. The planting of true faith is troublesome at first, but it leadeth to true joy; you may look upon the gospel with some kind of delectation. Thorns may blaze under the pot, though they cannot keep in the fire. Do not rest in 'tasting the good word of God,' Heb. vi. 5, in some slight and transitory comfort. Hymeneus and Alexander are said to 'make shipwreck of faith,' 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; that is, of a false faith. So for a formal profession, men may begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh: Gal. iii. 3, 'Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' A man may seem to himself, and to the church of God, to have true grace; nay, he may be enlightened, find some comfort in the word, escape the pollutions of the world, foul gross sins; yea, these good things may be the works and the effects of the Spirit of God, not of nature only, not professed out of a carnal aim; but there is no settled root, and therefore it is but of short continuance. But certainly that form that is taken up out of private aims will surely fail. God delighteth to take off the mask and disguise of hypocrites, by letting them fall into some scandalous sins. Paint is soon washed off. Therefore rest not in these things, till solid and substantial grace be wrought in your hearts.

*Use* 6. Is comfort to God's children. Grace is sure, and the privileges of it sure. Grace is sure; through your folly it may be nigh unto death, but it cannot die. This is the advantage of spiritual comforts, that they do not only satisfy our desires, but secure us against our fears: Isa. xxxv. 10, 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' Once in Christ, and you shall be for ever preserved. The leaven and the dough can never be severed when kneaded together, so neither can

you from Christ. Grace would be little better than temporal things if it did yield but temporary refreshment. You are sure that nothing shall cut you off from enjoying God, for nothing shall altogether cause you to cease to love God. The children of God would be troubled, though their grace should not fail, if their privileges should be cut off; but you are sure of both. God will maintain a spark, and the seed remaineth, and the privileges of grace are sure too. This was figured under the law. An Israelite could never wholly alienate his title to the land: Lev. xxv. 23, 'The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine, for ye were strangers and sojourners with me.' His title to the land shall not be quite cut off, 'it shall not be sold for ever;' which was a type of our spiritual inheritance in Christ, which cannot be alienated from us. He might for a while alienate and pass away his inheritance, yet the property remained; he knew it would return again. So here, God's children are never disinherited. By regeneration we are made co-heirs with Christ; we have an interest in the whole patrimony of the gospel. Now God will not cut off the entail, nor take the advantage of every offence which his children commit. To insure us, he hath not only put the entail into our hands, by giving us his promise, but he hath given us earnest and seisin in part, and he hath chosen a feoffee in trust to keep the estate for us; our heavenly patrimony is kept safe in his hands. It is true we forfeit it by the merit of our actions, but the trust standeth still enrolled in the court of heaven, and is not cancelled. Christ is to look to that, and it being conveyed in and by him as the first heir, he is to interpose his merit; as under the law, if the person were not able to redeem the inheritance, the kinsman was to redeem it. Christ is our kinsman after the flesh, he is our *Goel*, and maketh all firm and sure between God and us. It is true we lose the evidences that are in our keeping, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost; but the estate is indefeasible, and cannot be made away from us. Well, then, you see that grace is kept, and the privileges of grace are kept. Oh, what a sweet comfort is this!

But now, because comforts are never prized but in their season, men that have not been exercised in spiritual comforts nauseate these sweet truths; they know not what it is to be left to uncertainty, when troubles come like waves, one upon the neck of another. Let us see when these truths will be sweet and seasonable.

1. In great troubles, when God seemeth to hide his face, oh! how sweet it is to hear God say, Gen. xxviii. 15, 'Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.' All this shall better thy heart or hasten thy glory. We are apt to think that God will cast us off, and will never look after us any more, though formerly we have had real experience of his grace. What a foolish creature is man, to weaken his assurance when he should come to use it, to unravel all his hopes and experiences! Times of trouble are a fit season to make use of this comfort.

2. In the hour of temptation, and hard conflicts with doubts and corruptions, when you find their power growing upon you, you are

ready to say, as David did after all his experiences, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1; and many times out of distrust ye give over the combat; then say, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God?' One came to a pious woman, when she had been exercised with a long and tedious conflict, and read to her the latter part of the 8th of the Romans; she broke forth in triumph, 'Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' Sin or death cannot divide you from Christ; Christ will treat Satan under your feet, and weaken the malignant influence of the world.

3. In times of great danger and defection, through terror and persecution; as Sanders trembled to think of the fire; especially when others fall fearfully that were before us in privileges and profession of zeal and piety, when the first become last, when eminent luminaries are eclipsed, and leave their orb and station; as the martyrs were troubled to hear of the revolt of some great scholars that had appeared for the gospel. When Hymeneus and Philetus, two eminent professors, fell, it was a great shaking: 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19, 'Who concerning the truth have erred, saying, That the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless, the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.'

4. In times of disheartening, because of the difficulties of religion, and the use of means groweth troublesome. To quicken us in our christian course, think of the unchangeableness of God's love. All grace riseth according to the proportion and measure of faith; loose hopes weaken endeavours: 1 Cor. ix. 26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.' As those that run at all give over when one hath overreached them, they are discouraged; when hope is broken, the edge of endeavours is blunted. Go on with confidence, ye are assured of the issue; by these endeavours God will bless you and keep you; there is a sure recompense.

5. In the hour of death, when all things fail you, God will not fail you; this is the last branch: Do but wait, I will not forsake you; notwithstanding all that I have done, all that I have promised, there is more behind than ever you have enjoyed; death shall not separate. Olevian comforted himself with that, Isa. liv. 10, 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.' In the pains of death, sight is gone, speech and hearing is departing, feeling almost gone, but the loving-kindness of God will never depart. Oh! the Lord give us such a confidence in that day, that we may fix this comfort in our thoughts.

*Doct.* 2. That we are kept in the state of grace by God's name, by his power, for his glory.

God's attributes are called his name, because by them he is known, as a man by his name. I shall inquire—

1. What of the name of God is engaged in the preservation of the saints.

[1.] His truth, in opposition to our fickleness and falseness: 1 Cor.

x. 13, 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able to bear, but will with every temptation make a way for you to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' God cannot deny himself; his faithfulness is laid at pledge with the creatures. When difficulties and troubles are too hard for you, call him by his name: Lord, thou art faithful. When Judah was about to pass a hard sentence upon Tamar, she showed him his token, his bracelets, ring, and staff, 'Whose are these?' So may God's promises be showed to him.

[2.] His mercy, in opposition to our unworthiness; mercy to pardon and pity and help us. Poor creatures! they will surely miscarry if I do not go down and help them: Heb. iv. 16, 'Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain grace, and find mercy to help us in time of need.' God is not upon his tribunal of justice, but his throne of grace. When you are in spiritual straits, be not discouraged; the time of need is a time for God to show himself. God hath mercy to pardon, and grace to pity and help; mercy for the recovery of every sinner, grace as a remedy for every misery. Do but observe thy heart, what thou wouldst have, and tell God every day.

[3.] His power, against our weakness: 2 Peter i. 5, 'We are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.' This is our garrison; we cannot stand a moment longer than God upholdeth us by his power; as a staff in the hand of a man, take away the hand, and the staff falleth to the ground; or rather, as a little infant in the nurse's hand, which is God's own comparison: Hosea xi. 3, 'I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms.' If God should but let loose his hand, as he doth sometimes to make us sensible of our weakness, we should soon miscarry; as if God should let loose his hand of providence, all the creatures would fall into nothing.

[4.] I might mention his holiness, against our sinfulness. He is not only 'the Holy One,' but 'the Holy One of Israel,' the church's sanctifier; as the pipe would be dry if the fountain cease to run. But this is enough. *Deus, quantus est!* His whole name is engaged by Christ to do his people good.

2. Why we are only kept by God.

[1.] Nothing else could keep us but God's name. We should surely miscarry if our standing did depend upon the frailty of our will. We are weak, and the enemies and difficulties of our salvation are very great, corruptions within, and temptations without us; created grace could never hold out. One of the fathers bringeth in the flesh saying, *Ego deficiam;* the world, *Ego decipiam;* and Satan, *Ego eripiam.* But God saith, *Ego custodiam,* I will keep them, never fail them, nor forsake them; and there lieth our security. The world is a slippery place; it is strange that any hold their footing. We are carnal, and carnal persons are about us. It were strange for a man to keep his health in a town where every person, every house, and the air itself is infected with the plague; this is our condition. Then for the malice of Satan, he is a restless enemy, watcheth all advantages, as a dog that standeth waving his tail: it is Chrysostom's comparison. His envy and malice are bent against them that have most grace. There were two Adams, and both were tempted. In our hearts there is great deal of

variableness; in the best of God's saints many ups and downs in points of grace. Our hearts are rebellious: Jer. v. 23, 'This people have a revolting and rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone;' Jer. xiv. 10, 'My people have loved to wander.' It is natural to the creature to be fickle and inconstant, especially in point of grace. It is a miracle that we, having such naughty hearts, where there is so much pride, love of pleasures, worldly cares, brutish lusts, any of us should hold out to the end. Would not we wonder to see a herb that we prize grow in the midst of weeds, a candle to burn in the water.

[2.] It is meet none else should. God will have this honour from all saints, and he will put this honour upon the saints, that he will be their guardian and keeper; not only angels, who are 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are the heirs of salvation,' Heb. i. 14; they have a great deal of employment about God's children; but God himself will keep them: 1 Peter i. 5, 'Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' If your protection were visible, all the princes of the world would come short of your guard and attendance. God will be your watchman, your keeper, to foresee the danger and defend you from it: this honour he will have. He that is the maker of the world is the preserver of it; the keeping of the world could be trusted in no other hands but his that made it. So he is the preserver of the saints, as well as their maker: 1 Sam. ii. 9, 'By strength shall no man prevail;' he keepeth the feet of his saints; you rob God of the honour of your salvation by other confidences.

*Use.* It exhorteth us—

1. To a continual dependence on the name of God. All creatures have their refuges, the heirs of salvation are described to be those 'that fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that is set before them,' Heb. vi. 18. Now what is their refuge? Prov. xviii. 10, 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' At Babel, to secure themselves, they would 'build a high and strong tower,' Gen. xi. 3, 4. We have a strong tower built to our hands. We that are at continual war should have a place of retreat; here is a sure one, you have it without cost; you need in the hour of temptation to make speed to it. What is this running, but pleading his faithfulness, looking up to his power, magnifying his grace in your dependence? Those that go forth in the strength of their own resolutions are sure to miscarry, as Peter was a sad instance.

2. To confidence. We may boast of his name: Ps. cxviii. 10–12, 'All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them. They compassed me about, yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.' Thrice it is, 'in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.' When we have such a keeper as is omnipotent, why should we fear? Though thou hast so many infirmities, allurements, discouragements, corrupt inclinations, thou standest not by thine own strength. Christ hath engaged God's name to keep thee: Ps. xvi. 8, 'I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.' It is well that we have so good a second: a christian is a soldier that may triumph

before the victory. It was a proverb, 'Let not him that putteth on his armour boast as he that putteth it off.'

3. To thankfulness. Did we believe the power of corruption, we should be more thankful: 2 Cor. i. 21, 'Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.' He doth all, and being engaged with Christ, by virtue of your interest in him you shall stand. None should be proud of their standing in the state of grace; God must have all the glory: 1 Peter iv. 11, 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'

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## SERMON XVIII.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*—JOHN XVII. 11.

FOURTHLY, We are now come to the fourth circumstance, the persons for whom he prayeth, 'Those which thou hast given me.' Some ancient copies read, ὃ δέδωκας μοί, 'thy name which thou hast given me;' but I will not trouble you with that. Most read as we do, ὃυς, 'those which thou hast given me.' But who are they? and what is meant by God's giving us to Christ? and why is it mentioned here? The phrase is often repeated, and used in many verses of this chapter.

I shall now explain it once for all.

1. Who are the persons that were given to Christ?

I answer—Generally the elect, particularly the apostles. The elect are and may be comprised within the expression; for, ver. 9, it is put in contradistinction to the reprobate world, for whom Christ will not pray: 'I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me, for they are thine.' But in the principal scope of this verse, the disciples of that age are intended, and among them chiefly the apostles, who are ἐκλέκτων ἐκλεκτότεροι, the elect of the elect; for he doth principally pray for others afterward: ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for those which shall believe on me through their word.' But after that again, both the disciples and all others that belong to the purposes of God's grace are folded or bound together up in this one expression: ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' All which showeth that this expression, 'those which are given to Christ,' is a character proper and peculiar to the elect, and so Christ meaneth it in this place. Nothing can be objected against this, but that in the verse next my text, ver. 12, 'Those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.' So that either we must take this giving in a larger sense, or allow that some of those given to Christ may be lost. I answer—

I might take the word in a larger sense indeed, as it is sometimes used in scripture, for those given to Christ only by way of reward, though not by way of charge, as I shall distinguish by and by. Hypocrites, because of their external vocation, are said to be given to Christ by way of ministry and service, but not by way of special charge. And it is notable what Christ saith of Judas, John xiii. 18, 'I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture might be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me;' where he showeth plainly that one of them was not of the number of the elect, and should not receive the privileges of his special charge; though he was chosen to the calling of an apostle, yet not to eternal life, but only given by way of ministry and service. But this would seem to cross the constant use of the phrase in this chapter. I answer therefore by interpreting the phrase, εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπολείας, 'but the son of perdition;' the words are not exceptive, but adversative, and must be thus construed, 'None of them which thou hast given me is lost, but the son of perdition is lost.' And mark it, we do not render it *except* the son of perdition, but *but* the son of perdition; it is not *nisi*, but *sed;* there is no exception made of Judas, as if he had been given to Christ, and afterward had fallen away; but when he had mentioned their keeping, he would adversatively put the losing of Judas. This phrase or manner of speech is often used in scripture. So Rev. xxi. 27, 'There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life,' εἰ μὴ; where the words are not exceptive, for then it would follow that some that work abomination were in the Lamb's book; but adversative—They shall not enter, but others shall enter. So Mat. xii. 4, 'David entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests,' εἰ μὴ; it is not exceptive, as if they were of David's company, but adversative—It was not lawful for them to eat, but it was lawful for the priests.

2. How are they said to be given to Christ? Persons are given to Christ two ways—by way of reward, or by way of charge.

[1.] By way of reward, and so more largely all nations are given to him: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' and John xvii. 2, 'As thou hast given him power over all flesh.' This donation taketh in elect and reprobate. Nations are his heritage, as well as the church; only in this giving by way of reward, there is a difference; some are given to Christ at large, to be disposed of according to his pleasure; others are given to him for some special ministry and service, as hypocrites in the church; and thus Judas, amongst the rest, was given to Christ, though 'a son of perdition.' And again, others are given to him by way of special and peculiar interest, to be members of his body, subjects of his kingdom, children of his family. So only the elect are given to him: John xvii. 6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.' The great bargain that Christ made for his Father was only[1] an interest in souls.

[2.] By way of charge. This again is only proper and peculiar to

[1] Qu. 'with his Father was only for'?—ED.

the elect; they were given to Christ by way of charge, to be redeemed, justified, sanctified, glorified; given, not by way of alienation, but oppignoration, laid at pledge in his hands, so that none of them can miscarry. I shall name some places to prove this way of giving: John vi. 37–39, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me,' &c.; where you see they shall surely and infallibly be brought to grace, and as infallibly be conducted to glory; and when they come, they cannot miscarry: 'This is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing.' Christ hath received a charge, he is to look to all God's flock, not to lose a leg, or a piece of an ear. So John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man shall pluck them out of my Father's hands.' Where see Christ's power and faithfulness is engaged by the Father's gift for the preservation of the saints. So that we see what it is to be given to Christ, to become his reward, his charge.

3. A third question yet remaineth. Why is it mentioned here? The phrase, as I said, is often used in many verses of this chapter; but the repetition is not needless: it is not an empty tautology, but repeated for the more ample consolation and instruction of the apostles, that in the midst of their troubles they might look upon themselves as given to Christ, and so the more interested in a sure preservation; for God is bound to make good his grant, and Christ his trust. Christ pleadeth his own faithfulness: ver. 12, 'While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those which thou gavest me I have kept.' He made good his trust, and therefore now pleadeth with the Father that he would make good his grant: 'I am no more in the world, do thou keep them;' and he useth the same argument, 'Those which thou hast given me;' that swayed with him to keep them, and he knew the Father would take care of them for the same reason.

Well, now, having laid this foundation, let me—

Observe that this is a ground of solid consolation and establishment to the elect, that they are by the grant of God the Father given and committed to God the Son as his purchase and charge. The point is genuine, for this giving is by way of gift and charge; and this giving is proper to the elect, as we have proved; and it is here urged as a ground of establishment and consolation. Christ expresseth the elect by such a character, 'Those which thou hast given me,' not only to specify the persons, but to declare the ground of audience—Keep them, because they are those which thou hast given me.

Therefore, in following of it, I shall use this method:—

1. I shall more largely explain the manner of God's grant and donation to Christ.

2. I shall show you how it is a ground of establishment and consolation.

3. I shall enforce all by application.

First, To open the nature of the grant, let us again resume the distinction of giving by way of reward and charge. These two answer to one another, as work and wages. Christ taketh upon himself a charge of souls, and all his reward is that he may have an interest in them. Let us begin with the charge, the work first, and then the wages.

1. They are given to him by way of charge. What his charge was will be opened by considering what the Father proposed concerning the elect, and how the Son undertook it.

[1.] What the Father proposed. The words of heaven are ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, 2 Cor. xii. 4, 'Words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' Those secret ways of discourse and communication between the Father and the Son are to be adored with reverence and deep silence, were it not that the Spirit of God hath put them into such forms as are suitable to the transactions and intercourse which pass between man and man. It is usual in scripture to put the passages which concern God and Christ into speeches: Ps. xl. 6–8, 'Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then I said, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart;' Ps, ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' The Father came to Christ, and did, as it were, say to him, Son, I am loath that all mankind should be lost, and left under condemnation; there are some whom I have chosen to be vessels and receptacles of my mercy and goodness; and because I am resolved that my justice shall be no loser, you must take a body and die for them; and afterwards you must see that they be converted to grace, justified, sanctified, guided to glory, and that not one of them doth miscarry; for I will take an account from you of them. It were easy to prove all these things out of scripture, to wit, that there are a certain definite number whom God chooseth to be vessels of mercy: 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth those that are his.' There is no lottery nor uncertainty in the divine decrees; the number is stated and sealed, none can add to it, nor detract or take away any one person. And that Christ received a command to lay down his life for them, and for them only: John x. 15, 'I lay down my life for my sheep;' and ver. 18, 'This commandment have I received of my Father.' The description is a limitation; it is for his sheep. God would have none of Christ's blood to run waste. That he is to do this, that the honour of justice may be salved, and so mercy have the freer course: Rom. iii. 25, 26, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, his righteousness; that he may be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' The Son was not only to use entreaty, but to make satisfaction; not that God by any necessity of nature required it; the exercise of justice is free, and falleth under no laws; but it was most convenient to preserve a due sense and apprehension of the Godhead. That Christ was to see them converted, it was the express will of God: John vi. 38, 39, 'For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise them up again at the last day;' and by conversion, to be possessed of all the privileges of the

gospel; and without miscarrying to be guided unto glory: John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father that gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' They are one, and act by joint power and joint consent. And after all this, he is to give an account of bodies and souls: John vi. 39, 'That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise them up again at the last day.' Which accordingly he doth when he presents the kingdom to the Father, and appeareth before him with all his little ones, as a prey snatched out of the teeth of lions: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.'

[2.] What Christ undertook; the whole proposal of the Father was accepted: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' Christ consented to all the articles of the treaty and eternal covenant, not only to take a body to die, but to take a particular charge of all the elect. As Judah interposed for Benjamin, so doth Christ for all the souls committed to him: Gen. xliii. 9, 'I will be surety for him, of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not to thee, and set him safe in thy presence, let me bear the blame for ever.' So doth Christ say concerning all the persons that fall under his charge. If I do not see them converted, justified, sanctified, saved, count me an unfaithful undertaker, and let me bear the blame for ever.

2. By way of reward. As in a covenant there is not only a duty incumbent, but a benefit accruing to the party that contracteth; so Christ in this eternal treaty dealt with God by way of bargain and purchase; his aim was to get a special interest in, and relation to believers, as mediator. This was all the gain he reckoned of: Isa. liii. 10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.' And therefore by virtue of this purchase he hath many relations to them; they are given to him as subjects of his kingdom, as scholars of his school, as children of his family, as the spouse of his bosom, as the members of his body. All these relations I shall insist upon; for this was the honour granted to Christ upon his obedience; I mean, he counted it an honour, and bought it at a dear rate, and yet was contented with the purchase. Alas! nothing could be added to the greatness of his person, who was equal with the Father in glory and power; the privileges of the incarnation were but as so many milder humiliations; but he was so tender of souls that he was pleased to take it as a gift from his Father, and a reward of all his services. Mark it, nothing else could bring Christ out of heaven into the manger, the wilderness, the cross, the grave, but to get an interest in your souls: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' What did he gain by all his expense of blood and sweat, his temptations, agonies, taking our nature, bearing our burden, but to see you safe in the arms of mercy, that he might be your king, your prophet, your priest, your head? Next to the title of the Son of God, Christ valueth that of being head of the church. And see how

the relations are diversified, that he might come nearer and closer to us: a king is a more large relation, a master hath a more particular inspection; a master may be faithful and careful, but he hath not the bowels of a father; a father is very tender, but the greatest intimacy is between husband and wife, we are the wife of his bosom; if husband be a relation too remote, because the union is civil, he comes nearer to us yet, he will be our head, we his members, where the union is natural. Let us go over these severally.

[1.] We are given to him to be subjects of his kingdom. Christ is lord of all the world, but he prizeth no title like that of king of saints, Rev. xv. 3. No throne to him like the conscience of a humble sinner; the heart is his best presence-chamber, there is his throne of state set. He had an eternal right, together with the Father and Holy Ghost, but he would come and suffer, and be crowned with a crown of thorns, that he might have a new right as mediator, and have the crown of glory put upon his head in the church. Therefore it is said, Acts v. 31, that upon his resurrection, 'God hath exalted him to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' The grant was made long before, when he first contracted with Christ about the salvation of the world; but when the price was paid, then it was made good. There is never a subject Christ hath, but he is bought, and with the dearest price, his sovereign's own blood: Mat. xx. 28, 'The Son of man gave his life a ransom for many,' λυτρόν ἀντὶ πολλῶν. In other kingdoms many subjects die, that the prince may be seated in the throne; but here the prince dieth for the subjects' sakes, that he may govern his spiritual realm with peace and quietness. And as the price was great, so the Father hath made him a large grant. Christ's empire is universal; properly he is the catholic king, there are no bounds and limits of his kingdom; first or last, in all the habitable parts of the earth there are or shall be some that acknowledge his sceptre: Isa. xlix. 12, 'Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.' From the east, west, north, south, Jews, Gentiles; the Jews that are now his enemies shall acknowledge his sovereignty: Hosea i. 11, 'Then shall the children of Judah, and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land.' As the tribes flocked to Hebron to crown David, so shall these to crown Christ; and this royal garland shall Christ wear to all eternity. It is true it is said, 1 Cor. xv. 29, 'He shall resign up the kingdom to the Father.' I answer—In kingly dignity there are two things—*regia cura* and *regius honor*—kingly care, by which he ordereth and defendeth his subjects against enemies, that shall cease; but the kingly honour which he receiveth from his subjects shall be for ever and ever; he shall always be honoured as king and mediator of the church. He shall resign the kingdom; that is, that way of administration by which he now governeth; for when the elect are fully converted and sanctified, and enemies destroyed, there will be no need of this care. Now after he hath bought us out of his Father's hands by his merit and purchase, he is forced to recover us from the devil by his power and conquest. The word is the rod of his strength, the sacraments are our oath of allegiance; in prayer we

perform our homages, by alms and acts of charity we pay him tribute, and praise and obedience are the constant revenues of his crown. This is the first grant.

[2.] We are given to Christ as scholars of his school. He is the great prophet and doctor of his church; certainly Christ loveth the honour of this chair. He hath also obtained this title, Acts iii. 22, 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren; him shall ye hear.' Christ came out from the bosom of God to show us his heart and mind. So he is called, Heb. iii. 1, 'The apostle of our profession.' Christ doth so love a relation to his church, that you see he taketh the titles of own officers; though he is Lord of the church, yet he is 'the apostle of our profession;' he counteth it an honour to be a preacher of the gospel. The Son of God is first in the roll of gospel preachers; he is God's legate *à latere*, an apostle: he laid the foundation of the gospel when he was upon the earth, and he teacheth us now he is in heaven: he doth not teach the ear, but the heart; he doth not only set us our lesson, but giveth us a heart to learn it; the scripture is our book, and Christ our great master; and when he openeth our eyes, we shall see wondrous things in his law. Other teachers teach for hire, but he bought this liberty of God, that he might open his school, and become a light to Jew and Gentile.

[3.] We are given to him to be children of his family. The only thing propounded to allure Christ to the work of redemption was, Isa. liii. 10, 'He shall see his seed,' that he might have a numerous issue and progeny. He delighteth in us, though we are all Benonis, sons of sorrow. Though he died in the birth, yet he is wonderfully pleased with the fruitfulness of his death; as a woman delivered after sharp and sore sorrow, forgetteth all her past sorrow for joy of the birth. At the last day this will be Christ's rejoicing and crown, to see the multitude of his little ones all brought together: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me.' It is a goodly sight, when Christ shall rejoice in the midst of them, and go with them, as a glorious train, to the throne of God the Father. Jesus Christ is our brother and our father; by regeneration and the merit of the cross he is our father; but in the possession of heaven he is our brother, for we are co-heirs with him.

[4.] We are given to him as the spouse of his bosom. This is another of Christ's honours, to be the church's bridegoom. The epithalamium is in Canticles and Ps. xlv. There the nuptials are celebrated. Ministers, they are, as John Baptist was called, 'Friends of the bridegroom.' Look, as a father giveth her whom he hath begotten to another for a spouse and wife, so doth God give his elect to Christ. Indeed Christ hath bought the church at his Father's hands; other wives bring a dowry, but Christ was to buy. As Saul gave his daughter to David, but first he was to kill Goliath, and to bring the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, 1 Sam. xvii. 25, and xviii. 25; so God gave Christ the church for a spouse, but Christ was to redeem her with his blood, the infernal Goliath was to be slain. Yea, ere Christ did obtain this honour, he gaineth our consent by the power of his Spirit, working with the entreaties of the word: Hosea ii. 14, 'I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak

comfortably unto her;' and ver. 19, 20, 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.' First I will allure, then betroth; as David, after he had bought Michal with the danger of his life, yet was fain to take her away from Phaltiel, 2 Sam. iii. 13. The devil hath gotten Christ's spouse in his own arms; he is fain to rescue her, and oblige her to loyalty by the entreaties of his Spirit. Hereafter is the day of espousals; now the church is called the bride, then the Lamb's wife. Christ's honour, as well as our consent, is incomplete; then he cometh to fetch her, and present her to God, Eph. v. 27, and bring her into his Father's house. Christ is decking her against that time; we are to accomplish the months of our purification, and to have odours and garments out of the king's wardrobe, Esther i. 12.

[5.] We are given to him to be members of his body. Here is the nearest relation, and that which Christ most prizeth, next to the title of the Son of God, to be head of the church. Oh! what an honour is this to poor creatures, that Christ will take us into his own mystical body, to quicken us and enliven us, and guide us by his grace! To angels he is a head in point of sovereignty and power: Col. ii. 10, 'And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.' But to the church he is a head by virtue of mystical union. Angels are his ministering spirits, but we his spouse; they are not called his bride, nor the spouse of his bosom, nor the members of his body. In the Ephesians, the church is called 'his body,' the 'fulness of him that filleth all in all,' Eph. i. 23. Poor creatures are *πλήρωμα Χριστοῦ*; he doth not count himself perfect without us, as if he were a maimed, imperfect Christ till all the church be where he is. He treateth his mystical body with the same respect that he doth his natural; it is raised, ascended, glorified, so shall we. For the present there is some communion between us; he is grieved in our miseries, and we are exalted in his glory. As there is a mutual passage of spirits between the head and the body, so there is a communion between Christ and us by donatives and duties.

Secondly, How this is a ground of establishment and consolation.

1. By this gift we have an interest both in God and Christ: 1 John i. 3, 'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;' 2 John 9, 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.' God will make good his gift, and Christ his trust. God bestowed us upon his Son, to oblige Christ to the greater respect; and Christ hath bought us of his Father, that the gift might be sure and certain. The Son loveth us, because the Father required it; the Father loveth us, because the Son merited it. If Christ be faithful to his Father, or the Father be loving and respectful to Christ, we cannot miscarry. We have an interest in the Father, who is the fountain of mercy; in the Son, who is the golden pipe and conveyance. God made the elect to be members of Christ's body, that he might redeem them; and Christ made them children of God's family, that he might

love them and bless them. Electing love and Christ's purchase are the two fountains of salvation. God, who is the supreme judge, offended party, first cause and fountain of blessing, he requireth the Son to die for us; and Christ hath undertaken it, and made good his word.

2. God hath put the business of our salvation into safe hands. He would not be defeated of his purpose, therefore he hath given the elect to Christ, that they may be quickened by virtue of that power and life which was given to him. He would deal with us upon sure terms, and therefore took order sufficient to attain his end; he would not trust us with any but his own eternal Son. There is a charge laid on Christ, who is a good depositary, of such care and faithfulness, that he will not neglect his Father's pledge; of such strength and ability, that nothing can wrest us out of his hands; for he that doeth it had need of a stronger arm than Christ's, John x. 28, 29. Of such love, that no work can be more pleasing to him; he loveth us far better than we do ourselves, or else he would never have come from heaven for our sakes. Of such watchfulness and care, that his eyes do always run to and fro throughout the earth. Providence is full of eyes, as well as strong of hand. As the high priest bore the names of the tribes upon his breast and shoulders, so doth Christ the memorial of every saint; he knoweth their names and their necessities; though many thousands in the world, yet every single believer falleth under the care of Christ, as if none besides him; he knoweth them by head and poll, their wants, necessities. They are written in the 'Lamb's book of life,' Rev. xiii. 8. Christ keeps a register of them. There is not only God's book of remembrance, but the Lamb's book of life. He knoweth every distinct sheep by name, and constantly giveth an account of them to God: 'I am glorified in them.' It is grievous to our advocate when he is forced to be an accuser. He taketh a distinct and implicit notice of them: Isa. xl. 27, 'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?' Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.' If it were not for this our keeper, we should surely perish; but Christ is our keeper, who is faithful, loving, able, watchful. *Qui potest et vult, facit.* Christ's own charge cannot miscarry. If the elect should not be saved, Christ would neither do his work, nor receive his wages.

*Use.* To press us to come under these sweet hopes. There is nothing wanting but the clearing up of our interest, that you may be of the number of those that are given to Christ. You will know it by God's act towards you, and by your act towards God.

1. By God's act towards you. If we be given to Christ, Christ is given to us. We are given to Christ before all time, and in time Christ is given to us; by converting grace he and we are brought together. God makes an offer in the gospel; are we willing to receive him for Lord and Saviour? Then you put it out of question. Are you moved by the Spirit to receive him upon God's offer. Conversion, it is as it were an actual election. By original election the heirs of salvation are distinguished from others in God's purpose; so by conversion, or actual election, they are visibly distinguished. What

excitements of grace can you speak of that urge you to come to Christ? All that are given to him come to him.

2. By your act towards Christ. All the Father's acts are ratified in time by believers; he ordaineth, we consent; he chooseth Christ for Lord and king, and 'they shall appoint themselves one head.' So God's giving of souls to Christ is ratified by the believers' act. As there is a double giving on his part, by way of charge and by way of reward, so there is a double act on our part, committing, and consecrating ourselves to Christ.

[1.] Committing ourselves to Christ. Can we wholly and absolutely resign up our souls into his hands? The Father is wiser than we; he knew well enough what he did when he commended us to his Son. Faith is often expressed by 'committing ourselves to Christ;' it answereth the trust the Father reposed in him: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep, *παραθήκην μου*, that which I have committed unto him against that day.' This is not an easy matter, it argueth a sense of danger, a solicitous care about the soul, and an advised confidence. What care hast thou ever taken to lay thy soul safe? What confidence hast thou of Christ's ability? Didst thou think thou couldst be safe without him? Thou wouldst be an unfaithful guardian. Knowingly canst thou venture eternity on thy present state?

[2.] Consecrating ourselves to him: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Then walk as his, it is dangerous to alienate things once consecrated: 1 Cor. iii. 23, 'Ye are Christ's.' Whatever you have, you must give up to him for his glory. You have nothing at your own dispose, neither tongue, nor heart, nor estate; as long as a man reserves to himself an interest, he will miscarry. Nabal called what he had, 'My bread, and my water, and my flesh,' 1 Sam. xxv. 11. Did you ever make a serious resignation of yourselves to God? Ps. cxix. 94, 'I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.'

## SERMON XIX.

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.* —JOHN XVII. 11.

FIFTHLY, The last circumstance, 'That they may be one, as we are, is the aim of Christ's request, which is unity and consent among the apostles. It is illustrated by the pattern or exemplar of it, 'As we are one.'

The explicatory questions are two:—

1. What kind of unity this is that is prayed for.
2. Under what respect it is prayed for in this place.

First, What this unity is? How one? One in judgment, or one

in heart, or one body knit together with the same spirit? I answer—All these; for consider for whom Christ prayeth, for the disciples of that age, and principally for the college of the apostles; now saith he, 'Let them be one.' There is a double unity—mystical and moral.

1. Mystical union is the union of believers with Christ the head, and with one another; with Christ the head by faith, and with one another by love; ἵνα ὦσιν ἓν, understand ἓν σῶμα; so it agreeth with the letter of this place, nay, with the meaning. This union of believers in the same body is often compared with the mystery of the Trinity; and it is elsewhere expressed by one body, as Col. ii. 19, 'And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;' a place full to this purpose, where all believers, in regard of their union with the head, and with one another, are set forth as one body, governed under one head, by one spirit, by which they increase and grow up, till they come to such a kind of unity as is among the divine persons. I cannot exclude this, because where Christ's prayers are indefinite, it is good to interpret them in their full latitude, and according to the extent of his purchase. And yet I think this is not principally intended, because, as I said, Christ chiefly prayeth for the apostles and disciples of that age, not for the church catholic or universal.

2. There is a moral union, and that is twofold—(1.) Consent in doctrine; (2.) Mutual agreement and concord of affection. As it is said of the church, Acts iv. 32, 'The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind.' One heart, that noteth agreement in affection; and one mind, agreement in judgment: for both these doth Christ pray.

[1.] Let them be one in doctrine and judgment. Christ had intrusted them with the weightiest affair the sons of men are capable of, with the promulgation of the gospel; a doctrine which Christ brought out of the bosom of the Father, and gave it to the apostles, and they to the church; and Christ obtained that which he prayed for. There is such an exact consent and harmony between the doctrine of the apostles, that is a sufficient foundation for the faith and unity of the church. For the faith of the church: 1 Cor. xv. 10, 11, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me: therefore whether it were I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.' We have no cause to stumble and take offence at the doctrine delivered by the apostles; though God used several instruments, of different gifts and opportunities of service, yet all were conducted by an infallible Spirit: 'So we preached, all of us,' &c. So for unity and concord in the church: Eph. iv. 3–5, 'Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism,' &c.

[2.] Let them be one in heart, and with joint consent carry on this great charge that is committed to them. So did the apostles, by unanimous consent, divide their labours for the edification of the world, and kept a fellowship among themselves: Gal. ii. 9, 'They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto

the heathen, and they to the circumcision;' with such concord and agreement was this great work managed between them; for all this did Christ pray. And this suiteth with the pattern in the text, 'As we are one.' As between the Father and the Son there was a mutual agreement in the carrying on the work of redemption, so between the apostles in carrying on the doctrine of redemption.

Secondly, In what manner doth Christ pray for it? Here some take this only as a new petition, different from the former; he had prayed for preservation, now for unity. But there is a causal particle, ἵνα, and therefore some connection: ἵνα may be taken *specificativè*, keep them, by making them one; the safety of the church dependeth much upon the unity of it. Or *terminativè*, keep them, that they may be one.

I had intended, because of the necessity of the matter, to have spoken of the union of the church with Christ, and then with one another. But because he chiefly prayeth for the apostles (though others are not excluded), and because the union of the church, as one body, animated with the same Spirit, will fall under discussion in ver. 21 and 23, I shall adjourn it to that place.

Only now I shall observe—

1. How much Christ's heart is set upon the unity and oneness of his members. Here he prayeth for the apostles; in ver. 21 he prayeth the same for all believers. Upon this occasion let us see how much it was in the aim of Christ.

[1.] Therefore was he incarnate. He united the divine and human nature in his own person, that he might unite us to God by himself, and with one another. God and man had never been one in covenant if they had not first been one in person. The hypostatical union maketh way for the mystical. It was the main end of Christ's coming into the world, Eph. i. 10, 'That in the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ.' The angels and blessed spirits, and the saints in all nations, have communion with us in Christ under the same head. He would gather the elect rational creatures into a body, one with God in Christ, saints and angels. As all the heads of a discourse are summed up in the conclusion, so Christ would draw all into one body. He took a natural body that he might have a mystical body. Christ would not only leave us the relation of friends and brethren, but fellow-members. He would gather together all into one; not only into one family, but into one body. Brothers that have issued from the same womb, that have been nursed with the same milk, have been divided in interests and affections, and defaced all feelings of nature; Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, are sad instances. But this mischief is not found in members of the same body; there is no contestation and disagreement. Who would use one hand to cut off another? or divide those parts, which preserve the mutual correspondence and welfare of all? Again, brothers, if they do not hurt one another, they do not care for one another; each liveth to himself a distinct life apart, and studieth his own advantage. But it is not so in the body; each member liveth in the whole, and the whole in all the members; and they all exercise their several functions for the common good: 1 Cor. xii. 25, 'The members should have the

same care one of another.' We are not friends and brethren, but members.

[2.] No one thing is so much inculcated in his sermons: John xv. 17, 'These things I command you, that ye love one another.' Will you take a charge from a dying man? This was the great charge that Christ left at his death; it was a legacy as well as a precept. Speeches of dying men are wont to be received with much veneration and reverence, especially the charge of dying friends. The brethren of Joseph, fearing lest he should remember the injuries done to him in seeking his life, selling him into Egypt, they use this plea, Gen. l. 16, 17, 'Thy father commanded us before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did thee evil: and now we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.' We count it a piece of natural honesty to fulfil the will of the dead. When Christ took his leave of the disciples, this was the charge that he left upon them. Therefore when thy heart beginneth to be exulcerated, consider, What love do I bear Christ, since I do not respect his last commandment? Again, as it was Christ's last commandment, so it was his new commandment: John xiii. 34, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.' It was his solemn charge; a new commandment! How new, since it was as old as the moral law or law of nature? New because excellent, 'as a new song;' or new because solemnly and expressly renewed by him and commended to their care; as new things and new laws are much esteemed and prized; Christ would have this commandment always new and fresh; or new because enforced by a new argument: 'As I have loved you, so should ye love one another.' When we see how much Christ hath loved us, even to the death of the cross, we may learn to love with a new kind of love: *Experti amorem meum tam novum et inauditum.* This was a new kind of love indeed, to enkindle love in our souls. Christ gave us such a new kind of love as was never seen nor heard of. Christ came from heaven to propound us a pattern of charity; as to repair and preserve the notions of the Godhead by the greatness of his sufferings, so to show us a pattern of charity, and to elevate duty between man and man: Eph. v. 2, 'Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour.' In Christ's example we see the highest pattern of love: John xv. 9, 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.' His Father loved him with an infinite love, yet parted with him for the salvation of men; and Christ parted with himself, and all to raise our love to God and men the higher. But I digress.

[3.] In his prayers, that which he reinforced again and again is unity and love. When he was about to die he foresaw the divisions of the church, and that Satan would by all means endeavour to sow strife; corrupt nature putteth us on discords. He left some apostles, others believers, but all men; wherefore he prays for the apostles, 'Let them be one;' for believers, 'Let them be one.' Christ, that left unity as a charge in his last sermons, he would leave it as a legacy in his last prayers. But why was Christ so earnest in his prayers?

(1.) Because it is such an excellent blessing. Christ would not have been so earnest for it if it had not been so excellent. I would not digress into a commendation of concord and love: *pax ab omnibus laudatur, a paucis servatur;* all commend it, though few observe it; yet a little will not be unnecessary. This is the strength and safety of the church: Col. iii. 14, 'And above all things put on charity, which is σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος, the bond of perfectness,' or a perfect bond, the cement of the church. The church is but one temple, where stones squared by grace are cemented with love, and inhabited by the same Spirit; this keepeth them fast in the building. This is the beauty and safety of the church, the joining that runneth through all the squared stones. As the health of the outward body dependeth on the symmetry and proportion of the members, and the harmony and disposition of all the parts, so doth the welfare of the church upon the bond of love. Next to truth, there is not a greater blessing; and Christ prayeth for the apostles, that they might be kept in the truth for this end, that they might be one in love. And as nothing is more profitable to the church, so nothing is more acceptable to God; it pleaseth God exceedingly to see all that call him Father to love as brethren. Certainly there is not a greater grief to his spirit than to see us divided in opinion and affection, in our prayers and supplications. Certainly there is much in concord in praying, when all God's children do besiege heaven with uniform and joint supplications. Things stick in the birth, because we are not agreed what to ask. As reformation sticketh towards men, because we are not agreed what to hold forth to the world, so it sticketh as to God, because we are not agreed what to ask. When the Israelites would have God's help, it is said they came all as one man to ask his counsel: Judges xx. 1, 'Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beersheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the Lord in Mizpeh.' Oh! when shall it be so amongst us? There is not only altar set up against altar, but prayer against prayer. We are first divided in practices and opinions, and then in prayers; God's dear children and servants are divided in language; we cannot in charity but judge them to be acted with the same spirit, inspired with the same breath, yet they yield a different sound. It is said of the primitive believers that 'they continued, ὁμοθύμαδον, with one accord, in prayer and supplication,' Acts i. 14; and 'they were with one accord in one place' when the Holy Spirit descended on them, Acts ii. 1. And yet how seldom doth any public congregation meet with one mind in the same place! as in an organ, when some pipes do make a sound, others keep silence: Mat. xviii. 19, 'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. God looks for an agreement and harmony in our requests, if we would speed with him.

(2.) Because Christ foresaw how much the church would need this blessing. Divisions will arise, an evil most unsuitable to christianity, and yet the evil genius that hath attended it; partly through Satan's malice; he cannot else hold the empire and title to the world; he is not only prince of the power of the air, but the God of this world. God permitteth him in his righteous judgment not only to have a great

power over the elements, but to rule in the hearts of men. Now he could not keep his own, nor prevail against the church, were it not for divisions. As Cyrus in Herodotus, going to fight against Scythia, coming to a broad river, and not being able to pass over it, cut and divided it into divers arms and sluices, and so made it passable for all his army; this is the devil's policy, he laboureth to divide us, and separate us into divers sects and factions, and so easily overcometh us. Christ knew that the envious man would sow tares. Partly through weakness and imperfection of knowledge, divers men may agree in one aim, and yet not in one way. The apostle saith (which indeed is the great canon and rule of charity, when it is rightly understood and applied), Phil. iii. 15, 16, 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you: nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.' I observe there, that among the godly, because of difference of light, especially in times of reformation, there will be difference of judgment, though they agree in the same aim. As when divers physicians are sent for to a sick person, some think that the best way to cure the sick person is to take away all the corrupt blood at once, others think it best to take it away by little and little; here is a difference in judgment, but yet the aim is the same, all intend the good of the sick party: so it is in curing a sick church; some are for taking away all, and beginning upon a new foundation, others for a regular reformation, to try all ways and all means of recovery; this is a difference. Or rather thus: when a house is on fire, some are for pulling it down, others are for quenching it, and letting the building stand; it requireth a present remedy, and in this hurlyburly the master's voice is not always heard. So it is in reformation of inveterate errors and customs that have crept into the church; there is a difference of judgment about the cure, and God's voice in the confusion is not always heard. Partly through vile affections; man's nature is very prone to discords, out of pride, worldly interests, desire of precedency, envy of one another's reputes, irregular zeal; all these make us touchy. Some are of a salt and fiery humour, like flax and gunpowder, the least spark catcheth, and setteth them into a flame. Much experience hereof we have in these dogdays of the church, wherein every one is barking and biting at one another, whereby Christ is exceedingly dishonoured, and the cause of religion much disadvantaged. Therefore that there might be some sparks of love kept alive in the church, is Christ so earnest with the Father, 'Let them be one.'

(3.) That we might know that unity among believers is a possible blessing. It seemeth many times past hope, and that it were as good to speak to the winds to be still as to men's prejudices and boisterous affections. Ay! but there is hope; Christ hath prayed for it, and his prayers are as good as so many promises: John xi. 42, 'I know that thou hearest me always.' This is a fountain of comfort and hope.

(4.) To encourage us to pray for it. Endeavours with men are without fruit and success; but let us ply the throne of grace more, and learn of Christ to go to our heavenly Father, and wrestle with him in supplications. In one place it is said, Rom. xii. 18, 'If it be

possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.' *Fac quod tuum est.* We must do whatever is possible; but we are not in the place of God: 2 Thes. iii. 16, 'The God of peace give you peace always by all means.' It seems as if a small matter would set all right, but we have it not in our power; a little light, a little love; a little light to make the prejudices vanish, a little love to conquer animosities. But God alone must do the work; he can bow men's rugged and crooked spirits: Isa. xi. 6, 7, 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the suckling together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.' It is an allusion to the beasts in the ark, where all enmity was taken away; they were all tame. So the gospel can meeken the heart. Not that so disagreeing tempers shall remain in the christian church, which (though the ravenous disposition of some did cease) would make a motley company, and (as the prophet speaks) like a speckled bird; but besides the extinction of noxious qualities, all shall be governed by the same Spirit of truth and holiness.

[4.] Christ died for this end: Eph. ii. 14–16, 'He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.' He died, not only to reconcile us to God, but to one another, to make of twain one body, and destroy the enmity in his flesh. Other sacrifices are a sign of separation, therefore he would be a sacrifice of union. The flesh of bulls and goats were a wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles; but he would destroy the enmity in his flesh, to make of twain one. So Caiaphas prophesied, John xi. 52, that Christ should die to 'gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.' Christ died to enlarge the pale, that all nations, though of different rites, customs, and interests, might become one.

[5.] This he aimed at in his ascension, and the pouring out of the Spirit. We read of the unity of the Spirit: 'Keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' Eph. iv. 3. It is called the unity of the Spirit, not because the union is spiritual and mystical, but because the Spirit is the author of it. Therefore it is said, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 'There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.' Christ would have but one spirit to run through all his members, that as they are united to one head, so they may be animated by one spirit. Christ is the head of the church, and the Spirit is the soul of the church. There is a spirit of communion. Look, as it is said, Ezek. i. 21, 'When the beasts went, the wheels went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them;' the reason is, because 'the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.' So because the same spirit is in one christian that is in another, therefore they have the like affections, to procure the good of one another as much as may be. Christ giveth us the Spirit to make us one. But of this spirit of communion more hereafter.

[6.] This is the end of his gracious dispensations, he giveth us grace and assurance of glory to this end: John xvii. 22, 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.' Understand it of the privilege of filiation; we are made sons that we may live as brethren; or of the gift of grace, the glorious image of God is impressed on all the saints, that likeness may beget love; or of an interest in glory, that those that expect to live in the same heaven may not fall out by the way, and disagree on earth.

[7.] It is the end of his ordinances and appointments in the church. Baptism and the Lord's supper are to keep the saints together. It is sad indeed that the world maketh them apples of strife, when Christ made them bonds of love: 'We are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and have been all made to drink into one spirit,' 1 Cor. xii. 13. It notes our union with Christ and one with another. And 1 Cor. x. 17, 'We being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.' The sacraments are banners, under which we do encamp, and profess our union and brotherhood in the army of Christ.

*Use* 1. How contrary are they to Christ that love strife and sow discord among brethren; they are the devil's factors, agents for the kingdom of darkness; they wholly frustrate the design and undertaking of Jesus Christ. He was incarnate, preached, prayed, died, &c., that his people may be one. Yea, they do not only what in them lieth to frustrate Christ, and make void his aim, but do also disparage him before the world; he holdeth out to all the world that his people are one body, one family, one house, and yet they are crumbled into factions. Divisions in the church beget atheism in the world. Oh! let it not seem a small thing to rend the unity of the church. But where shall this be charged? Every one will excuse himself from the guilt of the present breaches. Certainly we have all cause to reflect upon our own hearts, and not make application for others. It is usual with us to do as Judas; when Christ told his disciples somewhat that concerned him, he looked round about upon the disciples. So we look about upon others, when we should smite upon our own thigh. One of the bellows of strife is crimination and recrimination; therefore let us see a little who is guilty. The unity is twofold—one in mind, one in heart; one in judgment, one in affection. Now what hast thou done contrary to either of these unions?

1. If thou hast been a stickler in novel opinions, whereby division hath been caused in the church, thou hast dis-served the aim of Christ. Christians are bound to be of one mind: 1 Peter iii. 8, 'Finally, be ye all of one mind,' &c.; Phil. ii. 2, 'Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;' 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 'Though I have all faith, so as I can remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.' But you will reply, Will you enforce judgment or impose belief, and make me an hypocrite and yourself a usurper? And what are novel opinions? You condemn others, and they you; you preach against them, and they against you. Yea, but yet christians should strive, as much as is possible, to be all of a mind; and it should trouble thee if forced to differ from the general judgment of the church. In doubtful matters, take not up an

opinion which will offend: 'Beware of doubtful disputations.' He that dissents had need have plain evidence, and that the truth should be brought with much demonstration to the conscience, arguments had need be express and clear, and he had need pray much, and consult and confer with others. But when singularity and diversity of opinions is affected, *homini congenitum est magis nova quam magna mirari*, and without any fear and jealousy, men let loose their hearts to novelties, this is blameworthy. When we have the consent of the church, a less light will serve the turn than for a dissent.

2. Hast thou done anything to hinder the church from being of one heart?

[1.] By professing principles of separation; certainly it is a crime. It is against love, as error is against faith; it cuts asunder the bands and sinews of Christ's mystical body. In these times, the charge of this sin is so frequent, that the sin is little regarded. Every modest dissent and unconformity is branded with the name of schism, that men think schism no such matter, or no such crime: Jude 19, 'These be they who separate themselves,' ἀποδιορίζοντες. Now it is dangerous to separate, and hard to discern when it is lawful. The question of separation lieth in the dark, but the enforcements of love are plain and open. Divers allow but three grounds of separation—intolerable persecution, damnable heresy, and gross idolatry. We should hold communion as long as Christ will. Scandal is a ground of mourning, but not a ground of separation, and whenever it is done, it must be with grief.

[2.] They that prosecute controversies in such a way as will not stand with love, viz., with passion, bitterness of spirit, damning all opposites, suppressing them by the power of the sword. Wrath, exulceration, and bitterness of spirit, are opposite to love. Michael durst not bring a railing accusation. The worst adversaries are overcome with soft words and hard arguments. Railing and reviling makes men deaf to the tenders of reconciliation: Ps. cxx. 7, 'I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.' So is damning all opposites, casting them out of Christ, urging things beyond the weight and consequence of the opinion, censuring others as not spiritual, 1 Cor. xiv. 37. Interest makes men passionately and irregularly zealous: 1 Cor. i. 2, 'To all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours;' not as a party impropriating Christ, 'I am of Christ.' So is domineering over men's consciences, and obtruding opinions by force; these are said 'to go in the way of Cain,' Jude 11.

*Use* 2. Let us be as earnest for unity as Christ; let us think of charity more than we have done, how to preserve peace, as well as truth. Certainly we that have one Father, are born of one mother, acknowledge one elder brother, even Christ, by whom we are adopted, hope for one patrimony, we should be more careful 'to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' We have a great many contentions now for one holy contention: Heb. x. 24, 'Let us consider one another, to provoke to love and to good works.' What arguments shall I use? The danger of the Papists on one hand, of sects on the other. Of Papists; if ever the beast were likely to recover of his wounds, now it is. Our divisions make us first a laughing-stock to the enemy, and then a

prey; first we are had in contempt, then they use violence. And it may be just with God to suffer it; when piety decreaseth, charity is exiled; and bitterness, partialities, strife, suspicions are only left to reign and flourish. Certainly, if once a peace were settled in the Reformed churches, the prophecies concerning antichrist would soon be accomplished; those relicts of God's election, which do as yet remain in spiritual Babylon, would soon come out from amongst them, who are now scandalised at our divisions: as when a boat is to take in passengers, when all the passengers are in the boat, they launch out, and hoist up sail. They are weary of the idolatry and superstitions of the Romish church, and would soon break the cords wherewith they are now held; truth would have a greater power: Acts iv. 32, 33, 'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and grace was upon them all.' As to sects on the other side, libertines daily increase, by means of the divisions amongst them that fear God, and grow formidable in the variety of their combinations and endeavours: Jude 11, 'Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Baalam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.' There would be an end of this itch if all that fear God would join together as one man in the defence of the gospel. Alas! we have striven long enough, hindered the common salvation long enough; scandals enough have been given: it is high time to renounce all fruits of revenge and ambition, and think of peace and unity.

But you will say, What would you have us to do?

I answer—Something with God, something as to men. Something with God; pray and mourn, lay to heart the divisions that are among God's people. I speak for Sion's sake; we should be very earnest with God for Sion: Isa. lxii. 1, 'For Sion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.' A great house is smitten with breaches, and a little house with clefts; not only kingdoms, but particular families are destroyed, when the members of them are divided in opinions and affections: Ps. cxxii. 6, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.' Let this be your constant request to God; be not acted with a private factious spirit.

Something is to be done with men. I do not speak now how to keep peace; it is past that; but how to restore it now it is lost. What shall we do? The apostle telleth you, Phil. iii. 15, 16, 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto ye have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.' There is no remedy now left but brotherly forbearance towards those that hold the foundation. It were to be wished that we could agree, not only in fundamentals, but in all other the accessaries of christian doctrine. But this cannot be hoped for. What then? Shall the rent go further and further without any

remedy? No; let therefore all parties that, in the judgment of a regular charity, may be presumed to have owned Christ, walk together as far as they have attained. And how is that? I can only propound my wishes and desires; let them, reserving their private differences to themselves, come under some common rule, or solemn acknowledgment of the foundations of religion. What if there were a form drawn up to that purpose, to which both should stand? I think to state fundamentals is a matter of great difficulty. God would make us cautious of every truth; therefore the canon of the scripture is very large. But there are some things propounded in the scriptures as absolutely necessary, without which salvation cannot be had. If we were mutually engaged to the profession of these, patiently bearing with one another in other things undecided, mutually abstaining from magisterial decisions and enforcements, and obtruding opinions upon one another by violence, and all rash condemnations, castings out of Christ, limiting religion to our own party, saying, Here is Christ, and there is Christ; as if Christ were divided; commending one another's prosperity to God by mutual prayers, this were a healing course. Let us perform all mutual offices of love and spiritual counsel to one another, strengthening one another in solid piety, holding forth light in the lesser differences, with all modesty and candour; and in civil matters standing as one man against the common enemy, and using endeavours to promote the kingdom of Christ, without any reflections on our private honour, profit, and interests. If this were once done, I doubt not but the fog would vanish, and we should find ourselves nearer to one another than we do imagine. I am not altogether out of hope that this will be done, because of the promises. It is done already in the kingdom of Poland, between the Lutherans and the Calvinists.

*Use* 3. To persuade the ministers of the gospel to a greater concord and amity in the joint discharge of their work. Christ prayeth here for the apostles, 'that they may be one.' How should we agree together in pressing duty, reprehending sin! This would be an effectual and potent means, not only to the peace of the church, but success of the gospel. Schism in the church of Corinth arose from the emulation of ministers among themselves, one striving to excel the other in eloquence and favour among the people, and contemning Paul and others, that followed the simplicity of the gospel. So the apostle noteth it elsewhere: Phil. i. 15, 'Some preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some also of good-will.' It is usual that one carpeth at another's gifts, one standing in the way of another's honour and profit; like men in a boat, jostling at one another till the boat itself be sunk. One faileth, and yieldeth to the promises and threatenings of the world, another standeth stoutly; and from their different practices there proceed different interests and opinions. We should with a combined strength promote the gospel.

2. Observe the pattern; he doth not only pray, 'Let them be one,' but shows what kind of oneness he meaneth, 'as we are one.' Some think that by *we* is meant the Father and Christ as mediator, between whom there was an agreement in the work of redemption; this is true: but unity of essence, I suppose, is here intended, there being a plain intimation in the context of the περιχώρησις, peculiar to the Trinity

(viz., ver. 21). But what then shall we say to the Arians? I answer—In this *κάθως* is implied, not *ἰσότης*, but *ὁμοιότης*; not an exact equality, but some resemblance; not the same unity, but a like.

*Doct.* The union of believers with Christ the head, and with one another, hath some resemblance to the unity that is between the divine persons themselves.

1. It is a spiritual union, not natural or civil, but divine and spiritual.

2. It is a close union. Between the Father and the Son there is not only consent, but unity of essence; there cannot be a greater unity. So there is a close unity between the members of the mystical body, by love, and peace, and concord, and delighting in one another. It is *unitas pluralis, et pluralitas unita*, saith Bernard.

3. It is a constant and inseparable union. The divine essence may be distinguished, but not divided. They that are united to Christ cannot be separated from him, and should not from one another. Take heed of straggling. What becomes of the member that is cut off from the body, the branch from the root? It is dangerous to run from the shepherds' tents.

4. It is a holy union. There is no unity but what standeth with purity: Mark ix. 56, 'Have salt in yourselves, and peace one with another.' The heart must be kept pure and holy. Loose zeal, it is not unity, but compliance. Peace with men is bought upon hard terms when we must go to war with God; it is better still to be a man of contention. An agreement in evil is like that of Herod and Pilate, who shook hands against Christ: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.' A man may see God without peace, but he cannot see God without holiness.

5. It is a unity which consisteth with order and distinction. There is in the church a subordination of callings, by which its beauty and strength is maintained; and if we would keep this unity, we must yield honour to one another's gifts and places. In the body natural, the eye meddleth not with hearing, nor the ear with seeing; the foot talketh not; the office of the hand is to dress the body, that of the foot to support the body. The soul giveth life to all the parts, there is ground of unity; but the parts have several offices, and there is ground of order and comeliness. The soul enlivens the feet, as well as the hands and breast. It is comfortable to see all conscionably in their way joining together for the common good.

*Use.* Let us study to imitate the Trinity; as in the case now before us, there is a little resemblance of the mystery of the Trinity. Men cry for a union, and yet make no conscience of separation. They would have an unholy mixture, a carnal compliance and consent, for carnal ends, out of worldly policy; as ice amasseth into a body iron, water, wood, sticks, and stones. We have one unity, but observe not due distinction therein. Is there not a horrible invasion of callings, and thence comes confusion and disorders? Ministers turn soldiers, and soldiers turn ministers? Oh! but remember, Christ commendeth this pattern to us, Walk as those that are one, as Christ and the Father are one, seeking one another's welfare, rejoicing in one another's graces, as if they were our own; contributing counsel, sympathy, spiri-

tual assistance, and prayers for the common good. When the finger is hurt, there is pain through the whole body. We should live as if we had but one essence and interest. It is almost in vain to hope for the public at present, but in your particular societies, faithfully yet regularly use your gifts for the common good, so as that you may neither dishonour the head nor dissolve the union between the members.

3. I observe that Christ seeketh it of God; he beggeth perseverance, 'that they may be one.'

*Doct.* It is God that keepeth the saints together. Nature is prone to discord; if God should leave us, we should soon discover what is in our hearts. God doth it sometimes by his providence, letting loose the common enemy, as a dog let loose makes the sheep run together; or by inflicting great distress, as two ends of wax are joined together in the fire; or he can take off contention, as a judge. Sometimes by his Spirit, and the constant influences of his grace, of light and love. God made Esau a friend to Jacob. Let spirits be never so rough, he can meeken them.

*Use.* Acknowledge God in this matter. He will be known as the Lord of hosts, and as the God of peace. Acknowledge him in this matter, in prayer and praise. In prayer, before division is broken out; if God did but leave men to their own sway, they would never be at peace. After divisions are broken out, prayer is the best means to settle the church. It is God's prerogative to speak peace; when men have wearied themselves in the pursuit of it, it is God must give it. Acknowledge him in praise in days of peace and tranquillity; when there is a happy union among the people of God, give thanks to his name for it, for it is God alone, who is the 'God of the spirits of all flesh,' that unites the spirits of men to one another.

## SERMON XX.

*While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*—JOHN XVII. 12.

IN this verse Christ declareth how he had performed his duty to the apostles when corporally present with them, which help was now to be removed. He had said before, 'I am no more in the world;' and he saith now, 'Whilst I was with them in the world, I kept them,' &c.

The argument is taken from the necessity of the request, and the equity of it.

1. The necessity. He could no longer keep them as he had kept them, by his visible presence, outward ministry, and familiar conversation; therefore he beggeth the Father to keep them. Christ is careful to remedy every defect; when the visible external custody was to have an end, then he beggeth the spiritual.

2. The equity. When thou commendedst them to me, I kept them;

now I commend them to thee, do thou keep them. Which is not to be so understood as if Christ did totally resign his charge unto the Father, or as if the Father and Son kept us by turns. No; as the Father is not hitherto excluded, so not the Son for the future. But he speaketh of his visible familiar presence and care, which was now to cease; and in lieu of it he beggeth his Father's custody and tutelage; and that upon this ground, because of his faithfulness during his corporal presence.

In the words, you may observe—

First, Christ's care.

Secondly, The fruit of it—(1.) As to the elect; (2) As to the son of perdition. Which, that it might not be scandalous to his custody, or manner of keeping, is mollified by a prediction or prophecy of scripture.

'While I was with them in the world;' corporally, visibly present, familiarly conversant. He speaketh as if he were already gone, because the time of his departure was at hand.

'I kept them in thy name.'—Christ kept them, as man, instrumentally, by teaching, conversing, warning, by daily precepts and examples; as God, as the principal agent, by inward influxes and operations of grace; as it is presently added, 'in thy name,' by thy authority and power, for thy glory.

'Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them are lost.'—I shall only open the different manner of keeping and losing, spiritually and corporally; none were lost by death or defection. Spiritually, Christ kept them against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Satan had a spite at them: Luke xxii. 31, 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.' Their own hearts are weak and apt to stagger: John vi. 66, 'Many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye go away also?' The world is a dangerous place. He had kept them corporally from death and danger; they were neither killed, nor drowned, as they were in danger: Mat. viii. 25, 'Master, save us; we perish.' That Christ kept both ways, is clear by this evangelist's own exposition, John xviii. 9, 'That that saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of those which thou gavest me, have I lost none.' Christ is there capitulating for his disciples; that place showeth he had an exact care of their bodies as well as their souls.

'But the son of perdition.'—Let us clear this a little. May any of those that are given to Christ miscarry? Certainly no; his charge was, John vi. 36, 'That of all which the Father had given him, he should lose nothing.' His prayer is, John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.' But what shall we make of this place? I will not trouble you with the several answers, but give you that which I conceive most proper. Here pray mark, it is not *except*, but *but*, and it must be supplied; only Judas was lost, who is not excepted, but opposed: not excepted as one of the former; εἰ μὴ is not put exceptively, but adversatively, as in the curt forms of scripture it is taken elsewhere. I say, there is no exception made of Judas, as if he had been given to Christ, and afterwards fallen away; but when he had mentioned their keeping, he would oppositely

put the losing of Judas. This phrase, εἰ μὴ, is thus used, Rev. xxi. 27, 'There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination and maketh a lie, but, εἰ μὴ, they which are written in the Lamb's book of life;' Mat. xii. 4, 'It was not lawful for him to eat (namely, of the shew-bread), neither for them which were with him, but, εἰ μὴ, only for the priests.' And yet more clearly, 2 Kings v. 17,' Thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord;' Acts xxvii. 22, 'There shall be no loss of any man's life, but of the ship.'

By the 'son of perdition,' is certainly meant Judas. Christ had before said, 'One of you is a devil,' John vi. 70; John xiii. 18, 'I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen; but that the scripture should be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me;' and ver. 21, 'Verily, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.' It is a Hebraism, as τέκνα ὀργῆς, 'Children of wrath,' Eph. ii. 3, so a child of hell. Judas did not only merit perdition, but was destined to it, as a son of death; 'for he shall surely die,' 1 Sam. xx. 31. So because Judas did not only deserve destruction, but was appointed to it, therefore he is called the 'son of perdition;' though the treason was not fully accomplished, yet he was about to execute it. Nonnus rendereth it, 'a son of the destroyer,' as referring to Satan.

'That the scripture might be fulfilled.'—*That* is many times put for *then*. It was not therefore foretold, that it might be done; this would put the sin on God; but this was the event, then the scripture was fulfilled. But what scripture? Our Lord hath not respect to one place, but to many, that speak of Judas's treason and punishment: Ps. xli. 9, 'Yea, my own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me.' Which is applied to Judas, John xiii. 18, 'He which eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me.' So Ps. lxix. from ver. 21 onwards, 'They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink,' &c. The 26th verse is applied to Judas. Acts i. 20, 'For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein.' So Ps. cix. 8, which is also quoted in that place, 'His bishopric let another take.'

Why is this passage mentioned?

1. To comfort the disciples, that they might not stagger in their faith.

2. To avoid the scandal, as if Christ could not discern a hypocrite.

3. To show God's hand and counsel in all this, as by and by more fully.

Because this text mainly concerneth a matter past, and there is no commonplace but what hath been handled in the former verse, I shall despatch all in brief hints.

First, I begin with Christ's care: 'Whilst I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name.'

1. Observe, we cannot withstand danger by our own strength. It is Jerome's observation. Christ saith, 'I kept them;' he doth not say, I gave them free-will to keep themselves. And it is confirmed by another scripture, 1 Sam. ii. 9, 'He keepeth the feet of his saints.'

The feet are put for all kind of actions, courses, and endeavours; 'For by strength shall no man prevail;' that is, by his own strength. God will have this honour, as to be the author of grace, so the preserver of it; as the making of the world and keeping of the world is put into the same hands. You rob God of his honour when you look elsewhere. Take heed then of going forth in the strength of your own resolutions. The devil doth not fear us, but the guard that is about us. Peter was a sad instance: 'Though all men do deny thee, yet will not I deny thee.' At first he outbraveth a whole troop, and afterwards falleth by the accusation of one damsel. A bold resolution doth not carry out a man so far as a humble dependence; a silly wench discourageth this stout champion. Every small temptation is sufficient to overturn a man puffed up with the confidence of his own strength, the weak blast of a damsel's question. What poor creatures are we when God leaveth us! We cannot be without these providences. *Audeo dicere,* saith Austin, *utile esse superbis cadere in aliquod manifestum apertum peccatum, ut salubrius sibi displiceant.* The saints fall so often that they may stand the firmer. Nay, if you do not fall foully, you will meet with a great deal of uncomfortableness and weariness in the ways of God; our strength will soon tire. Learn this, the best of you, you that seem to have most reason to stand. Peter had been with Christ on the mount, Mat. xvii. 1, in the garden, Mat. xxvi. 37, assured of his glory, armed against his sufferings, and yet now denieth him.

2. Observe how loyal, faithful, and tender Christ is over his charge. He is loyal to God: 'I have kept them in thy name;' faithful to his flock, he omitted no point of the duty of a good shepherd; he was tender of them: 'Whilst I was with them in the world, I kept them;' and now he surrendereth his charge into God's hands. Judas was lost, not out of any impotency and carelessness in Christ, he was not in his commission; but through his own malignity. Christ is faithful, for he giveth an account to God; none of them is lost; just as he will at the last day; it is but a type of what he will do then. He will present all the faithful to God: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.' And he will disclaim hypocrites, as he doth Judas.

*Use* 1. Let us learn how safe it is to be in Christ's hands and keeping. Christ was a faithful shepherd when he was upon the earth; and though his corporal presence be removed, yet it is supplied by the Spirit; he hath still a care of his flock; the lambs, those that are most tender, he carrieth them in his bosom; he hath a particular care of every single believer, though there be so many thousands in the world: John x. 3, 'I know my sheep by name.' John, Anna, Thomas, however called and distinguished in the world. He is careful to provide good large pasture, to supply your defects. His conduct is gentle and tender, as the little ones are able to bear, and to guide you with dispensations suitable to your work, and temptations are proportioned to your growth and experience. Paul was not buffeted till his rapture: 'After ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions,' Heb. x. 32. The castle is victualled before it is besieged. He is constantly watchful over you, taketh notice of decays of grace and spiritual languishments, to reclaim and reduce his people when

gone astray: Isa. xxx. 21, 'Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.' You may be confident of his keeping, if you will but choose him for a shepherd, and put your souls as a pledge in his hands: Ps. xxiii. 1, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' Walk on in a course of obedience, referring yourselves to Christ's care.

*Use* 2. We should learn of Christ to be faithful to our charge. We that are ministers should keep those that are committed to us in God's name, that when we die, or by providence are called away from our people, we may plead our faithfulness: 'Father, I have kept them in thy name.' If we give not warning to the sinner, 'his blood will God require at our hands,' Ezek. iii. 20. As under the law, if an ox or sheep were laid to pledge, and it did miscarry, the party was to make it good; so Heb. xiii. 17, 'They watch for your souls as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief.' It is a heavy charge and a great trust; the account of lost souls will be craved at your hands. So also you that are called to a family, you have a charge; you are not only to provide for them corporally, but spiritually, that when you die, you may commend them to God upon these terms: 'Whilst I was with them, I kept them in thy name.'

3. Observe, God hath many ways of keeping, mediate and immediate. Immediate, by his own Spirit, this Christ beggeth for them; mediate, by Christ's corporal presence: 'I have kept them;' by the guides of the church; by angels, they are a part of our guard: Heb. i. 14, 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation?' They have a great deal of employment about God's children: Ps. xci. 11, 'He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' Against bodily dangers the angels watch over us, God against spiritual dangers. So by grace in the heart: Prov. iv. 5, 'Get wisdom, and she shall keep thee.' These are the inward means of preservation.

*Use* 1. Admire the providence of God about such a creature as man is. It is counted a matter of great state to have at our heels a long train of followers; these mighty peers of heaven are our attendants. How many guards hath he set upon us! His Spirit, his angels, glorious angels, they behold God's face, and watch over our feet; his ministers, the outward supplies of providence, and grace in the heart. If our protection were visible, all the princes in the world would come short of it; a guard full of state and strength. Even little ones have their angels stand by their cradles.

*Use* 2. Learn to wait upon God, though you want an outward guard and veil of safety. Christ's corporal presence was removed, and supplied by the Spirit; and if God can make us amends for Christ's company, certainly for an outward comfort and blessing. Do not limit God to one way of keeping; he hangeth the earth upon nothing, how doth he keep the earth? A feather will not stay in the air: 'Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,' Mat. iv. 4. Not only by the outward supply, but the promise and the sustentation of providence. God can bring

water out of the rock as well as out of the fountain. When we have outward supplies, we are many times worst. Our well-being doth not lie in these things, but in God's care, which may be expressed in several ways. Christ may put that question to us that he did to the apostles: Luke xxii. 35, 'And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing.' God sendeth abroad his servants many times to make experiments of the care of his providence; they are helpless and shiftless, but did ye lack anything? The Lord can wonderfully incline the hearts of men, and dispose of the creatures for the supply of his people; he cometh in by wonderful and unexpected ways of supply. It were easy to give instances, if my intended brevity would permit. Merlin was hid in a hay-mow in the massacre of Paris, and a hen came constantly and laid an egg every day for a fortnight.

4. Observe, that Christ's keeping extendeth to corporal safety. So it is quoted, John xviii. 8, 9, 'If ye seek me, let these go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of those which thou gavest me, have I lost none.' God is in covenant with both body and soul, and he looketh after both; for the body, as far as it is necessary for his service, and for our profit and salvation, as well as for the soul; therefore it is but reason we should depend upon him for both. It is a pretty question, Which is more difficult, to believe in Christ for temporals or spirituals? The reason of doubting is because promises for temporals are not so express, and so exactly accomplished in the letter, as they are in spirituals. But certainly heaven and pardon of sins are greater mercies; and if conscience were opened and the heart serious, we should see the difficulty to obtain them to be greater. There are greater and more plausible prejudices against pardon of sins than against daily bread. God feedeth all his creatures, even the young ravens; but he pardoneth but a few, and blesseth them with all spiritual blessings. But here is the mistake: bodily wants are more pressing, and here faith is presently to be exercised with difficulties; and men are careless of their souls, and so content themselves with some general desires and loose hopes of ease and eternal welfare, which hopes import their security and presumption, not their gospel faith. But certainly, he that durst venture his estate into Christ's hands by a genuine act of faith, doth a less thing than he that by a genuine act of faith ventures his soul. They say they find no difficulty in believing in Christ for salvation and pardon of sins, and yet cannot trust him for daily bread, for maintenance, which God giveth to the ravens, and bestowed upon them when they were children of wrath. Well, then, trust Christ for these common mercies. You shall have temporal safety as long as God hath a mind to employ you in his service, and as much as is necessary to glorify him and keep your hearts good. In other things we must moderate our desires; God is a better judge than we are ourselves; and then by an undisturbed faith, without doubts and carkings, wait upon him. When you cark, and run to unlawful means, you take Christ's work out of his hands, and put it into your own; yea, you put yourselves out of Christ's keeping, and put your safety into the devil's hands. Oh! the children of God should consider this. Do you expect God should give you spiritual and eternal safety,

and not temporal? Shall he give the greater, and not the less? Martha was of this temper: John xi. 23, 24, 'Jesus saith to her, Thy brother shall rise again.' Oh! saith she, 'I know he shall rise again at the last day;' as if it were an easier matter to raise him up after so many years, than after four days. If you put your souls, which are the more excellent part, into Christ's hands, will you not put your bodies? Will you not trust him with all that you have? You should make experiments this way. How are you temporally kept? It is good to be acquainted with God by little and little; to trust him with smaller matters, and then with greater. And what is this trust? Leave all to God's disposal, having served providence in the use of means. It is a shame to see christians prole and shift, as if they had no Father in heaven, no Mediator to take care of them.

Secondly, Now I come to the success and fruit of Christ's care.

1. As to the elect.

2. As to Judas.

1. As to the elect: 'I have kept those whom thou hast given to me, and none of them is lost.' None of the elect can be lost; God's election cannot be weakened by the falling of hypocrites. Christ may lose members, as he is head of a visible church, but not as he is head of a mystical body: 'One of you shall betray me, but I know whom I have chosen,' John xiii. 18. As if he had said, This will not defeat my purposes of grace. So Rom. xi. 7, 'The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.' God's election worketh through all prejudices, wicked parents, bad education, a dumb ministry; and others are hardened, notwithstanding all advantages, as Judas, though of the seed of Abraham, though an apostle, though under Christ's inspection. The fathers compared Paul and Judas, Paul an open enemy, Judas a seeming friend: 1 Tim. ii. 18, 19, 'Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.' As those that build a palace are wont to lay a firm foundation, so God in building a heavenly city, he hath laid a foundation, by which is meant God's election, which is the great groundwork of salvation; whoever fall, God's elect stand sure.

*Use.* Let us not be troubled at the defection of hypocrites, let it not shake our belief of the doctrine of perseverance; be not offended, as if the salvation of the elect were not sure. Though glorious luminaries are quenched, and those that seemed to be stars leave their orb and station, God's election standeth sure. When a tree is shaken, rotten and unsound fruit comes clattering down. The devil never had such a season to set men on work to broach the doctrine of the apostasy of the saints, because of the general defection and miscarriage of eminent professors. In this case let us run to the scriptures. The defection of one from the college of the apostles was a great scandal; but Christ saith, 'That it might be fulfilled which was written.' So when any scandal falleth out, thus should we run unto the scriptures.

2. As to Judas, who is here called 'the son of perdition.'

1. Observe, in the general, there are some persons that are so wilfully set to destroy and damn themselves, that they may be called sons of

perdition; as here is one that perisheth in Christ's own company, a prey taken out of his hands, one that was never the better for all the care of Christ, for seeing his holy life, and for the excellent discourses that he heard from him, for all the kindness he had showed to him in taking him into a near office and service about himself, for bestowing on him the gift of miracles, for trusting him with the bag. Christ had lately washed his feet, as well as of the rest of the apostles; yet he obstinately goeth on in ways of self-perdition, and his purpose of betraying his Lord and master, yea, contrary to many warnings given him.

*Use.* Oh! take heed of a wilful obstinacy, and wresting yourselves out of the arms of mercy! of being of such a disposition that nothing will reclaim you, for that is to be a son of perdition. Wilful sins have a greater mark upon them than other sins; as when you go—

1. Against an express commandment: Prov. xiii. 13, 'Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed, but he that feareth a commandment shall be rewarded.' If a commandment stand in your way, it should be more than if a band of armed men stood to hinder you. Many make nothing of a commandment; they fear a judgment from God, or a punishment from men, but never stand upon the word of God.

2. Against express warnings of those that wish well to your souls: Deut. i. 43, 'So I spake unto you, and you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord, and went presumptuously up into the hill.' When men are wedded to their own inclinations, outfacing all challenges in God's name, they will do what they are set upon: Ps. xii. 4, 'With our tongues will we prevail, our lips are our own: who is lord over us?' This is not far from a judgment: 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, 'And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy.' This contempt will draw down wrath, no means to appease God.

3. Against checks of conscience, and motions of God's Spirit in our hearts: Acts vii. 51, 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.' Conscience telleth them ye ought not to yield to this sin, whatever the profit and pleasure be; yet men kick against the pricks, and do that which their own hearts disallow: Rom. xiv. 22, 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the thing that he alloweth.' And in spite of these good motions they will go forward to perfect the sin which they have in chase; then God lets them alone, lets them go on, till they perish.

4. Against restraints of providence, when God hath hedged up their way with thorns, or they have found much inconvenience in that course: 2 Chron. xxviii. 22, 'In the time of his distress he trespassed yet more and more: this is that King Ahaz;' the scripture sets a brand upon him. As Baalam would go on, 2 Peter ii. 16, 'But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness of the prophet;' when men go on over the belly

of more than ordinary opposition, till they perish. A miracle will not stop a sinner in the violent pursuit of his lusts. Providence hath a language that biddeth us stop, but the sway of lusts is great, and breaks through all restraints. Oh! take heed then of being self-willed, stout-hearted in a sensual course, wedded to our own inclinations, of being a slave to sensual appetite, and being led by it more than by holy reasons. Take heed of love to some unmortified lust, especially to covetousness; this is the cause of extreme violence in sin: Jer. xliv. 16, 17, 'As for the word that thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her.'

2. Observe from his character, 'The son of perdition.' The same name is given to antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 'That man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.' Judas was a type of antichrist; as they said of the blind man, John ix. 9, 'Some said, This is he; others said, He is like him.' The pope boasteth that his seat is apostolical, and that he is the successor of an apostle. If we grant it, and he will needs be a successor of an apostle, there is an error in the person; it is not Peter, but Judas. Let us see the parallel.

[1.] Judas was not a stranger, but a pretended friend and an apostle: Acts i. 17, 'He was numbered with us, and obtained part of this ministry.' So the pope obtained part of this ministry. Turks and infidels are enemies to Christ. Antichrist must be one that seeketh to undermine Christ under a pretence of friendship, *ἀντι-χριστὸς*, for and against Christ; he 'maketh war with the horns of the Lamb,' Rev. xiii. 11. If he were a professed adversary, what mystery were there in it? Now it is 'a mystery of iniquity,' 2 Thes. ii. 7; 'a false prophet,' Rev. xvi. 13. It is wisdom to discern him: Rev. xiii. 18, 'Here is wisdom: let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast.'

[2.] Judas sold Christ for a small matter; so *omnia Romæ venalia*, —pardons, indulgences, freedom from purgatory, all to be bought at Rome. The antichristian state maketh a market of religion; truth is made to yield to interest and profit.

[3.] Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss. Antichrist is a true adversary of Christ, and yet pretendeth to adore him. He pretendeth to be his servant and vicar, and is his enemy; not an enemy without the church, but within the church, that betrayeth Christ under a colour of adoration.

[4.] Judas was a guide to them that came to take Jesus. Christ is in heaven, death hath no more dominion over him. His natural body is above abuse, but in his mystical body he still suffereth: Acts ix. 4, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' The pope is the head of the persecuting state; others are his emissaries and agents, to persecute Christ in his members. It is a politic religion, carried on with cruelty.

[5.] Judas was *υἱὸς ἀπωλείας*, 'the son of perdition,' as destroying himself, and involving others in the same condemnation. So is antichrist called in the Revelations, *ἀπολλύων*, Rev. ix. 11, and *ἀπολλυόμενος*, the destroyer of souls, of himself and others.

*Use.* Let all these things open our eyes, that we may behold the man of sin. One egg is not more like another than Judas and antichrist.

3. Observe, that carnal practices will end in perdition. Because Judas is called the 'son of perdition,' let us see what course he took to undo himself. Let us look upon his sin and punishment.

[1.] For his sin. In the story of Judas, four sins are most remarkable—his covetousness, his hypocrisy, his treason, and his despair.

(1.) His covetousness. This was the root of all, as indeed it is 'the root of all evil,' 1 Tim. vi. 10. Christ had made him his treasurer; and carrying the bag is a shrewd temptation to a carnal heart: John xii. 6, 'This spake he, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.' He was a bad keeper of the stock, appropriating it to his own use, to make himself a store and a subsistence; having a mind to forsake Christ, because he had so often heard him speak of his sufferings, and the persecution of the apostles. And mark, he pretends piety and religion to disguise his covetousness, when it was his own private interest: 'There was a woman that took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus;' ver. 3, 'And Judas said, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? But this he said, not that he cared for the poor, but was a thief, and had the bag.' At length love of money, joined together with spleen, prevailed on him so far that he sold his own master. He that loveth the world hateth God; he that is greedy of gain will sell his soul, and heaven, and Christ for money; there is nothing so vile but he will yield to it. There was somewhat of envy and revenge in it: Mat. xxvi. 14, 15, 'Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.' 'Then;' when was it? When Christ had checked him for rebuking the woman, he stomached the disappointment, as carnal men will storm when their hypocrisy is discovered, and their carnal ends disappointed. Christ by commending the woman enraged him.

(2.) His hypocrisy. He continued the profession of an apostle, preached against sin, seemed to be zealous for the poor. Nay, his hypocrisy was augmented by the constant means he had to convince him, he was hardened in it the more. Jesus Christ was a constant preacher of repentance; and all those sermons and discourses Judas heard securely. Christ often admonished him of his sin: John vi. 70, 'Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?' John xiii. 18, 'I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen; but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me.' He was threatened that it had been better for him that he had never been born: Mat. xxvi. 24, 'The Son of man goeth as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born.' But all this would not do, it did not rouse his conscience, and make him bethink himself, and to consider that he was not hidden in his disguise. When Christ spoke it more pressingly: Mat. xxvi.

23, 'He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me;' ver. 25, 'Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I?' A benumbed conscience grows shameless. Certainly hypocrisy is a very hardening sin. With what face could the traitor, even when he was discovered, say, 'Master is it I?'

(3.) His treason. He first made a prey of his master's money, and then of his master himself. Little sticks set the great ones on fire. When a man cleaves a block, he first enters it with small wedges and then with greater; and so doth the devil make entrance into the soul by degrees. Judas first purloineth, and steals out of the bag; then censures Christ as profusely lavishing: What needs this waste? It is not only a check to the woman, but to Christ himself; then upon Christ's rebuke he hates him, and then betrays him. Christ gave him no cause. When Peter dissuades him from suffering, he calls him Satan: Mat. xvi. 23, 'But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.' But he dealeth with Judas mildly, reproves him in the lump. But privy sores will not be touched without recalcitration, and lifting up of the heel: Mat. xxvi. 16, 'From that time he sought opportunity to betray him. He that hath malice in his heart will not want an occasion. Judas, hurried with wrath and avarice, seeketh a chapman; and at this very time the chief priests were gathered together considering how to attack Christ. And when once men resolve upon a course of sin, God in his just providence suffers them to have a fit opportunity. The chief priests, alarmed with the miracle of raising Lazarus, by which many were drawn to believe in him, were thinking how to seize him; and Judas comes in fitly at this very time: Mat. xxvi. 15, 'What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?' God saith, Jer. vi. 20, 'I will lay stumbling-blocks before this people.' What! doth God lay stumbling-blocks? he that forbids the sin upon so severe a penalty? Providence orders the occasion, and carnal men will find the sin. If you will cherish the sin against warnings, it is just with God to give you the occasion. The treason may be amplified by the kindness of Christ to him; he never did him wrong, and he had been an eye-witness of his miracles, a hearer of his sermons, he had been familiarly treated by him. It aggravateth sins when done against mercy and kindness: John vi. 67, 'Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?' It goes more to the heart of Christ that they should lift up the heel against him, that have been familiar with him, and been trained up as his friends.

(4.) His despair, which was a greater sin than his treason. This is 'to put a talent of lead into the ephah,' as the prophet speaks, Zech. v. 8, to make that more weighty which is weighty enough of itself already. Christ prayed for his persecutors: Luke xxiii. 34, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;' and some of them found mercy. Peter, that denied him with oaths and curses, found sanctuary at the grace of God. There might have been hope, but Judas despairs. Usually this hath been the end of sinners that have been for a long time hardened in sin, that they do despair of that mercy which they have abused and slighted. Oh! hearken to this, all ye that com-

mit sin with security, in the midst of all your displeasing of God; though you may eat and drink, and rise up to play, take heed lest at length you cry out, 'I have sinned, and my sin is greater than I can bear;' for Judas came at last to this, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,' Mat. xxvii. 4. Sins, till they are committed, are hidden from the eye of conscience, but then guilt flasheth in the face. Before the commission, the devil will not let us see it, lest we should prevent it; and afterwards he represents it in a terrible glass that we may despair. After the act sin usually appears in its own colours; 'he despaired and hanged himself.' God's wrath and sin are exceeding terrible when they are charged on the conscience. Life is sweet, and man's nature is afraid of death; it must be some great matter that must cause a man to make an end of himself; and yet so great was his despair, that he was his own destroyer. Usually, it is thus with grievous sinners; they dream of nothing but mercy while they live, and when they come to die have nothing but wrath and hell. Their presumption of mercy doth but provide matter for despair. He repented, confessed his sin, restored the thirty pieces of silver. Conviction, confession, restitution are good, yet do not always lead to God: John xvi. 8, 'When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' This is as water out of a still, that is forced by fire, not as water out of a fountain.

2. We now come to his punishment. His temporal judgment you have recorded: Mat. xxvii. 5, 'He cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.' The pleasures of sin are very short; in the midnight he receiveth the money, and in the morning hangeth himself: 'The pleasures of sin are but for a season,' Heb. xi. 26. Till we sin, Satan is a parasite; but when once we are in the devil's hands, he turns tyrant; as an angler, when the fish hath swallowed the bait, discovers himself; or as a hunter lies out of sight till the beast is gotten into the toil, then he shouts and triumphs over the prey: Prov. xx. 17, 'Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.' 'He went and hanged himself.' A man will endure the greatest evils rather than the gripes of an awakened conscience; it is worse than all the racks and strapados in the world. A man may make shift with other calamities: Prov. xviii. 14, 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?' When once he hath broken his peace, and run into God's displeasure, oh! then, who can stand under it? Job vii. 15, 'My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life.' Death, the most violent and most disgraceful, is more welcome to them than life in such a case, when a man's thoughts become his hell, and wherever he goeth he carrieth his hell about with him. 'He hanged himself.' The event of sin is always deadly to the sinner. Judas becometh his own executioner. *Non potuit pejore manu perire quam sua, non debuit tamen.* He could not die by a worser hand. God cannot want instruments to punish sinners; he can arm our own hands and thoughts against ourselves. Judas was his own judge and his own executioner.

There is another circumstance in his death: Acts i. 18, 'And falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels

gushed out.' The rope breaking, he fell down, and then that accident befell him. God suiteth punishments to sins, to show his detestation of hypocrisy. He turns the traitor in and out; he was outwardly an apostle, inwardly a traitor; therefore his bowels and inwards are now poured forth. And then follows the infamy of it: Acts i. 19, 'And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem, insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.' Thus God will do, pour shame and contempt upon them that are false to him: Prov. xxvi. 25, 26, 'When he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart: whose hatred is covered with deceit, his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation.' First or last the mask shall fall off, and a man shall be betrayed to shame and infamy. Of the woman whom Judas envied, Christ saith, Mat. xxvi. 13, 'Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her.' As the memorial of the just doth not go into the grave with him, so neither the infamy of the wicked; here is an everlasting infamy upon Judas. Judas is remembered in the Lord's supper: 'The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread,' 1 Cor. xi. 23; as Pilate is remembered in the creed. But all this is nothing to hell; he is gone to his own place, where we must leave him as the first-fruits of reprobates.

*Use.* Let us hate those sins that brought Judas to destruction. If you imitate him, you make him your patriarch. We all defy his memory, but we love his practices. Every one that beareth the name of a christian would have nothing to do with Judas. Abandon his sins; you have heard what they are.

1. Covetousness. It is the root of all evil. This is that which betrayed Christ. Let us turn our displeasure upon the sin rather than the person; it made an apostle to become a devil. We stroke it with a gentle censure, as if it were but a little evil. Oh! you do not know how far this may carry you: Ps. x. 3, 'The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.' Sensuality hath more of the beast; covetousness seems to have more of the man. Oh! but think of it; here was the rise. Covetousness beginneth with inordinate desire, and ends in injustice, that (with hypocrisy to veil it) brings hardening; this hardness brings at length to despair, and so you are made sons of perdition by degrees. A man may insensibly grow a perfect Judas, to betray Christ and ruin his own soul. Cherish but this one sin, follow it, and obey it, and it will not leave you till it hath brought you *in laqueum diaboli*, into the snare of the devil: 1 Tim. vi. 9, 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.' Beware of that covetousness which is proper to Judas, begruding what is spent upon God. If thou thinkest thy time is lost that is spent in holy services, or thy money lost that is laid out upon God or good uses, thou hast much of his spirit, and it is a step to it. Seneca said of the Jews, that they were a foolish people, because they lost a full seventh part of their lives, meaning the sabbath. Oh! there are more of his mind, that think all is lost

that is not laid out upon their callings, and upon their sports and pleasures, and upon their temporal provision; that look upon the sabbath as a melancholy interruption; that say, as Amos viii. 5, 'When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?'

2. Beware of hypocrisy, or of taking up the profession of christianity for carnal ends. Oh! look to your grounds and motives, when you take up with the stricter ways of Christ. A sound beginning will have a happy end; but if you take up this profession upon carnal reasons, one time or other you will fall off, and all will end in shame and horror. Therefore take heed of following Christ for the loaves, John vi. 26. It was an old complaint, *non diligunt Jesum propter Jesum.* Men have their carnal ends in religion, as to make it a step to promotion, a cloak to injustice, a means to get rich matches. Whatever thou dost in religion, do it upon reasons of religion. Especially take heed of neglecting warnings, reproofs, and checks of conscience; stifling of convictions makes way for hardness. When you are convinced of any sin, or neglect of duty, oh! do not 'hold the truth in unrighteousness,' Rom. i. 18. Truths many times are imprisoned in the conscience; there they are, but they cannot get a fair hearing till God give them a gaol-delivery, and bring them out of the house of bondage. The devil holds you prisoners; when you hold the truth in prison, when you are convinced of any sin, or of the neglect of any duty, do not choke conscience, but humble thyself, till the heart be gained to practise the duty, and the disposition of heart towards sin be in some measure abated.

3. Beware of treason against Christ. God forbid, you will say, any of us should be treacherous to Christ. Many are so that seem to defy it. Judas did put a great affront upon Christ when he sold him for thirty pieces, a cheap and vile price. You will find in the law that thirty pieces was the price of a slave: Exod. xxi. 32, 'If an ox shall push a man-servant or maid-servant, he shall give unto their master thirty shekels, and the ox shall be stoned.' They proffered no more than was wont to be given for the basest of men. Possibly there may be something of mystery in it, that Christ should be sold for the price of a servant or slave; however, it aggravated his treason and treachery. There are many such Judases alive, that do but wait for a chapman, that are ready to sell heaven, and happiness, and religion, and all their profession, for a penny matter. God tries us, as Constantius did them in his army. Having some sense of the christian religion, he made this proclamation, Whoever would not renounce their profession, they should no longer have their military places; and this he did to prove them. Said he, For if they be not faithful to their God, they will not be faithful to me. So the Lord in his providence seems to put us upon such a trial, whether we will renounce our profession. Though we cannot sell Christ in person, and there be no priests to deal with us, yet Satan is still alive; and therefore, when for worldly ease and peace, and handfuls of barley and pieces of silver, we part with the promise, and comfort, and hopes of it, and hazard the favour of God and peace of conscience, for the trifling matters of the world, we are guilty of this treason of Judas. Though you hate the memory of

Judas, you love his sin. I observe that the historical passages of Christ's sufferings are often morally verified. The Jews preferring Barabbas, by the sensualist preferring his pleasures and brutish and swinish delights before the delights of communion with Christ; Judas his selling Christ, by the mammonist that yieldeth against conscience, for a little worldly gain, and sustentation of himself here in this present world.

4. Take heed of his despair. Oh! cherish the repentance of Peter, but not of Judas. If you have sinned against God, go out and weep bitterly, but take sanctuary at the Lord's grace. Do not hug a distemper instead of a duty. There were two ingredients wanting in Judas' repentance, that should be in every true penitent:—

[1.] Love to conversion. Whatever a convinced hypocrite doth, he doth it out of self-love. Pharaoh could say, Take away this plague; he doth not say, Take away this hard heart. Every creature loveth its own quiet and safety. Wicked men only hate sin when they feel wrath, and are surprised with horror and trouble; not out of a love to grace, but fear of hell. When hurt is at hand, the fear of it worketh upon us. True repentance cometh from a sight of the beauty, and excellency, and sweetness that is to be found in the ways of God. And they grieve, not only for the effects of his wrath, because God is angry, but because God is offended.

[2.] Hopes of mercy. Judas goeth not to God, but hangs himself. No conviction is good that doth not lead to God. When the Spirit convinces of sin, he convinces also of righteousness, John xvi. 8. And the heirs of promise are described to be those that 'fly for refuge to the hope that is set before them,' Heb. vi. 18. They are sensible that there is an avenger of blood at their heels, that the wrath of God is pursuing them for their sin. Oh! but they run to take sanctuary at the grace of God. Judas' sin stuck close to him, and he casts away himself; but Peter runs to Christ, and Christ sends him a comfortable message: Mark xvi. 7, 'Go, tell my disciples, and Peter, that I go before them into Galilee.'

4. Observe that the wicked, in their machinations against the church, do but draw perdition upon themselves. The church hath benefit by Judas' treason; we are redeemed, and God hath glory; but he is the son of perdition. Judas was the first heretic of the gospel, denying Christ's godhead; he betrayed him, thinking him a mere man; and he was the first false brother and persecutor. And now heretics and persecutors, what do they carry away but shame? The plots blow up the author. Heresies edify the church, but damn the broacher. Light breaketh out by knocking of flints. Persecutors are an iron in the fire; heated too hot, burneth their fingers that hold it, but the church is purged. The church was beholden to Charles the Fifth. God doth it to show his justice, power, and wisdom.

[1.] His justice, that they are taken in their own net. Judas was hanged ere Christ was brought to the cross: Ps. lxxvi. 10, 'Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee.'

[2.] His wisdom: 'He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.' The wise painter knoweth how to lay on black lines and shadows. All their policy is but a spider's web, woven with much art, but it cometh

to nothing. God will be known to be only wise, even when wicked men think to overreach him; as the governor of a castle, that is privy to the plots of his enemies, he knows what they will do, and suffers them to run on to such a point.

[3.] His power. Let Cain, Pharaoh, Achitophel, Haman, Herod, Judas speak; is not this true? They all confess they did but kick against the pricks, dash against the rocks, roll up a stone that will fall upon them, and break them all to pieces. It is the devil's torment that all his plots are turned to his loss, and the good of those he hated most; all his instruments are but executioners of God's will, while they rush against it. As men walking in a ship, the vessel keepeth its course though they move in a contrary way; or as in clocks, though some wheels move one way, and some another, yet all tend to make the clock go.

5. Observe, in the church are wicked men, who may finally miscarry; nay, men eminent for a while in the church, yet afterwards prove dreadful apostates. There was a Ham in the ark, a Judas among the apostles. The visible church never wanteth a mixture; there is no possibility to eschew it. Partly because they may be useful as to external employment and service. God hath a use for wicked men, as a dead post to support a living tree. They may have gifts for the benefit of the body. Wicked men may supply the place of an officer, as Judas was an apostle. A wooden leg may be a stay to the body, though it be not a true member: Mat. vii. 22, 23, 'Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' Christ will disclaim them, as here he doth. A torch giveth never the less light though carried by a blackamore; nor is the gospel less efficacious because managed by carnal instruments. Partly because God hath reserved a perfect discrimination till the last day, lest the wheat should be pulled up with the tares. He knew men were envious and censorious, therefore till sins be open he doth not allow us to judge. Partly to show us his patience to the worst of men. Judas was continued among the apostles; Christ knew him when he was a thief as well as when he was a traitor; before he discovered the traitor he bore with the thief; though a son of perdition, he doth not deny him the means.

*Use* 1. Do not rest in outward privileges. Say, What am I? It is a privilege to be a member of the church. David accounted it so 'to be a doorkeeper in the house of God,' Ps. lxxxiv. 10. A man may be an apostle of great authority; but there is a more excellent way, that is grace. Outward advantages, without special grace, will not serve the turn. Judas was under Christ's own instruction.

*Use* 2. Look to your grounds and motives upon which you take up the profession of the name of Christ. A sound beginning will have a happy ending; but if it be only upon carnal reasons, some time or other you will fall off, and all will end in shame and horror.

*Use* 3. When scandals arise, the whole body is not to be condemned for the miscarriages of some members. As the beauty of a street is not to be reckoned by the sink and kennel, nor the sound grapes by

the rotten ones. We are not to condemn religion and religious persons though some among them prove scandalous; we are not to think the worse of Christ and his apostles because a Judas was in their company. In the flour there is chaff as well as wheat; in the field there are tares as well as corn; in the draw-net there are bad fish as well as good: Mat. xviii. 7, 'Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.' Such is the enmity of man to good, that he is glad to have occasion to blemish the truth. Are there not many that are sincere, and walk unblamably? And doth not thy heart tell thee, thou hast no reason to speak against them? Religion itself condemneth such ways.

*Use* 4. Hearken unto this, you that commit sin with jollity and security; you can eat and drink, and rise up to play. Oh! take heed lest at length thou criest out, Oh! I have sinned; I have damned my soul; I have betrayed Christ! Judas came at length to this: 'I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood,' Mat. xxvii. 4. Some are set up as beacons to warn others, that by their dear cost we may learn to beware. We are whipped on their backs; as some malefactors, their bodies are not buried, but their quarters are set up on gates of cities and places of great resort, for a warning to others. *Ut qui vivi noluerunt prodesse, eorum morte respublica utatur*, saith Seneca. As Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt to season after ages. It is the property of God's children still to edify themselves by what they see in others, be it good or evil. The Lord grant both you and I may tremble at this instance, to stir up watchfulness for our own safety, that we may not fall into like offences. We have to do with a just and a holy God. Thin exhalations turn into great clouds and storms.

Thirdly, The next circumstance is an appeal to scripture, 'That the scriptures might be fulfilled.' Why doth Christ make this appeal? Partly to avoid the scandal, as if Christ could not discern a hypocrite. Partly to draw their minds from the treason of Judas and the malice of the Jews to the counsel of God revealed in the scriptures. Partly to show the certain accomplishment of whatever is foretold by the Holy Ghost. I shall prosecute these two last reasons, and thence take two observations.

1. Observe, in the whole passion of Christ nothing fell out by chance. He was not betrayed by chance; it was a circumstance that fell under the ordination of God. It is notable that the same word is used of Judas: Mat. xxvi. 15, 'What will ye give me, *κἀγὼ παραδώσω*, and I will deliver him unto you?' of the Jews: John xviii. 30, 'If he were not a malefactor, *οὐ παρεδώκαμεν*, we would not have delivered him to thee;' of Pilate: Mat. xxvii. 26, 'When he had scourged Jesus, *παρέδωκεν*, he delivered him up to be crucified;' and of God: Rom. viii. 32, 'Who spared not his own Son, *ἀλλὰ παρέδωκεν*, but gave him up to the death for us all.' But there are express places of scripture: Acts ii. 24, 'He being delivered, *ἔκδοτον*, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.' We must look not to instruments but to God's hand. The word *ἔκδοτος* may have reference to a prince giving royal gifts; he gave us this precious gift out of his treasury; or to a judge who delivereth a malefactor into the hands of

the executioner. Christ died not only as a martyr but as a surety; here lieth all the hopes of our salvation. So Acts iv. 28, 'For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' God decreed it, and God overruled it. This is in part the meaning.

2. Observe, to show the truth of whatever is foretold in scripture, scriptures must be fulfilled, whatever inconveniences fall out. See how tender God is of his word.

[1.] He valueth it above all his works: John x. 35, 'The scriptures cannot be broken;' Luke xxi. 33, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' God is not so tender of his works as of his word. It is more firm and stable than the frame of heaven and earth; that shall be dissolved, but not the least point of truth shall fail. Heaven and earth do only continue till all that is prophesied of in the word be fulfilled: 'His word endureth for ever.' We shall have the comfort of it in heaven, when all these things are melted.

[2.] Nay, which is more, the treason plotted against Christ taketh place that the word may be fulfilled; and one main reason why Christ came into the world was to accomplish the word; though it cost him his life, yet, saith he, Heb. x. 7, 'Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God.' Promises shall be fulfilled, though most difficult for God to grant or us to believe. Rather than God baulk from his word, God would send his Son to die for a sinful world.

*Use* 1. Wait for the accomplishment of prophecies; fear the truth of threatenings: Hosea vii. 12, 'I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard;' Isa. xxxiv. 16, 'Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate. For my mouth, it hath commanded; and his Spirit, it hath gathered them.' Look into the book of the law, where these curses are recorded. When the day of execution cometh, take this prophecy into your hands; see if any of these be found wanting, not one thing shall fail. This is the unhappiness of ministers; all other professions are believed when they discover danger, but 'who hath believed our report?' It is our duty to observe all occurrences, and compare the rule and event together, and observe what truth God makes good by what is fallen out and come to pass, and so wait for the accomplishment of promises; whatever inconveniences fall out, they shall be fulfilled. When a promise is thrown into the fire, it shall come out again, and be fulfilled in its due time.

*Use* 2. Here is comfort to the godly against the wrath of their enemies. God hath a hand not only in sickness and famine, but the treasons of men against Christ. If the rod smites, it is in the Father's hand. Let men live how they will, yet God will have his will, if not his will of command, his will of decree. His glory shall prevail at last. You cannot hurt God; whether you will or no, he will be glorified.

## SERMON XXI.

*And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*—JOHN XVII. 13.

OUR Lord is still amplifying that argument of his own departure, and the disciples' danger in the world, and so justifieth his earnestness in prayer for them. I come to thee, and must leave their company, and therefore I have need to make some provision for them. In the argument of this text, Christ showeth what was his special aim in the whole prayer. He is so earnest, not to blemish the Father, as if he were backward and wanted mercy, but for their comfort, that they might know what prayers were laid up in store for them, and to give them a taste of his own care. He prayeth with them, that they might know how he prayed for them. Christ would have something left upon record, as a pledge of his affections to the church: 'These things I speak in the world,' &c.

In the words, not to speak of the occasion, *I come to thee;* which signifieth not his address in prayer, but his ascension to God, as was cleared before, ver. 11. In the rest of the words we have Christ's action, and Christ's aim, the comfort of the disciples; where we have the author, *my joy;* the manner how received for quantity, *fulfilled;* the quality, *in themselves.*

'And these things I speak in the world;' that is, make this prayer in their hearing; λαλῶ, 'I speak,' it signifieth prayer with an audible voice; elsewhere he useth the word ἐρωτῶ and θήλω. And here a record and pattern is left for the use of the church in all ages.

'That they may have my joy.'—What is the meaning of that?

1. Because he rejoiceth in our good. *My joy*, and *your joy* are distinguished: John xv. 11, 'These things have I spoken to you, that my joy should be fulfilled in you, and that your joy might be full.' There is nothing maketh the heart of Christ so glad as to see his members thrive in peace and grace. So the apostle Paul: Phil. ii. 2, 'Fulfil ye my joy.' Nothing could be more comfortable to Paul than to see the Philippians thrive in grace. Thus some interpret it actively of the joy which Christ hath in the good of his members. But I suppose it is rather to be taken passively, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, 'in themselves.'

2. Others think that by *my joy* is meant a joy like mine; when they feel the same desires kindled in their hearts, they may be comforted with the workings of the same spirit of prayer in them; that is, feel such a joy as I feel in uttering these requests. But this doth not run so smoothly.

3. 'My joy,' because he is the author of it. *Gaudium ex me.* Joy which I work as mediator and redeemer. Of ourselves we have nothing but despair and trouble: Isa. lvii. 19, 'I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, and I will heal him.' We possess it, but it is Christ's joy; he worketh it, and causeth it by his Spirit; elsewhere it is called, 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' 1 Thes. i. 6.

4. 'My joy,' because he is the object of it. *Gaudium de me.* That

that joy which they have conceived from my presence with them, or care of them, may not be lessened, but increased, that this spiritual joy may be fulfilled. These two latter are of chief regard.

'May be fulfilled;' not only accomplished, but be abundant; as chap. xv. 11, 'That your joy may be full.' The filling up of joy is a phrase proper to St John: chap. iii. 29, 'This my joy therefore is fulfilled,' saith John the Baptist, because he heard the bridegroom's voice. So 1 John i. 4, 'These things we write unto you, that your joy may be full.' And 2 Epist. ver. 12, 'I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.' Possibly this joy is called a full joy, not with respect to itself, but with respect to other joys. In itself it is always a-growing, and receiveth a daily increase, till it be perfected in heaven. Here we have but some forerunning beams of the noon of glory, the first-fruits of the harvest. The joy of the world is a lank empty joy.

'In themselves;' that is, in their hearts, by their own feeling and experience; they have need of something within, for they have nothing without: John xvi. 33, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.'

To draw all to some doctrinal head and issue. Of Christ's coming to God I have spoken already. I might observe the force of the word to comfort the heart, 'These things I speak, that my joy may be fulfilled.' But I shall content myself with two observations.

1. Observe, that this prayer of Christ's is a fountain of consolation. This joy ariseth from the things he now spoke in the world, partly because here we have a taste of Christ's heart, how zealously he is affected for our good. When he took his leave of us, he took his leave of us with blessings and supplications. Partly because here we have a copy, model, or counterpart of his intercession. Here you may know what he is now doing for you in heaven. Christ is their advocate and intercessor, he pleadeth their right, and sueth for blessings; he prayed for their preservation, unity, and glory. There are two ways to know Christ's intercession—by this record, and his intercession in our hearts: Rom. viii. 26, 'The Spirit itself maketh intercession in us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.' The Spirit testifieth to our hearts the quality of that intercession Christ maketh for us in heaven; it is the echo of it; the inward interpellation of the soul is the echo of Christ's intercession. Now that the word and Spirit must go together, the form of it is left upon record. Here is a public record to look upon in all discomforts and troubles of the church; and this breedeth a full joy. Partly because Christ's prayers are so many promises; he prayeth for excellent blessings, and is sure of audience. Well, then, remember these prayers of Christ for your comfort; when we are pressed down with any evils in the world, let us run to Christ's prayers. As Luther said, Let us sing the 46th psalm; so say I, Let us meditate on John xvii.; here is a remedy for all the afflictions of the church.

2. Observe Christ's care to leave his people joyful; and careful he is, very solicitous about it before his departure.

First, I shall inquire what this joy is that Christ would establish.

1. For the kind of it, 'My joy;' not a worldly joy, but heavenly; not corporal, but spiritual. It ill beseemeth christians to set their hearts

on earthly things, or suffer the world to intercept their joy: Phil. iv. 4, 'Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.' The apostle was in prison when he wrote it, he had nothing else to rejoice in at that time; but what he had felt the sweetness of himself he imparts to others. What can a man desire more than joy? You are at liberty to rejoice, as he speaketh elsewhere of marriage: 'You are at liberty to marry, *ἀλλὰ μονὸν ἐν κυριῷ*, but only in the Lord;' such a joy you may have as Christ works, *ex me, de me*, of which I am the object and the author. You need not fear; that which Christ would establish is a cheerful piety, not a profane joy: 'Christ's delights are with the sons of men,' Prov. viii. 31. He feasteth himself with the thoughts of his grace; it is, as it were, the Lord's recreation; therefore certainly the sons of men should have their delights with God. If the Lord, that sitteth upon the throne of majesty and glory, if he delights in us, should not we delight in a God that is so excellent and worthy?

2. In what manner he would have it received, *πεπληρωμένην*, 'fulfilled in them.' The joy is full because the object is infinite; we can desire nothing beyond him. Desire answereth to motion, joy to rest; when we can go no further, there we rest. What can we desire beyond God? Acts xiii. 52, 'The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost;' their hearts could hold no more. Narrow vessels are soon filled with the ocean. It is a full joy, not in itself, but with respect to worldly joy. Worldly joy is scanty, unstable, and vanishing; it cannot satisfy nor secure the heart. Take away the creatures from the worldling and you take away his joy; the object lieth without him. But, John xvi. 22, 'Your joy shall no man take from you;' they cannot plunder you of peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost. This ravisheth the heart: 1 Peter i. 8, 'Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;' Phil. iv. 7, 'The peace of God, that passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.' It is better felt than expressed; a creature worketh it not, but a divine operation. Paul heard in heaven, *ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα*, 'unspeakable words.' So this, being a foretaste of heaven, cannot be conceived and expressed; you cannot imagine how sweet it is, and still it increaseth till we come to heaven, and lose ourselves in these eternal ravishments.

3. It is inward for the quality of it, *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς*, it is wrought in the midst of afflictions; there is sweetness within when bitterness round about us; like the wood that was thrown in at Marah, it maketh bitter waters sweet, Exod. xv. 25. Saints are fed with hidden manna, Rev. ii. 17. Their life is hid and their joy is hidden: 1 Peter i. 6, 'Wherein ye greatly rejoice; though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.' Without there are persecutions, temptations, afflictions from Satan and the world, and within joy; they have meat and drink which the world knoweth not of; the world seeth it not, and therefore the world will not believe it.

Secondly, How much Christ's heart is set upon it. It appears by the provision he made for them; when he departed he left the Comforter: John xiv. 19, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you;' John xv. 11, 'These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full.' He doth not

say, that my authority may remain over you, but my joy; and if we would make Christ's heart glad, or our own, we must obey his commandments; for when he enjoineth obedience to his disciples, it is that he may rejoice in our comfort. In his instructions he teacheth them how to pray: John xvi. 24, 'Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full;' and now he prayeth himself, 'That they have my joy fulfilled in themselves.' Christ maketh this to be his main work and aim, that in this life we might have peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, and in the life to come joy for evermore. Now lest ye should think this was only for the twelve apostles, you shall see it was the end of the whole word. The scriptures were written, Rom. xv. 4, 'That we through patience and comfort of them might have hope.' The whole ministry of the church serveth to the fulfilling of this joy.

Thirdly, Reasons why Christ was so solicitous about this matter.

1. Because of the great use of it in the spiritual life, to make us to do and to suffer: Neh. viii. 10, 'The joy of the Lord is your strength.' This is as oil to the wheels. It is a question which is most useful, godly joy or godly sorrow: sorrow maketh us serious, joy active. But why should I divide what God hath joined? *Gaudium ineffabile cum suspiriis enarrabilibus.* Both are wrought by the same Spirit; he is a comforter, and he descended in the form of a mourning dove. But certainly joy doth more quicken us in well-doing; it rendereth the functions of body and mind free and vigorous, that we may walk with alacrity and good conscience. The joy that we press you to is not a wantonness by which we cast away all care and labour, and give ourselves up to ease and lusts, as those do that make their life to be nothing else but a recreation; but such a joy as maketh us go about our duties and callings with comfort. This is sweet, when a man, out of the refreshings of the Spirit, can go about the business which God hath given him to do with delight: Acts xx. 24, 'Neither count I my life dear to me, so I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.' As the eunuch 'went his way rejoicing,' Acts viii. 39. Not like slow asses that go by compulsion, but like generous horses, that delight in their strength and swiftness; to take pleasure in praying, in hearing, in suffering, in doing good, in following the duties of our calling. Most men count sorrow to be a virtue, and joy to be an indecent presumption. When men are sluggish, carnal, careless, that they may flow in worldly delights, this is naught.

2. To mar the taste of carnal pleasures. The soul cannot remain without some oblectation; it delighteth either in earthly or in heavenly things. Love will not remain idle in the soul. Now God will give us a taste of spiritual joy, of pleasantness in wisdom's paths, that we might disdain carnal pleasures. It is not a wonder for a clown, that hath not been acquainted with dainties, to love garlic and onions; but for a prince, that hath been acquainted with better diet, to leave the dainties of his father's table for those things, that were strange. I do not wonder at carnal men, that they are delighted with carnal objects; they never knew better; but for a child of God, that hath tasted how gracious and sweet God in Christ is, to find sap and savour in coarser fare, this is wonderful.

3. It is for his honour. Nothing bringeth reproach upon the ways of God so much as the sadness of those that profess them. *Spiritus Calvinianus est spiritus melancholicus*, was a Lutheran proverb, because the Calvinists were against wakes and dancings and revels. You darken the ways of God by your melancholy conversation. Religion should be cheerful, though not wanton and dissolute. We are to invite others: Ps. xxxiv. 2, 'My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.' Otherwise thou art as one of the spies that discouraged the children of Israel, by bringing up an evil report upon the land of Canaan.

4. Because he delighteth to see us cheerful: 'He delighteth in the prosperity of his saints.' Certainly the Lord doth not delight in a sad devotion, and that the finger should always be in the wound. As a man delighteth that his fields should prosper, and laugh with fatness, so doth Christ in the saints. They are his charge: John xv. 11, 'These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' Would you make Christ's heart glad, keep your own cheerful.

Fourthly, I shall give you some observations concerning joy.

1. God's providence to all the creatures doth aim at their joy and welfare. In inanimate creatures there is a cessation and rest, in the beasts a sensitive delectation, in a man joy. All actions that tend to the preservation of life, have their pleasure mixed with them; and therefore certainly he hath provided some christian joy for a christian. All actions of godliness have a delight mixed with them.

2. Spiritual joy ariseth more from hope than possession: Rom. xii. 12, 'Rejoicing in hope;' Heb. iii. 6, 'If we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end;' Rom. v. 2, 'We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' It is an affection proper to the next life; but some birds sing in winter. Though we have not an actual possession of glory, yet there is a certainty of possession.

3. This joy is more felt in adversity than prosperity: 1 Peter i. 6, 'Wherein ye greatly rejoice; though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations;' Rom. v. 3, 'We glory in tribulation.' Partly from God himself; he proportioneth his comforts to our sorrows, and then sheddeth abroad his love most plentifully: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' Partly from the saints; they rejoice most in afflictions, because they taste in them what evil they are freed from in Christ. If we never had afflictions, we should not know what it is to be freed from eternal horrors and pains; but when we feel them then we say, If I have much ado to bear these temporal sorrows, what should I have done if I had been still liable to eternal! O blessed be God for my deliverance in Christ! Partly because of sweet experiences. We are kept from perishing with the world; a servant and stranger is turned out of doors, but a son is corrected. If it serveth for nothing else, yet for a spite to Satan, to confound him, when he thinketh he hath most advantage against us now, to overwhelm us with grief; as when one seeketh to wrest a staff out of our hands, we hold it the faster.

4. Those have the highest feeling of joy that have tasted the bitter-

ness of sorrow: Isa. lvii. 18, 'I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners;' Jer. xxxi. 18, 'I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,' &c.; ver. 20, 'Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still,' &c. Unutterable groans make way for ineffable joys; they feel the most lively elevation of joy as a recompense for the pangs of the new birth. God permits sorrows, that we may find the fuller comfort. Bernard thinks that the joy of the saints is greater than the joy of angels, because they who have been kept, and not restored, had never experience of any other condition; however, his reason is notable: *Placet sanctis securitas, sed ei magis qui timuit; jucunda omnibus lux, sed liberato de potestate tenebrarum jucundior; transisse de morte ad vitam, gratiam duplicat.*

5. The feelings of this joy are up and down, yet when the joy is gone, the right remaineth, and this joy will be fulfilled: John xvi. 22, 'Ye now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.' If we lose it ourselves, it is not utterly lost. The sun is always moving, but it doth not always shine, and display his rays with a merry countenance; so a christian meeteth with many rubs, but still he holdeth on his course to heaven; and therefore, where sense faileth, faith should make supply.

6. The nature of man is more acquainted with sorrows than with pleasures. Men naturally are more susceptible of sorrow than of joy. Partly because of the presages of a guilty conscience: Heb. ii. 14, 'Through fear of death, they were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' Men are more ingenious and inventive to torment themselves than they are to find out arguments of joy. Partly out of ingratitude: Mal. i. 2, 'I have loved you, saith the Lord; yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?' We grieve more for a mean affliction than we rejoice in many great blessings. As if the humours of the body be out of order, or one joint break, this is enough to make us sink, and ill at ease; so one light affliction sinks us. Partly because God hath laid this burden of sorrow upon us to make us long for heaven: 'Few and evil are the days of the years of my life.'

*Use* 1. To show us the goodness of God, who hath made our wages a great part of our work, and our reward our service. The Lord doth not require of us to lance and gash ourselves; his ways are not sour ways; he hath made it a part of our duty and homage to rejoice in him. Oh! that he should deal so bountifully with us in this life! The world might be a Bochim, and it is a Beracha. It is indeed a vale of tears; but yet the sun shineth sometimes when it raineth. Oh! how should this make us in love with the service of God! They are happy that minister in his presence. It is a request, Ps. xc. 14, 'Oh! satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.' Certainly God alloweth us to come with such requests, for he commandeth us to rejoice: 1 Thes. v. 16, 'Rejoice evermore.' We might weep evermore, yet he saith, 'Rejoice evermore.'

*Use* 2. To take off the slander brought on the ways of God, as if they were dark and uncomfortable, as if we should abandon and

renounce all delight. Oh! that wicked men would but make experience! God doth not require that you should renounce delight, but change the course of it. Joy is not abrogated, but preferred. Do not think the practice of religion is full of sadness and heaviness. Will you believe the spies, that have been in the land of promise? The righteous are only fit to give testimony to the comfort of a converted estate; a stranger intermeddleth not with their joys. If any of God's children be uncomfortable, it is because they have not tasted deep enough of the promises, the Comforter suffereth some contradiction from their hearts and lusts: but what is this to your estate? The souls of wicked men are still under bondage; in the midst of their greatest joys, their pleasures are mixed with fear; as Belshazzar was soon put out of his mirth.

*Use* 3. Let us despise the dreggy delights of the world. We are empty by nature, and worldly joy filleth not but with wind. Since Christ hath made such provision for our consolation, why should we seek it elsewhere? God hath forbid no joy but what is hurtful. Outward mercies bring in some joy, but not a full joy. Godliness doth not unman us, and hinder the course of any true natural affection. But no outward thing should be our chief joy; a light touch is best: 1 Cor. vii. 30, 'They that rejoice should be as if they rejoiced not.' First we have an interest, then a comfortable use of the creatures. Hast thou wealth, power, greatness? Do not bind up thy heart with these things, they will be gone, and then thy joy will be gone too. When they take up too much of our affections, they are curses, and will prove our sorrow: Eccles. vii. 6, 'As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity;' a slight superficial thing. Vain men are catched with every light pleasure, as a fire soon taketh in thorns. Thorns burning under a pot make a great noise, and so carnal mirth maketh much noise. Worldly men promise themselves a great deal of pleasure and contentment, but this fire is soon out, so worldly joy is soon gone. Let us not delight in fleshly liberty; the pleasures of sin are short-lived, and carnal pleasures leave bitterness and remorse behind them: Prov. xiv. 13, 'Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.' As laughter, through dilatation of the spirits, maketh us sad afterwards. The fuel of carnal pleasures is gross, burdensome, oppressive to reason, it hindereth the free contemplation of the mind, and lasteth but for a little while; we need to be refreshed with other pleasures. But God in Christ is full and fresh to all eternity; angels are not weary of him. Besides, carnal mirth is but madness; Eccles. ii. 2, 'I have said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doeth it?' It is good for no serious purpose. Solomon challengeth the masters of mirth; what doth it but displace reason, and give way to vanity and lightness? I know there is a lawful use of inoffensive mirth; but when we take pleasures, they should not take us: Eph. v. 4, 'Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks;' ver. 19, 'Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing, and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.' There is a mirth becoming the gravity of a christian.

*Use* 4. Reproof to two sorts:—

1. To those that are always sad. Christians do not live up to that care and provision which Christ hath made for them. In scripture it is, 'Rejoice evermore,' 1 Thes. v. 16. And they live as if God had said, Weep evermore. It is verily a fault, however disguised; in some it deserveth pity; in others chiding and rebuke. In some pity, that are under penal disturbance; when God putteth any into the stocks of conscience, they cannot come out at pleasure; these are irresistible chains; a poor creature lieth bound till God saith, Go forth. Those chains of darkness in which the devils are held are their own everlasting horrors. It is God's prerogative, 'to create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace,' Isa. lvii. 19. Joy is his immediate dispensation. We wonder, considering the comforts of the gospel, that there should be any such thing as trouble of conscience, because we know not what it is to lie under God's mighty hand, to be cast into the prison, shall I say, or the hell of our consciences. Alas! poor creatures! We cannot break prison when we will. It is easy for those that stand upon the shore to say to those that are tossed upon the waves, Sail thus. They are tugging for life, the cause is beyond our direction and their choice. But these persons are to be pitied, yet counselled. Besides God's power, we mingle much of our own obstinacy and peevishness, as Rachel would not be comforted, Jer. xxxi. 15. We are to invite them to Christ, and they are bound to hearken. Their present duty is to come for ease: Mat. xi. 28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' That is the only gracious issue of soul-troubles; as Christ cried, 'My God,' on the cross, they are not exempted from believing. But others are to be chidden. It is a sad thing that christians should not have the wisdom to make use of their own felicity. We often hug a distemper instead of a duty, as if God were better pleased with dolorous impressions: Lam. iii. 33, 'He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' Not with his heart, so it is in the Hebrew. It argueth ill thoughts of God. Baal's priests gashed themselves to please their idols; but God delighteth in the prosperity of his saints. Men think there is more of merit and satisfaction in what is afflictive; it is a kind of revenge they take upon themselves. God hath required sorrow to mortify sin, but not to satisfy justice; he would have us triumph in Christ whilst we groan under the body of death. Oh! consider, sourness is a dishonour to God, a discredit to your profession, a disadvantage to yourselves, a grief to the Spirit, because you resist his work as a comforter. Besides, there is much of ingratitude in it; complaints and murmurings deface the beauty of his mercies. As a snail leaveth a frothy slaver upon the fairest flowers, so do unthankful christians leave their own slaver upon the rich mercies of God vouchsafed to them in Christ; when they are always complaining, and never rejoicing in God, they leave the slaver of their murmurings upon them, as if all were nothing. If a king advance a man, and he always is sad before him, he is angry: Neh. ii. 3, 'Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was sore afraid.' Because men are prejudiced against godly joy, let me tell you it is a fruit of the Spirit: Gal. v. 22, 'The fruit of the

Spirit is love, joy,' &c. In the garden of Christ there groweth other fruit besides crabs. It is a great privilege of Christ's spiritual kingdom: Rom. xiv. 17, 'The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' It is a help in the spiritual life: Neh. viii. 10, 'The joy of the Lord is your strength.' It is as wings to the bird, that makes you fly higher; a sad christian hath lost his wings.

Well, then, consider these things. Besides your unfitness hereby for your duty, the uncheerfulness of professors darkeneth the ways of God, and brings a scandal upon Christ's spiritual kingdom. What cause have you to be always sad? It must be either your afflictions or your sins. For afflictions, if your eyes were opened, and earthly affections mortified, you would see no cause of grief. It can never be so ill with a christian but he hath matter of rejoicing. Nothing can deprive you of God, of your interest in Christ: Job xv. 11, 'Are the consolations of God small,' that they cannot counterbalance worldly afflictions? Your discontent cannot be greater than your grounds of comfort. It is true nature will work; afflictions are bitter in the root, but the fruit is sweet to a spiritual palate: Heb. xii. 11, 'No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous;' it doth but *seem* bitter, carnal sense is not a fit judge. But then for your sins. I confess, joy is proper to God's children, behaving themselves as children; but what shall we do when we have sinned? I answer—There is a time to mourn, and this is the season of it: 'If her father had spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?' Num. xii. 14. It is good to be sensible of the displeasure of a father. Ay! but in this heaviness there should be a mixture of joy. Though there be a time to mourn, yet 'Rejoice evermore.' Great heaviness, without a mixture of joy, is sinful. In this sense we should not mourn without hope. We have to do with a God that is not implacable; he mixeth love with his frowns: 'In the midst of judgment he remembereth mercy;' and therefore we should mix joy with our sorrows: Jer. iii. 14, 'Turn, O backsliding Israel, for I am married to you.' God doth not forget his relation to us, and so should not we. Come again, and I will make up all breaches between you and me. A believer may fall grievously, but not finally. He doth not fall so but that God takes hold of him; and we should learn to take hold of God. Labour to recover your former condition, that you may freely rejoice again; by this means love is renewed and strengthened.

2. The other sort are those that would rejoice, but do not provide matter of joy. Christ saith, 'That my joy may be fulfilled in themselves.' But in whom? He had pleaded their interest, 'They are thine;' he had spoken well of them to the Father, 'I am glorified in them.' Alas! the joys of others are but 'stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret,' frisks of mirth, when conscience is asleep. A man cannot rejoice in God till he hath some interest in him: 1 Sam. xxx. 6, 'David encouraged himself in the Lord his God,' when all was lost at Ziklag; pray mark, 'his God.' *Tolle meum et tolle Deum*—take away *mine*, and take away *God*. God is better known *in prædicamento relationis, quam in prædicamento substantiæ*. God in his nature is terrible; God in covenant is sweet: Hab. iii. 18, 'Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' When all things

fail, a child of God runneth to his interest. The object of joy is good, but not good in common, but *my* good. Excellency and propriety are the two conditions of the object of joy. Therefore holy joy is not every one's duty, but theirs that have an interest in God. There are some duties proper to the saints, that suppose such a state and interest. Prayer and hearing are common duties, the obligation lieth on all the creatures, it is the homage they owe to God; but now they are not immediately bidden to rejoice. All are bound to provide matter for joy, but not all to rejoice. Carnal men are for the present under wrath, liable to hell, bondage is their portion; therefore clear up your interest, if you would rejoice in God. Men delight in their children because they are their own.

*Use* 5. To raise your minds to the exercise of this joy. We should be more careful than we are to maintain our peace and joy.

To help you, I shall show—

1. What reason a christian hath to rejoice.

2. By what means he may get, keep, and maintain it.

First, What reasons a christian hath to rejoice. The causes of joy may be referred to his past estate, his present interest, his future hopes.

1. The remembrance of his past estate. A christian may stand wondering at the change which God hath made in his soul: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' The light is the more marvellous because of the foregoing darkness. Past miseries are sweet in the remembrance. It will be a part of our happiness in heaven to look back; as travellers in the inn discourse of the dangers and dirtiness of the way. It is matter of renewed joy to see how the weeds of sin are rooted out, how the buds of grace begin to grow in the garden of our hearts. No man looketh on the sea with more comfort than he that hath escaped the dangers of a shipwreck; as the Israelites, when they saw the Egyptians dead on the shore, sung a song of triumph; so doth a christian rejoice when he considereth his change, what he was, what he is.

2. His present interest, sense, and feeling. We have mercies in hand as well as mercies in hope, something exhibited as well as promised; God's eternal love, with all the blessings that issue thence, of justification, sanctification, &c. Paul triumphs in this: Rom. viii. 37, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.' God hath adopted them to be children, heirs of his heavenly kingdom; if the world maketh war against them, they have peace with God, they are in a reconciled estate; in frame of heart they are regenerate, they have the first-fruits of the Spirit, sweet experience of grace; not only the wine of Canaan, but the clusters of Canaan; they have communion with God, though banished from men. It is the nature of the mind to delight itself in the possession of any solid good. No good can satisfy but the supreme; this we are in part possessed of as soon as grace is wrought in the heart.

3. His future hopes: Heb. iii. 6, 'If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end.' We are heirs-apparent to the crown of heaven. We may rejoice in what we possess, we may glory in what we hope for. This ravisheth the heart to think of it; we shall

have what infinite mercy will bestow, infinite merit purchase, and the ample promises of the reward[1] hath revealed. The body of sin will be destroyed, and we shall be out of the reach of temptations.

Secondly, By what means it is maintained. God hath appointed graces and ordinances for this end.

1. Graces; faith, hope, and obedience.

[1.] Faith; it is a help to joy; it representeth the excellency, truth, and reality of spiritual things. That which we rejoice in must be good, true, present. All joy ariseth from the presence of some good, either in actual possession or firm expectation. Thus doth faith: Heb. x. 34, 'Knowing in yourselves that in heaven ye have a better and an enduring substance.' Faith is not an opinion or wild guess; heaven is a pleasing fancy to a carnal man, but it is a reality, a substance, an enduring substance to a believer. The world is a fashion, perishing, moveable. It is the nature of faith to make things absent, present; it giveth a being to hope, it sets up a stage in the heart of a believer, where God is represented acting whatever he hath promised; and this not by a naked fiction or empty speculation, as a man may frame ideas of things that never shall be, as in the dream of dotage of a distempered fancy they make a soul as if seen with bodily eyes. Faith gives to its object not only a naked representation, but an actual presence.

[2.] Hope; this dependeth much on faith; it is an earnest elevation of the mind to look for what faith counteth real. Now hope ravisheth the soul, as if it had its head above the clouds: 'Rejoicing in hope,' Rom. xii. 12. Joy is proper to enjoyment, but hope serves instead of enjoyment; they feast and entertain their souls with their glorious hopes.

[3.] Obedience; faith giveth the title, hope the sight, obedience the evidence, therefore it is necessary to the establishing of joy. Nay, it hath an effective influence; it is God's method. First he poureth in the oil of grace before the oil of gladness: Heb. vii. 2, 'First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, that is, King of peace;' Rom. xiv. 17, 'The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Sin taketh away joy and peace; the whole strength of men and angels cannot make the conscience of a sinner to rejoice. Yea, the children of God must take heed that they do not violate peace of conscience by allowing the least sin. You are to walk so that you may be in a condition capable of joy; none walk sweetly but they that walk strictly: Acts ix. 31, 'They walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost;' that is a sweet couple.

2. Ordinances. I shall name them.

[1.] The word. The joy that hypocrites have is from the word: Heb. vi. 5, 'They have tasted the good word of God.' A temporary faith findeth joy in the word; all the fault is, it is but a taste, some slight experience, which they do not continue and maintain. Here is represented fuel for faith and hope, God's infinite mercy, Christ's infinite merits, the glory of the next world. Joy is, as it were, the blaze of the soul. Love keepeth the fire burning; but now, if we would have it blaze and flame up, we must come to the word, this is the bellows.

[1] Qu. 'word'?—ED.

When the angel preached the gospel, he said, Luke ii. 10, 'Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.' We come to hear good news from heaven; though an angel be not the messenger, yet the message is the same; God openeth his heart to us.

[2.] Prayer; wherein we open our hearts to God; it hath a pacative virtue. Many psalms begun with anguish end with triumph, as if he had received good news that his affairs were altered. Hannah when she had prayed, 'her countenance was no more sad,' 1 Sam. i. 18. God is 'the Father of mercies, the God of consolations,' 2 Cor. i. 4; the nearer to him, the nearer to the fountain of joy. There are joys felt in prayer, by retiring into God's presence: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence there is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' Heaven is a place of joy, because of the constant communion we have with God there. God doth not love to send us away sad.

[3.] Sacraments; because of sweeter experiences: Cant. i. 4, 'We will be glad, and rejoice in thee: we will remember thy love more than wine.' They are sealing ordinances: Heb. vi. 18, we have 'strong consolation;' Mat. xxvi. 30, 'When they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives,' though it were a sad time. The eunuch went away rejoicing as soon as he was baptized, because he was made sure of the grace of God, Acts viii. 39. It is as when a man hath a good lease confirmed to him. It is not the bread and wine rejoiceth the heart, but the renewing of the covenant.

[4.] Meditation; it refresheth the soul, and feeds joy. It is the proper natural use of reason. The speculation even of terrible things is grateful. It was the comfort God himself took in his works; he made them, he saw them. It is a refreshing to the soul to think of creation and providence; as a son taketh pleasure in a history wherein are recorded his father's valiant acts. It is a pure recreation. But oh! the sweetness of redemption, the excellency of glory! The thoughts are sent as spies into the land of promise; hereby we have a Pisgah-sight; it giveth us a foretaste of heaven, and filleth our souls with joy and blessedness.

## SERMON XXII.

*I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*—JOHN XVII. 14.

CHRIST had urged several arguments on the behalf the apostles, their interest, his own departure, their danger in the world; this is the argument he now presseth. Their danger, because of the world's hatred, is set forth by the occasion of it; their office, 'I have given them thy word;' the cause of it, 'They are not of the world;' which is amplified by their conformity to the pattern and example of Christ, 'Even as I am not of the world.' So that we have here the condition of the saints in the world, and then their constitution and temper.

'I have given them thy word.'—Partly by external revelation in his ministry during life, partly by inward illumination he had given them the knowledge of it: John xvi. 27, 'Ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God;' John xvii. 6, 'I have manifested thy name to the men which thou gavest me out of the world.' Partly by tradition or commission; he had left the word with them, not only that they might profess it, but preach it to others. There is an emphasis in 'thy word;' Christ grounded his plea with the Father upon it. Men are wont to respect those that suffer for their sake and cause.

'And the world hath hated them.'—By the *world* is meant that party which is contrary to Christ's kingdom; they are sometimes called 'the kingdom of darkness,' because the devil is their head and chief; sometimes 'the world,' because that is their aim; they are guided by the malicious spirit of Satan, and acted by their own ends and interests. Briefly, they are called 'the world,' either because the greatest, the most flourishing part of mankind are obstinate against the gospel; or because their whole bent, their way, their savour, is of the world, they relish nothing but the world, the wicked, unbelieving, obstinate part of the world. And it is said, 'hath hated them.' Hitherto in their profession they have had but sad experience of the world, and in the course of their future ministry they can expect no better.

'Because they are not of the world.'—'Of the world;' that is, of that strain and sort of men; as *of the devil*, is to be swayed by him: John viii. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil; and the lusts of your father ye will do.' They are different from the world in spirit, in worship, in conversation.

In spirit, or in the frame of their hearts: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is of God.' There is a particular genius that runneth out that way; they have other manner of affections and dispositions.

In worship, they are to root out inveterate superstitions, both among Jews and Gentiles. Now men are tender of their old customs and traditions. Unconformity doth exasperate them, much more zealous opposition against traditions received from their fathers.

In conversation, they are come out from among them, they are heteroclites: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to all excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' Their course is a countermotion to the fashions of the world; they have renounced worldly desires and practices.

'Even as I am not of the world,' most estranged from the customs and fashions of it: John viii. 23, 'Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world.' He tasted of the world's hatred: John xv. 18, 19, 'If the world hateth you, you know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have called you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' This is added for the consolation of the disciples, that it may not be grievous to them to suffer what their master suffered before them. When the king is wounded in battle, should the soldier shrink? They have my

spirit, and are to inherit my office; and they that have Christ's spirit must look for Christ's entertainment. Only when it is said, 'Even as I am not of this world,' it noteth not an exact equality, but some conformity. Christ never was of the world: Heb. vii. 26. He was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;' that is, he never was of their number. After the fall, all men are of the world; but by regeneration they are so no more; therefore it is said, John xv. 19, Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.' Ye are separated by God's fan, the wheat from the chaff, and cut off from your old root by the sword of the word.

1. Observe, that christians, especially ministers, to whom Christ hath given his word, must expect the world's hatred. I apply it to both, because Christ hath given the word to both; to ordinary christians by regeneration, to ministers by special commission. Ordinary christians are cut off from the world by the sword of the word, and conformity is the ground of love, as difformity and dissonancy of practice is of hatred and aversation. And ministers have a special commission to preach it. And then both hold forth the word: ministers clearly, they manage the fan; and of private christians it is said, Phil. ii. 15, 16, 'That ye be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.' They copy out the word in their lives; they are a living sermon, a walking rule; they preach by their lives: the truth is held forth in a minister's mouth, but in a believer's conversation.

[1.] Christians, that do not let fall the strictness and majesty of their conversations, if they keep the word that Christ hath given to them, that is, keep close to it, they must expect troubles. Christ's subjects are the world's rebels, and if they will not forfeit their allegiance to Christ, the world will fall upon them. You must not expect friends in the world; your great friend and patron is in heaven: John xvi. 33, 'In me ye shall have peace, in the world ye shall have tribulation.' He propoundeth it disjunctively; we have seldom both together. Christ leaveth his subjects in Satan's territories and dominions, that he might try their allegiance: 2 Tim. iii. 12, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;' he doth not say, that profess Christ, but that will live godly in Christ, that are strict, holy, true to their principles. And it is not an observation proper to that age. As long as the enmity lasts between the two seeds, opposition will continue. Satan never wanted a party to support his empire. The persecution of the church began in Abel, and will not be finished till the day of judgment; and it is a wonder to see an Abel without a Cain. Afterwards, in Abraham's family, Gal. iv. 25, 'As then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, so it is now;' and still we may say, 'So it is now.' So it hath been, and so it will be. So afterward Jacob and Esau struggled together in the belly, and the quarrel began before the birth. And so it is in all ages; Satan hath not changed his nature, nor the world left its wont. Emperors and kings have become christian, but Satan never yet became christian; and there never wanteth a strong faction in the world to abet him against the church. In our times we had great hopes, but

still the spirit of enmity continueth, though under other forms and appearances. We see there is a quick conversion from a malignant to a sectary; the term is changed, but not the person. I would not be mistaken. By a malignant, I mean that which the scripture meaneth, not one that dissents from others in civil matters, but one that is an enemy to the power of godliness. And by a sectary, I mean one that is so in the scripture notion, a party-maker in the church, a carnal man under a plausible form, opposing the holy and strict ways of God. I tell you, this conversion is easy. A piece of soft wax, that was but now stamped with the shape of the devil, may be easily stamped again with the seal that is carved into the shape of an angel; the wax is the same, but the impression is different. It is no new thing for the saints of God to be in peril of false brethren, as well as of open enemies; nay, rather than sit out, the devil can make use of one saint to persecute another; as Asa, a good prince, put the prophet in the stocks, and Christ calleth Peter, Satan. The devil may abuse their zeal, and this is strange, that a lamb should act the wolf's part. Usually indeed he maketh use of the world; it is the providence of God that the wicked hate Christ and his messengers. Christ doth usually reveal his ways to the world by the quality of the men that rise against them; it must needs be good what such men hate; their very respect would be a suspicion, and their approbation a contumely and disgrace; a man would have some cause to suspect himself if he had their favour. Thus you see christians, though in a private sphere, that would live godly in Christ, must expect their share in the world's hatred. Now the Lord permits it, *εἰς μαρτύριον*, 'for a testimony;' for a testimony to his servants, for a testimony against his adversaries, for a testimony to the ways of God; all these will be gathered out of the same expression, as it is recited by several evangelists: Mark xiii. 9, 'They shall deliver ye up to councils, and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before kings and rulers for my sake, for a testimony against them,' *εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς*, that by your zealous defence they may have a sufficient knowledge of the ways of God, and so be convinced or confounded by them: Luke xxi. 13, 'It shall turn to you for a testimony,' *ἀποβήσεται δὲ ὑμῖν εἰς μαρτύριον*, that is, a proof of your loyalty; and Mat. xxiv. 14, it is only *εἰς μαρτύριον*, 'The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness;' implying, to the truth. God chooseth his eminent servants to be his champions, that the world may know that there is somewhat excellent in their principles, worth the suffering for. God will not have his servants to go to heaven without a testimony; nor his enemies to go to hell without a testimony, and a sting in their consciences; nor any age to pass away without a testimony.

[2.] Ministers; this is usually their portion; few of the apostles and prophets came to a natural death. As their calling is eminent, so are their sufferings: James v. 10, 'Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have suffered in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.' He doth not say, Take them for an example of holiness, but of suffering and patience. They were the worthies of God, eminent for holiness, yet chiefly for sufferings. The prophets, that were God's own mouth, sheltered under the buckler of

their special commission, and the singular innocency and holiness of their lives, and yet they suffered; what recompense did they receive for all their pains, but saws and swords and dungeons? Now the ministers of all ages are mustered and enrolled for the same war with the prophets and apostles; we maintain the same cause, though with less vigour and strength, and we expect the same crown; why should we grudge to drink of the same cup? In these latter times, God hath reserved the ministry for all the contempt and scorn that villany and outrage can heap upon their persons. But why should we look for better entertainment? You would think the world should hate false teachers; surely they have most cause: but if they slight us, and neglect to provide for us, remember it is a wonder that they do not persecute us. But this falleth out partly by the malice of men, partly by the providence of God.

(1.) By the malice of men. To preach is to bait the world. *Prædicare nihil aliud est quam derivare in se furorem mundi.* We are to cross carnal interests, to wrestle with vile affections, to pull the beast out of men's hearts; and we are like to be bruised in the conflict: 1 Cor. xv. 32, 'I have fought with beasts at Ephesus;' most probably the rude multitude, that were ready to tear him in pieces when he cried down the worship of Diana. Carnal interests are very touchy, worse than vile affections. The doctrine of the gospel cannot be preached in power, but it draweth hatred upon the person that preacheth it: John vii. 7, 'The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil.' We are to contest with public miscarriages; interests and powers stir up the malice and rage of men; sore eyes cannot endure the light, nor a guilty conscience the word: John iii. 20, 'For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.' The Ethiopians curse the sun: Rev. xi. 10, 'The two witnesses tormented them that dwell on the earth.' This drowsy world would fain take a nap and sleep, were it not for some bawling preachers. Proud, covetous, carnal men, men wedded to their interests, will hate us, if we preach in good earnest; as a good thresher maketh the straw to fly about his ears. Nay, and errors are more touchy than sins; a drunkard is more patient of conviction than a seducer. Errors take away the light of reason, and leave nothing but the pride of reason. A drunkard standeth upon lower ground; his practices cannot endure the test of the light of nature; but every erroneous person thinketh he standeth upon the upper ground, because of the height of his pride and the plausibleness of his notions.

(2.) By the providence of God. Preachers are like Gideon's lamps in earthen pitchers. Possibly the apostle may allude to it when he saith, 'We carry this treasure in earthen vessels,' 2 Cor. iv. 7. Now, as when the pitcher is dashed to pieces, the lamp breaketh out to the amazement of the adversaries, so the sufferings of ministers are a great confirmation to their doctrine.

*Use* 1. Advice to us—(1.) To prepare for sufferings; (2.) When they come, do not count it strange.

First, To prepare for sufferings. It will do us no hurt to be prepared for sufferings. It hath ever been the lot of God's people to be

obnoxious to the world's hatred, and we ourselves cannot look for any exemption. I shall lay down several probabilities, to show when God is about to bring trouble on the church.

1. Observe, that after God hath laid in many spiritual comforts, there comes a time to lay them out again; and after great receipts, we are put upon great expenses. The disciples first enjoyed Christ's presence and ministry, and then were exposed to a dreadful persecution. John xi., Christ biddeth them 'make use of light, because darkness was coming upon them.' Never was the gospel powerfully preached but trials came: 1 Thes. i. 5, 'For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.' And it follows, ver. 6, 'Ye received the word with much affliction.' God will try how we can live upon the comforts of the gospel. Castles are first victualled, and then besieged: Heb. x. 32, 'After ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.' The churches of Asia had horrible desolations after a powerful ministry. The Germans, after a sufficient promulgation of the gospel, suffered many sad years.

2. Observe, after trials and reformations there come trials and probations, that after we have submitted to the ways of God, we may honour them with sufferings. The ten persecutions were after Christ had set up the ordinances of the gospel. The Marian and bloody days were after King Edward's reformation. God will have every truth honoured in its season. When the witnesses had finished the testimony of their prophecy, after a short time they were slain, Rev. xi.

3. Observe, when reformations stick in the birth, God will promote them by troubles; he taketh his own fan into his hand: Mat. iii. 12, 'Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.' When men cannot or will not effect it, God will purge his floor, and cleanse the church from profane mixtures. Christ came with his whip to cleanse the temple, John ii. 15. Grosthead prophesied that the church should not be reformed, but *ore gladii cruentandi.* God usually tendereth a reformation to the world with a judgment in his hand; and if the reformation be obstructed, the judgment will proceed: Ezek. xxiv. 12, 13, 'She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her; her scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness; because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.' When the pot is put over the fire, if the scum remaineth still, he overturneth all.

4. Observe, when there are great differences among God's own people, the end is bitter. We warp in the sunshine. The dog is let loose that the sheep may run together. A piece of wax, when it is broken, put it together never so often, it will not close; but put it into the candle, and the ends stick close together. Ridley and Hooper could agree in a prison. A little before Dioclesian's persecution, the church was rent and torn by intestine broils, pastor against pastor, and people against people. Ease begets pride and wantonness, and that maketh way for contention. God may solder you in your own blood, and effect union by making you objects of the same hatred and persecution. Nazianzen was wont to call the enemies of the church,

κονοὺς [1] διαλλάκτας. The turbulent enemies many times prove the best reconcilers, and the wolves bring the sheep together.

5. Observe, libertines and fanatical persons, when they increase in power and numbers, become cruel: Jude 11, 'Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain.' The Donatists are of detestable and accursed memory, because of their insolent cruelties: Hosea v. 5, 'The revolters are profound to make slaughter.' Men that have cast off the holy faith, after some profession, the Lord keep us from their tender mercies! The Arians grew bloody. Want of truth is usually made up by a supply of rage. Lees and dregs are usually very tart and sour.

6. Observe, when religion hath received wounds in the house of her friends, and occasion is given to the world by scandals to think evil of the ways of God, God taketh his scourge in his hand, and the devil hath an advantage, he stirreth the malignant world against the children of God; as a sect of monsters, the gnostics, by their impure and libidinous courses, made christianity odious, and then the heathens rose up against them as pests of mankind. Satan is a liar, but never his lies carry more pretence.

7. Observe, when there is a decay of the power of godliness and formality and contempt of the word take place, which are the usual effects of prosperity. As soon as we come out of miseries, we run into disorders; therefore God is wont to return us into our old chains and captivity, that we may wanton it no more: Hosea v. 15, 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.' I will try them by adversity, I will try what my rod will do to better my people. As also to discover hypocrites. When the ways of God are in fashion, many pretend for him; and so religion is turned into a fashion and empty pretence. Salvian observeth that the church, like a river, loseth in depth what it gaineth in breadth; as a woman that hath borne many children is with every birth the weaker; as a large body is less active. Carnal men coming under a profession of religion weaken the power of it.

8. Observe, when professors grow worldly, this awakeneth the world's rage and God's rod. The men of the world take mammon for their God, and the conveniences of this life for their portion. Now when the children of God put in for a share, and are all for worldly hopes and worldly interests, it stirreth up their sleepy enmity; they cannot endure to be discountenanced: Luke xvi. 8, 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.' This is their generation and sphere; as a people take it ill to be beaten and foiled in their own land: They are active to recover their interest, and are full of watchful malice. God is very jealous of mammon; and when the world gets into the church, God's rod whippeth it out again. By the world God will show us the vanity of our aspiring projects. When vessels grow musty, they are not fit for use. I find the spirit of the world breathing in most christians, who are proling for worldly greatness, as if they served the god of this world. Some transform their christian hopes into a worldly hope, and look for a sudden coming of Christ in carnal pomp, and dream of greatness and dominion.

[1] Qu. 'κοινοὺς'?—ED.

I shall say no more, but that it is a doctrine fit for a worldly age. The disciples had such a dream, and Christ cureth it by those threatenings, Mat. xxiv. But because that was not a sufficient cure, but after Christ's resurrection they ask, Acts i. 6, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?' therefore there were many persecutions in the primitive times. If ever God should send a scourge, men would complain of their affecting worldly greatness, and aspiring to raise their families.

Secondly, When sufferings come, do not think them strange: 1 John iii. 13, 'Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.' Wonder is for things unusual. We do not wonder at the darkness of the night, as we do at the darkness of an eclipse. Therefore if any thing were a marvel, this were, that ever it should be otherwise, that you ever see the church of God to have any ease and peace. We may stand wondering at the bounty of God, that we have so much peace as we have. The church must have a time of learning and training up, and must be in the school of afflictions and persecutions: 1 Peter iv. 12, 13, 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.' Alas! why should it now seem strange? Christ had foretold it, the constant experience of the church ratifies it. The disposition of the world is the same; Satan never did, nor ever will turn christian; and the world will never leave its old wont. Why should we wonder at these things? When ministers are put to hardships, it may be their revenues straitened, scanted, why should we think it strange? The apostles had not so much. Paul was put to a hard shift for his living, to make tents. Obadiah fed the prophets, by fifty and fifty in a cave, with bread and water. Your means are short and straitened by the malice of men, the apostles had no standing revenues, and were put to hard shifts for a livelihood. Therefore do not think it strange; it is the bounty of God that it is no worse.

*Use* 2. Of caution.

1. Before you choose any way, do not judge of things by the world's hatred or applause. Why? 'I have given them thy word, therefore the world hateth them.' A philosopher could say, *Nunquam tam bene agitur cum rebus humanis, ut meliora placeant pluribus*—It was never so well with the world that the best things could please the most; therefore the world may appear against the ways of God. Be not swayed by their opinion in taking up the course of thy profession.

2. If thou art convinced, do not defer profession till the times are more quiet. This is the deceit of men's hearts. Alas! when will the ways of God be exempted from persecution? You may expect it a long time. Will Satan ever be at an agreement with God? Do you ever think to hear of a Jesus without a cross? As the husbandman stands expecting till the river be drawn dry, and still it runs with a constant stream, so you may expect till the times be more quiet, and the ways of God exempted from trouble; but the children of God must constantly expect trouble in the world. The devil hath a potent and powerful faction in the world.

3. If thou dost profess the ways of God, take heed of giving Christ

a short allowance; but first sit down and count the charges; come what will come, here I will stick: Luke xiv. 26, 27, 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?' &c. Thus should you resolve upon sufficient evidence and demonstration. When a man hath set apart such a sum of money for building, he spends willingly and freely while that lasts; but after that is gone, every penny goes from him with grudging. So sit down and count the charges, and give Christ a large allowance.

4. If thou dost profess, do not allay the world's hatred by any carnal means, by abating one jot of your zeal, or by any fond compliance; for honour or dishonour, for esteem or disesteem, put it into the hands of God: Prov. xvi. 7, 'When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him;' as he made Jacob find favour with Esau, the three children in Babylon in the eyes of the prince. God hath the key of every man's heart and respect; we must not break open the door by carnal compliance. God hath a golden key, and he can open it; you must not force conscience, that your interest may be favoured.

5. When you are actually burdened with the world's hatred in the course of your profession, be not dismayed. Whenever this is thy case, thou art an object of Christ's prayers. When Christ was to go to heaven, he remembers all that are hated for his sake. Christ maketh the world's hatred an argument, and we may conceive thence a ground of hope; it is a singular consolation, a sign you belong to God, and have an interest in his care. If their hatred be for righteousness' sake, and your being zealous in the ways of God, then you may know God will keep you; for that is the main request, 'Keep them through thine own name.' And why? 'Because I have given them thy word, therefore the world hates them.' The more they are our enemies for God's sake, the greater help will God afford us. Men use to send relief there where the battle is sharp and hottest; so when the battle is sharpest and hottest, thou hast an interest in God's protection.

Second point. 'The world hateth them, because they are not of the world;' because of their strictness and holiness, they live contrary to their interests and lusts; this is the very cause.

Observe, there is such a sin as antipathy against the power of godliness, or hatred of others because of their strictness in the service of God and diligence in heavenly things.

Here—

1. I shall give you instances of this from the word of God.
2. Discoveries of this *κακία*, or malignity.
3. Reasons of it; and then come to apply it.

First, Instances of it from the scripture. The world's hatred is disguised under other pretences, but this is the proper cause of it. The word is the best judge of that, which is a searcher of the thoughts and intents of the heart. God and his word have the same properties: Heb. iv. 12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper

than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' Now what doth the word say? The word of God doth tell us doctrinally that it is so, and giveth instances and examples of it.

1. Doctrinally, that it is so. Let us begin with that place which describeth the first rise of it: Gen. iii. 15, 'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.' There is a natural enmity between the two seeds, as there is between a toad and a man, a wolf and a lamb, a raven and a dove; so there is between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; that is, between Christ and his upright followers, and so many of mankind as fall to the devil's share; an enmity that will never be laid aside while the world is the world, and till the devil turn christian and be converted, which will never be. The next place is, Prov. xxix, 27, 'An unjust man is an abomination to the just, and he that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked.' There is a mutual enmity between the good and the bad, so as they can never piece in a firm friendship; only there is a difference between the prosecution of this hatred: the just hate not *virum*, but *vitium;* sin is to be hated, not the person; as we are not to love the sin for the person's sake, so we are not to hate the person for the sin's sake. A good man abhorreth that which is evil; he loatheth it in others, but chiefly in himself. Or, as the schools distinguish, there is *odium abominationis et offensionis*, and *odium inimicitiæ*. The godly are offended with the evil deeds of others, though they do not hate their persons; but the wicked hate the godly, *odio inimicitiæ*, they have an inbred enmity against them, and seek their destruction, they hate them despitefully, because of the old hatred. The next place is, John xv. 19, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' You see men are divided into two ranks, some are of the world, and some are not of the world. Some there are whose hopes and hearts and conversations are wholly here; their manners, the temper of their spirits, and the course of their worship, is wholly calculated for the world. Others there are that neither conform to the world in judgment, affections, nor practice, but wholly savour things past this life, are fitted for another world, breathe after it, and labour for it. Now let us see what different entertainment both these meet with. Some are dandled on the world's knees, suck freely of the breasts of her consolation; others are troubled, and molested, and exercised with all manner of displeasures. And why? Because they are chosen out of the world, and called to the love and enjoyment of better things. It is true there may be contentions and emulations among the men of the world, as their lusts and interests interfere and cross one with another; but because they differ not in contrary general principles and ends, the hatred which they have towards their own is nothing so violent and extreme as that which they have against the godly; and they do not so hate one another but that they can easily agree in this common enmity against those who are upright with God; as Herod and Pontius Pilate did, and the Herodians and pharisees against

Christ, and Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek against Israel. Thus you see doctrinally the scripture speaketh of such a thing.

2. By way of instance and example. Let us see how this spirit of enmity hath been working, and how the holy men of God have had bitter experience of it. Abel was slain by Cain. Let us begin with Cain, the patriarch of unbelievers. Now the Holy Ghost giveth us a comment on that action: 1 John iii. 12, 'Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.' The one was the seed of the woman, the other of the serpent; the one worshipped God after the right order, and brought the first, the fat, the tenth, to the Lord: the other was slight and careless in worship. The Targum of Jerusalem mentioneth a dispute that happened between them concerning the providence of God, and the last judgment, and the world to come, and those wholesome doctrines by which godliness is maintained. *Non est judicium, nec judex, nec sæculum aliud, nec munus pro justis, nec pœna pro impiis.* However, this we are sure, it was for his godliness that this outrage was committed upon him. Let us go a little lower; in the story of the patriarchs, we shall find Isaac scoffed at by Ishmael, Gen. xxi. 9; upon which practice of his, the apostle glosseth thus: Gal. iv. 29, 'As he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so it is now.' Scoffing and mocking is a kind of persecution; ever so it was, and ever so it will be, while there are two seeds in the world. Whatever civility the men of the world have, they are all opposite to grace and godliness; and do not only refuse and resist it in themselves, but hate it and persecute it in others. I say, they that have not the image of God in themselves, they cannot endure the lustre of it in others. And therefore it is the ordinary lot of God's children to suffer hard things from the men of the world. If you go a little further, Jacob, because of the blessing and birthright, was pursued to the death by Esau, and driven out of his father's house, Gen. xxvii. xxviii., and there was matter of godliness and profaneness in this: Heb. xii. 15, 'Not as profane Esau, who for one morsel of bread sold his birthright.' Instances are endless, but by these brought you see the point fully made good. And over and above what was to be proved, you may collect that no bonds of duty can allay it; for in these instances given you may observe that Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, were all brothers, members of the same church and family, tied to one another by the nearest and strictest bonds of kindred and acquaintance; yet because the one was holy and the other wicked, did they hate one another.

Secondly, Discoveries that this hatred that is commenced against the people of God ariseth from an antipathy to godliness. This part of the discourse is necessary, because wicked men will not own that they hate others for their goodness; they disguise it with other pretences, as the Jews did excuse their hatred to Christ, when he told them, John x. 32, 'Many good words have I showed you from my Father; for which of these works do you stone me?' They could have no quarrel against him unless they would quarrel at a good turn, and reward evil for good. But ver. 33, 'The Jews answered, For a

good work, we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, because thou, being a man, makest thyself equal with God.' So will carnal men say, it is not for their holiness that they hate them, but for their pride, covetousness, censoriousness, and hypocrisy. But when they neither hate, nor abhor, nor avoid these sins in themselves, or other men, yea, do wink at fouler and grosser evils, even against the light of nature, which themselves live in, or else tolerate and make nothing of them in their friends, they do clearly convince themselves, if they would attend to it, that the pretended causes of their hatred are but cloaks of their malice, which is truly raised in them by the contrariety of their nature to that which is good. Shall a leper loathe another because of a few pimples in his skin? or shall he that is tumbled into the ocean in drink vaunt against another who, on slippery ground, is fallen into a ditch? Besides, these allegations are usually false; for it is the fashion of evil men first to caluminate Christ and his followers, and then to hate them: as they would clothe the primitive christians with the skins of bears and of wild beasts, and then worry them and bait them with dogs, as if they were bears. From the beginning, Satan hath been both a liar and a murderer, John viii. 44; first a liar, then a murderer with the more pretence.

But to take off all cavils, let us see how it appeareth that this hatred is the effect of their abhorrence of that which is good and holy.

1. This is some discovery of it; because the servants of God have been hated most, and troubled by the worst men; which is a shrewd presumption that the proper reason of this hatred is because they are so evil and the other so good. So David concludeth from the ill conditions of his enemies, their bad nature, violence, and ingratitude: Ps. xxxviii. 20, 'They also that render evil for good are mine enemies, because I follow the thing that good is.' In Nero's time, about the 70th year of Christ, Nero made a law, *Quisquis christianum se profitetur, tanquam generis humani convictus hostis, sine ulteriori sui defectione capite plectetur.* Trajan moderated it, *Id genus hominum non inquiri, repertos autem puniri oportere.* So usually it falleth out that the worst and most virulent enemies to religious men are the vicious and debauched; those that are infamous for other crimes, atheists, whoremongers, and pot-companions; these have the greatest pique against them, because they cannot endure the brightness of God's image in them.

2. Because the best of men, who have the least alloy of corruptions, and are most eminent for strict and exemplary conversation, are most hated and maligned: Ps. lxiv. 5, 'They shoot their arrows at the perfect;' 2 Tim. iii. 12, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.' Morality doth not exasperate; it shineth with a faint beam, and is not so troublesome to the sore eyes of the world; and they that have but the form and outward skin of godliness escape better than they that have the life and power of it. A wolf doth not worry a painted sheep. But when any are holy indeed, and of a strict innocency, they are hated, and contradicted, and spoken against.

3. Because when religion is accompanied with other things that a man would think should assuage malice and allay the heat and rage of men against them, yet it escapeth not. As for instance, godly

meek men, that are guilty of nothing but worshipping God in sincerity, and desiring to go to heaven with all their hearts, are persecuted. If this hatred did only light upon busy intermeddlers, that did trouble men's lusts and interests, it were another matter. *Oditur in hominibus innocuis nomen innocuum.* The primitive christians were quiet and harmless, their weapons were prayers and tears; and they prayed for the health of their emperors, though they could not drink their healths. *Cajus Sejus vir bonus, nisi quod christianus :* yet he was hated for being a christian. John the disciple of love, was banished into Patmos. Moses, the meekest upon earth, had those that spoke against him. Chrysostom observeth of those holy men, Heb. xi. 38, 'They wandered about in deserts and mountains, and caves and dens of the earth,' ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔκει ὄντες ἔφευγον, they would not allow them the recess and retirement of a cave, or den, and obscure grot, where they were far enough from troubling the world; but they were hunted up and down like a partridge upon the mountains; and they were driven out of their obscure refuges, where they desired to worship God in silence. Though there are many excellences which are wont to deserve respect; as nobility of birth; there were many noble martyrs; Isaiah, of the blood royal, yet sawed asunder, as they report: eloquence and learning; the men of Lystra called Paul Mercurius, Acts xiv. 12, the god of eloquence, yet stoned him, ver. 19: philosophy and other learning, as Justin that is called Martyr, a learned man, and yet suffered. Mere christianity and godliness is the mark and butt of spite and rage.

4. It appeareth by their invention of lies and ridiculous crimes to palliate their hatred; as against the primitive christians their worshipping of an ass's head, their drinking the blood of a child in their meetings. These are a testimony to their consciences that they could find nothing against them 'but in the matter of their God,' Dan. vi. 5. They have no real matter against them, and therefore feign and suppose these crimes to justify their opposition, for they devise crimes because they find none.

5. Because, if a man be strict and conscientious, mortified, sober of life and behaviour, the world is apt to judge him one of such a hated party. As if any named the name of God with reverence, they suspected them for heretics if they said, If the Lord will. And we read in the story of the French martyrs, when Sanpanlius reproved a man for swearing, he was presently suspected to be a Huguenot, and so condemned. As if it were said, in the language of the damsel to Peter, 'Thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.' If any were humble, mortified, serious, the world suspecteth them.

6. The consciences of wicked men are as a thousand witnesses. *Non amo te Sabedi*, &c. Ask conscience what is the matter; they cannot look upon them without fear and shame. Their heart riseth against them; and what is the reason? All regular affection may be justified; the cause is bad, and men are loath to render it.

7. It appears by the joy wicked men take when they have anything offered to justify their opposition; as suppose by the scandals of any that profess the ways of God, as the heathens took an advantage from the impurity of the gnostics to defame all christians. Regular

zeal is accompanied with compassion, and flieth not from the persons to the cause, from the faulty to the innocent, to the whole generation of the just. It is hatred, πρὸς τὰ γένη, as Haman thought scorn to lay hands upon Mordecai alone, but sought to root out the whole seed of the Jews, Esther iii. 6.

## SERMON XXIII.

*I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* —JOHN XVII. 14.

THIRDLY, Having given the instances and discovery of the world's hatred to the people of God, I now come to the reasons thereof.

1. Difference and estrangement in course of life is a provoking thing. Therefore men that live in any sinful course are loath that any should part company with them: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to all excess, speaking evil of you.' Therefore they hate them, because of the difference in the course of life. Now this suitableness and oneness of course can never be between the serious worshippers of God and others. There is a contrariety in their dispositions: the one have the spirit of the world, the other have a heavenly spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 12. They are employed in the service of contrary masters, Christ and mammon, Mat. vi. 24, Christ and Belial, 2 Cor. vi. 15. They are guided by contrary rules, the law of sin and the law of righteousness, the customs of the world, and the will of God; and they are carried in all their ways and actions to contrary ends, the one living for earthly, the other for heavenly things; whence it must necessarily follow that they must continually cross one another in the course of their conversation.

2. This is not all: it is not only a difference, but a difference about religion; and usually hatreds that arise from difference in religion are very deadly; that which is for the restraint of passion is made the fuel of it, and instead of a judge a party. The Samaritans and Jews could not endure one another. The nearer they agree the strife is the greater, when they are outstripped in that form. *Proximorum odia sunt acerrima.* A Turk hateth a Jew more than a christian, a Jew hateth a christian more than others. So in the other subdivision, the nearer and more conjoined in a common profession, the greater the particular breach, and the hatred more fierce.

3. It is not only a difference about religion, but between the true religion and false. False worships, though never so different, may better agree together than the false with the true; as darkness and darkness will better suit than light and darkness, and one error will give better quarter to another than either will to the right worship of God. The heathens tolerated the Epicureans, that denied providence, and took away all respect and care about divine matters; and yet persecuted christians. The strict profession of the name of the true God enrageth more than to say, 'There is no God.' The

Romans, when they had captivated any nation, worshipped the gods of it, except it were Jehovah, the God of the Jews; yea, afterward, though the Jews were equally against the idolatries of the Gentiles as the christians, yet they were not so generally hated and persecuted. So that hatred and persecution is the church's lot, and the evil genius that followeth the gospel wherever it goeth. Other religions, though much different among themselves, can agree well enough and live together in peace, when the malignity of the world is turned upon that which is true. Under Rome antichristian the Jews were tolerated, but not Protestants.

But why is there such a spite and enmity at the sincere and serious profession of the true religion? It is needful to speak to this, that we may search this sore to the bottom. Holiness is lovely, and there is a natural veneration of what is strict, and godliness in the power of it tendeth to love and meekness, and teacheth men patience in wrongs, and readiness to give and to forgive, to do good to all, to pass by injuries, and to render good for evil. Why should such an amiable thing be hated? I answer—

1. The devil's instigation is one great cause; he hath great wrath against the saints; their increase presageth his ruin: Rev. xii. 12, 'The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a little time.' And he hath great power over wicked men: Eph. ii. 2, 'The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' As he worketh other sins in them, so this sin of hatred and trouble to the saints: John viii. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning.' And Cain is said to be 'of that wicked one,' 1 John iii. 12. They are his seed, and there is an old enmity between the seeds. The original cause is malignity against God: Rom. i. 30, 'Haters of God.' It is a part of original sin; they hate God, and hate his saints. God should speed no better than his saints, if he were in their power. But the actual cause is—

2. On man's part; and there seemeth to be a double reason—pride and envy. Pride is impatient of reproof, and envy looketh with an evil eye upon their privileges and advantages in Christ.

[1.] Pride, which is impatient of reproof. Strictness is an object reviving guilt: Heb. xi. 7, 'Noah, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his family, whereby he condemned the world.' Your life is a reproof, that maketh them ashamed: John vii. 7, 'The world hateth me, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.' Every wicked man loveth another, *velut fautorem, adjutatorem, et excusatorem sui criminis.* One wicked man doth not put another to the blush. It is no shame to be black in a country of negroes, where all are black. Their conversation is a living reproof. Thy guilt is upbraided by their righteous works; their conversation upbraideth thy conscience; the sense of thy guilt and negligence is revived by their righteous works, and serious diligence in heaven's way. We are impatient of a verbal reproof, much more of a real. Their holy lives beget a fear and awe: Mark vi. 20, 'Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and holy, and observed him.' Christ saith here not only, 'I have given them thy word,' but, 'They are not of the

world.' They do not only teach things contrary to the world, but live contrary to the world. Many a strict preacher may be a carnal man, and the world and he may agree well enough. They look upon sermons as words spoken of course; it is the holy conversation that enrageth most, as elephants are enraged with gorgeous apparel. They have no veil and cloak for their sins. Thieves rob in the night; they would fain extinguish the light. The world cannot endure to be condemned by that light that shineth from the godly, as the sun is burdensome to the owl and other night-birds: John iii. 19, 20, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.'

[2.] Envy at God's favours bestowed on them: John xv. 19, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' Cain was not only upbraided by Abel's better sacrifice, but envied God's acceptance of him, Gen. iv. 4, 5. Joseph's parti-coloured coat and his father's favour stirred up envy in his brethren. This is the difference between envy and emulation: envy is accompanied with laziness, as emulation with industry. There is between the good, *ἀγαθὴ ἔρις*, a good contention, Heb. x. 24, who shall be most forward. Emulation is good, if separated from carnal aims; but envy, which is accompanied with sloth, maketh a man malign that good which is in others. Envy hath an evil eye, it cannot look upon goodness without grief. When others are at the top of the hill, and they lie lazily at the bottom, they fret at those which are at the top; they will not put in for the privileges of christianity, and therefore are troubled with those that do so. Divine grace hath made a distinction, and those whom God blesseth to be objects of his love, the world chooseth to be objects of hatred.

*Use* 1. If the children of God hath the world's respect at any time, they have need to look to their consciences. Do not you symbolise with them in carnal practices? Luke vi. 26, 'Cursed are you when all men speak well of you, for so they did to the false prophets.' Phocion, upon a general applause, went home, and said, *Quid mali feci?*—Do not you at least let fall the majesty of your conversation? A child of God may find external favour, as the three children did in Babylon, by God's overruling power on men's spirits: Prov. xvi. 7, 'When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.' The world may do it in design; as Hannibal abstained from Fabius his fields, to render him suspected; or else to oblige by courtesies, and gain them to their faction and party. However you have cause to look to yourselves; it is ill to be solicited, as a chaste matron is troubled to be solicited to lust. Have not you given them some advantage? Do not you share with them in their wickedness? When the world's respects run out so fairly and smoothly towards you, you have cause to suspect yourselves. At least, take the more heed that you do not seek to make your conversation more pleasing, by suiting yourself to the customs and sinful courses of carnal men.

*Use* 2. To press all to avoid this sin and snare of death, especially

in these times of dissension. Oh ! take heed, whatever you do, whatever differences you cherish, or whatever party you stick to, that you be not guilty of hatred against the power of godliness. Let not the saints act the wicked's part. The spirit of enmity seeketh other pretences. Hold not communion with the wicked world in their malignity and spite against God's children.

1. It is a mark of a child of the devil, the express image of Satan. Thereby our Saviour convinced the Jews to be of their father the devil, because they hated him that came from God : John viii. 40, 41, 'But now ye seek to kill me, a man that have told you the truth, which I have heard of God : this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father;' and ver. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do : he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him;' and 1 John iii. 10, 'In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil : whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.' This manifests men to be the children of Satan, because they love not their brethren, as Cain loved not Abel. You express the image of Satan to the life, when this is the ground of your hatred.

2. It is a very provoking sin ; and it is the more provoking, because we enjoy so many benefits by them. It is sad to hate men for their godliness, for Christ's name's sake. Look, as it is a commendation of kindness on the one side, so it is an aggravation of injury on the other : Mat. x. 42, 'Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in nowise lose his reward.' The height of this sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost, the wilful persecuting of the known truth ; therefore take heed that you be not guilty of any spice and degree of it.

3. It is possible for them that profess religion to hate one another for their strictness in that religion. Pseudo-christians may be hot and violent ; the beast pusheth with the Lamb's horns, Rev. xiii. ; Isa. lxvi. 5, 'Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified.' Men that are brethren, that have great pretences of zeal, hate you for my name's sake. Nay, the people of God may have a spice of carnal envy, and be guilty of some unkindness, if not hatred to their godly brethren. Job was deeply censured by his godly friends, and Paul by his own hearers : 1 Cor. iv. 10, 'We are fools for Christ's sake;' that is, in their account. Though there be not in them that desperate hatred against the power of godliness, yet there is offence too often taken, and carried on with too great heat and animosity : some godly men are too favourable to their own interests.

4. When there is a secret rising of heart against the purity and strictness of others, natural malignity beginneth to work, you had need suppress it betimes; exulcerated lusts will grow more tumultuous. One godly man may reprove another that is less godly, reprove his conscience by his life, they cannot look upon them without shame. Let it be a holy emulation, not a carnal envy.

5. In opposing those that are godly, we had need be tender : 'Take

care what thou doest, for this man is a Roman,' Acts xxii. 26. A man that meddleth with any that profess religion in strictness had need go upon sure grounds: Mat. xviii. 6, 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.' Men that know the danger will not easily kick against the pricks. At least, do not join with the opposite, eat and drink with the drunken, and smite your fellow-servants; for 'the lord of that servant shall come and cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites,' Mat. xxiv. 49–51. When you cry up a confederacy with wicked men, to prosecute your private differences with more advantage, there is much of the hatred of godliness in it.

6. If you be glad when you find any blemish whereby to eclipse the lustre and glory of their innocency, there is a secret hatred. You should be affected with the scandal brought upon the common cause: Phil. iii. 18, 'For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ;' not real christians, but professors only. The Hams of the world laugh to see a Noah drunk. It is a sign you hate them because they are holy, when you are glad of any blemish wherewith to stain them, especially when the miscarriages of a few are cast upon all.

7. To be at a great distance from this, take heed of the hatred of any man. We should love all men with the love of good-will, though 'our delight should be in the excellent ones of the earth,' the saints of God. There is φιλαδελφία and ἀγάπη: 2 Peter i. 7, 'Add to brotherly kindness charity.' Live in enmity and malice with none, though you take just offence at their sins, as Lot's righteous soul was vexed from day to day: 2 Peter ii. 8, 'For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.' It troubled him to see them. They are an abomination, by way of caution for ourselves, and just abhorrence of their impurities, but we must not hate them with a mischievous hatred, *odio inimicitiæ*.

*Use* 3. Advice to the people of God.

1. Be not amazed at it if you meet with trouble and opposition from wicked men, even for goodness' sake: 1 John iii. 13, 'Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.' So it hath ever been, and so it will be. We are surprised and perplexed at it, as men use to be at something that is strange. The wonder is on the other side; if there be any remission of this enmity, it were a shrewd suspicion that we were of their stamp, or complied too much with their humours, and did symbolise with them in carnal practices: Luke vi. 26, 'Cursed are you when all men speak well of you; for so they did to the false prophets.'

2. To walk holily and watchfully, so to live that their religion may be their only crime, and to keep up the repute of godliness, that they may not be hated as evil-doers, but as saints: 1 Peter iv. 15, 'Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.' It is a sad thing to be a martyr to passion, interest, vainglory, and private conceits and opinions, to suffer for your own shame. The world doth but watch for such an advantage: their conscience telleth them you do not deserve their

hatred, and therefore they seek other pretences. Do not suffer for pride, indiscreet zeal, and unnecessary intermeddling. It is the glory of the christian religion always to have holy martyrs and infamous persecutors; that they should have nothing against them but in the matter of their God.

3. Let not this discourage you; the power of godliness, as it is a provoking, so it is a daunting thing. The wicked hate you and fear you: Mark vi. 20, 'Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.' He feared him, not only as a zealous preacher, but as a strict man. A man would think that John had more cause to fear Herod. And God will respect it; it is his quarrel, though you have the management of it; you have good company; Christ suffereth with you: 1 Peter iv. 13, 'Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.' You do not only suffer for him, but with him; in such a case ye are not only looked upon as his, but him. They cannot hate you as much as they do Christ; you are the world's eyesore, but God's delight; you have glorious assistance, glorious hopes, 'The Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you,' 1 Peter iv. 14.

4. 'Walk wisely towards them that are without,' Col. iv. 5. How is that? Not to swerve from the course of a godly life, or neglect our service to God, or to cool and slack in our zeal for his glory, or to conform ourselves to any of their wicked practices; but to forbear to provoke them without cause, 'To live peaceably with all men as much as is possible,' Rom. xii. 18; 'To overcome evil with good,' ver. 21. This was that which Christ hath prescribed: Mat. v. 44, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.'

Third point. A christian should live in the world as one that is not of the world. There is not a total separation from the men of the world. Live in the world he doth; here is his corporal presence and conversation, but not his heart. And live in the world he must; here is his station and place of service: 1 Cor. v. 10, 'Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must we needs go out of the world.' As the soul is in the body, but not of the body. Οἰκει μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡ ψύχη, οὐκ ἐστὶ δὲ τοῦ σώματος—Just. Mart. So a christian is in the world, but not of the world. Use the world we may without offence; when a christian is sanctified he is not glorified, and doth not divest himself of the innocent interests and concernments of flesh and blood; they have bodies as others have, and must eat, drink, sleep, and put on apparel as others do: 1 Cor. vii. 31, 'And those that use the world as not abusing it.' The use is allowed, the abuse only is forbidden. We may use the world as a means to sweeten our pilgrimage, but not to weaken our hopes. A man may use the comforts of this life to draw good out of them, to employ them for God, as encouragements to piety, and instruments of mercy and bounty.

But how then positively are they not to be of this world? Not of the world's gang and faction, nor acted by the same principles, to the same ends.

1. There is a difference in the inward principles—the spirit of the

world and the Spirit of God. Christians are acted by the Spirit of God, not by the spirit of the world: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God.' There is a particular genius that suiteth with worldly affairs, and fits men to turn and wind in outward employments, as the ostrich's wings serve her only to run, not to fly; their hearts and affections wholly run out this way. It is the character of some: John iii. 31, 'He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth.' They mind nothing, affect nothing, speak of nothing, but the earth.

2. They are under different rulers. Christ is head of the church, and he professeth 'that his kingdom is not of this world,' John xviii. 36. But now the devil is called 'the god of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 4, the head of the worldly state.

3. There is a difference in their course and conversation. The children of God, *τῷ κανόνι στοιχήσουσιν*, Gal. vi. 16, 'Walk according to the rule of the word.' The men of the world, *κατ' αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*, Eph. ii. 2, 'According to the course of the world,' as fishes swim with the stream. A christian is the world's nonconformist: Rom. xii. 2, 'Be ye not conformed to the world;' he is estranged from the pursuits and aspiring projects of worldly men, and can deny the interests and concernments of the flesh for God's sake.

4. There is a difference in their aims. A christian liveth to glorify God: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.' And a child of the world is all for aspiring projects, how to compass the conveniences of the present life, and advance his secular interests: Phil. ii. 19, 'They mind earthly things.'

5. Their ends are different. A christian is hastening to his country, his way is upward; first he gets his heart in heaven, and then his soul, and then his body. But a carnal man is grovelling and tending downward, first to the earth, and then to hell. So that you see there is a perfect difference and counter-motion; they are not of the world, nor of that faction, communion, or fellowship.

But if you ask me why?

[1.] Because of Christ's example. We do not worship the god of this world, nor mammon, but Christ. Worldly men had need seek another god, Jesus Christ is not for their turn, 'I am not of this world;' he is not a worldly Christ. We are to imitate our great master, to be unlike the world, and like Christ; to be led, not by the course of the world, but by Christ's example. Christ, by his own example, hath put a disgrace upon worldly greatness: he chose a mean estate, to teach us to be contented with a little, and his eye was 'to the glory set before him,' Heb. xii. 2. Christ's poverty was not out of necessity, but choice; his were the cattle upon a thousand hills. At his birth, he was born in an inn; to show that he came into the world as a stranger and passenger. In the course of his life we find that he had a bag that was filled with alms, but no annual rent, or constant possessions: Mat. viii. 20, 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' Christ was no landed man, he had no tenement of his own. Christ speaketh it when a young man came to him and professed to follow him; he had no certain place of residence, neither house, nor furniture, nor house-

hold stuff; certainly he was little beholden to the world, it would hardly afford him house-room and lodging: 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,' yet Christ, his own Son, had but little of it. He begged a draught of water of a stranger when he was weary, John iv., and every way lived as a poor man, not out of necessity but choice. He refused a crown when proffered him: John vi. 15, 'When Jesus perceived that they would come and take him by force, and make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.' He had no heart to these things, no relish in crowns and worldly glory. When he died, he was not master of a cup of cold water to quench his thirst; his coat was all his legacy, and he lodged in a borrowed grave. This was the captain of our salvation, whose steps we are to follow. You see what a disgrace he put upon crowns, and honours, and pleasures, and the glory which we doat upon. Christ came from heaven on purpose to cast contempt upon the world by his own choice and course of life.

[2.] Because of their new birth. Man's heart naturally is addicted to the world, and runneth thither, whither the world carrieth it, even to forsaking God; but by grace it is turned the quite contrary way: 'We have forsaken all, and followed thee,' Mat. xix. 27; and Ps. xlv. 10, 'Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.' It is the proper work of grace to alter the course of nature, to take us off from the world, and bring us to God by degrees, first in heart, and then in soul, and then in body. It is everywhere made an effect of the new birth: 1 John v. 4, 'He that is born of God overcometh the world.' The children of God have somewhat of the Father in them. Grace of all things cometh nearest the nature of God. Now God is our heavenly Father, therefore the children that are born of him cannot be worldly. See another place: 2 Peter i. 4, 'That by these ye might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' There is something divine in a christian, therefore he cannot live as other men. When we press men to strictness, they will say, We are saints, and not angels. Yea, but saints have a new nature, over and above that nature which they received from Adam, and therefore should live a heavenly life. They have a higher life which overruleth the other, the Spirit that governeth the motions of the soul. Look, as the planets have a motion of their own, by which they walk in their own path and course; and besides, there is a rapid motion, by which they are carried about in twenty-four hours: so christians have an old nature, and an overruling nature, that carrieth them on contrary to their own motion and tendency. The soul we received from Adam looketh after the conveniency of the outward life, the decent state of the body: naturally men use their souls only as a purveyor for the body, for outward comforts and outward supports; but when there is a new nature from Christ, the regenerate part must have its operation. In the new birth, principles of more raised and elevated nature are brought into the soul.

[3.] Because of their great and glorious hopes. They are chosen out of this world: 2 Peter i. 4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be made partakers of a divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world

through lust.' There is an estate that dependeth upon the new birth. God's children cannot complain for want of a child's portion; they have promises as so many leases, a right to the inheritance in light. Now a christian, that hopeth for another world, should not live according to the fashions of this world: Rom. xii. 2, 'And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your mind.' This is an unworthy base world; you are acquainted with a better. If a man were in a strange country, where he saw none but rude savages, that had not shame enough to cover their nakedness, would he conform himself to the guise of this country? We, that have other hopes, should have other lives: 1 Thes. ii. 12, 'That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.' There is a description of a christian's life. It beseemeth worldly men to look after worldly things. Leave things that perish to men that perish. *Incolæ cœli estis, non hujus seculi.* If you must not die as they die, do not live as they live, lest you are in their case at the point of death, 'who have their portion in this life,' Ps. xvii. 14. Wicked men have their whole portion in this life, because they look for no more; no wrong is done to them, it is but their own choice. But a believer will not give God an acquittance nor discharge, having such great promises.

*Use* 1. To show us what to judge of persons that live so as if they were of the world. You may know it by these three notes—when they do nothing worthy of their new nature, their glorious hopes, and the example of Jesus Christ.

1. Nothing worthy of the new nature. What difference is there between you and others? The christian should be like Saul, so much higher by the head than other men. Wherein do you differ? 1 Cor. iii. 3, 'Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' *κατ' ἄνθρωπον.* Men of an ordinary nature, destitute of the Spirit, would do the same. Christ maketh it to be the ground of hatred, 'because they are not of the world.' The world will soon scent out him that is regenerate, he walketh so as to convince the world; they 'declare plainly that they seek a country,' Heb. xi. 14; their hopes are discovered in their conversation. They reprove the world: Heb. xi. 7, 'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world.' A carnal man justifieth the world, as Israel justified Sodom. Carnal men are called the children of this world; the spirit of the mother is in them, the spirit of the world inclineth them, they are all for lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eye, and pride of life, to go fine, to feed high, to shine in worldly pomp, affect honour and great places. Too many christians are baptized into this kind of spirit; they live as if they were born and bred here, and then they justify the carnal practices of men. Therefore what difference should there be between a christian and the world! 1 Peter iv. 4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to all excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' Mortifying pleasures, denying interests upon religious reasons, this maketh the world wonder what kind of nature have these men. This showeth that there is something divine in you.

2. Nothing worthy of their hopes, and of that eternity which they expect. When men waste their strength and time in worldly projects

and pursuits, they live as if their portion were only in this world. A traveller, that is to stay but half an hour in a room, or for a night in an inn, would he adorn it with hangings? They that are so much in this world, they show they do not look for a better: Prov. xv. 24, 'The way of the wise is above;' their heart is fixed on heaven, and the face of their conversation is turned that way. Your lives do not bear proportion with your hopes. Well, then, what do you make the scope of your lives? A christian is satisfied with nothing but eternity: 2 Cor. iv. 18, *μὴ σκωπούντων ἡμῶν*, 'While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.' A christian useth the world, and followeth his business, but he doth not make it his scope; his heart is within the veil. There is an eternal principle in the heart of every godly man, and therefore they cannot be satisfied with the things of the world; he mindeth other things in a subordination to eternity, mercies and duties of his calling, with respect to his usefulness and service; and therefore spendeth his time and estate so that his main work is to provide for eternity: 1 Tim. vi. 19, 'Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life.' But now men think they can never have enough in the world, and make but slight provision for the life to come; they make all things sure in the world, and any slight assurance serveth the turn for eternity; they live as if their hopes were altogether in the world, they do not make eternity their scope.

3. Nothing worthy of Christ's example. In Christ's example we may take notice of two things—the heavenliness of it, and the courage of it.

[1.] The heavenliness. Christ despised the world; the great encouragement of his human soul was 'the glory set before him,' Heb. xii. 3. He came from heaven on purpose to set us this example. But now, when a christian followeth the world, when he is of this temper that he could wish to live always that he might enjoy the world always, 'they have their reward,' *ἀπέχουσι*, Mat. vi. 2. They discharge God of all his promises, and look for no more. A thousand worlds will not satisfy a craving heart; but a child of God is content with the least mercies, but not satisfied. Contentment respects God's allowance; but this is not their portion: they do not murmur, but yet they desire more; a reprobate's portion will not serve the turn. Nothing is more acceptable to a carnal heart in conceit, than to live here for ever, and to delight themselves in meat and drink, and the sports and glory of the world. Now this is quite contrary to the example of Christ, a disposition that seeketh to make the life and death of Christ of none effect. Christ came from heaven to earth to fetch us to heaven; if thou cleavest to the world, Christ's coming is vain; he lived in a poor estate, to teach us to despise the world; his life was a sermon of mortification; he died to deliver us from the present world; he ascended that we might follow him with our hearts while we live here.

[2.] The courage of Christ's example. He was not for the humour of that age: John viii. 23, 'Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world.' He speaketh to the

carnal Jews, that looked for a pompous Messiah, that should maintain their worship and state, and deliver them from the Roman yoke and servitude. Christ was not a Messiah for their turn; if Christ had complied with their humours, he had been more generally received. So a christian's courage is a counter-motion to the fashions and humours of the age. We must not be afraid to be singular in holiness. So was Christ: Acts ii. 40, 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation;' not only in purpose and thought of heart, but externally in course of life. When men are afraid to estrange themselves from the corrupt and carnal courses of the world that are in fashion, they do not write after Christ's copy. What father would endure his son should be intimate with his enemies, and symbolise with them in practice and conversation? Therefore you must look to this; you are in danger. Christ's example is only left upon record, and the world's example is before your eyes; living examples work much, and taint insensibly. The prophet complained, Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' An estrangement in the course of life will draw trouble upon you; but persecution is not as bad as hell, nor is man's wrath to be feared as much as God's judgments. Carnal men may make great profession of the name of Christ, but they humour the world: 1 John iv. 5, 'They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them;' they comply to humour the carnal world in their inveterate customs and superstitions.

*Use* 2. To press christians not to conform to the world. It is Paul's exhortation, Rom. xii. 2, μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε, 'Be not conformed to the world.' It is a sad thing when christians are cast into the world's stamp and mould, to symbolise with them in practices and affections.

Two things you should take heed of—the world's spirit, and the world's courses and practices.

First, The world's spirit. A man is good or evil according to the disposition of his heart: Phil. iii. 19, 'They mind earthly things.' The apostle doth not describe carnal men there by any notorious scandalous sin, but by the inward frame of the spirit. This is most odious in the eyes of God; the carnal conversation is an effect of a carnal frame of spirit. First men mind earthly things, and then in time they come to hate the gospel, and to symbolise with the world in practices: 2 Tim. iv. 10, 'Demas hath forsaken us, having loved this present world;' James iv. 4, 'Ye adulterers, and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.'

Now the frame of the heart may be known—

1. By the working of the thoughts, counsels, and deliberations. Therefore we should observe what we think of and meditate most upon. Inventions serve affection. As the heart is, so are the thoughts and counsels. A worldly man is always thinking of the world, and framing endless projects how to grow great and high. Therefore it is said, 2 Peter ii. 14, 'They have an heart exercised with covetous practices;' that is, always plotting how to bring the world into their net. As the apostle would have Timothy to 'exercise himself unto godliness,' 1 Tim. iv. 7, that is, to be much in consulting and contriving how to carry on

the holy life with most advantage; so 'their hearts are exercised with covetous practices,' that is, with worldly purposes and thoughts. All sins do more or less discover themselves by the thoughts; for a man will deliberate to accomplish that which he aimeth at; and chiefly worldliness occupieth the thoughts, for it is a serious madness, full of carking and caring and vain projects. When our Saviour would represent a worldling, he bringeth him in musing, Luke xii. 17, 18, 'And he thought with himself, saying, I will do thus and thus,' *καὶ διελογίζετο. Verbum mire appositum*, saith Beza; for a worldly man is always framing dialogues within himself, between his reason and his carnal desires. Distractions in worship are chiefly ascribed to covetousness: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 'With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.' The prophet instances in that sin, though other lusts withdraw the heart and distract in hearing, as unclean glances, vainglory, &c. Words are but thoughts expressed; there is a quick intercourse between the mind and the tongue. Now it is said, John iii. 31, 'He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth.' There is nothing of heaven in their thoughts, nothing in their language and communication, a heavy clod cannot move upward of itself. Observe the drift of your thoughts, your first and last thoughts morning and evening, what guest haunteth you in duties. When the heart is deeply engaged, the mind cannot be taken off from thinking.

2. By your esteem. When a man prizeth worldly things, when you overrate them, have too greatening thoughts of the world, the devil is at your elbow, and the spirit of the world is set a-work: 'Happy is the people that is in such a case,' Ps. cxliv. 15. What is the treasure of the soul? Carnal men have no savour of Christ. God's people sometimes may be taken with a glittering show of worldly things, but their solid esteem is in Christ, he is their treasure; the soul feasts itself with the riches of grace. To a carnal heart, heavenly things are but a notion, it worketh no more than a dream; to a gracious heart, the substance of the world is but a fancy: John xiv. 17, 'Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.' The world cannot see things that are not of great profit and benefit.

3. By the bent and resolution of the will: 1 Tim. vi. 9, 'They that will be rich,' &c.; not *is*, but *will be;* James iv. 4, 'Whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.' Grace is known by the full purpose of the heart: Acts xi. 23, 'He exhorted them all that, with full purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord;' what he fixeth upon as his end and scope.

4. By a special sagacity and dexterity in the matters of the world, and a dulness in the things of God: Luke xvi. 8, 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.' They have ostrich's wings, not to fly, but to run. It is strange to hear how sottishly worldly-wise men will speak of religion and the ways of God; they are dull and blockish in religion, though otherwise of great ability: Rom. xvi. 19, 'I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.'

5. By the stream of your desires. Desires are the pulses of the soul. You may know the temper of your souls by the beating of the pulses,

by the current and drift of your desires, as physicians judge by appetite. The saints plead their affections: Isa. xxvi. 8, 'The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.' They cannot justify their innocency, yet they plead their integrity, the vigorous bent of their souls. So the spirit of the world is known by an unsatisfied thirst, and the ravenousness of the desires, which rise with enjoyment, for still men crave more. Such a dropsy argueth a distempered soul; the soul is transported beyond all bounds of modesty and contentment: Isa. v. 8, 'Woe unto them that join house to house, and field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.' The inordinate inclination still increaseth, and men never have enough.

6. By your grief at worldly losses and disappointments. Men lose with grief what they possess with love; the affliction riseth according to the degree of the affection. They that 'rejoice as though they rejoiced not, weep as if they wept not,' 1 Cor. vii. 30. Earnest affection will not brook disappointment: 1 Tim. vi. 10, 'For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.' The sorrow will be answerable to the desire. You grieve more for the loss of wealth than for the loss of God's countenance. The bridegroom is gone, and you never mourn; but upon every worldly loss the heart is dejected. What slight thoughts have men of God! Thou art sad if thou hast lost but a ring of value, the offals of thy estate; but God's accesses and recesses are never noted. Grief followeth love. When Jesus wept for Lazarus, the Jews said, 'Behold how he loved him!' John xi. 35.

7. Fear of want, or an extraordinary solicitousness about outward provisions, that is a sure note of a worldly heart. Christ was disputing against worldliness, and among other precepts, he saith, Luke xii. 29, 'Seek not ye what ye shall eat, nor what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind;' μὴ μετεωρίζεσθε; be not hovering between doubts and fears. This is to take God's work out of his hand. Suspicious fears argue too much of the spirit of the world. God would have us look no further than the present day: 'Sufficient for each day is the evil thereof,' Mat. vi. 34. God is very careful of our good. He hath made carking a sin; he might have left it as a punishment.

8. By excessive delight in worldly comforts. A man may be worldly that is not carking and ravenous. Esau saith, 'I have enough, my brother,' Gen. xxxiii. 9. Your too much complacency is a great sin. When men are satisfied with the present portion, it is as great, if not a greater sin than to desire more: Luke xii. 19, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' He took too great delight in his portion; they bless themselves in their worldly enjoyments, as if they had happiness enough: Ps. lxii. 10, 'Trust not in oppression, become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them;' not in point of delight and trust; your delight should not be terminated on the creature.

9. By envying the worldly happiness that others enjoy. This is a great fault in the children of God; you are not of this world. Though you have not such costly furniture, rare accommodations as others

have, though you are not the world's fondlings, dandled on the world's knees, you have a better portion in Christ: Ps. iv. 7, 'Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than the time when their corn and their wine increased.' It is a disparagement to your privileges and hopes: Ps. xvii. 14, 'From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with hid treasures: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.' It is your time to be princes in disguise. The less splendour in the world, the more lustre in grace. Grace would not be so eminent, if worldly glory were greater. Who that is owner of a palace would envy another a dunghill?

Secondly, A worldly conversation; which is seen in two things—

1. Immoderate endeavours for the world, to the neglect of God: Luke xii. 24, 'So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.' All things must be looked after in subordination to God. When Sarah saw Ishmael scoffing at Isaac, she thrust him out of doors. When Mammon upbraideth God, and worldly things encroach, and allow God no room but in the conscience, then we are immoderate.

2. Carnal compliance. The worldling serveth the times, cozeneth, lieth, cheateth, hateth Christ; so must not you: 1 John v. 19, 'And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness,' as a carrion in a sink.

[1.] Consider your condition; you are strangers. The fathers of old dwelt in tents; we never read that Abraham made any purchase but of a grave. Cain built cities. David was a king, yet a stranger: Ps. xxxix. 12, 'For I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.' The world is not our country. The fathers of the Old Testament, for the most part, lived a wandering life: Heb. xi. 14, 'For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.' Jacob passed over Jordan with a staff, Gen. xxxii. 10. It is a most unbeseeming thing as can be for one that professeth himself a christian to take up with the things of this world.

[2.] Consider it is a dishonour to God, and a scandal to religion, to be of a worldly conversation, to profess an interest in Christ, and yet run after such low things.

## SERMON XXIV.

*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*—JOHN XVII. 15.

CHRIST having enforced his request, explaineth it; not to inform God, but to comfort the disciples, as explications in prayer are for our benefit. Our heavenly Father can interpret our sighs and breathings, but formed and explicit words have a greater force and efficacy upon our hearts. This explication is delivered, *κατὰ ἄρσιν καὶ κατὰ θέσιν.*

1. *Κατὰ ἄρσιν,* 'not that thou shouldest take them out of the world;' that is, presently glorify them, either by an ordinary death, or

by an extraordinary translation, as Elijah and Enoch were translated. Christ was not ignorant of their danger, yet he would have them ride out the storm; he would not carry his disciples to heaven with him, nor doth he pray his Father to do it, though he loved their company, and they his, that they could be content to die with him; as John xi. 16, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him;' yet, 'I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the world.'

2. *Κατὰ θέσιν,* 'but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil;' *ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ,* it may be rendered from the evil one, or from the evil thing, as referring to a person or thing. To a person; the evil one is often put for the devil: Mat. xiii. 19, 'When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, *ὁ πονηρὸς,* and taketh away that which he heard;' 1 John ii. 13, 'I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome, *τὸν πονηρὸν,* the wicked one;' 1 John iii. 12, 'Not as Cain, who was *ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ,* of that wicked one, and slew his brother.' Or else to the evil thing: Mat. vi. 13, *ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονεροῦ,* 'deliver us from evil;' Mat. v. 37, 'Whatever is more than this, cometh of evil,' *ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ*; 1 John v. 19, 'The whole world lieth, *ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ,* in wickedness.' Which shall we prefer? I answer—Since the words lie so indifferently for either sense, we may interpret them of both; keep them from the author of evil, and from evil itself; from sin, from the power and snares of the devil, from destruction, till their ministry be accomplished. Satan he is the author; the world is the bait. Sin is the hook. Keep them from the devil, that they may not come under his power; from the world, that they may not be deceived by its allurements. Briefly, this keeping may be referred to their life or to their souls; keep them alive as long as they have work to do; keep their souls, that they may neither, by the world or by the devil, be drawn to do anything unseemly and unbecoming their profession: 2 Cor. xiii. 7, 'I pray God that ye do no evil, but that ye should do that which is honest;' and Rev. iii. 10, 'I will keep them from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the earth, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' It is meant of a preservation in the time of a bloody persecution under Trajan. Christ prays for temporal and spiritual safety; temporal safety, so far as is necessary to carry on the duty of their calling.

Points.

1. Observe that it standeth with the wisdom and goodness of God to continue us in the world, notwithstanding the dangers of it. Christ loved his disciples, and knew they were exposed to the world's hatred; yet, 'I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world.' In evil times sometimes God taketh his children out of the world, and sometimes he continueth them in the world; both dispensations stand with his wisdom and goodness. There are reasons on both sides.

[1.] For taking them away in evil times. It standeth with his goodness, that they may not feel the smart of them: Isa. lvii. 1, 'The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, yea, the merciful man is taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.' When corn is gathered in, then the beasts are turned into the field. God valueth his saints so that he doth not

count the world worthy of them: Heb. xi. 38, 'Of whom the world was not worthy.' He showeth his jewels, and then shutteth them up into the casket. And with his wisdom, that they may not be corrupted. The wisdom of providence concurreth to our preservation, as well as the power of grace. Enoch was translated and taken out of the world in a wicked age: 1 Cor. xi. 32, 'But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world.' What judging and chastening was it? Not only by sickness, but by death: 'Many are sick, and many weak, and many fallen asleep.'

[2.] Christ continueth them in the world, as the disciples here; partly because he hath need of them, as the disciples were to preach the gospel; partly that they might have more experience, and a more grown faith: they might try God, and God might try them; they might have experience of his faithfulness, and he of their loyalty. The world must have a time of trial, and so must we. Nay, he dealeth thus with believers; they are continued in evil times, either because God hath more work for them to do, or that they may carry more experience with them to heaven.

*Use.* To refer it to the wisdom and goodness of God, either to go or tarry. Christ knew there was service for them to do, therefore he was express, 'I pray not that they may be taken out of the world.' We that know not the counsels of God must refer ourselves to his pleasure.

2. Observe, that as long as we have a ministry and service to accomplish, we should be willing to continue in the world. Paul was at a strait: Phil. i. 21–23, the cause was service; 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour,' viz., bringing honour to Christ; 'yet what I shall choose, I wot not: for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.' He is ravished with the thoughts of it; but then he considereth the profit of the church: ver. 24, 'Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you;' and service casts the scale. Paul's case is the case many times of mortified christians; after long experience of God, and weanedness from the world, they are in such a strait. Natural motion is swifter in the end; the nearer they draw to the end the more vehemently do they long for Christ's company. Some make it a question which is hardest, to bear affliction or to wait for glory, the work of patience or the delay of hope? Desire is a more restless affection than sorrow, yet I should think the depth of sorrow is more burdensome than the strength of desire. Many of God's children are tempted to make away themselves; but I never heard of any that were tempted to make away themselves in the height of assurance, or out of the vehemency of spiritual desire, though the present life be accompanied with many vexations and afflictions. Despair maketh men to lay violent hands on themselves, but not assurance; as Saul fell upon his sword, and Achitophel went home and hanged himself, and Judas was his own executioner. But assurance, though it desireth God's presence, yet it tarrieth God's leisure. Waiting is a fruit of faith, as well as confidence. Spiritual desires are always conceived with submission and obedience; if God hath more work, they can brook the

delay of the reward, and tarry for their wages. I remember a passage of a heathen, of Tully, in his *Somnium Scipionis*, when Scipio had said, 'If true life be only in heaven, why stay I then upon earth? why haste I not to come to you?' 'No,' saith his father; 'unless God free thee from the fetters of thy body, thou canst not come hither. Men are born and bred upon this condition, that they should promote the good of the world. You must not fly from the duty assigned by God; the soul is to be kept in the custody of the body till it be commanded thence by God that gave it at first.' This was his saying; and indeed it is wonderful. Christians, learn to wait God's leisure; it is bettter to be with Christ, but you must not look for your wages till you have done your work. When a sentinel is set upon the watch, he must not come off without the commander's leave, and till he is discharged by authority. God hath set us in a watch, and we must not leave our ground till we have done all that is enjoined us, till we receive a fair discharge.

This point will serve to open two cases:—

*Case* 1. Whether men confessing Christ may make away themselves to avoid the cruel torments of their persecutors, and they know not certainly what their strength may be able to sustain? This was a great case in the primitive times, and it may be still of use. Eusebius telleth us, lib. viii. cap. 24, that in the time of Dioclesian's persecution, which was very bloody and cruel, there were divers that procured death to themselves by leaping down from lofts and high places, or else thrust themselves through with knives or swords.

I answer—This is sinful. Christ prayeth not that his disciples 'might be taken out of the world,' but 'kept from the evil.'

The sinfulness appeareth—

1. Because this is an act of disobedience, contrary to the law of God: 'Thou shalt not kill.' Now the more unnatural any act is, the greater is the crime. A man is not lord of life and death.

2. It is an act of distrust: 1 Cor. x. 13, 'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to men: but God is faithful, who who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' God will either temper the affliction to our strength, or raise our strength to the degree of the affliction. Christ hath laid in this prayer for our encouragement in this case, 'Keep them from the evil;' it is a making haste, as if God would not be faithful, but require brick where he giveth no straw.

3. It is a disparagement and dishonour to the cause which we maintain. It robbeth God of a great deal of glory, when he calleth us out to show our love to him, to take our lives out of God's hands, when he claimeth them: Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 'For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.' Providence hath singled you out to be witnesses; God by his providence challengeth his due; it is a retracting of your vows. And therefore, though God may be merciful to the soul, yet the act is unnatural and sinful and base, when God hath drawn you out to be his champions and witnesses to the world.

*Case* 2 is about wishing for death. You know the law doth not only forbid acts, but thoughts and desires; therefore, is it lawful to long for death and dissolution? We find instances on both hands in the scriptures. The murmuring Israelites are taxed: Exod. xvi. 3, 'Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt.' And it is usual for men in a pet to wish themselves dead, to curse the day of their birth, and long for the day of their death. On the other side, Paul, out of a spiritual affection, desireth to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: Phil. i. 23, 'I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.' What shall we say in this case?

I answer in several propositions:—

1. There is a great deal of difference between serious desires and passionate expressions. The desires of the children of God are deliberate and resolved, conceived upon good grounds, and after much struggling with flesh and blood to bring their hearts to it. Carnal men are loath that God should take them at their word; as he in the fable that called for death, and when he came, desired him to help him up with his burden. Alas! they do not consider what it is to be in the state of the dead, and to come unprovided and unfurnished into God's presence. We often wish ourselves in our graves; but if God should take us at our word, we would make many pauses and exceptions. Men that in their miseries call for death, when sickness cometh will run to the physician. Many gifts are promised if life could be restored. None more unwilling to die than those that in a passion wish for death.

2. We must carefully look to the grounds of these wishes and desires. Carnal wishes for death arise, either—

[1.] Out of violent anger, and a pet against providence; as Jonah, chap. iv. 3, 'Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live;' and ver. 8, 'He fainted and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.' The murmuring Israelites, when they felt the famine of the wilderness, wished they 'had died in the land of Egypt.' When men are vexed with the world, they look upon death as a release, to take vengeance upon God, to deprive him of a servant.

[2.] In deep sorrow; as Job iii. 11, 'Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?' and Job vi. 8, 9, 'Oh that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off.' Elisha: 1 Kings xix. 4, He sat down under a juniper-tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.'

[3.] From the peevishness of fond and doting love: 2 Sam. xviii. 33, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee! O Absalom, my son, my son!' As the wives of the barbarians, that burn themselves to attend the ghosts of their dead husbands.

[4.] From distrust and despair; the evil is too hard for them, they are at their wits' end: Job vii. 15, 'My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life.' In all these cases it is but a shameful retreat

from the conflict and burden of the present life, from carnal irksomeness under the labours and burdens of the present life, or a distrust of God's help. There may be murder in a rash wish, if it proceed from a vexed heart. These are but froward thoughts, not a sanctified resolution.

3. Such desires of death and dissolution as are lawful, and must be cherished, come from a good ground; a heart deadened to the world, they are crucified to it, their hearts are mortified, 'set on things above,' Col. iii. 1. Some competent assurance: Rom. viii. 23, 'We groan, waiting for the adoption, viz., the redemption of our body.' They have tasted the clusters of Canaan; as Simeon: Luke ii. 28, 29, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation;' the eyes of his faith, as well as of his body. Now, Lord, I do but wait for my departure hence, as a merchantman richly laden desires to be at his port.

4. You must look to the end. Men have a blind notion of heaven; they expect a carnal heaven, as the Jews looked for a carnal Messiah, to enjoy a Turkish paradise, full of ease and pleasure. The people of God desire heaven to have a perfect union and communion with him whom their souls love: Phil. i. 23, 'I desire to depart, and be with Christ;' Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for a Saviour;' they long to see him, to be where he is. Heart and head should be together. And so also to be freed from sin: Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' They would be in heaven that they may sin no more. Men look upon heaven as a kind of reserve, if the world do not hold. We should desire heaven, not to be freed from trouble, but to be freed from sin, and to be with Christ; there must be a holy desire of a better life.

5. The manner must be regarded; it must be with submission: Phil. i. 24, 'Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you;' otherwise we encroach upon God's right, and would deprive him of a servant without his leave. A christian will die and live as the Lord will; while others want submission to live in trouble, he is satisfied; or to die if he be not in trouble; if it be the Lord's pleasure, a believer is satisfied with long life, Ps. xci. 16; he is willing to live and die as God liketh; he will wait till his change comes, when God will give him a discharge by his own immediate hand, or by enemies. *Gratias agimus, quod a molestis Dominis liberamur.* God knoweth how to choose the fittest time, otherwise we know not what we ask.

3. Observe, that a spiritual victory over evil is to be preferred before a total exemption from it. Christ doth not pray for an absolute immunity and deliverance, but a preservation from the evil of the world. Christ prayeth thus, and so he teacheth us to pray, Mat. vi. 13, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' When we say, 'Lead us not into temptation,' he doth not mean that we should pray for an absolute exemption from temptation; that is the lot of all the saints; but that we may not fall under the weight of a temptation, that is, εἰσενέγκῃς, and it is explained, that he would not as a judge, by a spiritual excommunication, put us into the hands of Satan, to be crushed by him, as it is explained in the next verse, 'But deliver us from evil.'

*Use* 1. It teacheth us how to pray to God. Our prayers should be

to be delivered not from the world so much as from the evil of the world, from sins rather than afflictions. The saints seek grace rather than deliverance in their afflictions, direction as well as protection, that they may do nothing unseemly while they suffer: Ps. cxli. 3, 4, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with them that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties.' And they desire improvement rather than a discharge; for the saints do not conceive prayers out of interest, but from a principle of the new nature. To a gracious eye, sustentation under the cross is better than absolute deliverance; the deliverance is a common mercy, the sustentation is a special mercy. Carnal men may be without affliction, but carnal men have no experience of grace; and bare deliverance is no sign of special love, but improvement is: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' It is divinity preached from heaven makes the saints to rejoice in infirmities. Paul before was earnest to be freed from the trouble.

*Use* 2. How to wait and hope for the blessings of Christ's purchase. Absolute immunity is not to be looked for, but victory and conservation: 2 Tim. iv. 18, 'The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.' A christian placeth his hope chiefly on that. Paul could not look for such a deliverance again from the lion, but from an unworthy carriage. The blessings which Christ hath obtained of his Father are rather spiritual and celestial than temporal; therefore he is more solicitous to free us from sin than from trouble: Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins;' not from their troubles, their sorrows, but their sins. We would be delivered from sickness, trouble, danger; but Christ is a spiritual saviour; the great deliverance is to be freed from sin.

*Use* 3. To teach us to suffer with patience. Let us endure the evil of punishment, that we may escape the evil of sin. Moral evil is worse than natural; it is better to be miserable than to be sinful. Of all evil sin is the greatest: to be carnal, a swearer, a drunkard, an unclean person, this is a greater evil than poverty, sickness, blindness, lameness; this doth not separate from God.

4. Observe the danger of the worldly estate. It appears in two things:—

First, The multiplicity of snares. The whole world is full of snares, and we can walk nowhere but we are like to be defiled. It is a vale of tears, and a place of snares; and therefore a vale of tears because a place of snares, which make the saints go up and down groaning: Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' All conditions of life may become a snare, prosperity, adversity: Prov. xxx. 8, 9, 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of God in vain.' Mark, either condition hath its snares, but prosperity hath most. As a garment too short will not cover our nakedness, and too long proveth *lacinia præpendens*, ready to trip up our heels. Many that carry themselves well in one condition quite miscarry in another; as it is observed of Joab: 1 Kings ii. 28, 'That

he turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom.' 'Ephraim is a cake not turned,' Hosea vii. 8. The young prophet that withstood the king is overcome with the insinuations of the old prophet, 1 Kings xiii. 16, 17. Some miscarry in adversity, others in prosperity, but more there; as diseases that grow of fulness are more dangerous than diseases that grow of want. The taking God's name in vain is not so bad as denying God: 'Lest I be full and deny thee; lest I be poor, and take thy name in vain.' They that are full live as if there were no God at all; there is the snare; and in adversity we are impatient, as in prosperity we are forgetful of God. Paul 'learned of Christ how to be abased and how to abound,' Phil. iii. 12. We must do both. But there is a greater snare in prosperity; the more of the world the worse; as fat and fertile grounds are most rank of weeds, and produce most thorns and thistles: Rom. viii. 39, 'Nor height, nor depth, shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' The depth of misery is a snare, and the height of happiness too; there the snare is greater. Misery is often made an occasion to bring us to Christ, but never fulness, ease, and plenty. The moon is never eclipsed but when at full; God's children have most miscarried then. David was not soiled with lust whilst he wandered in the wilderness, but whilst he walked on the terrace of his palace; then men discover themselves, as a leaky vessel is known when it is filled with water. Adversity makes men more reserved and serious; when the vessel is empty, its hollowness and unsoundness is least discovered. Thus every condition may prove a snare. So every calling and course of life. In ordinary callings, a long familiarity breedeth a liking, and the soul receiveth taints from objects to which we are accustomed. Men that have much to do in the world had need take heed of a worldly spirit; continual presence of the object secretly linketh the affections; long suits prevail at length, and green wood kindleth by long lying on the fire. When the course of your callings and employments put you much upon worldly business, the heart is drawn away from God insensibly, and you will find less savour in holy things. Yea, in that calling which immediately respects the service of God there wants not snares: 1 Tim. iii. 6, 'Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride, he falleth into the condemnation of the devil.' Holy things are often abused by a perverse aim. Those that are set on the pinnacles of the temple are in danger; the devil carried Christ thither with an intent to tempt him. Christ prayeth here principally for the college of the apostles; ministers are in danger as well as others; we have our temptations as well as you. Nay, in all actions and employments, worship, feeding, trading, sporting, all these may become a snare; and temptations are like the wind, that bloweth from every corner, east, west, north, and south. So there are temptations in worship to pride, self-confidence, carnal distractions. Satan stealeth away our hearts from under Christ's own arm: 'When the sons of God met together, Satan was amongst them,' Job i. 6. Not only our table may be turned into a snare, but duties into dung. In recreations, eating, drinking, bodily refreshments, there is a snare. Job i. 5, Job sacrificed while his children were a-banqueting. At a feast there are more guests than are invited; evil spirits haunt such meetings; and usually

men let loose themselves to a carnal liberty at such a time. Satan, to be sure to be welcome, bringeth his dish with him, a bait for every humour: 1 Tim. iv. 5, 'The creatures must be sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.' We must not only ask God's leave, but his blessing. So pleasures, if not sanctified, bring a brawn and deadness upon the heart: 1 Tim. v. 6, 'She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.' So also in all places; in company, and when we are alone, we are still in danger. In company, we are in danger to be provoked to wrath or tempted to sin; though open excesses manifest their own odiousness, yet secretly we learn of one another to be cold, careless, less mortified. In good company, nature is very susceptible of evil, and we imitate their weaknesses sooner than their graces: Gal. ii. 13, 'Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulations.' So in privacy, when we are alone, the devil often abuseth our solitude; Christ was tempted in the wilderness, Mat. iv. 1. In the vast world there is no corner where a man can be privileged from temptations; how hard a matter is it to be alone when we are alone, or to have none with us but God and our own souls! It is good to be alone with God, but not with Satan: John xvi. 32, 'Ye shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.' Now few can say so. Alas! we have cause to say, Here I am alone, but I am not alone, for Satan is with me. So also there is danger from the men of the world, and the things of the world. The men of the world are apt to ensnare us by their counsels or threatenings. Sin is as earnest to propagate itself as grace. Wicked men would have the whole world to be all of a piece; they are panders and bawds to wickedness, to draw others into the same snare with which they are held themselves; they are the devil's factors, and when they cannot prevail, then they rage, and slander, and persecute: 'They think strange that you do not run with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you,' 1 Peter iv. 4. The wills of men are ranked with the lusts of the flesh; ver. 2, 3, 'That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we lived in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine,' &c. Then the things of the world. There are several baits for every temper, pleasures, honours, profits. Satan is well skilled in tempers; he dresseth the temptation in that livery which suiteth with every man's humour and complexion, and plieth that object which suiteth with the distemper. He knoweth every distemper loveth the diet that feedeth it; hath honours for the ambitious, wealth for the covetous, pleasures for the sensual; and God by a righteous dispensation permitteth it: Jer. vi. 21, 'Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will lay stumbling-blocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them.' As when we suspect a servant to be given to filching, we leave loose money about the house to try if he will steal it; so God, to try us, may suffer Satan to ply us with a diet suitable to our distemper.

Secondly, The next reason is our own weakness. There are not only snares and temptations in the world, but there is a flexibleness in the party tempted: James i. 14, 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.' The fire burneth in our

own hearts; Satan doth but blow up the flame. There is bad liquor in the vessel; Satan giveth it vent, and sets it abroach with violence: Mat. v. 28, 'He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' There is an intrinsical flexibleness in the heart, a treacherous party within. The evils of the world were tolerable, if there were not lust in the heart: 2 Peter i. 4, 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' We carry the worst enemy in our own bosom; Satan could not prevail against us were it not for our own lusts; as the Philistines could not prevail against Samson if Delilah had not lulled him to sleep, or as Balaam first corrupted Israel before he could curse them. Nay, when there is grace wrought, still there is a treacherous party within: Mat. xxvi. 41, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' The will hath a proneness still, and in your affections there is a suitableness to carnal baits. It is as with a garrison besieged; though the treacherous party be weakest in the town, yet they may do much hurt; so there is still corruption enough to open the door to Satan.

*Use.* 1. Caution. Take heed; the world is a dangerous place, even to a disciple of Christ; and therefore you have need 'to use it as if you used it not.' The heart is soon tainted, and that insensibly. There are two remedies that you should constantly use—watching and prayer; they are prescribed by our Saviour: Mat. xxvi. 41, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' These must always go together. We watch that we may not be careless; we pray that we may not be self-confident. These two duties help one another; the heart is best kept when it is commended to God. We watch only to discover the approaches of the enemy; and we cry for God's help against the temptation. As watching helps prayer, danger descried giveth quickness, fervency, and earnestness in supplication; so also prayer helpeth watching. We can best maintain our station when we call in God's help.

1. Watch, and that especially against two things—the occasions of sin, and the privy distempers of the heart.

[1.] The occasions of sin. Do not put yourselves upon danger; it is a sign of a naughty heart to dally with occasions; as ravens, when they are driven away from the carrion, will stand within the scent. It is not good to be within the scent of sin. Lot and his wife were not to look back upon Sodom: Gen. xix. 26, 'Lot's wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.' The act in itself was not sinful, but it was forbidden to them as an occasion of sin. You shall see, ver. 29, Abraham looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and he is commended; but it was forbidden to Lot: ver. 17, 'Escape for thy life, look not behind thee;' because it was likely to work relentings. He was loath to leave that pleasant vale; the sight was more like to work on Lot's heart and his wife's than Abraham's, and prove a snare to them. Therefore Lot's wife is turned into a pillar of salt. Pray mark it; Ananias and Sapphira were stricken dead for a sin, and Lot's wife for putting herself upon a temptation to sin. God hath declared his displeasure against hankering after corruption as well as closing with it; and in these days sin is not grown less dangerous, nor

God less angry with it. A wanton look, putting ourselves upon the presence of a temptation without a call, 'beholding the wine while it sparkleth in the glass,' these are temptations, and we have no need to tempt the tempter. Satan is waiting for such advantages; he can interpret the silent language of a blush, a smile, a frown, a look, the glance of a lustful eye; he is watchful, and is an excellent naturalist, skilled in the external gestures and motions of the spirits.

[2.] Against privy distempers. We are not only to watch against actual sins, but the secret growing of evil habits, especially against deadness, drowsiness, and those distempers that insensibly creep upon the heart. Conversing with worldly pleasures and worldly objects breedeth a deadness, and withdraweth the heart ere we are aware. Natural conscience is kept waking against foul lusts and corruptions; they are in a dead sleep that can, as Jonah did, sleep in a storm, that fall into brutish practices without remorse. But the great end of spiritual watching is to keep the heart in frame, to prevent the sly encroachments of the world. But how shall we know when the world doth encroach? I answer—When your care is lessened towards heavenly things, and your delight is lessened in them.

(1.) When your care is lessened towards heavenly things, you are not so serious, so frequent in communion with God. This is Martha's fault; she 'was cumbered about much serving, while Mary sat at Jesus his feet, and heard his words,' Luke x. When you begin to lessen your course of duty, though the same abilities, opportunities, and necessities continue, and only out of respect to the world, it is a carnal distemper, especially when the world beginneth to upbraid conscience. If I hear as much, and pray as much, and meditate as much as I was wont, it will engross my time and hinder my worldly pursuits. As Sarah thrust Ishmael out of doors when he began to scoff at Isaac, it is good to thrust the world out of the heart when it encroacheth too much. Be it the world of carnal delight, or of carnal profit, when it would defraud God, or the soul, or the family of its due allowance, it is sad.

(2.) When your delight is lessened, and you have lost your savour of the word or the ordinances, or sabbath, and prize communion with God less, God is defrauded: 1 John ii. 15, 'Love not the world, nor the things of the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' The love of the world hath made you weary of God. When the affections are scattered to other objects, it is adultery; the wife of the bosom is defrauded of her right. So it is spiritual adultery when the world hath intercepted your delight, and you go a-whoring after it. It is idolatry to divert our trust, and adultery to divert our delight. Worldliness is expressed by both terms—adultery and idolatry: Ps. lxxiii. 27, 28, 'Thou hast destroyed all them that go a-whoring from thee; but it is good for me to draw near to God.' Estrangement of affection from God is called there, 'going a-whoring from God,' and opposed to delight in communion with God. And it is spiritual idolatry: Col. iii. 5, 'Mortify your earthly members; fornication, &c., and covetousness, that is idolatry.' And Eph. v. 5, 'No covetous person, that is an idolater, shall inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.' Therefore though we do not run

into gross sins, we must watch against these distempers, lessening of our care of and delight in heavenly things.

2. Pray. God is the best guardian and keeper; he must watch over our watching: Ps. cxli. 3, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my lips, and keep the door of my mouth.' Our security lieth in the restraints of his grace and the conduct of his Spirit: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' Give your souls to Christ to keep; it is our best jewel, it is fit it should be in safe hands. In every prayer we do anew charge Christ with our souls; the heart is best kept when commended to Christ. To quicken you, consider how weak the highest saints have been, when God hath loosed his hand and left them to themselves. David was a holy man, a grown man, a saint of long standing, of many experiences, yet he was overcome by his eyes. Joseph was a youth, a servant, had a fair opportunity, which David wanted; he did not tempt, but was tempted, yet he resisted: Gen. xxxix. 9, 'How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God?' Who would have thought that Lot, that was kept righteous in Sodom, should have miscarried in the mountain, where there was none but his own family? God sometimes will show us such instances, that we may learn to wait and depend on him.

5. Observe the necessity of God's keeping. Christ would never make a prayer to his Father for it if it had been in their own power to keep themselves. It is God must keep us; if he doth but leave us to grapple with a temptation in our own strength, we are soon gone: 'Keep them from evil.' This point hath been of often recourse in this prayer, therefore I shall be the briefer in it:—(1.) How God keepeth us; (2.) Why God keepeth us.

First, How God keepeth us? God hath many ways of keeping us, but they may be reduced to two—either by his Spirit or providence.

1. All the inward work is despatched by the Spirit, by the power of which he suppresseth inclinations to sin, and layeth on restraints of grace: Gen. xx. 6, 'I withheld thee from sinning against me.' So in his people he weakeneth the power of sin, prevents us by the counsels of his grace from giving consent, leaves the awe of grace upon the soul to weaken the power of sin: Jer. xxxii. 40, 'I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me;' and giveth actual strength when tempted: 2 Cor. xii. 9, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' and when we fall God raiseth us, that we perish not. Sometimes God lets us fall; as a father, when the child is busy about the fire, puts his finger to a coal, that he may be afraid of it. It is one of his methods to bring us to heaven, to make us taste of sin's bitterness. David prayeth, 'Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free Spirit,' Ps. li. 12.

2. By his providence.

[1.] He removeth the provoking occasions and objects of sin: Ps. cxxv. 3, 'The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest they put forth their hand to do iniquity' We need this outward help; if we had oftener occasions, we should be more angry, more voluptuous, more worldly.

[2.] Violent temptations are not permitted where he seeth we are

most weak. As Jacob drove as the little ones were able to bear, 1 Cor. x. 13, 'God will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but with the temptation will make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.' He doth not give us into the enemies' hands, and leave us to the malice of Satan or the violence of men; all is guided with wisdom and care.

[3.] By withholding occasions and opportunities, when temptation hath prevailed: Job xxxiii. 17, 'That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.' When we have conceived a purpose, God hindereth the execution; such disappointments are a great mercy.

Secondly, Why God alone must keep us.

1. From the nature of God. He is able: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him;' 1 Peter i. 5, 'Who are kept by the power of God;' Jude 24, 'To him that is able to keep you from falling.' He is wise: 2 Peter ii. 9, 'The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.' God is skilful and well versed in this work. God is faithful, and will not fail: 2 Thes. iii. 3, 'The Lord is faithful, who will stablish you, and keep you from evil.' Our establishment and preservation from damning sins is among the blessings of the covenant; his faithfulness lieth at stake.

2. From our weakness. We cannot keep ourselves. We are so weak, we are apt to consent to lusts, or to faint under afflictions. We can no more stand against Satan than a lamb can against a wolf. The world hath a treacherous party in our own hearts. The best things are most dependent—a sheep, not a wolf; a vine, not a bramble; a saint, he is always depending.

*Use* 1. Do not forfeit God's keeping. This may be done; therefore we pray, Mat. vi. 13, 'Lead us not into temptation.' God, as a judge, puts us for our exercise under Satan's hands; as a malefactor is put into the serjeant's hands, if he will not be ruled; this is a spiritual excommunication. Partly to cure us of self-confidence, or resting in our own strength. We use to try men that boast with a heavy burden; so doth the Lord: Judges x. 14, 'Go and cry unto the gods whom ye hath chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.' Partly to cure us of neglect and unthankfulness, when we do not take notice of God's keeping, when God hath lent us his grace, and we think we are not beholden to him; as if a man is weary, and another should lend him his staff to go by, and thereupon he should begin to slight him. He taketh no notice of his preservation that doth not walk answerably to it; dependence should beget observance: Phil. ii. 12, 13, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, to will and to do according to his good pleasure.' When we do not thrive under his custody it is scandalous. God will take away the hedge, let the boar of the forest come in and eat them down.

*Use* 2. To press the children of God to two duties—dependence, confidence.

1. Dependence: 1 Chron. xx. 12, 'We have no might against this great company, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are up to thee.' We must profess that we do not stand by our own strength,

but are as a staff in the hand of a man, or a child in the hand of the father: Ps. lxx. 5, 'I am poor and needy, make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help, and my deliverer, make no tarrying, O my God.' God is honoured when we acknowledge him for our guardian.

2. Confidence that he will preserve us in that grace to which he hath called us in Christ. There will be shakings and wanderings, as a tree fastened at the root is driven to and fro with violent blasts. There may be an interruption of the acts of grace; as a man in a swoon, or as stunned by a great blow, but he is alive: so there may be particular falls, but we shall not fall constantly, readily, easily. As in a land flood the meadows may be overflown, but the marshes are drowned every tide. Preservation from damning sins is sure and certain; Christ hath asked it. God is able to keep us. Happy are they that have an interest in Christ's prayers, and that have God for a guardian. Therefore wait upon God with hope in the midst of temptations.

6. I observe from the last words, 'the evil,' from the evil one, or evil thing; it lieth indifferently.

[1.] From the evil one. Observe, Satan hath a great hand in the evils that befall us in the world, both afflictions and sin. He instigateth our enemies, and inflameth our lusts.

(1.) He instigateth our enemies. Christ said, Luke xxii. 53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness;' Rev. xii. 12, 'The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' If you could behold with bodily eyes this evil spirit hanging on the ears of the great men of the world and of the common people, to animate them against the saints, you would more admire the work of God that you do subsist.

(2.) He inflameth our sins and lusts: 1 Cor. vii. 3, 'Lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency.' The sin is ours, but Satan joins with it and makes it more violent; as in storms and tempests, when matter is prepared, the devil maketh them more formidable.

*Use* 1. Let persecutors take heed; the devil is near, and they are guided by him, though they see him not: Rev. xvi. 14, 'They are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth.'

*Use* 2. Here is advice to the people of God. (1.) To beware of sins, that you gratify not Satan with the displeasure of God. Do you think Peter would ever have given such advice to Christ as he did, if he knew Satan had been in it? Would carnal men ever lie if they knew the devil filled their hearts? Acts v. 3, 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost?' Would men sin so freely if they knew the hand of Satan was in all? And if the Lord should give you over to his power, if he should give Satan charge over you, how far might he hurry and carry you! (2.) Let this teach you dependence upon God so much the more: Eph. vi. 12, 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.' We have to do with the devil as well as men, and therefore have need to look up to God. And this is thy comfort, O christian, that God is stronger than Satan.

[2.] From the evil thing, that is, the evil of persecution; keep them

from being destroyed till they have accomplished their ministry. Observe, God keepeth his saints temporally, till their work is ended, by a special providence. He delivers them from diseases and from the fury of men as long as he hath any service for them in the world. Therefore, whenever you have escaped any visible and sensible danger, when you are come out of a terrible disease, or kept from the fury of men, improve it accordingly; it is for service.

But rather it may be understood of the evil of sin; keep them from the evil. And so the note is, that sin is the greatest evil. Christ doth not say, Keep them from trouble. No; let them ride out the storm; but keep them from the evil of sin.

## SERMON XXV

*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*—JOHN XVII. 16.

IN this verse Christ repeateth the argument used in the 14th verse. This repetition is not idle and of no use; it is Christ that speaketh. The reason of the repetition may be conceived either with respect to the disciples, the persons for whom and in whose hearing he prayed, and so it is to inculcate their duty; or with respect to God, the person to whom he prayed, and so he urgeth their danger. For in the 14th verse he showed this was the cause why the world hated them; now he maketh it the reason why he prayeth for them, that they may be kept: 'Keep them from the evil: they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.'

In the general observe, that repetitions of the same point are sometimes necessary: Phil. iii. 1, 'To write the same things to you, to me it is not grievous, but for you it is safe.' Repetition of the same things is tedious and irksome to nature, but profitable to grace. It is tedious to nature, partly out of an itch of novelty. Most men have but an adulterous love to truth; they love it while it is new and fresh; there is a satiety that groweth by acquaintedness; the Israelites grew weary of manna, though angels' food. Partly out of the impatiency of guilt; sores cannot endure to be rubbed again and again; frequency of reproof and admonition is like the rubbing of a sore, grievous to a galled conscience: John xxi. 17, Peter was grieved that he should say to him the third time, 'Lovest thou me?' as reviving his apostasy, bringing to remembrace his threefold denying of Christ, questioning his fidelity. Sinners do not love to be suspected or urged much; it reviveth guilt, and maketh it fly in the face of conscience. None are weary but they that cannot endure to be remembered of their duty. But it is profitable to grace—(1.) To cure weakness; (2.) To further duties.

First, To cure weakness. Our knowledge is little, our affections changeable, our memories weak, our attention slight.

1. Our knowledge is little. Narrow-mouthed vessels take in liquor by drops, so do we divine truths, and therefore you have need to hear

the same things often, that your understandings may grow familiar and acquainted with these notions: Isa. xxviii. 10, 'For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little.' They must be taught as little children are wont to be taught when they learn to read and write, to know letter after letter, and to draw line after line; we must go over it again and again, that you may understand it more. Frequent inculcation maketh us to observe every part and point; you take it in by degrees.

2. Our attention is small. We do consider it when we understand it. Since the fall, we have lost our settled and solemn thoughts; the roving vanity of our minds needeth this outward cure. When truth is again brought into the view of the understanding, the mind is set a-work; first we learn, and then we meditate. If christians would observe their hearts, they would find it hard to go along with the preacher at first hearing; but when they go over it in their thoughts, then it worketh spiritually, and they consider it with affection upon a review. Mary 'kept all these sayings in her heart,' Luke ii. 51. We mind things but slightly, there must be apprehension before musing; study findeth out a truth, meditation improveth it.

3. Our memories are weak. We have a short memory in the best things. A man needeth no remembrancer to put him in mind of worldly gain, and to revenge injuries; but as to good things, our memories are as a bag with holes, or as a grate or sink, that retaineth the mud, and lets the running water go: Heb. ii. 1, 'Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.' We are as sandy ground or leaky vessels; we have much lost the practical memory, have few actual thoughts of truths in the season of them. Men forget what we have told them of God's justice, his omnipresence, the day of judgment. When we are about to faint under afflictions, Heb. xii. 5, 'Have ye forgotten the exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto children?' 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked by him.' It is a main office of the Spirit to remember us of truths in their season: John xiv. 26, 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.' It is one thing to know, another thing to remember; seasonable thoughts are a great relief in temptation: 2 Tim. iv. 2, 'Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season,' εὐκαίρως, ἀκαίρως. We may press truths when there is no such express need of them, in season press them again; it is a great advantage.

4. Our wills are slow and averse. It is not enough for a slow and dull servant to hear the commands of his master, but they must be often told him. We must be urged again and again, as Christ doth Peter. The heart is averse and deceitful; we give a slight answer to the first demand, Will you do this for God? 2 Peter i. 12, 13, 'Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be stablished in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance.' Most men love to hear, as being greedy of novelty and speculation, expecting things that are rare

and less known. It is our duty to press things that are more known, to urge the will: 1 John ii. 21, 'I have not written to you, because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth;' not to acquaint them with new doctrine, but to urge them to steadfastness. All preaching is not to enlighten the understanding, but to gain the will, to stir you up again. Our affections are changeable; heated water groweth cold again: we have need of the same truths to revive our frame. Our affections soon flag, as a bird cannot always keep upon the wing, and remembrance worketh not so much as present excitement. It were an excellent work to put you into the same frame again. Our corruptions and temptations daily arise; we lose what we have wrought, we had need be quickened anew, put in mind again, that we may be kept in a good frame: 2 Peter iii. 1, 'This second epistle I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.'

Secondly, It helpeth duties.

1. Meditation. The mind worketh freely upon such objects to which it is accustomed; in things rare and seldom heard of there is more need of study than meditation, to search them out.

2. It helpeth application. We hear to do and practise, not only to know. We do not hear to store the head with notions, but that the life and heart might be bettered.

*Use* 1. Let it not be grievous to you to hear the same things pressed. Common truths are not too plain for our mouths, nor too stale for your ears. If you should hear the same sermon preached again, observe God's providence: 'A sparrow doth not fall to the earth without our heavenly Father.' Have I considered of this, meditated of it? Doth not my heart need it again? Sure there is somewhat in it that God directeth the minister to it again. Usually we come to hear sermons with an unmortified ear, and bewray an itch of novelty, as the Athenians, who loved to hear of new things. And this puts preachers upon ungrounded subtleties and quintessential extracts, and so the gravity and sobriety of religion is lost. Or else there is pride in it, as if they were above these common helps; the most learned need a remembrancer. Some will say, This I knew before; they can teach me no more than I know already: 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3, 'If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know: but if any man love God, the same is known of him.' Dost thou practise what thou knowest? This is a new hint from God to humble thee, to quicken thee. God seeth that I do not live up to my knowledge, and therefore the same truth is returned. Preachers should hear sermons, as prophets studied their own prophecies, as godly, as prophets; there is difference between the man and the prophet. Or else for want of affection. In music, if a man hear an excellent lesson, he would hear it again; the second hearing is sweetest to a gracious heart. If it be grievous to any, it is to us that do more deeply consider it, and weigh it before it is brought. If it be not grievous to us, it is safe to you. It is a great wantonness and gluttony when men cannot endure to eat twice of one dish.

*Use* 2. It serveth to encourage you in your private exercises of rehearsing and meditation; this is chewing the cud: Ps. lxii. 11, 'God

hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth to God;' it was often revolved in the mind. The meat is taken into the mouth, and digestion is afterward. Repetition is the outward help, meditation the inward; conscience preacheth over the sermon again to the heart.

*Use* 3. To ministers, not only to study new things, but to inculcate those that are of a common use: Jude 5, 'I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this.' We are not to content your curiosity, but to provide for your benefit; not to please the Athenian, but to profit the christian. We are not cooks, but physicians. People do not remember half we preach, or they lose their affections. Christ often repeateth the same sentences, so do the apostles. You may repeat the same things, only with these cautions:—

1. That it be in matters mainly necessary. There are some standing dishes at Christ's table.

2. That it be with variety of enforcement, to avoid tediousness, *κοίνα καινῶς*. There are several notions to help us; every time we should have new thoughts, *adoro plenitudinem sacræ scripturæ*, that all be subjected to profit, not a cover to laziness. There is much of God's providence to be observed in inclining the heart; not only the efficacy of the Spirit in quickening gifts is to be regarded, but the power of his providence in determining the thoughts. Much of God is to be seen in the choice of the subject.

But let us look upon the words more particularly; the reasons of this repetition, with respect to the disciples, or to God.

First, With respect to the disciples. It is repeated in their ears for their comfort and instruction: 'They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.' It either noteth their outward condition, or their inward temper and constitution, or both; they have little of the world's respect, and the world hath little of theirs: Gal. vi. 14, 'The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.' A dead man hanging on the cross is a miserable and ignominious spectacle. I despise the world, and the world despiseth me, as a crucified man is made an object of shame and scorn. Paul sought not after the world, nor did the world seek after him. All the honours, pomps, delights, which the world doteth upon, were as a crucified man in whom there is no form and comeliness why he should desire them; thus they are to a gracious eye. Both senses are taken, and the pattern will agree to both—Christ's Spirit, Christ's life.

Take it for their constitution and temper of mind: 'They are not of the world, as I am not of the world.' Christ repeateth it again in the hearing of the disciples.

Observe, that we can never enough be cautioned against the world. We had need to be pressed often and often in this matter.

1. Because of our proneness to it. The love of the world is natural to us. We need it in part, and we love it more than we need it. There are several reasons; partly because worldliness is a part of original sin; it is a disease we are born with. The commandment that forbiddeth the original sin saith, 'Thou shalt not covet.' It is hard for any to say they are not tempted to covetousness; it is their nature. Partly by custom; we are daily conversant about the things of the

world; our affections receive taint from the objects with which we usually converse; long converse is a bewitching thing. Partly because it is of a present enjoyment; we have the world in hand and heaven in hope, and think heaven a fancy, a notion, and the world substance: Prov. viii. 17, 'Riches and honours are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.' The judgment of men is different from the judgment of the word: we have a sensible experience of the profit of the world. Partly because it is a serious sin, applauded by men: Ps. x. 3, 'The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.' Men think well of it, and stroke it with a gentle censure; it is not so foul an act. A drunkard is more liable to reproach than a worldling. It is consistent with the gravity and strictness of profession. Religion is a serious thing, and of all corruptions it is most incident to them that profess religion; the dissoluteness of luxury will not stand with the external gravity and strictness of profession; licentious persons do procure shame, and are publicly odious. Partly because it is a cloaked sin: 1 Thes. ii. 5, 'Neither at any time used we flattering words, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness.' It is hard to discover it and find it out, there are so many evasions, of necessity, providence, and provision. It is a great part of religion to 'keep ourselves unspotted from the world,' James i. 27.

2. Because of the heinousness and danger of it. It is called adultery: James iv. 4, 'Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.' It is most unsuitable to the matrimonial contract between God and the soul, wherein God propoundeth himself as God all-sufficient. Now, as if we had not enough in God, men go a-whoring to the creatures. It is idolatry: Col. iii. 5, 'And covetousness, which is idolatry.' So Eph. v. 5, 'No covetous person, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.' It diverteth our trust, robbeth God of the fairest flower in his crown, of his sovereignty, the trust and dependence of the creature. It is 'enmity with God,' James iv. 4. The world is the greatest encroacher upon God and grace; it robbeth God and destroyeth grace. The comforts of christianity relish not with them that love the world. It is impossible at the same time to look with one eye to heaven and another to the earth.

3. Because of the unsuitableness of it to the divine nature. It is most unsuitable to the new nature: 1 John v. 4, 'Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.' It is unsuitable to our hopes. God hath provided heaven on purpose to draw us off from the world. God is most liberal in this world to the worst; as Judas had the bag. These are gifts for worldly men, not for God's favourites: Gen. xxv. 6, 'Unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son.' Isaac had the inheritance. It is contrary to the aim of Christ; his whole aim in coming and going was to bring us to heaven: Heb. xi. 16, 'Now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a country.'

*Use.* To press us to beware the more of worldliness. Christ doth once and again say, 'They are not of the world.' 2 Kings v. 26, 'Is

it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?' Especially in these times, in which so many miscarry by worldly practices, and when God hath declared so much of his displeasure against worldly greatness. To this end—

1. Consider your condition; you are strangers and pilgrims. David was a king, yet not at home in the world: Ps. xxxix. 12, 'I am a stranger, and a sojourner with thee, as all my fathers were.' We never read that Abraham made any purchase but of a grave; Cain built a city. We are gone hence to-morrow, and who would hang a room in an inn?

2. We are called to better things: 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12, 'As ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.' It is not for princes to embrace the dunghill. Who would believe that a man raking in a dunghill or nasty ditch were heir to a crown? You show yourselves hereby to be unworthy of heaven.

3. Take the apostle's argument: 1 Tim. vi. 7, 'We brought nothing with us into the world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out.' The millwheel turneth round all day, but at night it is in the same place. So at death, we are in the same estate as at our birth. A man's wealth doth not follow him, but his works do. Your iniquity will find you out. You did not come rich into the world, and you were born to die. In our birth we were contented with a little cradle, at death with a little grave; but here we join house to house, as if the whole world would not contain us.

4. Consider how hard it is to have Christ and the world, to have heaven and the world: Mat. xvi. 26, 'What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' You are put to your choice; who would lose a crown to be owner of a dunghill? It is a vain design to think to reconcile Christ and mammon.

5. Thou art as thy love is. If thou lovest this world thou art worldly; if thou lovest God thou art godly. A man is not as his opinion is, but as his affection is; a bad man may be of a good opinion, but a bad man can never have good affections. The soul is as wax, it receiveth an impression from the object. Take a glass, put it towards heaven, there you shall see the figure of heaven; put it towards the earth, and you see the figure of the earth, trees, meadows, fruits: thou receivest a figure from the objects to which thou appliest thy heart, earthly things or heavenly.

But you will say, What would you have us do? Is it a fault to enjoy the world? No; but to have a worldly spirit.

(1.) Be not of a worldly spirit when thou wantest the things of this world. Be not over-careful for the things of this life; use the means God hath ordained, trust God with the issue and event of all. Carking implies not only distrust, but discontent with God's allowance; and both imply worldliness, distrust, and fear: Luke xii. 22, 'Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.' I am sure discontent doth. Be contented with a mean

condition; if these things were good for us, God would never deny them to us, never have bidden us to contemn them. Saints are never more illustrious than when they have least of the world; the less splendour they have in the world the more bright and glorious are they; had the saints a worldly glory, their grace would not appear with such advantage.

(2.) Be not of a worldly spirit when thou hast the world. A godly man may be a rich man; but take heed of trust, immoderate delight, and pride in them. Do not trust in them, for they are vain; nor delight in them, for they are snares; nor be proud of them, they do not make us better; we do not value a horse by the trappings, but by his spirit and courage. We may accept the allowance of providence; it is not having wealth, but setting the heart upon it, nor the enjoyment, but trust in it, that is condemned: Ps. lxii. 11, 'Trust not in oppression, become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.' You will be apt to do it; but divert your heart, draw it off into another country: 1 Tim. vi. 17, 'Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches;' and ver. 19, 'Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.' Get a bank in heaven, make an advantage of it for religion, to confirm your title to heaven by more evidences. Our wealth follows us not into another world, but our works do. A man that loveth his money is willing to part with it, to assure his title to an earthly inheritance.

(3.) Be not dejected and over-sorrowful when thou losest them; thou art but delivered of a burden, a charge, and a snare; riches are a clog to thee. We are sure to give an account.

Take the words as they denote the outward condition of the disciples: 'They are not of the world;' that is, not respected by it, as if they were of their number and faction, left out of the world's tale and count.

1. Observe, it is a hard thing to digest the world's neglect and disrespect. We had need be urged again and again; partly because every one would be somebody in the world, and have some interest here, τὶς μέγας; and when we miss our aims, sorrow is obstinate, sufferings harsh and irksome to flesh and blood, because we admire things below, and have too good an opinion of them.

*Use.* This should be regarded by us in these times. When some grasp the world, and use all kind of means to get it into their hands, others are apt to envy at them; when they see others have all, and themselves poor, men think themselves wronged.

1. Let them alone; look after better things: Ps. xvii. 14, 'From men of the world, who have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy good things.' If they grow fat upon common mercies, we have no reason to pine and murmur. You have not such large estates, costly furniture, fine clothes, but you have a better heart; it is enough. Let the world's fondlings be dandled on the world's knees; you have a better portion, full breasts to suck on, purer consolations. When a river is troubled the mud will come on top. In troubles, sin would be uppermost. You have no reason to change conditions.

2. Remember by whose providence it falleth out. You think God is not wise enough; you will teach him whom to advance and whom not. Princes have their *arcana imperii*. Shall our servants know all our counsels? Many times God raiseth bad men to high places, not because they deserve it, but because the age deserveth no better: Phil. ii. 14, 15, 'Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God.'

3. If you are favoured by God, why should you trouble yourselves about the world's respects? In choosing heirs to salvation, God doth not ask their counsel. Thou hast the testimony of God's Spirit, and many now in hell have had much of the world's respects. Their disrespect cannot hurt thee; it may profit thee, if thou art not wanting to thyself. If God should take counsel of the world, whether he should assume thee to glory or cast thee into hell, then their respects were to be sought after; but God will deal with thee alone, not ask their opinion, but refer it to thine own conscience. If all the world should respect thee, what is this to God, who will judge thee by another rule? They had need of steady heads that walk on high places. When men study to preserve the world's good opinion they lose it. God is master of their respects. If men did not study to please the world, they would not only have more quiet, but more success.

2. Observe again, an excellent means to digest the world's neglect is to consider the example of Christ. It is our duty, it will be for our comfort, and it turneth to our profit.

1. It is our duty. In his example we have a taste of his Spirit: 'I am not of the world,' saith Christ; and we should 'imitate Christ as dear children,' Eph. v. 1. They that love to live in delight and pleasures are but christians in name. If we had no other reason to contemn the vanity of the world than the life of Christ, this were enough. Who was wisest, Christ or you? Who can make the better choice, Christ or you? Who is in error, Christ or you? Christ chose a poor life, and you affect greatness.

2. It will be your comfort. It is a sweet comfort in all conditions to remember the similitude of condition between Christ and us: 'Shall the disciple be above the lord?' What more honourable than to carry the cross after Jesus Christ? Christ hath worn this garment: Col. i. 24, 'Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.' Christ was exposed to the envy of Satan and his agents. Art thou better than Christ? He suffereth with us, because we should suffer with him: Mat. xxv. 45, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me;' Acts ix. 4, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Man and wife, if they love one another, had rather live together in the meanest estate than in the greatest glory and abundance asunder. Christ and a christian are fellow-sufferers; we are conformed to his sufferings, and he hath a feeling of ours.

3. It will be for our profit. The issue will be glorious; we must first suffer, then enter into glory; winter is before the spring: Rom. viii. 17, 'If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together;' 2 Cor. iv. 10, 'Always bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest

in our mortal flesh;' 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 'It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.' If we would be like Christ in glory, we must be like him in suffering.

*Use.* Meditate on this. God had but one Son, he came into the world without sin, but he could not get out without a cross. Art thou poor? so was Christ. Hast thou enemies? so had he. Art thou disdained? Christ went this way to glory, and so must thou. He was charged maliciously, blackened with slanders, accused falsely, &c., the like usage you must expect.

Secondly, With respect to God. How solicitous is Christ about those who are not of the world! Compare ver. 14 with this. His Father's choice must be made good; his own delight is in those that are like him. Christ loveth himself, and his own reflection in the saints. Christ is at perfect antipathy with the world; and a christian loveth what he loves and hateth what he hates. If you have the world's hatred against you, remember you have Christ's prayers.

## SERMON XXVI.

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*—JOHN XVII. 17.

HERE is Christ's second request for his disciples. Where—

1. The request itself, *sanctify them.*
2. The manner how it is to be accomplished, *through thy truth.*
3. The reason why it is to be so accomplished, *thy word is truth.*

The main points are the influence of truth upon sanctification, and that the word is the public record and register of this truth.

Now I shall make some entrance upon the verse.

*First,* The request; and here—(1.) What he prayeth for; (2.) To whom; (3.) For whom.

First, What he prayeth for, sanctification.

1. Observe, Our chief aim in prayer for ourselves and others should be to be sanctified. Christ prayeth for sanctification.

[1.] What it is to be sanctified. To sanctify is—(1.) To consecrate or set apart for some holy use; (2.) To cleanse or purify; (3.) To adorn with gifts of grace.

Some prefer the first acceptation, and apply it particularly to the apostolical calling. 'Sanctify them,' that is, separate them, and set them apart for the work of an apostle. So Christ was sanctified, that is, set apart for the work of redemption. But it is not sanctify them *for* thy truth, but *in* or *by* thy truth, ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ; and therefore this scripture hath a more general respect and signification. However, in the work of holiness, all the senses may be taken in; for whoever are sanctified are set apart, cleansed, and adorned with grace.

(1.) Set apart by God and by themselves. By God, both in time and before time. Before time they are set apart by God's decree, to be a holy seed to himself in and by Christ; separated from the

perishing world, to be vessels of honour, as the reprobate are called vessels of wrath and dishonour; set apart by God's election, chosen to be holy: Eph. i. 4, 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.' But then in time they are regenerated, and so actually set apart. Sanctification is an actual election. By election they are distinguished from others in God himself, so by regeneration and sanctification they are distinguished from others in themselves, separated and set apart from the perishing world, to act for God, to seek the things that may make for his glory: James i. 18, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.' The first-fruits were the Lord's portion. Or else by the consent of their own vows: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you that you present yourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, that is your reasonable service.' They have dedicated and devoted themselves to God. God calleth for it when he saith, 'My son, give me thy heart.' God will have his own right established by the creatures' consent; it is a necessary fruit of grace.

(2.) Purged by degrees, and made free from sin; this is to be sanctified, to be purged from the corruption of sin and the world. We are not only accounted holy, but we are made holy, and that cannot be till we are purged, because we come into the world polluted with the stain of sin: 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' There is a stain and an uncleanness sticketh to our natures and defileth all our actions; we need to be purged.

(3.) Endowed with God's image and likeness; not only cleansed from sin, but adorned with grace; as the priests under the law were not only washed, but adorned with gorgeous apparel. To be sanctified is more than to be purified, because it noteth not only the expulsion of sin, but the infusion of grace: 2 Tim. ii. 12, 'If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.' Besides purging, sanctification addeth somewhat more; they are not only purged from the filthiness of sin, but prepared by the infusion of grace for every good work, made holy as God is holy.

[2.] Why we should chiefly mind it in prayer?

(1.) Because of the excellency of it. It is God's glory, angels' glory, saints' glory. God's glory: Exod. xv. 11, 'God is glorious in holiness.' Angels' glory, who are called, Mat. xxv. 31, 'Holy angels.' And the saints' glory: Eph. v. 26, 27, 'That he might sanctify them with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy, and without blemish.' The church's honour lieth not in pomp and outward ornament, but in holiness.

(2.) Because God aimeth at it in all his dispensations. Election: Eph. i. 4, 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love;' 2 Thes. ii. 14, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.' God

chooseth us that we may be of a choice spirit. As when Esther was chosen out among the virgins, then she was decked with ornaments, so when we are chosen by God we are beautified with holiness. Redemption: Eph. v. 26, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word.' His promises: 2 Peter i. 4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' His providences: Heb. xii. 10, 'They verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Earthly parents correct their children out of mere passion, but he to renew our affections, to sanctify us for himself, that the husk may fly off. He bestows blessings to encourage us in holiness: 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 'Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;' that your riches may be instruments of piety, not occasions to the flesh. It is our corruption to turn all things to a carnal use. His ordinances: 'That he might sanctify them by the washing of water, through the word.' Eph. v. 26. This is God's aim, and it should be ours.

*Use.* Is to teach us what to seek for ourselves and others; not temporal felicity so much as sanctification; not deliverance from afflictions, nor outward blessings, so much as the sanctified use of them. This is to pray for one another out of the communion of the Spirit, and for ourselves out of a principle of the divine nature. Temporal blessings are only to be desired in order to spiritual ends. Nature is allowed to speak, but grace must be heard first: Mat. vi. 33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you.' These are for overplus.

2. Observe from the matter, he had prayed for conservation from evil, now for sanctification. It is not enough to keep from evil, but we must be holy, and do good: Ps. xxxiv. 14, 'Depart from evil, and do good;' Isa. i. 16, 17, 'Cease to do evil, learn to do well.' God hateth evil and delighteth in good; as we must hate what God hateth, so we must love what God loveth. *Eadem velle et nolle.* I durst not sin, God hateth it; I durst not omit this duty, God loveth it. Our obedience must carry a proportion with the divine mercy; not only be positive but privative. Divine mercy spareth and saveth: 'God is a sun and a shield,' Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Therefore we must not 'walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful;' but our delight must be 'in the law of the Lord, and in his law must we meditate day and night,' Ps. i. 1, 2. We must have communion with Christ in all his acts, in his death and resurrection. He mortifieth sin and quickeneth the heart: Rom. vi. 11, 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' The same divine power that killeth the old man quickeneth the new. In the word, which is the rule, there are precepts and restraints; therefore we are not only to escape from sin, but there must be a delight in communion

with God; there must be an eschewing what God forbiddeth, and a practising what God commandeth. Thus are we obliged from our approver, our principles, our encouragements, our rule.

*Use.* Let it press us not to rest in abstaining from sin. Men are not vicious, but they are not sanctified. The pharisees' religion ran upon negatives.

1. Both are alike contrary to the new nature.
2. Both are alike disserviceable to the work of grace.
3. Both are hated by God.

1. Both are contrary to the new nature; it hateth evil and loveth good. There is a putting off and a putting on: Eph. iv. 22, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' It is indeed a question where the trial of a christian lieth most sensibly, in mortification or vivification? in a hatred of sin or in the practice of duty? It may be alleged that our nature doth more easily close with precepts than prohibitions. We are many times content to do much; if the law require this or that, we yield and consent to it; but to be limited and debarred of our delights, this is most distasteful. Men that love sin cannot endure restraints: Oh! that there were no bonds! And therefore, to meet with man's corruption, the decalogue consists more of prohibitions than precepts; the fourth and fifth commandments are only positive. But then, on the other side, it may be alleged that many that live a civil life, and do no man wrong, have no care of communion with God, and that sins trouble the conscience more than want of grace. Natural conscience doth not use to smite for spiritual defects. Sins work an actual distemper and disturbance to reason. It is the new nature that maketh conscience of duties, and of obeying God's precepts, therefore the new nature is here most tried; but yet both must be regarded.

2. Both are alike disserviceable to the work of grace. It is another question whether we are more hardened by sins of omission or by sins of commission? For sins of commission, it may be alleged that they stun the conscience, like a great blow on the head, and cast grace into a swoon. David's adultery put all out of order: 2 Sam. xii. 14, 'Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child which is born of thee shall surely die.' He lay in a spiritual swoon till the child was born. But then on the other side, neglect of duty depriveth us of the influences of grace, and hardens us insensibly. An instrument, though never so well in tune, yet if you let it alone, it will soon be out of order, worse than if a string were broken. After some great and sudden fall into sin, there may be a recovery, as in David's case, but it is hard to recover out of long neglects; therefore sins of omission are more dangerous than sins of commission. And if your communion with God be not constant, the heart contracts rust. A key that is seldom turned is rusted in the lock; by neglect and omission of God and duties the heart is wonderfully hardened and estranged from God. Gifts and graces languish and perish in idleness: 2 John 8, 'Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought.'

Standing pools are apt to putrify; and sins increase as well as unfitness for duties, the motions of the Spirit are quenched.

3. Both are odious to God. It is a question whether God hateth most the careless sluggish person or the outwardly vicious. A barren tree cumbereth the ground, and is rooted out, as well as the bramble. It is not enough that a servant do his master no hurt, but he must do his work. A husbandman is not contented that his land does not bear him briars and thorns, but it must yield him good grain. It is not enough to say, I am no swearer, no drunkard. What communion have you with God? What motions and feelings of the power of holiness? Want of grace depriveth a man of happiness. As you would not be damned in hell, so you should get evidences for heaven. Negative righteousness in abstinence from sin the brutes and inanimate creatures have; it is improper and lame. Omission of good duties is a more general means of destruction than commission of evil; but then commission of evil is ever accompanied with omission of good, but omission of good is not always accompanied with commission of evil. He that doth evil dishonoureth God more, but he that omitteth good disadvantageth himself more. Sin is more odious than want of grace in itself; yet want of grace, considering our advantages, may provoke God as much as commission of sin.

Secondly, To whom he prays: 'Holy Father, sanctify them.'

Observe, it is God must sanctify us; we cannot ourselves, and means will not without God.

1. We cannot ourselves. We could defile ourselves, but we cannot cleanse ourselves; as little children defile themselves, but the nurse must make them clean. A sheep can wander of itself, but it is brought home upon the shepherd's shoulders. *Domine, errare per me potui, redire non potui.* God, that gave us his image at first, must again stamp it on the soul. Who can repair nature depraved but the author of nature? When a watch is out of order we send it to the workman: Eph. ii. 10, 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that we might walk therein;' Lev. xxi. 8, 'I the Lord that sanctify thee am holy.' It is God's prerogative.

2. The means cannot without God. It is by the truth, but God is the principal cause. Sanctification is ascribed to many causes. To God the Father, as he decreeth it: Jude 1, 'To them that are sanctified by God the Father.' To the Son, as he merited it: Eph. v. 25, 26, 'He gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it.' To the Holy Ghost, as he effects it: 2 Thes. ii. 13, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit.' To faith, as it receiveth the grace of God: Acts xv. 9, 'Purifying their hearts by faith.' To the word, as the instrument of begetting it: John xv. 3, 'Now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you;' it is the external means, but all efficacy is of God, and grace is his creature; else what should be the reason why the same word, preached by the same minister, worketh on some and hardeneth others, at least it amendeth them not? Lydia alone is converted, because the Lord 'opened her heart,' Acts xvi. 14. Man's will doth not put the difference, but God's grace.

*Use.* It presseth us—

1. To wait and look for it from God. A plant thriveth better by the dew of heaven than when watered by the hand. We may say as Peter, Acts iii. 12, 'Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk?' 'Am I in the place of God?' saith Jacob to Rachel, Gen. xxx. 2. When you look only to the teacher's gifts, you lose the divine operation; it may fill your heads with fancies and notions but not your hearts with grace.

2. To praise the Lord when it is accomplished: 1 Cor. iii. 5, 'What is Paul, or what is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye have believed?' as if children should thank the servants for what they have. Grace maketh us more in debt; you have received it from him, not from yourselves: 'Not I, but the grace of God in me;' 'Thy pound hath gained ten pounds.' If you have any holiness, any good work, it is not of yourselves, but of God. Every act, every degree of holiness, is from God.

Thirdly, For whom he prayeth, the apostles.

1. That were already holy: John xiii. 10, 'Ye are clean;' and in the verse immediately preceding, 'They are not of the world;' yet now, 'Sanctify them,' let their hearts be more heavenly, and their lives more pure every day.

Observe, those that are sanctified need to be sanctified more and more: Rev. xxii. 11, 'He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; he that is holy, let him be holy still.'

[1.] Our inward sanctification must increase, because of the weakness of present grace and the relics of corruption: 2 Cor. iv. 16, 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' It is not a work to be done at once: 1 Thes. v. 23, 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It is perfect in parts at first; the new creature doth not come out maimed; but not in degrees: there is need of more sanctification in spirit, in soul, in body; the kingdom of heaven increaseth by degrees.

[2.] Our outward man must be cleansed day by day, because of new defilements: John xiii. 10, 'He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.' It is an allusion to a man coming from the bath; his feet contract soil in the passage. Your persons are sanctified by the Spirit; but when you are never so holy, there are new defilements.

*Use* 1. Be not satisfied with any present degrees of grace. There is a holy covetousness: 'I count not myself to have attained,' Phil. iii. 14. Christ is so full that we cannot receive all at once.

2. It is a strange conceit in any to think they may be too good. When we begin to be unwilling to grow better, we begin to wax worse; it is a good degree of grace to know our defects.

3. Therefore let us use means to persist in holiness, to increase in holiness, especially prayer, which is the breath which God hath appointed to keep in the flame.

Again, For the persons once more: they were to preach the word; as a preparative, he prayeth for sanctification.

Observe, holiness is a good preparative to the ministry, and they are inwardly consecrated by the Spirit sanctifying them.

[1.] That they may have experience of the truth of the doctrine upon their own hearts. The apostles were to preach the truth to others; now saith he, 'Sanctify them through thy truth.' 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken,' Ps. cxvi. 10. We speak best when we speak by experience. This is the right way of getting sermons by heart. We are God's witnesses; now we should have sound experience: 1 John i. 1, 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life; that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.' Ezekiel was first to eat the roll, Ezek. iii. 1–3; not only to see it, and to hear it, but to eat it. Ministers must first eat themselves, then feed others. We are not to speak by hearsay, to deliver God's message as a mere narration, but out of a deep impression on the heart. What cometh from the heart and from experience is quick and lively.

[2.] For the honour of God. Carnal ministers bring a reproach upon the ordinances: 1 Sam. ii. 17, 'The sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.' Who will take meat out of a leprous hand?

[3.] To answer the types of the law. Aaron and his sons were sanctified for the Levitical priesthood, Exod. xxix. 4; to be washed with blood and oil, to be washed in the great laver, sprinkled with blood, anointed with oil, which denotes remission of sins, regeneration, the gifts of the Spirit: 1 John v. 8, 'There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood.' Every office should have a solemn consecration.

*Use* 1. Ministers should look to their inward call. They that are designed to serve God in a special manner must look after special purity. It breedeth atheism, when we do not live up to our doctrine. People will say they must say something for their living.

2. Let people look to their choice of ministers. There is a great deal of difference between an eloquent and an experienced pastor.

*Secondly*, We now come to the means or manner how Christ's request is is to be accomplished, 'by thy truth,' ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ. It may be rendered *in* thy truth, or *by* thy truth, or *through* thy truth; as ver. 19, ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, without an article, 'that they may be sanctified through the truth;' or, as in the margin, 'truly sanctified;' but we better render it 'by the truth;' there is an article τῇ, not in truth, but in the truth; and it is presently added, 'Thy word is truth.' So that it noteth not the kind of their sanctification, but the instrument and means. Now these words 'by thy truth' may be understood either of God's faithfulness or his revealed will, both which are called his truth. Of God's faithfulness, as ver. 11, τήρησον ἐν ὀνόματι σοῦ; so here, ἁγίασον ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, as 'keep them by thy power:' so sanctify them by, or according to thy truth and faithfulness. But this exposition, though plausible, yet is not so proper, because it is presently added, 'Thy word is truth,' By truth, then, is meant, not his faithfulness, but his revealed will. Now God hath revealed his will by the light of nature, or by the light of his word. That will of God which

is revealed by the light of nature is called truth; so the Gentiles are charged, Rom. i. 18, with 'holding the truth in unrighteousness,' τὸ γνῶστον; 'that which may be known of God,' ver. 19, is called truth. How came the Gentiles by the truth, who are strangers to the covenant of promise? The apostle answereth, much of God was known to them. But this truth that is here spoken of is the will of God made known in his word, or the knowledge of things necessary to salvation, concerning God and his worship, first delivered by the prophets, afterwards explained by Christ himself to the apostles, and by them consigned to the church. Now the truths delivered in the word may be referred to two heads—law and gospel. The distinction in Christ's time was law and prophets. In this place Christ chiefly intendeth the gospel; the truth which they were sent to preach to others, Christ would have them to have an experience of it themselves. And it is notable that in many places of scripture the gospel is called the truth, not only in opposition to human writings, but also with respect to the law and other parts of scripture, because it is truth by way of eminency, as we call the plague the sickness, as being the chief of the kind.

Before I come to the observations I must clear up the latter part of the text, 'Thy word is truth.' Why is this added? I answer—Either by way of explication, or by way of argument and reason.

1. By way of explication. Christ would pray intelligibly; some might ask, as Pilate did, 'What is truth?' John xviii. 38. Christ answereth, 'Thy word is truth.' The word is the authentic and public record of the church; the truth whereby we are sanctified is nowhere else to be found; all pretended truths are hereby to be examined.

2. Or else by way of argument and reason why Christ would have them to be sanctified by the truth, that they might have a saving experience of the power of it, and so the better preach it to others; then we know the truth of the word, when it sanctifieth.

This premised, I come to the point—

*Doct.* That God sanctifieth by his truth. I shall open the point in these propositions.

1. God's way of working is by light; and in infusing grace he beginneth with the understanding. He dealeth with man as a rational creature; and therefore not only teacheth, but draweth and sanctifieth the heart by enlightening the mind. As the rising of the sun doth not only dispel darkness but mists and vapours, so doth a saving light not only dispel ignorance but lusts. This way is spiritual life begun: Eph. v. 14, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' A man would have thought the apostle should rather have said, And Christ, shall give thee life, than 'give thee light.' It is the apostle's word; ἀποφώσει σοι, he shall shine upon thee, rather than ζωποιήσει, he shall quicken thee. But light is enough; the power of grace breaketh in upon the soul by the light of the gospel; as it is said of the natural life, John i. 4, 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' Reason and understanding are the fountain of life to men, so is spiritual reason and spiritual understanding to the soul. If the mind of a man were once spiritual, enlightened, and possessed of the ways of God, the heart could not utterly reject them.

There is a notional illumination, that, like a winter sun, shineth but warmeth not, leaveth no comfort and profit upon the heart. But a spiritual light is always effectual; for though the will and the judgment are distinct faculties, and the will is averse as the understanding is blind, yet God doth never soundly and thoroughly convince the judgment, but he moveth and inclineth the will. If we know things as we ought to know, 'as the truth is in Jesus,' Eph. iv. 21, the heart must needs close with the ways of God; for the will of man is not brutish, but reasonable, and acteth reasonably. Answerably to the discovery of good or ill in the understanding, there is a prosecution or aversation in the will. Therefore a thorough conviction of judgment must be the ground of grace in the heart; for God worketh in us, not only by a powerful and real efficacy, but agreeably to an intelligent nature, by teaching, persuading, counselling: nothing can be wrought in this moral way unless light and knowledge go before.

2. It must be a true, and not a false light. Truth sanctifieth, and error defileth: Titus i. 1, 'According to the acknowledgment of the truth that is after godliness.' Right thoughts of God and his ways preserve an awe in the heart, which both restraineth and reneweth. *Τὰ ὄρθα δόγματα περὶ Θεοῦ λεγόμενα ἁγίαζει τὴν ψυχήν*, saith Chrysostom. It is truth that cleanseth the heart; error leaveth a stain and defilement. The understanding and the will are like the head and stomach; a corrupt heart blindeth the mind, and a blind mind corrupts the heart; they mutually vitiate one another: as in a ruinous house, the upper room being uncovered, lets down the rain to founder the supporters below, and the rottenness of the supporters below weakeneth all above. Erroneous persons are generally represented in scripture as vain and sensual: Jude 8, 'These filthy dreamers defile the flesh.' First there is dreaming, and then defilement; error maketh way for looseness, and a vain mind for vile affections. Partly by God's just judgment: some opinions seem to be remote, and lie far enough from practice, yet the persons that profess them are generally loose. Nay, some errors seem to encourage strictness, as doctrines concerning the power of nature, and the merit of good actions; but we find it is otherwise. Duty is best pressed upon God's terms: Phil. ii. 12, 13, 'Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.' By the judgment of God, such are of loosest life. God will have his glory kept unstained. Idolatry is expressed by whoredom; bodily uncleanness ends in spiritual:[1] Hosea iv. 12, 13, 'My people ask counsel of their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them; for the spirit of whoredoms have caused them to err, and they go a-whoring from under their God. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good. Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredoms, and your spouses shall commit adultery.' So Rom. i. 23, 24, 'They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and

[1] Qu. 'Spiritual uncleanness ends in bodily'?—ED.

creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.' Partly by a natural efficacy; the spirit is embased by error, and all false principles have a secret and pestilential influence on the life and practice. We lose a sense and care of piety, if we have not a right apprehension of God's essence and will; a frame of truth keepeth an awe. Therefore, where there is so much truth as to sanctify, yet because it is mingled with falsehood, there is no such reverence of God, no such strictness. Unbelief is the mother of sin; misbelief is the nurse of it. In error there is a sinful confederacy between the rational and the sensual part, and so carnal affections are gratified with carnal doctrines.

3. Every true light will not serve the turn, but it must be the light of the word. God hath reserved this honour of sanctifying the heart to the doctrine of the scriptures, to evidence their divine original: James i. 18, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.' The great change that is wrought in the heart of man is by the word. A moral lecture may make a man change his life, but the word of God maketh a man change his heart, as Xenocrates' moral lectures made Pollemo leave his vicious and sensual course of life; but regeneration is only found in the school of Christ: 'He hath begotten us by the word of truth.' And the ordinance of preaching the word is consecrated to this purpose: Eph. v. 26, 'That he might sanctify them by the washing of water through the word.' There are other occasional helps, but this is the instituted means. God will work no other way in his ordinary and revealed course, and will accept no other obedience and sanctification but by the word. Holiness, or that piety which is proper and genuine, is wrought by a divine truth, otherwise it is superstition, not godliness; civility, not holiness of conversation. Though men have never so good an inclination, yet because they have not a divine revelation for their warrant, it is but a bastard religion, superstition, or framing a strictness of our own, accompanied with opposition against the truth. The word and Spirit are in conjunction: Isa. lix. 21, 'My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth,' &c. These act in conjunction, and it is for the honour of the scriptures that God hath annexed them: 1 Thes. v. 19, 20, 'Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesying.' Preaching of the word and pouring out of the Spirit go together.

4. Every part of the truth worketh not, but only the gospel, which is the truth, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*. The law showeth us our spots, and the gospel cleanseth and washeth them away. The work of the law is preparation, but that which hath a special and direct influence upon sanctification is the gospel: John xv. 3, 'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you;' and that was the gospel privilege. This pulleth in the heart to God, that we may be partakers of his grace. Moses brought them to the borders, but Joshua brought them into the land of Canaan. The apostle appealeth to the experience of believers: Gal. iii. 2, 'This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' Though the Spirit may be received by the preaching of any part of

canonical scripture, yet most usually by the preaching of the gospel. The Lord would give us this sensible and authentic proof of the truth and excellency of the gospel, that we receive the Spirit of regeneration by it, and not by the law. It is the instrument by which God useth to confer the Spirit. So 2 Peter i. 4, 'To us are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we may be made partakers of the divine nature.' What part of the word worketh the heart to a conformity to God, likeneth us in holiness to God? The great and precious promises. It is not by moral strains, nor by terrible threatenings; these have their use in their place; but by the great and precious promises, as God was in the still voice.

5. The gospel worketh not unless it be accompanied with the Spirit. There is a great deal of difference between seeing things in the light of reason, and seeing things in the light of the Spirit. Truth represented in the light of reason begets but a human faith, leaveth a weak impression, and hath but a weak operation upon the soul; but things represented in the light of the Spirit worketh quite otherwise; there is not only a notional irradiation, but an experimental feeling; they see another manner of beauty and excellency in Christ, a vanity in worldly delights, which they never saw before. Running water and strong water differ not in colour, but in taste and virtue: John xvi. 13, 'When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth;' 1 John ii. 27, 'The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things.' Most men content themselves with a superficial belief; they have but a human knowledge of divine things, and therefore their souls are not carried out to holiness, love, fear, trust, obedience; they have a cold and naked apprehension: literal knowledge is washy and weak, it worketh not: 1 Peter i. 22, 'Seeing ye have purified your souls, in obeying the truth through the Spirit.'

6. This must not only be represented in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, but received and applied by faith. Sanctification is sometimes ascribed to the gospel, and sometimes to faith, which receiveth the gospel: Acts xv. 9, 'Purifying their hearts by faith.' Our hearts are purified by the word of truth: 1 Peter i. 22, 'Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit.' Here they were purified by faith. The word worketh not without an act on our part as well as on God's: 'The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it,' Heb. iv. 2; as a plaster worketh not till it be applied to the sore. Nay, the apostle's word implieth more; the word must not only be applied to the soul, but mingled with the soul, *συγκεκραμένος*. As in a medicine, the ingredients must be mixed together to do good; so if we have the word, we must have the Spirit, and we must have faith; mix it altogether, and then it worketh. Faith receiveth the word as a divine and infallible truth, and that begets an awe.

In short, faith working to sanctification, apprehends the love of God, the blood of Christ, the promises, precepts of the word; and by all these it is ever purging and working out corruption. By apprehending the love of God: Gal. v. 6, 'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision

availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love.' Shall I love that which God hateth? 'Oh! do not this abominable thing that I hate,' Jer. xliv. 4. Faith representeth God pleading thus: Is this thy kindness to thy friend? do I thus requite God for all his kindness to me in Christ? There is an exasperation against lusts. It maketh use of the blood of Christ: 1 John i. 7, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins;' Heb. ix. 14, 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?' That is an excellent purger. In outward purging it is the water and the soap cleanseth, but the hand of the laundress applieth it, and rubbeth the clothes that are washed. Faith apprehendeth the blood of Christ to purge the conscience, it waiteth for the sanctifying virtue of his blood, and the grace purchased thereby. So faith maketh use of the promises; this giveth faith encouragement to expect glorious rewards. Assistance is purchased, and acceptance is promised: 2 Cor. vii. 1, 'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' Then faith constantly maketh use of the precepts and counsels of the word, by which sin is discovered and taxed. When the word is received by faith, there goeth a light with it to see sin after another manner, although a man did not know it before. Faith persuadeth us that the commands of God are just and equal. There is a believing commands, as well as promises; this is a command from God: Ps. cxix. 66, 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments.'

## SERMON XXVII.

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*—JOHN XVII. 17.

THIRDLY, I now proceed to the reasons why God sanctifieth by his truth. It is most suitable to God's honour and to man's nature.

First, To God's honour. It was meet that God should give a rule to the creatures, or else how should they know his will? And then it was meet to honour this rule, by owning it above all other doctrines, by the concomitant operation of his Spirit. This is the authentic proof; the efficacy of the word is a pledge of the truth of it: John viii. 32, 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free,' from the bondage of sin, the devil, and death. A wicked man cannot have an absolute assurance of the truth of the word; he hath no feeling of the power of it. There is a great deal of do. How do you prove the scriptures to be the word of God? A believer hath the testimony in his own heart: 1 John v. 10, 'He that believeth in the Son of God hath the testimony in himself.' His conscience and his heart are set at liberty by water and blood. This made the apostles bold, and should make ministers so: Rom. i. 16, 'I am not ashamed

of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.' We should not be ashamed to preach it, and you should not be ashamed to profess it: 'It is the power of God.' God will not associate and join the powerful operation of his Spirit with any other doctrine. So David, when he commendeth the law, by which he doth not mean the decalogue, but the whole word of God: Ps. xix. 7–9, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the soul; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.' He had spoken before of the excellency of the sun, now of the word, intimating that the word of God is as necessary for the heart as the sun is for the world. We can as well be without the sun as without the bible. But how doth he evidence it? From the effects upon the heart and conscience: comfort and grace are two great evidences of the perfection of the word. No doctrine in the world, save this divine truth set down in scripture, is able to discover the sin and misery of man, the remedy and relief of it in Christ. No doctrine save this alone can effectually humble a soul, and convert it to God, make it sensible of the loss by sin, and restore it to a better condition.

Secondly, It is more suitable to man's nature. The word is more morally accommodated to work upon the heart of man than any other instrument, means, or doctrine in the world.

1. The precepts of it. It is the copy of God's holiness, the light by which we see everything in its own colours. The light of nature is ἔργον νόμου, 'the work of the law,' Rom. ii. 14, 15. It taketh notice of gross acts of sin, and the outward work of duty; they made conscience to abstain from gross acts of sin, and to perform outward acts of piety and devotion, as offering sacrifices and prayers. But now there is an excellent spirit of holiness that breatheth in the word, and all matters of duty are advanced to their greatest perfection: Ps. cxix. 96, 'Thy commandment is exceeding broad;' of a vast extent and latitude, comprising every motion, thought, and circumstance in duties; not only the act is required, but the frame of heart is regarded; not only sins, but lusts are forbidden. If ever there were an instrument fitted to do a thing, the word is fitted to promote holiness, the true purity that is pleasing to God.

2. The patterns and examples of the word. We miscarry by low examples, and learn looseness and carelessness one by another. Therefore the word of God, to elevate holiness to the highest extent, presseth not only the examples of the saints, whose memorials are left upon record in the word, but the holiness of the angels, yea, the holiness of God himself. The highest aim doth no hurt; he will shoot further who aimeth at a star than he that aimeth at a shrub: 'Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises,' Heb. vi. 12; 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven,' Mat. vi. 10; 'Be ye holy, as I am holy,' 1 Peter i. 15. Communion begets conformity. We need all kinds of examples; high examples, that we may not rest in any low degrees and beginnings of holiness; low examples, that we may think it possible. We are not

angels, but men and women, ὁμοιοπαθεῖς, of like affections, that have the same natural interests, natural wants with others. It is a trodden path; in the way to heaven you may see the footsteps of the saints.

3. Excellent rewards, and fit arguments to induce us to the practice of holiness: 2 Cor. vii. 1, 'Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all the filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;' 2 Peter i. 4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' God covenants with us, as if we were free-born; to interest our hearts in the love and practice of holiness, we have as much propounded as we can wish for, nay, and more: 1 Cor. ii. 9, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' Lactantius saith of the heathens, *Virtutis vim non sentiunt, cujus præmium ignorant*—They feel not the power of virtue, because they are ignorant of the reward of virtue. Life and glory, and the great things to come, are powerful motives; can you meet with the like elsewhere? All creatures seek their own perfection. Philosophy is to seek of a sure reward and encouragement.

4. Our many advantages in Christ. We have not only encouragement offered, but help and assistance. Christ hath purchased grace to make us holy: 1 Peter ii. 24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.' He hath not only purchased the rewards of grace, to wit, that God should not deal with us in sovereignty; but purchased the abilities of grace, 'redeemed us from a vain conversation,' 1 Peter i. 18. By his death the covenant is made a testament, and all the precepts are turned into so many promises and legacies. Christ will give what he requireth. All excuse is taken away from laziness, and wickedness is no longer allowed the plea of weakness. There is help offered in Christ.

5. Terrible threatenings. The word is impatient of being denied; it would have holiness upon any terms. There is somewhat propounded to our fear as well as our hope; not only the loss of happiness: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God,' which is loss enough to an ingenuous spirit; but the forfeiture of the soul into eternal torments, without ease, without end: 'Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.' God hath a prison for obstinate creatures, a worm that never dies, a fire that never goes out. Whose heart doth not tremble at the mention of these things? We cannot endure the torment of one night under a feverish distemper; how shall we think of lying down in everlasting burnings?

6. The word presseth all this with such a majesty and power, that it astonisheth the conscience, and maketh the hearts and souls of men to quake within them. Felix trembled at the mention of judgment to come. There is so much of God in the word, that if it doth not renew men, it doth restrain them, maketh them tremble; where it hath least force, it cometh with a manifestation of divine authority upon the conscience. Lactantius saith, *Nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta, quæ sunt*

*humana.* There is no such majesty in human precepts. *Nemo credit, quia tam se hominem putat esse qui audivit quam illum qui prædicat.* Man is not astonished by man. *Verba dedi, verba reddidi.* But now the word of God searcheth the heart, pincheth the conscience, and where it worketh least it maketh men to quake within themselves. It is said, Mat. vii. 28, 29, 'The people were astonished at Christ's doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' God's word cometh with evidence and conviction upon the conscience, that they admire the power of it; there is a sovereign majesty in it, the draught is like the author. Thus you see what a powerful instrument the word is, even in a moral way; therefore the fittest means whereunto God should join his assistance to work on the heart of man.

*Use* 1. Of information.

1. It informeth us what a treasure truth is, and what a value we should put upon it. There are two things in the world that God is very tender of—his truth, and his saints. In the controversy about toleration, men, on the one side, have urged the danger of meddling with saints; on the other side, others have urged the value of truth. If the whole controversy did depend upon this issue, which are to be most respected, the truth or the saints, since God is tender of both, it would soon be decided; for besides this, that it is strange that they only who are called saints should be afraid of a vigorous prosecution and defence of the truth, it is clear truth must have the pre-eminence, for it is truth that maketh saints, and we had need be more tender of the root than of the branches.

2. It informeth us that out of the true religion there is no salvation, because there is no true holiness, and without holiness no man shall see God: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.' It is not without peace; the necessity is not laid upon that, but holiness; for peace is often broken for strictness' sake. A man that is faithful and sincere may have little of the world's respect; but now without the true religion there is no holiness, that is clear. Hence it is said, 'Sanctify them by thy truth.' There may be civility, and the exactness of a moral course, counterfeit grace; but there can be no true sanctification, because the heart can never be good that is ignorant of the truth and poisoned with error. There may be superstition, which is but a bastard religion; there may be a good life, but there cannot be a good heart, no true comfort, and true grace. *Anima, que a Deo fornicata est, casta esse non potest.* He that believeth ill, can never live well. Grace and truth are twins, that live and die together. Moral virtue is very defective in itself. *Sapientia eorum plerumque abscondit vitia; non abscindit*—All their craft was to hide a lust, not to root it out.

3. That they have not a sound apprehension of truth that have no grace. There may be a naked and inactive apprehension that is not accompanied with power; they learn truth by rote, and rest in a vain speculation, but have no strength to perform their duty: 2 Tim. iii. 5, compared with Rom. ii. 20. What in one place is called 'a form of godliness,' is in the other called 'a form of knowledge.' Poor, slight, and superficial apprehensions of the truth; they take up truth, not

upon any divine testimony or evidence of the Spirit, but upon the credit and authority of men, the practice and profession of the nation, or the injunctions of a civil state. This is the account of most men's truth and faith. Alas! truth thus received entereth not upon the heart. Men gain but a disciplinary knowledge; a literal knowledge and a spiritual knowledge differ: Eph. iv. 21, 'If so be that ye have heard of him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.' When a man receiveth it out of the hands of the Spirit of Christ, it frameth and disposeth the heart to godliness. So Col. i. 6, 'Since ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.' The tasting of a thing excelleth the reading of it; the true, inward, powerful, affectionate knowledge affecteth the heart, and altereth and changeth it. A man knoweth no more of Christ than he valueth, esteemeth, and affecteth, and which puts the whole inward man into a holy spiritual frame. Good principles, if heartily embraced, will breed a good conversation. The point needeth to be heeded in these times, when knowledge is increased, but practice and strictness suffereth an abatement and decay. *Boni esse desinunt, postquam docti evaserint.* What strength and power of religion possesses the heart? When you know the truth, doth it carry you to God and godliness?

4. They that are above scriptures have no true holiness. God sanctifieth by the truth. It is strange how charity overreacheth to saint antiscripturists and men above ordinances; whereas it is the true ground and reason of sanctification. As Bernard saith of some, that whilst they plead for the salvation of heathens, scarce show themselves christians; so I am afraid our excessive charity to men argueth little affection to God. God accepteth no holiness but word-holiness, and worketh holiness no other way. I doubt they that despise prophesying quench the Spirit. When men neglect and contemn the word of God, they dam up the fountain of holiness.

5. What is the true witness of the scripture's certainty? Not the testimony of the church, but feeling the sanctifying virtue of it. It is good to take the testimony of the church at first, as we take a medicine from others upon their experience; but we must not rest in it: 1 Thes. i. 5, 'For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;' this giveth certainty. At first we believe upon the church's saying, as the woman commended Christ to her citizens: John iv. 42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' There is a preparative human faith; as in taking pills, we do not chew them, but swallow them. It is not good to be disputing away our hopes. But we should not rest in this, but labour to get an experience of the power of the truth upon our hearts.

6. The difference between civility and sanctification. Civility is wrought by mere moral education, according to natural principles, without any knowledge, or so much as a desire to be acquainted with the word of God. Thus many are careful of common honesty in matters of traffic and commerce, obedience to civil laws, being restrained from gross enormities, but have no true grace; but in true holiness we are inclined by the word: 1 Peter ii. 2, 'As new-born babes desire the

sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.' This is true holiness, when we conform and subject ourselves in heart and practice to the will of God, revealed in the word. The word of God must be reason and rule. Reason: 1 Thes. v. 18, 'This is the will of God concerning you;' and rule: Gal. vi. 16, 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them.' Why do you do this? as the children must ask their parents, 'Why do ye keep the passover?' Still all must be examined by the word: John iii. 21, 'He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought of God;' he trieth every action by it. Only the word is our rule in all our actions; we seek to it as our guide, obey it for truth's sake.

*Use* 2. Exhortation.

1. Beware of error. It is a defiling thing; the more mixture of falsehood, the less awe of God upon the soul, and the more carnal affections are gratified. A constant use of the word discovers sin.

2. To press you to wait upon God for the purifying of your hearts through the word, in the use of the word, through the Spirit, to look for the purification and sanctification of your souls. Here I should press you to take heed *that* you hear, *how* you hear, and *what* you hear.

[1.] That you hear. You need wait upon God, and hearken diligently. The apostle infers it: James i. 18, 'Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth.' What then? 'Therefore be swift to hear.' Continually you will find some new enforcement or new consideration to promote your holiness and sanctification.

[2.] Take heed what ye hear, Mark iv. 24. You must get the distinguishing ear; that as the mouth tasteth meats, so the ear may taste doctrines, and you may judge of things that differ.

[3.] Take heed how you hear, Luke viii. 18; that is, wait for the operations of the Spirit, do not hear carelessly, negligently. It is said, Acts x. 44, 'While Peter was speaking those things, the Holy Ghost fell upon them.' While we are speaking to you there are many good motions stirred up in your hearts. Take heed how you hear, that the blessing may not escape from you.

'Thy word is truth.'—The point which I am now to discuss is, the truth of the word. In managing this discourse I shall show—

1. What necessity there is that God should give us his word, or a declaration of his will.

2. Where we shall infallibly find this word or declaration of his will.

3. Of what concernment it is to be established in the truth of this word.

4. Whether it be possible that carnal men, remaining so, can have any assurance of this truth; or whether it be only left to be cleared up infallibly to the soul, by the light and working of the Spirit.

First, What necessity there is of God's word, or some outward signification of his will. An absolute necessity of an outward rule there is not. God might immediately reveal himself to the heart of man; he who made the heart can stamp it with the full knowledge of his will. But the written word is best for God's honour, and for the safety of religion, and because of the weakness of our nature.

1. For the honour of God, that he should give man a rule. You

know all creatures that God hath made, they have a rule without themselves, by which they are guided and directed in their operations. It is God's own privilege to be a rule to himself. The angels have a rule, that is distinct from their essence. And in innocency, though God stamped the knowledge of his will immediately upon man's heart, that Adam's heart was as it were his bible, yet his rule was distinguished from his essence, otherwise he could not have sinned against God. If man were his own rule there would be an impossibility of sinning, and so there would be an intrenchment upon God's own privilege. You know it is God's own privilege that his act is his rule, and therefore it is impossible that God should sin. Look, as when a carpenter choppeth and squareth a piece of timber, there is a line and rule without him, by which he is guided and directed: if it were to be supposed that his hand could never strike amiss, that would be his rule, he would need no line or rule without him. But this is proper to no creature, it is God's own privilege that his essence and his rule are not distinguished; but still a man should not share with him in his peculiar privilege, therefore he hath given him a rule. Besides, if man were a rule to himself, there would be no room for rewards; there is no commendation nor praise where there is a natural necessity of doing good; as stocks and stones are not capable of a reward for not sinning, because they cannot sin.

2. For the safety of religion, now man is fallen, that he might not obtrude fancies on his neighbour: Isa. viii. 20, 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' Let it be voice or oracle, all is to be measured by the outward rule which God hath given to the church.

3. In respect of man, to repair the defects of nature, and to satisfy the desires of nature.

[1.] To repair the defects of nature. Fallen man is brutish, and knows not how to carve out a right worship for God, or a rule of commerce between him and us. We have not light enough in our own hearts for such a work. You see what sorry devices of worship man frameth when he is destitute of the knowledge of God's will, and left to the workings of his own heart. The apostle observes it of the philosophers, Rom. i. 22, 23; the wisest of heathens, when they sat abrood upon religion, it proved but a monstrous misshapen piece: 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.' You see how sottish man, if left once to himself, is ready to worship a stick, or straw, or piece of red cloth, instead of God. Though the knowledge of the law of God be written on man's heart, as it was on Adam's, who was his own bible, yet it is so blurred and defaced that we cannot read the mind of God in our own heart. It is true there are some scattered fragments and relics, and some obscure characters, that will teach us something of morality and duties, to fit us for commerce between man and man, but very little to teach us how to have commerce with God. The Gentiles have the work of the law written upon their hearts: Rom. ii. 14, 15, 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law,

are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts in the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another;' that is, they are sensible of the necessity of external obedience, but nature goes no further. There is no article of belief, if we consider it with all its circumstances, and in that exact manner that is propounded to us in the word of God, that could ever have entered into the heart of man. And therefore, since man's heart is so weak, we need a rule that we might know God's will. His works indeed declare God's glory, that indeed there is an infinite, eternal, incomprehensible power, that made all things and guides all things: Ps. xix. 1, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handiwork;' but they speak nothing of the fall, of the restitution by Christ, of the mystery of the Trinity, and those glorious representations that are now made of God in the scriptures; and therefore there was a necessity in this kind to repair the defects of nature.

[2.] To satisfy the desires of nature. There are two things that render us unsatisfied with the light of nature—an insatiable desire of knowledge in the soul, and a trouble of heart about misery, sin, and death.

(1.) An insatiable desire of more knowledge, and full satisfaction concerning God and the way to enjoy him. Reason, you know, is the property and excellency of man, and his privilege above the beasts; now reason desires to replenish itself with knowledge and perfection in its kind. The stomach no more desires true food for sustenance than a man doth knowledge. Man that is born to know hath a strong desire to it, and delight in it when it is increased. This was Adam's bait in paradise: Gen. iii. 6, 'The tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.' And it is a mighty delectation, even to man's natural soul, to view any truth; the contemplation of it is a mighty rejoicing and delight. Therefore the word of God may beget, even in natural men, such a kind of delectation: Ps. xix. 10, 'More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than fine gold; sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb.' They rejoice the soul because they fill it with light. That there is such an impatient thirst and desire after more knowledge than we have in ourselves appears by the very idolatry of the Gentiles; they were unsatisfied with their own thoughts, they would know more, and that was the reason they were so ready to close with every fancy that was offered to them. As a man that is very hungry, and almost famished, will fasten upon any food that comes next to hand, many times that which is most hurtful and noxious, so man, being desirous of some more knowledge concerning the nature of God, when he can meet with no other, he fastens upon gross superstitions and fables, whatever comes next to hand. Some outward rule and direction they will have, a bad one rather than none at all, out of a despair to find a better.

(2.) As there is an impatient thirst and desire after knowledge, so there is a trouble in conscience about misery, death, and sin. This bondage is natural, and we cannot be eased of it without some knowledge of a means of reconciliation. Nature is full of inquiries which way God will be pleased: Micah vi. 6, 7, 'Wherewith shall I come

before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' What shall I do to pacify God? This is the great inquiry of nature. Nature knows that some satisfaction must be given to offended justice; and until conscience have a firm ground of rest it will not be quiet. This put the heathens upon such barbarous actions as giving the first-born for the sin of their soul; and this made the Jews so unsatisfied; they looked no farther than the sacrifice: Heb. ix. 9, 'In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; that is, their conscience had no firm ground of satisfaction and quiet by sacrifices. Therefore you shall see how God makes use of this advantage, this dissatisfaction, without some external rule, and the knowledge of means how to be reconciled: Jer. vi. 16, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, Where is the good way? and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' As if the Lord had said, There is now a dissatisfaction, a natural bondage upon man. Now look to all the religions in the world, see where you can find rest for your souls. God leaves it upon that issue and determination. These things show there must be some external rule for guiding of the creature. It is for God's glory, for the safety of religion, to repair the defects of nature and to satisfy the desires of nature.

Secondly, What is God's word? This is necessary to be cleared; for the question is not so much, whether God's word be truth? as whether this or that be the word of God or no? This will be easily granted by every one that hath the sense of a godhead, that what God speaks must needs be true; for God is so infinitely wise that he cannot be deceived, and so infinitely just and true that he will not deceive us, and so omnipotent that he cannot be jealous of our knowledge, and so gracious that he is not envious of our knowledge, as the devil would insinuate: Gen. iii. 5, 'For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' It will be no infringement to his interest if we should know his nature and his will. But the great question is, what we should take for the word of God? Now that we may have a sure ground in this kind, let us consider how he hath revealed himself to man. The dispensations of God are several:—(1.) To Adam; (2.) To the world; (3.) To the church.

1. To Adam. His bible was his heart; the law was written there, and God preached to him immediately, and by oracle gave him all extraordinary commands, and the book of the creatures for his contemplation; not so much to better his knowledge, as to increase his reverence.

2. To the world. To heathens God gave the book of nature, which was more than they made use of, and therefore he stopped there: Ps. xix. 1–3, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language

where their voice is not heard,' &c. This revelation God hath made of himself, even to all nations; they have sun and moon to look upon, and the structure of the heavens to behold, which are so many pledges of the excellency and infiniteness of God: Rom. i. 19, 20, 'Because that which may be known of God is manifest to them, for God hath showed it unto them; for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse;' Acts xiv. 17, 'Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' In the book of nature there is the rough draught of God's will. Trismegistus said it was *liber unus divinitate plenus*—creation was nothing else but one book, that was full of the glory of God and his excellency. God spake to them by things, not by words. This, with some instincts of conscience, the relics of the fall, was all the heathens had. Conscience was God's deputy, to put them in mind of a judge; and the heavens put them in mind of a God. Look, as Job's messengers said, 'I alone am escaped to tell thee,' so there are some few relics and principles alone escaped out of the ruins of the fall, to tell us somewhat of God, and somewhat of a judge. That light proclaims everywhere, and speaks to every nation, and proclaims it aloud to all people, kindred, and tongues of the earth: Take notice there is one infinite eternal God, that made us, and you, and all things else. God's refreshing the parched earth with showers of rain shows how willing he is to be gracious to poor hungry creatures. Fruitful seasons show us the abundance of his mercy. The decking the heavens with stars, and the earth with plants, show us what glory he can put upon the creatures. This language may be gathered out of the creation, and thus did God speak to all creatures by the voice of his creatures.

3. To the church. And the dispensations of God to the church have been various and diverse: Heb. i. 1, 'God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως, spake in times past unto our fathers by the prophets,' &c. He spake his mind by pieces, that is signified by the word; now he gave a piece of his mind, and then a piece; and he hath spoken also in 'sundry manners,' by several ways of revelation. The church never wanted sufficient revelation nor means of knowledge to guide them to the enjoyment of God and true happiness. God's dispensations to the church may be reduced to three heads. There was—(1.) His word without writing; (2.) Then word and writing; (3.) Then writing only.

[1.] There was the word without writing, by visions, oracles, and dreams, by which he manifested himself to persons of the greatest sanctity and holiness, that they might instruct others, and impart the mind of God to others. Now mark, this dispensation was sure enough to guide them to communion with God. Why? Because the people of the world were then but few families, and the persons intrusted with God's message were of great authority and credit, therefore sufficient enough to inform that present age of God's counsel; and (which was another advantage) they lived long, to continue the tradition with certainty to others for hundreds of years. Vision and tradi-

tion was sure enough; for, as it is observed by some, three men might continue the tradition of the counsel of God from Adam till Israel went down into Egypt. There was Adam first; God taught him by oracle, and he taught others, he lived a long time. Methuselah lived with Adam two hundred forty-three years, and continued until the flood; then Shem lived with Methuselah ninety-eight years, and flourished about five hundred years after the flood; and Isaac lived fifty years with Shem, and died about ten years before Israel's descent into Egypt. So that Methuselah, Shem, and Isaac might continue the knowledge of God, and preserve the purity of religion from Adam's death, till Israel's going down into Egypt, for so many hundred years. This was God's dispensation to that church.

[2.] Afterwards there was both word and writing. God's word was necessary for the further revealing and clearing up of the doctrine of salvation, which was revealed by pieces. And writing was necessary, partly because in process of time precepts were multiplied, and it was needful for men's memories that they should be registered in some public record; and partly because the long life of God's witnesses was much lessened, and the corruption of the world was increased, and Satan began to imitate God by oracles, visions, and answers, and idolatry and superstition crept into the best families. Into Terah's: Josh. xxiv. 2, 'Your fathers dwelt on the other side the flood, in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods.' And Jacob's family was corrupt: Gen. xxxv. 2, 'Then Jacob said to his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.' The people were grown numerous enough to make a commonwealth and a politic body, and it was fit they should have a public record and common rule; and therefore, to avoid man's corruptions, and to give a stop to Satan's deceits, the Lord thought fit there should be a written rule at hand, for the trial of all doctrines. God himself wrote the first scripture that ever was written with his own finger: Exod. xxiv. 12, 'And the Lord said to Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there, and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them.' And then commanded Moses and the prophets to do the same: Exod. xvii. 14, 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book;' and Exod. xxxiv. 27, 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.' So he bids Jeremiah, chap. xxxvi. 2, 'Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken to thee.' And so God spake to all the prophets, though it be not expressed, and by inward instinct bids them write their prophecies, that it might be a public record for the church in all ages. Now this way was always accompanied with prophetical revelations until Christ's time, who, as the great doctor of the church, perfected the rule of faith, and by the apostles, as so many public notaries, consigned it to the use of the church. And so when the canon was complete, then John, as the last of the apostles, and outliving the rest, closed up all, and therefore closeth up his prophecy thus: Rev. xxii. 18, 19, 'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the

prophecy of this book; if any man add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book.' Which sealeth up the whole canon and rule of faith, as well as the book of the Revelations. And therefore—

[3.] There is now writing only without the word, without visions and revelations. There needeth no more now, because here is enough to make us wise unto salvation: 2 Tim. iii. 15–17, 'And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' It is sufficient to make as wise to preach, and you wise to practise. It is now certain enough; God hath left a public record, that we might not spend our time in doubting and disputing. And it is full enough; you need nothing more, either to satisfy the desires of nature or to repair the defects of nature, to satiate the soul with knowledge; for God hath given to the church sufficient instruction to decide all controversies, to assoil all doubts, and to give us sure conduct and direction to everlasting glory.

Thirdly, The next question is, of what concernment it is to inquire of the truth of the scripture? Many think that such a discussion needs not, because this is a principal matter to be believed, not argued, and arguments at least beget but a human faith; yet certainly it is of great necessity if you consider four things:—

1. It is good to prepare and induce carnal men to respect it, and to wait for the confirmation of the Spirit. A human faith maketh way for a divine; when men hearken to the word upon common grounds, God may satisfy them; as those, John iv. 42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God.' They first believed upon the woman's report, and then upon their own experience. So it is good to establish sound grounds, that we may know the truth of God, first upon hearsay, and afterward upon experience. This way we induce and invite men to make a trial.

2. Because it giveth an additional confirmation, and greater certainty to the people of God. Foundation-stones can never be laid with exactness and care enough. For if you mark it, you will find all doubting in your belief, all disproportion in your practice, ariseth from this, because the supreme truth is not settled in the soul. We ought to believe it more and more; then it stirs up greater reverence, greater admiration, and makes way for your delight and joy, to have your charter cleared. It is good to look upon this argument, that it might further our comfort, and that this fire may be blown up into a flame, and that truth may have more awe upon the conscience.

3. It awakeneth them that have received the word upon slight grounds, to be better settled. Most men look no further than human authority and public countenance; they have no other grounds to

believe the scriptures than the Turks to believe the Alcoran, because it is the tradition of their fathers. Most men's belief is but a happy mistake, a thing at peradventure, and they are christians upon no other grounds than others are Turks. God loveth a rational worship; he would have us to render λογὸν, 'a reason of the faith that is in us.' But they are christians by chance, rather than choice and solid reason; it is because they know no other religion, not because they know no better. Well, then, that you may be able to justify your religion ('for wisdom is justified of her children,' Mat. xi. 19), that you may take up the ways of God upon a rational choice, it is good to see what grounds and confirmations we have for that holy faith we do profess.

4. That we may know the distinct excellency of our profession above all other professions in the world. The daughters of Jerusalem are brought in asking the spouse, Cant v. 9, 'What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?' What can you say for your Christ, and for your way of salvation, and for your scriptures, above what other men can say for their worship or their superstition? A christian should know the distinct and special excellency of his profession: Jer. vi. 16, God bids us, 'Stand in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, Where is the good way?' It is good to survey the superstitions we have in the world, and compare the excellency of our holy profession with other professions. In scripture we are required, not only to glorify God, but to sanctify him: Isa. viii. 13, 'Sanctify the Lord of hosts in your hearts.' So 1 Peter iii. 15, 'Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.' Now what is it to sanctify? It is to set apart anything from common uses. This is to sanctify God, when we can say, He is thus and thus, and none like him. Now it is fit that you should be acquainted with the grounds and reasons of your holy profession, with the distinct excellency that is in it above all other religions in the world. God counts no assemblies in the world to be like the church; therefore we should be always studying the excellences and perfections of God, that we may see there is none like our God. That phrase, 'Who is like unto thee?' is twice used in scripture. Of the church: Deut. xxxiii. 29, 'Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord?' And of God: Micah vii. 18, 'Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity?' &c. The church should in gratitude return this upon God. Where is there such a pardon to be had? such a satisfaction for conscience, and such a fountain of holiness? Christ and the church are thus brought in mutually pleasing themselves in one another, Cant ii. 2. Christ begins with the church: 'As the lily among the thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters.' It is not meant in regard of scratching, as if the church were in the midst of thorns; but by way of comparison. Look, as a lily excels thorns, so the church excels all the world. And then the church begins, ver. 3, 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.' Look how much the fruit-bearing tree excels the barren and rotten trees of the forest; so doth Jesus Christ excel all others. Upon these grounds it will not be

amiss to enter upon the discourse concerning the divine authority of the scriptures.

Fourthly, Whether a wicked man remaining wicked, may be convinced of the truth of the word? I should think they can have no absolute assurance till they have some work of grace, because that is the fruit of grace: Col. ii. 2, 'That your hearts might be comforted, and 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;' 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost;' 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' He receives not the things of God, that is, doth not perceive them with demonstration, nor receive them with acceptation. A natural man may have an opinion, a light conjecture, a slight conviction upon his heart, enough to beget an awe, so as he knows not how to contradict the truth of the scriptures; but not an absolute assurance of the truth of the word. It is Christ's sheep only that are able to distinguish his voice: John x. 27, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.' They that look upon the scripture in the light of the Spirit, they are only able to see that it is from God. We may convince them, and use preparative inducements, but they cannot be absolutely assured of the truth of the doctrine, and that for two reasons:—

1. Because all external arguments, without the light of the Spirit, work but a human faith. He that inspired the scriptures must open our eyes to know them, and incline our hearts to believe them; otherwise we shall look upon them but as a traditional report; Isa. liii. 1, 'Lord, who hath believed our report?' The church maketh report; what is the reason wicked men do not entertain it? 1 John ii. 20, 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.' Men may speak of Christ by hearsay, as a parrot talks after a man; but it is the Spirit only that must reveal him to the heart. The disciples themselves knew not the truth of the gospel so much by Christ's outward ministry as by the inward illumination of the Spirit. So Christ himself saith, John xvi. 13, 'Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.' Christ had brought it out of the bosom of the Father, and had taught them by an external ministry; but the Comforter was to bring it into their hearts, to lead them into all truth. Therefore though carnal men may have a rational conviction, and may be so overpowered with reason that they cannot contradict the word, and so far understand it as to be condemned by it, yet they have not an absolute assurance; it is accompanied with atheism, doubts, and dissatisfactions.

2. Because the Spirit worketh not by way of certioration and full assurance, but where he sanctifieth. And therefore the apostle saith, 1 Thes. i. 5, 'Our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.' It cleanseth and sanctifieth the heart. And in the text it is said, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.' Wherever there is an inward plenary conviction, there is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of God

works, he changeth the heart. It is true a wicked man, remaining carnal, may have common gifts from the Spirit: Heb. vi. 4, 'They may be enlightened, and taste of the heavenly gift, and be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' They may be able to make use of the model and form of knowledge that is in the brain; but there is not an absolute assurance. This partial conviction is soon lost; it is led in by man, and led off by man. A natural man, being in the church, may have great presumption and probability; he may know nothing to the contrary why it is not God's word; nay, he may in bravery die for his profession; but he dies in his own quarrel, and for his own humour, not for the love of the truth; because it is his, not because it is God's, because his own profession may not be disparaged; but a true certainty they cannot have, such as is affective, transforming, settled.

*Use* 1. To wicked men, that stagger about the truth of the scriptures, and are haunted with a spirit of atheism and continued doubts.

1. Wait upon common grounds, consent of the church, and probable arguments. You ought out of respect to search into it, whether it will be found to be the word of God or no. You read in Judges, when Ehud said to Eglon, Judges iii. 20, 'I have a message from God unto thee, he rose out of his seat.' If a king's letter, threatening great peril, were brought to a man, he doth not know whether it be the king's letter or no, but because the peril is great, he will inquire further into the matter. So when the word of God is brought unto you, propounding everlasting hope, threatening everlasting death, this should make you wait, inquire, and see if it be the word of God or no. We venture far for great gain upon a probable hope. If there were but a loose probability of having a great prize for a shilling, a man would venture upon that probability. Now here is not only a possibility of gaining, but you are threatened with horrible torments, everlasting death and horror, more than is propounded in any religion. Do not think this is a foolish credulity: 'The simple believeth every word;' there is none more foolishly credulous than the atheist and the antiscripturist, who withhold their assent from the word of God upon very slight reasons, and venture their salvation upon them.

2. Do not in such a matter rest upon the credit of any man, but seek to have a firm ground in your consciences, an inward certioration from the Spirit of God: Phil. i. 9, 'This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in judgment,' *αἰσθήσει*, in all sense. Wait till you have an inward feeling. He that is led by a man into the acknowledgment of the truth will be led off again by men. There will be no stability till you have an inward assurance: 2 Peter iii. 16, 'Beware, lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness,' *ἴδιον στηριγμὸν*. Every child of God should have some ballast in his own spirit, some ground and experience upon which he durst venture his soul. Labour for this proper ballast and steadfastness of your own. And for your comfort let me tell you, if you, with a humble and pious mind, wait upon God, you will not want it long. He that with a sincere mind, and studiousness of his own salvation, desires to find out the truth of the scriptures, certainly God will settle him.

*Use* 2. Here is advice to the people of God.

1. Prize this way of dispensation; bless God that the rule of faith is put into a settled course, the greatest gift, next the Lord Jesus Christ, that the world ever had. The scriptures are God's charter given to man, the evidence of his happiness, by which he holds heaven and grace, and all his privileges in Christ. Though the bible alone were extant in the world, here were sufficient direction, a doctrine full enough to guide us to happiness; and though all the world were full of books, if the bible only were wanting, you would have no sure doctrine. Some books are of Satan's inditing, they that are full of filthiness and folly; other books smell of men; there is not another book in the world but hath something of man in it, and a human spirit. But this is all of God, this is the truth, the touchstone of words and deeds. Other writings speak man's heart, but this speaks to man's heart with a divine power; this is the book that is the best discovery of God's heart to us, and our own to ourselves; it is the touchstone, not only to try doctrines, but to try all men's dispositions, how we stand affected to him.

2. Rest in the certainty of this doctrine. We are foolish creatures, and would give laws to heaven, and indent with God to believe upon our own terms. Look, as the devil would indent with Christ: Mat. iv. 3, 'If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread;' so we indent with God: If it be his word, let God testify it by some oracle, or some visible dispensation. We think it were better, and that the world had more assurance, when God spake 'in divers manners,' than when the canon and rule of faith is closed up, and he speaks by writing only, and not by voice. No; God's terms are surer than if a man should come from hell and speak to them. We are apt to think, if a messenger should come up in garments of flaming fire, and preach the horrors of the world to come, then there would be no atheists; but there is a far greater certainty in such a dispensation as we are now under: Luke xvi. 30, 31, 'If one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one arose from the dead.' Satan still appears to the blind world in horrible shapes to terrify them; so would we look upon this as a horrible shape, as the malice and cunning of the devil. Nay, it is surer than if an angel should come from heaven to preach the gospel to us, for that would not be such an absolute assurance: Gal. i. 8, 'For though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' Nay, it is more sure than an oracle from God; though that is as sure in itself, because it is from the true God, yet it is not so sure to us: 2 Peter i. 19, 'We have a more sure word of prophecy.' More sure than what? Than visions and the voice from the excellent glory. He alludes to that voice which came from heaven: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Ay! but, saith he, 'We have a more sure word of prophecy.' Therefore rest in this way of dispensation; do not blame God, as if he had ill provided for the comfort and safety of the church.

3. Improve it to a solid hope and comfort; it is the word of God, and venture upon it. If you be deceived, God hath deceived you, as

the prophet saith, Jer. iv. 10. Venture upon the promises of God; entertain the precepts of it, as if God himself had spoken them: 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' When you hear any particular thing pressed out of the word, entertain it as if God spake from heaven. What will you venture upon God's word in a way of suffering? and what lust will you thwart and crucify, that God by his word commands?

## SERMON XXVIII.

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*—JOHN XVII. 17.

Now I proceed to the arguments that prove the scriptures to be the word of God.

1. Some are extrinsical, and do lie without the scriptures.

2. Some are intrinsical, and lie within the scriptures themselves, as being taken from the matter and form of them.

For the first, extrinsical arguments; there I shall show you—

1. That God hath owned the scriptures for his word.

2. The church hath owned them as God's word.

3. The malignant world in their way hath owned them; that is, upon that respect they have opposed them.

*First*, God hath owned them several ways. By the wonderful success of that religion which the scriptures establish; preservation; miracles; accomplishment of prophecies, promises, and threatenings; by concomitancy of grace; testimony of the spirit; by particular judgments and punishments of those which have abused the scriptures.

First, By the wonderful success of that doctrine and religion which the scriptures do establish. Certainly if we think that God hath any care of human affairs, we cannot but judge that doctrine to be divine which God hath suffered to diffuse, and spread itself far and near in all parts of the world. Nay, if he hath any care of his own glory; for this doctrine pretendeth to be his, and his permitting it to be propagated showeth that he owneth the claim and pretence: to right himself, and to undeceive the nations, he would otherwise have disclaimed them. Herod was smitten with worms and died when he assumed divine honour to himself: Acts xii. 22, 23, 'And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.' It is agreeable with the goodness of providence, that that which is best should be diffused. Now, what religion hath been so diffused as the christian, through Europe, Asia, Egypt, Ethiopia, and other parts of Africa, and now in America? It is true, paganism is of a vast extent, but it includeth many religions under one name: some worship a star, some a dog or cat, some a plant. Rites differ with nations and countries; but christianity alone, like the

leaven, hath pierced the whole lump: Mat. xiii. 33, 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.' Within the space of thirty years, or thereabout, it spread far and near throughout the Roman empire, and much further. *Hesterni sumus*, saith Tertullian, *et tamen vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, paulatim senatum, forum; sola vobis relinquimus templa.*—We are but of yesterday, and yet how are we increased? The christians are found in all places, cities, villages, isles, castles, free towns, councils, armies, senate; mark, everywhere but in the idols' temples. Such a wonderful increase and success was there in a short time. So I shall mention Augustine's dilemma—If the miracles related by our writers be true, then they give experience of the truth of scripture; if false and feigned, then this is a miracle above all miracles, that the christian religion should prevail in such a manner as it hath done in the world. You will say so too, if you do but consider the circumstances of this success: the doctrine itself contrary to nature; it is a religion that doth not court the senses, nor woo the flesh; it offereth no splendour of life, nor pleasures, nor profits; it biddeth us to deny all these things, and expect persecution: self-denial is the first lesson that is learned in Christ's school: Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up the cross and follow me.' As Crates to a woman that courted him showed his bunched back. The devil disguiseth his temptations, and concealeth the worst. Christianity hath its allurements, but they are either spiritual, or to be made good in another world; here they have comfort with persecution: Mark x. 30, 'He shall receive an hundred-fold now in this life, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.' Here they have support and comfort, but still trouble and exercise. And the doctrine is as contrary to our lusts as our interests: Col. iii. 5, 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.' As dear and as near as a joint of the body is, yea, the most useful one, it is to be cut off: Mat. v. 29, 30, 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, &c. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee.' Now, that this should prevail, it argueth a divine power. Mahomet allured his followers with fair promises of security and carnal pleasure; there wind and tide went one way; man is very credulous of what he desireth; but christianity teacheth men to row against the stream of flesh and blood, and to bear out sail against all the blasts and furious winds without: here was nothing lovely to a carnal eye. This for the doctrine itself.

Again, look upon the persons that were to manage it, the contemptibleness of the instruments which God used in promoting the word; a few fishermen, destitute of all worldly props and aids, of no power, wealth, wisdom, authority, and other such advantages as were wont to beget a repute in the world; yet they preached, and converted many nations. They had no public interest, and were not backed with the power and authority of princes, as superstitions are wont to prevail by

their countenance and example: 'Every one seeketh the face of the ruler;' but the gospel had gotten firm footing in the world long ere there was a prince to countenance it; there were many to persecute it, but none to profess it. It is notable that at first, as God's instruments were poor and contemptible, so were the persons that received their message: James ii. 5, 'Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised?' He speaketh it as a known observation in that age. Though now, as the church is constituted, it is otherwise, and sometimes God chooseth the rich, and sometimes the poor; but then those that were poor and despicable, that it might be known they were not moved with any outward respects to profess the truth, and that the glory of his power might be known, in preserving and propagating religion, when destitute of worldly succours and supports. *Ne videretur authoritate traxisse aliquos*, saith Ambrose, *et veritatis ratio, non pompæ gratia prævaleret.* It was much that christianity, supported by such (to appearance) despicable instruments, should hold up the head: yea, the powers of the world were against it; bonds and sufferings and afflictions and deaths did abide them everywhere, horrible tortures, and very frequent; never did war, pestilence, or famine sweep away so many as the first persecutions. Thus were christians murdered and butchered everywhere, and yet still they multiplied, and were not frightened by their calamities; as the Israelites grew by their oppression in Egypt, or as a tree that is lopped sendeth out the more sprouts. Christianity flourished most when the scorching heat of persecution was at the highest.

And as they were without power and worldly interests, so they had not such gifts of art, eloquence, and policy as the world had, with whom they had to deal. You see, in the scriptures, all is carried on in a plain way, without art and pomp of words. Paul was learned indeed, but he layeth aside his ornaments, lest the power of the cross of Christ should be made void: 1 Cor. ii. 3-5, 'And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.' And they were to deal with men of excellent parts and learning, some of which received the gospel. And pray mark, this plain doctrine was opened in that part of the world where arts most flourished, and at that time; for about the time of our Saviour's coming, curious arts and other civil disciplines were are at the height and *ἀκμὴ*; yet, as Aaron's rod devoured the magicians' serpents, so was the gospel too hard for all, and got ground. And pray mark again, which is another circumstance, it prevailed not by force of arms, or the long sword, as all dotages and superstitions are wont to do; this was the way of Cain, Jude 11; the christian religion prevailed by the word and patience of the saints: Christ's sword is in his mouth; and Ps. viii. 2, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mayest still the enemy and the avenger.' Again, this way seemed to the world a novel way; they were leavened with prejudices, and bred up by long custom (which was another

nature) in the worship of idols: 1 Peter i. 18, 'Ye were redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations, received by tradition from your fathers.' Men keep to the religion of their ancestors with much reverence. Christ did not seize upon the world as a waste is seized upon by the next comer. Men took up with heathenish rites when they were to seek of a way of worship; but the ark was to be set up in the temple that was already occupied and possessed by Dagon. The work of those who first promoted the faith of the gospel was to dispossess Satan, and to persuade men to renounce a religion received by a long tradition and prescription of time; they went abroad to bait the devil, and hunt him out of his territories; and yet they prevailed in that manner that hath been declared, and to this day doth it prevail. Now errors are not longlived, 'the day shall declare it,' 1 Cor. iii. 3. In time they vanish and come to nothing; when passions are allayed, and worldly interests are changed.

What *use* shall we make of this, of God's owning the word by success? Besides satisfaction in the matter in hand, and admiration of providence, we may make this use of it, to bewail our own blindness and hardness, that the word which hath prevailed over the world doth not prevail over our hearts: Col. i. 6, 'Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.' This is comfortable when we can say so, This word prevaileth over all the world, and, blessed be God, over my heart. But oh! how sad is it when that which subdueth the world standeth still, and getteth no ground with us! Say, out of what rock was my heart hewn? Is my will only the toughest sinew in all the world, that it can stand out against the battery of the word? In thirty years, or thereabouts, the word prevailed over most of the known world. I have been a hearer ten, twenty, or thirty years, and yet I cannot find my heart soft, pliable to the purposes of grace; much ignorance and obstinacy still remaineth. As they said, Luke xxiv. 18, 'Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass there in these days?' Art thou only a stranger to the power and success of the word? Thus may we bemoan ourselves.

Secondly, By miracles, the known miracles that accompanied the teaching of it. Miracles you know are a solemn confirmation, or letters-patent brought from heaven to authorise any person or doctrine; for they are such effects as do exceed the force and power of nature, and therefore must needs come from an extraordinary divine power. Now it is not to be imagined that ever a divine power would co-operate with a falsehood and cheat; and therefore whatever is confirmed by miracles hath God's solemn testimony and ratification, and so deserveth credit and estimation. Now a little before Christ's time, there was a great silence and rest from prodigy and wonder, that the Messiah might be known; but after he had preached his sermon on the mount, they were commonly wrought, both by himself and his messengers, and to evidence the truth of them, they were commonly done in the sight of the multitude, even of them that withstood his doctrine. His adversaries objected, that he did 'cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.' But that could not be, because all miracles were referred to

the glory of his Father, and the devil cannot work beyond the power of a natural agent. Now by the circumstances of Christ's miracles it appeared that he wrought beyond any natural power. It is possible that by natural power diseases may be secretly inflicted and secretly cured by Satan; but Christ not only cured, but restored perfect health, which no natural means can work. He raised the dead, a miracle that cannot be counterfeited. Therefore well might Nicodemus say, John iii. 2, 'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him;' they being wrought by a divine power, they showed his divine mission and calling. And as Christ, so did his messengers; as the apostles: Heb. ii. 3, 4, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him? God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.' They were authorised by Christ, as Christ by God, and God bore them witness: it is my truth, I am their witness, and you will perish if you do not hearken to it. That which may be observed in these scripture miracles is, that they were not done when men would require, or when the instruments pleased, but according to God's own will, upon special and weighty occasions, that it might be the more evident that God was the worker of them; and therefore were not merely used to beget a reputation at all places, and at all times, as if God's power should be at the creature's beck. Counterfeits, such as Apollonius Tyanæus, were never dainty to show their juggling tricks, but always were pliable to the humours and lusts of men, and to satisfy curiosity. Only now and then, and upon special occasions, would God manifest himself. Jugglers prostitute their feats. Come, let us see what you can do, show us a miracle; as 'Herod desired to see Christ, that he might see some miracle,' Luke xxiii. 8. This would not lessen[1] the majesty of God. Signs and wonders were not ordained for the stage and scene, to cause admiration and pastime for every wanton spectator. Again, I observe, that generally these miracles were actions of relief and succour, not merely of pomp and glory, and tended to deliver from the miseries of soul and body, as blindness, sickness, and devils. I remember but two of Christ's miracles that were destructive, blasting the fig-tree, and drowning the herd of swine; in other miracles, he was exercised in curing the sick, raising the dead, casting out Satan, &c.

*Object.* 1. Ay! but we have none now.

*Ans.* It is not necessary, because the same doctrine and rule is continued to us without change. That which is extraordinary must be proved by extraordinary means. Miracles wrought where there is no necessity are liable to suspicion. When Christ's doctrine was new, and the calling and function that he exercised in the church new, then were miracles wrought to confirm them. The Lord's manner hath always been, when he erects any new worship and service, to give testimony to it from heaven; as trees newly set need watering, which afterwards we discontinue. Upon the delivery of any new law or truth to the world, natural and ordinary means of conviction are

[1] Qu. 'would lessen'?—ED.

wanting. None now pretendeth to be an extraordinary messenger from God; the doctrine is ordinary, and the call ordinary, and why should we expect extraordinary confirmation? The old sufficeth. And by the consent and experience of many ages, and its own reasonableness, christianity hath gotten a just title to human belief, and there we must submit: John xx. 30, 31, 'And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these were written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.' God hath given us the report and record of the old miracles, which is enough to beget faith in them that have a mind to believe rather than wrangle. We think it had been better if God had continued this sensible confirmation, but we must not give laws to heaven. Because we have so much light, and other inducements of faith, God will govern us by wisdom and not by power. It is true, men are less apprehensive of his wisdom than of the sensible effects of his power; but because we have otherwise confirmation sufficient, now doth God try us, whether we will turn atheists and antiscripturists, and upon light suspicion misbelieve.

*Object.* 2. How shall we know that those miracles were done, since we saw them not; we have but fame and report, which oftentimes is no friend to truth?

*Ans.* We have the report of men that lived in that age, who were only fit witnesses in this case, and were persons of singular holiness and credit, and they were those that sealed it with their blood, and therefore their report is of as great authority and certainty as if we had seen them ourselves. And besides, the report is ancient, constant, not contradicted by the vigilant adversaries of that age with them, which would be a madness, if they were false and counterfeit, since they might so easily inquire into the truth of the report. Foreign histories testify that such things were done, though they seek to deprave the actions, as if done by the power of Satan. And hitherto the church hath maintained the truth of them against all opposers. But of this hereafter.

*Use.* To press us to reverence the word of God, since God hath owned it by miracles, and 'sealed up instruction,' as the expression is, Job xxxiii. 16; that is, ratified it by extraordinary dispensations. The apostle proveth that the despisers of the gospel will have a sorer judgment than the despisers of the law: Heb. ii. 2–4, 'For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?' The transgressors of the law, though they did not see God giving it upon the mount, were punished, and so will the disregarders of the gospel, though they did not see the miracles. It is better to believe than to make trial; there are no atheists and antiscripturists in hell; they feel the truth of what they would not fear. Nay, when God hath owned it, if you neglect it, or receive it carelessly, or do not study it, though you do not openly oppose, or secretly question the

authority of it, if you neglect it, God will deal severely with you. The miracles were then wrought, and the doctrine needeth not often confirmation.

Thirdly, The accomplishment of prophecies, threatenings, promises; as if God had made the word a rule of proceeding, and the whole government of the world were managed in a conformity to the scriptures, for his whole providence is but a comment upon it.

1. Prophecies. How have they always been accomplished, as set down in the word? Isa. xli. 23, 'Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.' A man may foretell things that depend on natural causes, as snow, rain, heat, cold, eclipses; but things merely contingent, depending upon the free grace of God, or free will of man, are foretold in the word; as the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles are clearly spoken of and clearly accomplished. The scripture is not only an authentic register of what is past, but an infallible prognostication of what is to come; nothing good or bad befell but that which was foretold.

2. So for threatenings; God governeth the world by this rule. Threatenings have been accomplished: Hosea vii. 12, 'I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard.' A man might have the history of the Jews, from time to time, out of the threatenings of Moses and prophetical predictions, and extract the life of Christ out of the writings of the prophets.

*Object.* But threatenings many times are not accomplished.

*Ans.* The prerogative of free grace many times doth interpose, and God worketh *extra ordinem*. God hath reserved this liberty to himself; he is not bound though we are. It is for his honour that it should be so; as all human laws allow the chief magistrate a liberty of pardoning. There is difference between laws and decrees; the threatenings are the sanction of the law.

3. Then for promises. We never waited upon God, and put forth hope according to a promise, but it was made good to a tittle: Josh. xxxiii. 14, 'Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth; and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.' He was about to die, and therefore could not be supposed to feign. Now he appealeth to their experience, 'You know in all your hearts,' &c. So Solomon speaks, 1 Kings viii. 56, 'Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest upon his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.' So if a man would but observe the course of providence, after a little faith and patience, which is required of all that would inherit the promises, God never failed, but made good his word to a tittle.

*Object.* Many temporal mercies are promises, which promises are not accomplished.

*Ans.* They are promised still with exception of the cross. God is tied no further than the covenant tieth him: Ps. lxxxix. 31–33, 'If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.'

*Object.* But the scriptures do absolutely press and inculcate these hopes of temporal mercies.

*Ans.* No; only they are mentioned in the promise, partly to encourage our hearts to pray, we should not else ask them: 2 Chron. xx. 9, 'If when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help;' Ps. cxix. 49, 'Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' Partly to show that God is able to keep them from such distress; and, if it be good for them, will keep them: Dan. iii. 17, 'Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.' Partly to show that if we have such mercies, we have them by virtue of a promise: Ps. cxxviii. 5, 'The Lord shall bless thee out of Sion:' to see a mercy come out of the womb of a promise is very sweet and comfortable. Partly to comfort them; if they have them not, they shall have the spiritual part; nothing shall light on them as a curse. We must go into the sanctuary to know the meaning of such promises. God will deliver, either from the lion or from every evil work: 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18, 'I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work.' If there be any temporal promise, you may expect the mercy in kind, or as good. There is not a waste word in the promise; God will give them satisfaction. The people of God never complain when their thoughts are regular, partly because God seldom faileth a trusting soul; few experiences can be given to the contrary: Ps. xci. 2, 3, 'I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress; my God, in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver me from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.' Thereby there is another engagement on God: Isa. xxvi. 3, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee;' Ps. ix. 10, 'And they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.'

*Use.* Learn to regard the promises and threatenings of the word with more reverence, as if God in person had delivered them to you: 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God.' Look to the threatenings. God hath left room for his mercy, and that must be sought in God's way, or else we have no security and peace.

Look to the promises.

1. Seek after them more, and mind them more. Sure your neglect saith you do not count them true: 1 John v. 10, 'He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.' If one should proffer you a hundred pounds, and you should go away and never heed it, it is a sign that you do not believe him.

2. Venture more on the promises; they are God's bills of exchange, whereby you have treasures in heaven. Deny interests; God will make it up.

3. Rejoice in them more. You have blessings by the root: Heb. xi. 13, 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them;' they hugged the promises. Do you ever refresh yourselves with the remembrance of them? Do you ever bless God for your hopes, and say, I will rejoice in God because of his word?

4. Wait for the accomplishment of them. The word of the Lord is a tried word. The saints are tried, and the word is tried: Ps. xii. 6, 'The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.' It is enough for faith that we have the promise.

Fourthly, God hath owned the word, by associating the operation of his grace and powerful Spirit with it, and with no other doctrine. Things of a powerful operation do evidence themselves, as fire by heat, the wind by its noise and strength, salt by its savour, the sun by light and heat, and the like. Moral principles that are effectually operative manifest themselves also. Let us see how the case standeth with the scripture. It is called, Rom. i. 16, 'The power of God unto salvation;' and the 'preaching of the cross is to them which are saved the power of God,' 1 Cor. i. 18; 'and 1 Cor. ii. 4, 'My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;' and 1 Thes. i. 5, 'Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.' It giveth a persuasion of itself by its being the power of God, and the rod of his strength: Ps. cx. 2, 'The Lord shall send the rod of his strength out of Sion.' When the Egyptians saw the miracles that Moses wrought, they confessed the power of God, that God was with him: Exod. viii. 19, 'Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God.' And when the scripture evidenceth so great a power, it shows itself to be of God, as in judging the hearts of men: Heb. iv. 12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' In convincing them of their evil estate: 1 Cor. xiv. 25, 'And thus are the secrets of the heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.' In converting sinners to God: James i. 18, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.' In building up them that are sanctified: Acts xx. 32, 'And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to built you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.' This is no sluggish idle power, that may be hid and obscured, but manifests itself by sensible effects; it is lively and operative, not only to change men's lives, but hearts: Ps. xix. 7, 8, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' This the apostle makes to be a sensible proof

of Christ speaking in him: 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 'Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.'

*Object.* But this is an argument to those that have felt it; how will it persuade others?

*Ans.* 1. It is an argument to others also, for this mighty operation is sensible to others; they may see the change wrought in them, and wonder at it: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'Wherein they think it strange, that you run not with them to all excess of riot.'

2. There are public effects of the power of the word, besides private instances. Wherever the word hath been, Satan vanished where formerly he tyrannised, and his deceits are of no more force; oracles ceased at Delphos, the devils howled. Where the gospel is preached, there are less witchcrafts and diabolical delusions; they are not so frequent where the gospel has had a free passage.

3. Those that have felt no experience of this power have a secret fear of it: John iii. 20, 'Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.' Conscience is afraid of the majesty of God shining forth in the scriptures. Men dare not pause upon, and consider the doctrine therein contained. Atheism lieth in the heart, the seat of desire: Ps. xiv. 1, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' Men question the word, because they would not have it true. When men give leave to lusts, they are afraid the word should prove true, and therefore would rather accuse the word of falsity than their own hearts; as Ahab was loath to hear Micaiah, because he prophesied evil. Strong lusts make the soul incredulous; they fear the scriptures, and then question them. They know there is power in them to astonish them; and therefore, as malefactors desire to destroy the records and evidences that are against them, so do wicked men; they are antiscripturists in affection, rather than opinion.

Fifthly, By the Spirit's testimony. That it is so is clear: 1 John v. 6, 'It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.' The doctrine of the gospel is there called Spirit, because he is the author of it: 2 Peter i. 21, 'For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' Or because the Spirit is truth, therefore he is the supreme witness. He is of God's privy council: 1 Cor. ii. 11, 'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, that is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.' Now the Spirit witnesseth from heaven or on earth: 1 John v. 7, 8, 'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and blood; and these three agree in one.' From heaven in miracles, and so Christ as God might be a witness in his own cause. On earth; so in an association and conjunction with water and blood, when we feel the effects of it in ease of conscience, or sanctification of heart. And over and above the Spirit's testimony there is an inward testimony: 1 John v. 10, 'He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony in himself.' But what is this inward testimony? A

witness to the truth of scripture by the certainty of our own thoughts; it is not that which every one's mind and fancy suggests to him, but the light of the Holy Ghost leading us into the acknowledgment of the truth; the same Holy Ghost which inspired the penmen of the scriptures, inclines our hearts to believe them: 1 John ii. 27, 'But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.' Faith cannot be wrought by human authority, or mere rational inducements; it is the work of the Spirit. We may plead and urge, but the heart closeth not with what is represented till the Spirit worketh: Isa. liii. 1, 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' There is an outward report, and an inward revelation. This testimony of the Spirit may be thus discerned.

1. It is affective. Truth represented in the light of reason, leaveth a weak impression; but truth represented 'in evidence and demonstration of the Spirit,' 2 Cor. ii. 4, worketh after another manner, sees another manner of excellence and beauty in Christ, another manner of vanity in the creatures.

2. It draweth to admiration: Ps. cxix. 18, 'Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out thy law.' A man never wondereth so at the dreadfulness of God's wrath, at the sweetness of God's mercy in Christ, at the evil of sin, the strictness of duty, till the Spirit opens his eyes: Acts xiii. 12, 'Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.'

3. It begets more certainty. Till we have the Spirit's light, we have but a trembling, wavering opinion, but then we have that which the apostle calleth, 'The fulness of the assurance of understanding,' Col. ii. 2. Though we have no other arguments, yet we see by another light. As Gerson reporteth of a devout man, that doubted of an article of faith, and came to be settled, not by any new demonstration, but by the humiliation and captivation of the understanding, to see more by former arguments; as Hagar's eyes were opened to see the fountain by her, Gen. xxi. 19. The Spirit taketh away the veil of ignorance, the pride of reason; and by an overpowering force maketh the soul stoop to the simplicity of the gospel.

4. It is a transforming light: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God.' A man that looketh upon the gospel in the light of parts and external tradition hath a model of truth in his brain; but these find it impressed upon their hearts; there is light and fire. Wait for this witness.

Sixthly, By the wonderful preservation of scriptures, even to our times. There is no doctrine so ancient; it describeth the whole history of the world from the very creation: Moses was ancienter than the gods of the heathens. No doctrine can produce such records of the original of the world. The doctrine of the gospel is as old as paradise, where God preached it to Adam: Gen. iii. 15, 'I will put

enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' The foundation was laid long since, though it was more explicitly revealed upon the coming of Christ. None so much oppugned. We have some ancient writings of the heathens, though nothing so ancient as scripture. Other writings, by tract of time, have been much mangled, though they have been cherished by men, as not contrary to their lusts; but the scripture is still opposed, persecuted, maligned, and yet it continueth: Ps. cxxix. 1, 2, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say. Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.' The church hath been always bred up under affliction. Enmity against it began betimes, yet still it holdeth up its head; errors are not long-lived: 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13, 'Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.' The world hath had time enough to inquire into the scripture, and to discover the vanity and falsehood of it, if there were any. Nay, not only the main doctrine of the scripture hath been continued, but no part of it is falsified, corrupted, or destroyed. The world wanted not malice nor opportunity; the powers of the world were bent against it, and corrupt persons in the church were always given to other gospelling: Gal. i. 6, 7, 'I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel; which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ;' 1 Tim. vi. 3, 'If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words,' &c. But still the scriptures are wonderfully preserved, as the three children in the furnace, not a hair was singed; not a jot or tittle of the truth is perished or corrupted. If it were corrupted, it must be before Christ's time, or after it; not before, then Christ would have noted it; not after, for then the parts would not agree; but we find no such thing, but an exact harmony. Nor is there any lost, for here is a sufficient instruction and guide to happiness. Christ hath promised not a tittle shall fall to the ground. The word hath been in danger of being lost, but the miracle of preservation is therefore the greater. In Joshua's time there was but one copy of the law. In Dioclesian's time, there was an edict to burn their bibles, and copies were scarce and chargeable, and yet still it hath been kept.

Seventhly, By his judgments on those who have reviled, abused, and persecuted this truth. The records of all ages witness to this. The whole Jewish nation was destroyed for opposing the doctrine of the gospel. After the slaughter of the prophets, and murder of Christ, God let them alone for forty years, and then 'wrath came upon them to the uttermost;' the people were carried captive, contrary to the Roman custom; the land lost its fertility. Look into succeeding times, very few persecutors went to the grave by a natural death. Particular stories are full of the judgments of God executed on them. Julian, the apostate, confessed Christ had the best at last, *Vicisti Galilæe*, and so died blaspheming. Lucian, that railed against

God and his word, as he returned from a supper, his dogs fell mad, and tore him to pieces. Eusebius reports of a certain Jew that took upon him to apply a sentence of the word to a profane end, to make a jest of scripture, was stricken with blindness till he made confession of his fault. Appion, scoffing at scripture and circumcision, had an ulcer growing in the place of circumcision, as Josephus reporteth. God is very angry when men are partial in the law, though they do many good things: Rev. xxii. 18, 19, 'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'

## SERMON XXIX.

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*—JOHN XVII. 17.

SECONDLY, The church hath owned the word. You see how God hath owned it; he saith it is my word. Let us see how the church hath owned it. Here I shall show three things:—

1. What is the church's duty to the word.
2. What credit and value we ought to put on the church's testimony.
3. How the church hath witnessed to the word in all ages.

1. What is the church's duty? To keep the word, and to transmit it pure to the next age, that nothing be added, nothing diminished; that it be published to the present age, and transmitted pure to the next: Rom. iii. 2, 'Unto them were committed the oracles of God.' We are trustees: Jude 3, 'Earnestly contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints: 1 Tim. iii. 15, 'The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.' The church is to hold it forth, as a pillar doth a proclamation, that it may not be lost and extinguished. This is the jewel Christ hath left his spouse, as the law was kept in the ark.

2. What respect we ought to bear to the church's testimony? To hearken to it till we have better evidence. We do not ultimately resolve our faith into the church's authority, for the authority of the church is not absolute, but ministerial; as a royal edict doth not receive credit by the officer and crier, he only declareth it. Yet the church's testimony is not to be neglected; for 'faith cometh by hearing,' Rom. x. 14. It is a preparative inducement: John iv. 42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' If we would know the truth of a thing before we have experience, go to them that have experience; the judgment of others, whom we respect and reverence, causeth us to have a good opinion of a thing till we make trial. The testimony of the church hath inclined us to

think that the scriptures are the word of God; not that the church can make and unmake scripture when it pleaseth, as a messenger that carrieth letters from a king doth not give authority to them.

3. How the church hath witnessed to the truth of the scriptures in all ages? Partly by tradition, partly by martyrdom.

[1.] By tradition. Holy books were indited one after another, according to the necessity of times, and still the latter confirmed the former. Moses was confirmed by Joshua, chap. xxiii. 6, 'Be ye courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses;' and Joshua and others by succeeding prophets; and all were confirmed by Christ: Luke xxiv. 44, 'These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me;' for the New Testament, it was confirmed by all the suceeding ages of the church. Christians different in other things yet agreed these to be the writings of the apostles. So that we have a more general consent than we have about any other matter probable in the world. Men of excellent parts and learning, that were not apt to take matters on trust, all assent to scripture, as the public record for the trial of doctrines. When heirs wrangle, they go to the last will and testament.

[2.] By martyrdom. The patience and constancy of the martyrs, who have ratified this truth with the loss of their dearest concernments, yea, even of life itself: Rev. xii. 11, 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.' It is possible that a man may suffer for a false religion, and sacrifice a stout body to a stubborn mind; but because there is counterfeit coin, is there no true gold? The devil's martyrs are neither so many for number, nor for temper and quality so holy, so wise, so meek, as Christ's champions. The christian religion can show you persons of all ages, young and old; of all sexes, men and women; of all conditions of life, noble and of low degree; of all qualities, learned and unlearned; persons that could not be suspected to be mopish or melancholy, or tired out with the inconveniences of an evil world, but were in a capacity to enjoy temporal things with the highest delight and sweetness, and yet counted not their lives dear to them, to confirm the truth of this word. What is dearer to men than life? And this not out of any desire of vainglory, their death being accompanied with as many disgraceful as painful circumstances; not out of any senseless stupidity, or fierceness of mind, they being of a meek temper, and blamed for nothing else but their constancy in asserting that truth which they professed; not out of any confidence in their own strength, in bearing those horrible cruelties that were inflicted upon them, but humbly committing themselves to God, and imploring his strength, did deliberately and voluntarily give up themselves to be cruelly butchered and tormented, as a testimony of the power of this truth upon their hearts; some of them kissing the stake, thanking the executioner, others wrestling a while with flesh and blood and natural desires of life, yet, the love of the truth prevailing, came at length to encounter the horrors of a cruel death with a well-tempered constancy and resolution; which certainly in so many

thousands, even to an incredible number, could not be without some divine power and force upon their souls. That all this should be done by persons otherwise of a delicate, tender sense, and a meek and flexible spirit! what should move them to it but the power of the truth? This being a religion of little reputation in the world, which the philosophers and disputers of that age sought to batter down with arguments, the politicians with all manner of discouragements, the orators with a flood of words, the tyrants with slaughters and torments, the devil by all manner of crafts and subtleties. What had the poor christians before their eyes but prisons, and wild beasts, and gibbets, and fires, and racks, and torturing engines more cruel than death? They had flesh and blood as well as others, a nature that continually prompted them to spare themselves as well as others; life was as dear to them, and their care of their families and little ones as great, their respect to parents and friends as much in them as any; yea, more, religion requiring natural affection in the highest exercise, and entendering their hearts with a sense of their duty; yet rather than give their bibles to be burnt, or be led away from their religion, they could trample upon all. Certainly such an invincible constancy could not be imputed to any rigid sullenness, or foolish obstinacy, or distempered stiffness, but merely to the love of truth, which prevailed over all other concernments. Let it shame us, that they could part with life, and all their interests, for Christ and his truth, and we cannot part with our lusts; they with their well-being, and we not with our ill-being. Could they suffer the persecutors to destroy their bodies, and will not we suffer the fire of the word to consume our lusts? Reason and conscience is calling upon us to quit these things, and yet we hug them to our great prejudice; we to whom a little duty is so irksome, a little pains in prayer so tedious, what would we do if the fires were kindled about us, and we were every day to carry our life in our hands, and could look for nothing but halters, and stakes, and instruments of destruction? Surely our spirits are too silken and soft for such a religion, so abstracted from ease and pleasure, and worldly interests.

Thirdly, The malignant world hath owned it; the deadly hatred of the devil, and the constant opposition of wicked men is a proof of it. The malignant world know it, and therefore they hate and oppose it. The reason of the argument is because the heart of man is naturally averse to God: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Now that which all wicked men do universally and constantly oppose and malign, certainly that is of God. As Christ saith of his own disciples, John xv. 19, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' So may we reason: If the scriptures were of men, if devised by them, and suitable to their lusts and humours, the men of the world would receive them with a great deal of stillness, flesh and blood would love its own. But carnal men have constantly and universally opposed the doctrine of God, and always have been afflicting the church, and seeking to oppose the people of God, because of their professing the truth. Mark it, before christianity

began to be generally propagated in the world, the Jews were the mark and butt of malice, whereat all nations did shoot their envenomed arrows of malice and rage; and therefore it is very notable that the Romans, though they conquered many nations, yet they never put down the idolatry of the nations, as they put down the religion of the Jews, and sought to oppose that and molested that; and when the christians began to be discovered, then all their malice was turned off from the Jews to christians. Certainly it was not merely because of the difference of worship, for they tolerated the Epicureans, but took away all the worship of God; yea, they burnt the christians, and made them to be torches, to give light to Rome in a dark night. Therefore there was so special a spite at the ways of God.

*Secondly*, I am now to prove the truth, or divine authority of the word by intrinsic arguments, or such arguments as are taken from the scriptures themselves: either—

1. From the manner and form of these writings; or else,
2. From the matter of them.

1. In the manner and form of these writings you may observe these things:—

[1.] The majesty of the style. Look, as there was a difference between Christ's teaching and the teaching of the pharisees: Mat. vii. 29, 'He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes;' such a sovereign majesty is there in the scriptures. They speak, not as conscious of any weakness, and so begging assent, but as commanding it. 'Thus saith the Lord.' It is the great argument in scripture; hear it, or you are lost for ever. Pray mark, it is not said, 'not as the prophets,' but 'not as the scribes;' they had nothing but what was human out of the Jewish rabbis, but Christ speaketh like an extraordinary messenger, as one that came to increase the canon and rule of faith, with such an awe that the high priest's officers were afraid to meddle with him: John vii. 45, 46, 'Why have ye not brought him? The officers said, Never man spake like this man,' with such an infallible spirit. 'Ye have heard,' saith Christ, but 'I say;' and his great argument is, 'I say unto you;' Mat. v. 21, 22, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said of old time, Thou shalt not kill, &c.; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause,' &c. So ver. 27, 28, 33, 34, 38, 39, 43, 44. There is such a majesty breathing forth from one end of the scriptures to another. Men can only beg assent, not command it by their own authority; and therefore in all matters which they would enforce, they use insinuation and argument; but the prophets say, 'Thus saith the Lord;' and Christ, who had original authority in the Church, 'I say unto you.' With what a majestic contempt doth Christ scorn his opposers! 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;' 'He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.' God will not regard the loss of such, that do not regard to understand and obey his word. Longinus, a heathen, admired the majesty of Moses his writings, *γενηθήτω καὶ ἐγένετο*, 'Let it be done, and it was done;' the style of mighty princes and emperors.

[2.] The simplicity of the style. Though it be full of majesty and authority, yet the naked truth is represented in a plain manner, to the capacity of the meanest: Ps. xix. 7, 'The law of the Lord is perfect,

converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.' As there are deep mysteries which may exercise the greatest wits, so in points necessary the scriptures are so plain and clear that they may be understood by those of the dullest understanding. Such simplicity with such majesty is a character of their divine original. They speak in such a manner as to feed the greatest, and instruct the meanest; a child may wade, and an elephant may swim. But this is not all I mean by simplicity, the plainness of the style, but the native beauty of it. Things are nakedly reported, but yet in an affective manner, as if we had been actually present to see them done. Look to the histories of the word, certainly they cannot be fictions, for fictions must either be to delight the fancy, as poetry, or to win the assent for politic ends. There is no such thing in the scriptures; not poetry, things are delivered in a plain manner; not policy, to gain a repute to themselves; they still seek to cast the honour upon God, as I shall prove by and by, by the faithfulness of their relations. It is not imitable by art, such a plain genuine relation. For mysteries, there were sophists in the apostle's times. *Nihil tam horrendum, quod non dicendo fiat probabile.* The fashion was to make absurd horrid things seem probable by the paint and artifice of words, as to prove a gnat better than the sun, or a worm than a man, by plausible arguments. But saith the apostle, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 'My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' Nor in ostentation of parts, but in simplicity and power; plain words have a mighty efficacy. Those sophists and orators did only tickle the fancy; their aim was not to win assent.

[3.] The fidelity of their reports. The penmen of the scripture report their own failings, which men will not do. If they must write of themselves, they will be sure to write the best, and not the worst; but these spared not their own faults. Men naturally labour to cover their own faults, to hide them, to speak well of themselves; especially they are careful not to leave an ill character of themselves to posterity, nor of their party and faction. Now you shall see Moses spareth not to relate his own weaknesses and miscarriages, his resistance of his call, Exod. iv., nor what a great deal of do God had to bring him into Egypt, to perform his duty to his country. His false pleas show his carnal fear: ver. 19, 'The Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt, for all the men are dead which sought thy life.' His murmuring against God, and speaking unadvisedly with his lips, the idolatry of Aaron, the murmuring of Miriam his sister, God shutting him out of the land of Canaan, and not believing after many miracles: Num. xx. 12, 'And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.' Many such instances may be given, how the penmen of scripture relate things to their own disparagement: Deut. xxxii. 51, 'Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel, at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.'

[4.] Another quality to be discerned in the manner and form of

the scriptures is the harmony and agreement that is to be found in them all along, notwithstanding the diversity of times, places, and persons; still there is an increase of knowledge, and dispensations rise higher and higher, as the light increaseth till noonday, but there is no difference: Luke i. 70, 'As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.' One mouth, many prophets. They lived in such distant ages, handled such diversity of arguments, yet all conspired in promoting the same truth, which is now revealed to us in the New Testament. There is a great difference of style; some speak with more loftiness and majesty, others with greater familiarity and humility of expression, yet all promoting the same thing. There is a difference in the manner of prosecution, yet an exact harmony in the substance and essential quality of their writings, not only in their general drift and scope, to set out the glory of God and the good of mankind, but in the matter handled, without any spice of secular vanity, as is to be seen in other writings; so the one and the same spirit appeareth throughout the whole: 1 Cor. xii. 4, 'Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.' Yea, there is not only a diversity of style, but a different degree of light, according to the increase of God's dispensations; yet there is a harmony. God's name and style, and the mystery of Christ, was made known to the church by degrees; the solemn title and style of God was not one and the same from the beginning of the world; but though they were diverse, yet they were not one contrary to another, but one perfecting the other. He is called by Melchisedek, 'The most high God, possessor of heaven and earth,' Gen. xiv. 19. Afterwards, by reason of his covenant with Abraham, אל־שדי, 'God all-sufficient;' Gen. xvii. 1, 'I am the Almighty God,' or the all-sufficient God; 'walk before me, and be thou perfect.' Then when he was put to it, he made known himself by the name of Jehovah: Exod. vi. 2, 3, 'And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord. And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known unto them.' And after the appropriation of the covenant to the family of the patriarchs, he is called the 'God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob;' Exod. iii. 15, 'The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you. This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.' Then, upon experience of God's care of them, he is called, Exod. xx. 2, 'The Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;' then 'the Lord, that brought his people out of the north country:' Jer. xxiii. 7, 8, 'Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land.' Then, when the Sun of righteousness was risen, 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:' 1 Peter i. 3, '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,' &c.; 2 Cor. i. 3, 'Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the

Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;' Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' So for the mystery of redemption; first it was revealed to Adam to be by 'the seed of the woman;' Gen. iii. 15, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;' then to Abraham, by 'thy seed:' Gen. xii. 3, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;' which was repeated to Isaac to cut off Ishmael; then to Jacob to cut off Esau. Then it was revealed out of what tribe he should come, viz., out of Judah: Gen. xlix. 10, 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.' Then that he should come of David's line: Isa. xi. 1, 'There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.' And that he should be born of a virgin: Isa. vii. 14, 'Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.' There is a difference of manifestation, yet still a harmony, as there is a difference between a small print and a great print, but the matter is the same. The mystery of God manifested in the flesh is set forth in a fairer edition.

[5.] There is one character more in the form and manner of these writings, and that is impartiality. Kings and subjects are bound by the same laws, liable to the same punishments, encouraged by the same promises. If the scriptures were only a politic device to keep subjects in awe, there would be some exemption for potentates; but they are alike obnoxious to God's judgment, and the same Tophet that is provided for the peasant is provided for the prince: Isa. xxx. 33, 'For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large,' &c. Tophet was a valley where the idolatrous Jews were wont to burn their children; therefore, as a fit type of everlasting punishment, it is put for hell; it is capacious enough to receive all, king and subject. Now the scriptures, that threaten potentates as well as others, must needs be a law that cometh from a higher than the highest; who would presume else to threaten those in power? Rev. xx. 12, 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' On this side the grave there is a distinction between man and man, but all are alike obnoxious to Christ's judgment, and all stand in dread of it. There is enough in the scriptures to astonish the heart of the mightiest potentate, and make it tremble.

2. Now from the matter of the scriptures. I am much prevented from what is published on James i. 18; but let me speak something now. All that is spoken in the scripture may be reduced to these five heads—Precepts, promises, doctrines, histories, prophecies. Now all these proclaim it to be of God. I shall be brief in going over this enumeration.

[1.] For the precepts of the word: Ps. cxix. 96, 'I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandments are exceeding broad.' Here all matters of duty and morality are advanced to their highest

perfection. It is very broad, watching every thought, and the first motions of the heart. No precepts are so holy, just, and good. The light of nature seeth a necessity of holiness; there are some fragments and remains of light in man's heart, that teach him what is good and right; but these are much blurred: Rom. ii. 15, 'Which show ἔργον νόμου, the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts in the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.' Now the word is the second edition of God's will, wherein duties are better known and set forth; not only sins, but lusts are forbidden. Lust is adultery: Mat. v. 28, 'Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' In worship and other duties, not only the act, but the frame of the heart is regarded: Mat. xxii. 37, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' Yea, there are precepts that go against the bent and hair of nature; man's heart could never have devised them, as to love our enemies: Mat. v. 44, 45, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father that is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' To wean men from the world, that it is a sin to walk as men: 1 Cor. iii. 3, 'For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' Christians are trained up in a higher school. So to deny ourselves, a lesson proper to Christ's school: Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up the cross and follow me.' To depend on God, renouncing our sufficiency, &c.

[2.] The promises of the word, they hold forth the highest happiness that man is capable of. Philosophy was to seek of a fit reward and encouragement of virtue; the chief good is only revealed in the scriptures. Men are at a puzzle and loss till they take this light along with them: Ps. iv. 6, 'There are many that say, Who will show unto us any good?' There is a disposition and instinct of nature towards happiness, yea, towards eternal happiness. All men would be happy. Man's soul is a chaos of desires; like a sponge, it desireth to fill itself; it is thirsty, and seeketh to be satisfied. Austin speaketh of a jester that at the next show would undertake to show every one what they did desire; and when there was a great confluence and expectation, he told them, *Hoc omnes vultis, vili emere, et caro vendere.* Another said, Ye all desire to be praised. But Austin saith rightly, these were but foolish answers, because many good men desire neither, the one being against justice, and the other against sincerity; but, saith he, *Si dixisset, omnes beati esse vultis,* he had said right: every one may find this disposition in his own heart, to an eternal infinite happiness. This stock was left in nature, on which grace hath grafted: Acts xvii. 26, 'That they may seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.' They groped after God, like the blind Sodomites about Lot's door. When we have all outward blessings, the soul of man is not filled, but this sore runneth. *Fecisti nos, Domine, propter te, et ideo irrequietum est*

*cor meum, donec requiescat in te.* There is a natural poise in the soul, that bendeth it that way, so that we cannot be quiet without God. We may make experiments, as Solomon did, but still we shall want an infinite eternal recompense after this life, for we can never be happy here; as the heathens dreamed of Elysian fields. This is fit for God to give, and for us to receive; the infinite eternal God will give like himself, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;' as Araunah 'gave like a king to the king,' 2 Chron. xxiv. 24, a royal gift. There is a time when God will give like himself. The scripture giveth this manifestation of eternal happiness.

[3.] The doctrines of the word, of sin, righteousness, and judgment, tney are all sublime: John xvi. 8, 'When the Spirit is come, he will reprove (or convince) the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' Without a revelation from God they could not enter into the heart of man; doctrines of sin, to humble the creature; of righteousness, to raise him and comfort him; of judgment, to awe him unto holiness. Of sin, as of the fall, the heathens knew nothing of this; they complained of nature as a step-mother. *Vitia etiam sine magistro discuntur.* Man cometh into the world crying, as into a place of misery; the cause they could not tell. The scriptures show us how we sinned in Adam. Our natures are evil, more susceptible of bad than of good, never weary of sin, because this is most suitable to us. Then there are doctrines of righteousness, and there indeed come in many mysteries, trinity of persons, union of the two natures in Christ's person, a child born of a virgin; but all these, though above nature, yet not against it. All religions aim at this, to bring men to God; nature is sensible of a breach. There are vain offers elsewhere to make up this breach, but the scriptures show the way; therefore there is no reason to suspect the truth of them. It is above reason, that showeth it to be of divine original; if the creature had been put to study it, they could never have found it out; it exceedeth all human contrivance, and therefore maketh us wonder. And there are doctrines of judgment; take it of judgment to come, resurrection, last judgment, it is not incredible; reason showeth it may be: Acts xxvi. 8, 'Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?' Justice must have a solemn triumph. The heathens dreamed of a severe day of accounts: Acts xxiv. 25, 'As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled;' Rom. i. 18, 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.' There is a sad presage of it in a guilty heart.

[4.] The histories of the word. The scriptures are a history of the creation of the world, which puzzled the philosophers; some thought it was produced by chance, others that it was from eternity. Moses with plainness, and yet with majesty, speaks of the original of all things, the propagation of mankind, &c. There is no such ancient historical monument; for above the funerals of Troy, all is uncertain. And all the rest of the bible is but a comment on Moses.

[5.] The prophecies of the word; future contingencies are in it foretold many years before the event: Isa. xli. 22, 23, 'Let them show the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, and know

the latter end of them, or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.' Cyrus was mentioned by name a hundred years before he was born: Isa. xlv. 1, 'Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden.' The birth of Josiah three hundred years before it came to pass: 1 Kings xiii. 2, 'Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name,' &c. The building of Jericho five hundred years before it was re-edified: Josh. vi. 26, 'Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.' Which was fulfilled: 1 Kings xvi. 34, 'In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho; he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.' The great promise of Christ made in paradise was accomplished some thousands of years afterward.

*Use* 1. It informeth us how to settle the conscience in sore temptations. When we doubt of the truth of the scriptures, take this course:—

1. There must be some word and rule from God to guide the creatures; how else shall he be served and worshipped? The inward rule of reason is not enough, as appears by the sad experience of the heathens: Rom. i. 21, 22, 'Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.' There must be some second edition of his will. Reason will teach us that God is to be worshipped, and every man's heart will tell him that he must not be worshipped as we will, but as he will; for the servant must not prescribe to the master, but the master to the servant. Now we have no rule of worship but in the scriptures. The Alcoran is a silly piece, fit for sots. As for revelation, those that are ingenuous cannot speak of any such thing; and we see how men split themselves upon that rock: all is proved lies at length.

2. There is far more reason to receive the scriptures as the word of God than to suspect them. There is none more credulous than the atheist; he offereth violence to his own heart. The first temptation to it ariseth from his lusts; he would not have them true; and then afterward he is hardened and grown obstinate in his prejudices. If he would but hearken to the books of Moses as to the story of an ordinary man, as of Henry the Eighth, there is enough to make him tremble. Now there is no such history in the world, of such a genuine native style, so free from weaknesses, so likely even to a common eye; and if Moses be true, so is all the rest; the same vein runneth through all. Now the cause being so weighty, the inducements so rational, why should we not believe it? At least we may say, as of the blind man, 'If it be not he, it is like him,' John ix. 9.

3. To what hath been alleged, add only this: consider the matter and aim of the scriptures. The scriptures seek to establish nothing but the worship and glory of the true God, the creator and governor of the world; they discover the God of nature in a most worthy and glorious manner. And for precepts: Deut. iv. 8, 'What nation is

there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law, which I have set before thee this day?' Where are there such precepts? where such promises? such a manifestation of happiness? such purity? There have been corruptions in the best things to which man ever put his hand, mixtures of falsehood and folly; but here all is pure and divine. Where are there such comforts for afflicted consciences? Jer. vi. 16, 'Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, Where is the good way? and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls;' Mat. xi. 28, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Go and survey all the religions in the world, whatever pretence they be of, see where you can find such rest for your souls, such provision for the comfort and everlasting happiness of the creature, such rich encouragements for afflicted consciences. That which all religions aim at is here only accomplished.

4. Beg the light of the Spirit. What will your arguings reprove? David saith, Ps. xxxvi. 9, 'In thy light we shall see light.' We shall never else have any certainty: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;' ver. 15, 'But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.' The Spirit in the heart discerns the Spirit in the scriptures, as the sun is seen by its own light.

5. Till you have certainty by the light of the Spirit, practise what the scripture enjoins, upon these rational inducements: John vii. 17, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.' You will say, What is the meaning of this promise? before doing the will of God, we must of necessity know it. *Ans.* It is true, before you know it certainly. There are degrees of knowledge; first we know the scriptures to be the word of God by rational inducements, and some foregoing light of the Spirit, as those that are bred in the church. They that would know, not to wrangle but to practise, shall have new light, till they grow up to a greater certainty. It concerneth chiefly weak and doubting christians. Do that you may believe, believe that you may do. They that set their hearts to fear and obey him shall be clearly resolved of the christian faith.

*Use* 2. It teacheth us these duties:—

1. To make the word the judge of all controversies. There God speaketh to us. A father having many children, while he lives he governeth them himself, and needeth no will and testament; but a little before he dieth, that his children may not fall out, he calleth witness, maketh his will. *Voluntatem suam de pectore morituro transfert in tabulas diu duraturas.* If any controversy happen, *Non itur ad tumulum, sed quæritur testamentum*, saith Optatus. In this testament he speaketh his mind as if he were alive. God taught by oracle. Christ, when bodily present, taught his disciples by word; but his will and testament is written: Isa. viii. 20, 'To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'

2. Make it your direction and constant rule of faith and manners. All other rules are uncertain, the traditions and opinions of men: Ps.

cxix. 152, 'Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.' Among men, *τὰ δικαῖα κινούμενα*, saith Aristotle; what one age counteth just and good, another counteth vain and frivolous, but God hath given us a settled rule. Not providence; it is to be observed, but it doth not always speak by way of approbation, nor point out the best way. Not impulse of spirit; this is to be regarded with other circumstances of a known duty: Acts xvii. 16, 'His spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry;' Acts xviii. 5, 'Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.' Not necessity; man never was necessitated to sin. David's eating the shew-bread in necessity does not prove it; for ceremonials must give place to moral duties. But now observe the word, as if God himself spake from heaven: Gen. iii. 3, 'God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' What the word saith, God saith: Ps. cxix. 105, 'Thy word is a light unto my feet, and a lamp unto my paths.'

## SERMON XXX.

*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*—JOHN XVII. 18.

IN the context our Lord had prayed for conservation and sanctification; first he saith, 'Keep them through thine own name,' ver. 11; then, 'Sanctify them through thy truth,' ver. 17. In this verse is the reason of the latter request, why he prays for sanctification for the apostles; and the argument which he uses is, 'I have sent them into the world.' It was at hand, and therefore it is spoken of a thing done, I am about to send; or it referreth to his election and choice, I have called them, that I may send them to preach the word. The same office which thou hast put upon me as a prophet I have put upon them, and therefore 'sanctify them.' They that are sent abroad to preach the gospel need special preservation and special holiness; their dangers are great, and so are their temptations. So much holiness as will serve an ordinary christian will not serve a minister. The measures of the sanctuary were double to other measures, and so should the graces of ministers be double to the graces of others. It is not enough that ministers excel in gifts, but they must also excel in holiness; they are to bear forth the name of Christ before the world, and therefore they should resemble Christ more than others do. This is the reason of the context: 'Sanctify them through, or by, thy truth; for I have sent them into the world, as thou hast sent me into the world.'

In the text there are two things:—

1. The mission of Christ.

2. The mission of the apostles. Together with the comparison between them both; *as* thou hast sent me into the world, *even so*, &c.

First, The mission of Christ, 'Thou hast sent me into the world.' Here you may consider—(1.) Who sends; (2.) The nature of this

mission, or what this sending is; (3.) The ends and purposes why Christ was sent.

1. Who sends. Christ saith to his Father, 'Thou hast sent me.' The Holy Ghost sends as well as the Father, yea, the Son sends himself. The Trinity are one in essence and in will, and their actions are undivided; why then doth he say to the Father, 'Thou hast sent me into the world'? I answer—It is chiefly ascribed to the Father, because it is his personal operation. In the economy of salvation, the original authority is said to reside in God the Father; he sent Christ, and the Spirit fits and qualifies him, and the Son he takes human nature, and unites it to his own person. Now there is a great deal of comfort in this, that the Father sends Christ. The Father, being first in the order of the persons, is to be looked upon as the offended party, and as the highest judge. All sin is against God, and it chiefly reflects upon the first person, to whom we direct our prayers, and who is the maker of the law, and therefore requires an account of the breach of it. It chiefly reflects upon the first person, to whom Christ tendered the satisfaction. Sin, it is a grieving of the Spirit, it is a crucifying of Christ, there is wrong done to all the persons of the Godhead; but in the last result of all, it is an offence to God the Father, and an affront to his authority; for all that is done to the other persons redounds to him. It is his Spirit that is grieved; and our Saviour thus reasoneth, Luke x. 16, 'He that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me;' so that he is the wronged party. And again, he is the supreme judge. All the persons in the Godhead are co-essential and co-equal in glory and honour; but in the economy and dispensation of salvation, the Father is to be looked upon as judge and chief. Therefore Christ doth say, 'My Father is greater than I.' And all addresses are made to him, not only by us but by Christ: 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.' And Christ is said to be 'an advocate with the Father,' 1 John ii. 1. I say, in that court and throne that is erected the Father is supreme; and if it passeth God the Father, the business is done. So John xiv. 16, 'I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.' Pardon, comfort, grace, all comes from the Father, as the fountain and first cause. It is true it is said, Mat. ix. 6, 'That the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins;' but this is by commission from God the Father. Well, then, the Father sendeth Christ. Eli saith, 1 Sam. ii. 25, 'If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?' There may be an umpire to compromise the difference between man and man, and award satisfaction to the party offended; but now who shall state the offence and compound the difference between us and God? Can there be an umpire above God, that can give laws to God? The sin is committed against the judge himself, the highest judge, from whom there is no appeal; and who is a fit person to arbitrate the difference? This is a doubt that would have remained to all eternity unsatisfied, a question that never could be answered. Where should we find an umpire between God and us, to have awarded a meet satisfaction? But now God himself is pleased to find out the remedy. Christ saith to the Father, 'Thou hast sent me;' his act is authoritative and above

contradiction. If God had not given us a mediator out of his own bosom there could have been no satisfaction, and we had for ever lain under the guilt and burden of our sins: Gal. iv. 4, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,' &c.; he consecrated him for this great purpose. Therefore he is said to seal him: John vi. 37, 'Him hath God the Father sealed;' a metaphor taken from them that give commissions under hand and seal. Christ is a mediator, confirmed and allowed under the broad seal of heaven, by God the Father, as the supreme judge. God hath awarded satisfaction to himself, and sent his own Son to make it.

2. What is this sending? It implies three things—(1.) The designation of the person; (2.) His qualification for the work; (3.) His authority and commission.

[1.] The designation of the person. This was an act of divine and voluntary dispensation, according to which the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, was sent to take our nature, and the office of a redeemer upon himself. In this choosing of Christ was the original and first rise of elective love. Augustine hath observed, in choosing Christ, what was the reason Christ was the person designed: Col. i. 19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' What is the reason we are elected and chosen above others? that God reveals himself to babes? and the things of his grace are hidden from the wise and prudent? 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight,' Mat. xi. 26. The same reason is given for the election and choice of Jesus Christ to be the redeemer, that is given for our election; 'It pleased the Father;' that is all. That Christ might be the first pattern of free grace the Father chose the Son, that he might be the redeemer. It was congruous and very fit that the Son and heir of all things should give us the adoption of sons: Gal. iv. 4, 5, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' He sent his Son that we might have the same relation to God by grace which Christ had by nature. By nature, he is the only-begotten Son of the Father; and this is that which is purchased for us, that we should become the sons of God; and the middle person of the Trinity is the fittest to be the mediator between us and God.

[2.] This sending implies his fitness and qualification to do the work for which he was sent. (1.) He had fit natures; (2.) He had fit endowments.

(1.) Fit natures. He was God-man: God, else how could he send? man, else how could he be sent into the world? This sending implies he was a person truly existing before he came into the world, as a man must be before he is sent, and therefore he is said to be 'sent forth from God;' Gal. iv. 4, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.' 'Sent forth,' that shows his being before he took flesh; Christ was somewhere from whence he was sent forth. And then, 'made of a woman,' that implies his incarnation. This sending doth suppose his divine nature, and imply his incarnation, or God's bestowing upon him a human nature. God he was, in the bosom of the Father, from whence he was sent forth into the world. Such an errand as Christ

came about required a God, no inferior mediator would serve the turn. Nothing but an infinite good can remedy an infinite evil. Sin had bound us over to an eternal judgment, and nothing can counterpoise eternity but the infiniteness and the excellency of Christ's person. His divine nature was requisite in many regards. Partly to give efficacy and virtue and value to his sufferings; and therefore it is said that we are 'purchased by the blood of God,' Acts xx. 28; the meaning is, the blood of that person to whom the divine properties belonged. God is a spirit, and hath not flesh, blood, and bones, as we have; how then are we said to be redeemed with the 'blood of God'? that is, the blood of him who was God; which makes it to be of infinite value, and enough to counterpoise that eternity of torment which we should have endured. Again, the dignity of his person conduced to the acceptance of one for all: 2 Cor. v. 15, 'And that he died for all,' &c., in the room and stead of all the elect; and therefore that there might be such a value in his sufferings, his person must be thus worthy; as they said to David, 'Thou art worth ten thousand of us,' 2 Sam. xviii. 3. A general or commander given in ransom will redeem thousands of private soldiers; so the worth of Christ's person made him equivalent in dignity to the persons of all those whom he sustained; yea, much more, God was more satisfied from Christ, than if all the world had suffered, and all angels and men had been made a sacrifice. Again, God he must be, because of the exuberancy of his merit. Christ's suffering was not only a ransom from death, but the merit of eternal life. By his death he satisfied the old covenant, and ratified the new. The scriptures do not only set forth the death of Christ as a ransom for souls, but as a price given to purchase everlasting glory. A surety to an ordinary creditor, if he pay the debt, he only frees the creditor from bonds, but doth not bring him into grace and favour. But now Christ hath merited happiness for us, and not only freed us from wrath to come, and delivered us from bondage; there was a price paid to divine justice. Again, the dignity of his person was necessary by way of compensation for those circumstances of punishment which did not beseem Christ. The civility of nations remits to princes and nobles some disgraceful circumstances; though the punishment is inflicted, yet the kind of death is changed, because of the dignity of their birth, and place in the commonwealth. So here; the sentence which passed upon men was eternal death; the sentence itself is not reversed, that would lessen the authority of the law, and the glory of God's justice. The truth is, there are some circumstances abated which stood not with the worthiness of Christ's person; as for instance, the eternity of the punishment is abated. Christ suffered but a few hours, because of the greatness of his sufferings, and the dignity of his person. A payment in gold is as full and valid as a payment in silver, though it may take up less room, because of the excellency of the metal; so here, the suffering and death of Christ was of full value, though it was despatched in a lesser time; the eternity, that is abated, because of the dignity and worth of his person. Once more, the godhead of Christ was necessary, that he may be able to discharge the office of a priest, as that he might satisfy on the cross, and know all those whom he did personate and represent before the tribunal of God. As the high

priest had the names of the twelve tribes upon his shoulders and upon his breast, Exod. xxviii. 12-29,—upon his shoulders, to represent them to God, and upon his breast, to show how dear they were to himself,—so Jesus Christ hath, as it were, the names of all those for whom he was to suffer and intercede; he was to know them man by man. And it was meet that he should know all the sins that were imputed to him; and therefore the person thus sent, for such a work as this was, must needs be God. Again, he must be God, that he might support his human nature, and overcome his sufferings. Jesus Christ was to be raised, and also to raise himself; he was to be raised by God the Father as a judge. As the apostles would not go out of prison till the magistrates came to fetch them out themselves, so God as judge is said to raise Christ, and exalt him; he must give him power to rise. But now Christ was also to raise himself: John ii. 19, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again.' He was to raise himself, to declare the glory of his person. Christ was to rise by his Father's authority, and to rise by his own power. He was to rise by the Father's authority; therefore, as a pledge of it, an angel is sent to roll away the stone, and open the prison-door, and let our surety out of prison, the debt being paid. And Christ was to rise also by the strength of his own godhead. Why? This was necessary for our satisfaction. He that would undertake our case, with comfort and satisfaction to the creature, had need be able to overcome divine wrath, for the creature could never have satisfied. If our surety were kept in prison, and held under wrath, we could have no security that the debt was paid; the great assurance that is given to the world is the resurrection of Christ: Acts xvii. 31, 'Whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead;' this was his public acquittance and discharge. Again, it was necessary he should be God, for so much of his prophetical office as he accomplished upon earth. Christ came to bring the everlasting gospel out of the bosom of God, and to ratify it with miracles, to choose disciples to preach it, to give the Holy Ghost, to give them power to work miracles, suitable to the tenor of the gospel; as raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, &c. Thus his godhead was necessary to his work.

But now, upon his sending (and that is more formally and expressly intended in the phrase), he had new qualifications and a new power; for as God he could not suffer, therefore the manhood is bestowed upon him: Ps. xl. 7, 'A body hast thou prepared for me.' This is formally implied in that expression, 'He sent him;' that is, prepared a body for him. God's sending of Christ doth not imply his change of place; for Christ, as God, before was everywhere; 'the heaven of heavens could not contain him;' but it implies the assumption of another nature. He was *sent*, that is, took flesh, assumed another nature into his own person. Now this was necessary, that Christ should be man, that he might have an interest in us, and have compassion on us, and be in a capacity to die for us. That he might have an interest in us, and be of our blood: the next of blood had a right to redeem, Ruth iii. 9. Therefore Christ, he took our nature, that he might be of our blood, that so he might have a right to redeem us, having an interest in us; and therefore he was not only man, but the Son of man. Christ

might have been true man, if God had formed him out of the dust of the ground, as he did Adam, he might have given him a true human nature. But Christ was not only man, but was of our stock and lineage; and therefore it is said, Heb. ii. 14, 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same;' and ver. 11, 'For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one.' They are 'all of one.' How is that? Of one stock. Justice required that the same nature that had sinned should be punished. It was not fit our sins should be punished in the nature of an angel, nor in the nature of man that was made out of nothing, or out of the dust of the ground; but in one that was of the same stock. Again, that he might have compassion on us, as well as an interest in us. Christ hath a nature that inclines him to his office; besides his essential mercy as God, there is a human compassion, which ariseth from feeling and from experience: Heb. iv. 15, 'For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' He took our nature, that he might have experience of our sorrows, miseries, temptations, and so entender his own heart by an experimental pity and compassion. As man, Christ had a feeling what it was to be in the state of men, that we might have an assurance of his pity. As a man that hath felt the racking of the gout and stone is more fit to pity others in the same case, so Jesus Christ, having had a feeling of the buffetings of Satan, and wrath of God, and of the neglects and scorns of men, feeling of all conditions that are miserable, his heart is the more entendered, his human compassion is increased; and God would have it to be so for our greater assurance. Again, his human nature gave him a capacity to suffer. As God he could not suffer; and therefore when God would have no more sacrifices, but all were to be abolished; he prepared Christ a body: Heb. x. 5, God invested him with a human nature, that he might offer one sacrifice to abolish all the rest. Thus you see Christ was sent, that is, fitted by his two natures; his divine nature, that is supposed, and his human nature is formally included in that expression, 'He was sent;' that is, assumed a body, did not change place, but assumed a nature in his own person, that so he might be fit to deal with God for us.

(2.) And then he had fit endowments; he came to be loaded with graces and blessings, and with all kind of qualities to do men good: John x. 36, 'Him hath the Father sanctified, and sent into the world;' that is God's sending, his anointing of Christ as our head, 'with the oil of gladness above his fellows.' As the head of the high priest was anointed, and thence the oil dropped down to all the members: Ps. cxxxiii. 3, 'It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment;' so our head is anointed with the oil of gladness for our sakes. Christ received the Spirit without measure in our nature, as holiness, pity, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Look, as when an ambassador is sent forth, there is not only a designation of his person, but he is furnished for his employment and work; so is Jesus Christ sent forth, that is, his person not only designed and chosen in grace, and yet in wisdom, but also furnished with all manner of

endowments in our nature, grace and strength for his work as our head.

[3.] This sending implies authority, and noteth a commission sealed to him, so that he was an authorised mediator, or an ambassador with letters-patent from heaven. This is the principal thing intended in this sending, the call and authority Christ had to do his office: Heb. v. 4, 5, 'No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.' He was designed in the council of the Trinity; and as every ambassador hath letters of credence under the hand and seal of him from whom he is sent, that he may be acknowledged as his deputy to act for him, so Christ is sent as God's deputy into the world, to act and deal for him; and the apostles they are thus sent from Christ, to act and deal for Christ. Here the comparison chiefly holds: 'As thou hast sent me into the world,' that is, given me authority to execute the office of a mediator, 'so have I sent them;' I have given them authority to preach in my name, and to deliver the gospel to others. This sending of Christ, it maketh all that Christ doth in the Father's name to be valid, which is much for the comfort of our faith. Christ is not a mediator by the right, or merely by the desire of the creature, or by his own interposition; but he is sent and authorised; you may plead it with God, he hath sent him to save sinners. You know Moses, when he interposed on his own accord: Exod. xxxii. 32, 'Forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.' Though it was a high act of zeal in Moses, yet God refused it: ver. 33, 'And the Lord said to Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.' So if Christ had been set up as mediator by the right and desire of the creature only, he might have been refused; but he was authorised by God; he did not glorify himself by invasion of the mediatory office, but had a patent from the council of the Trinity, indited by the Father, accepted by himself, sealed by the Holy Ghost, evidenced to the world by his personal endowments, and by his miracles. Thus you see what this sending is; it implies the designation of the Father, the qualification of his person for the work, and his authority to execute it in his name.

3. To what purpose was he sent into the world? I answer—To perform the whole duty of the mediator, but principally to redeem and instruct the world; those two offices of prophet and priest Christ performed upon earth. The apostle toucheth upon them: Heb. iii. 1, 'Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.' Mark, the apostle mentioneth but two offices, but they were the highest in both the churches: the high priest was the highest officer in the Jewish church, therefore he saith he was the 'high priest of our profession;' and an apostle was the highest officer in the christian church, therefore he saith he was 'the apostle of our profession.' And he mentions but these two, because these were the two offices Christ chiefly performed on earth. He came to preach the gospel which we profess, so he is 'the apostle of our profession;' and he came to ratify it with his blood, so he is 'the high priest of our profession.' In short, he

came to deal with God and with men: to deal with God, and so is a high priest, to pacify God, to offer such a sacrifice as might satisfy God; and he came to deal with men, and so he is an apostle, to open the everlasting gospel, to bring it out of the bosom of God to our hearts. His kingly office was but little exercised upon earth; we have a glimpse of his kingly office, or rather of his divine nature, in turning the money-changers out of the temple; but it was little exercised upon earth. Why? Because this was the time of Christ's humiliation. Now the kingly office suits more with the exaltation of Christ; when he comes the second time, then he comes to exercise his kingly office, to reign, and scatter his enemies, and show his kingly power; but now he came to teach and to suffer. That is the reason why his kingly office is made the consequent of his resurrection: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' Was not Christ king of the church, and king before his resurrection? I answer—As God, so he was a king from all eternity; and in the days of his flesh he was our mediator, therefore certainly king, priest, and prophet; but in the world he did not come to possess his kingdom, but only to preach it and divulge it. Therefore he saith to Pilate, John xviii. 36, 'My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.' Christ came to bear witness that he was king, but did not come to possess his kingdom and act as a king. As soon as ever he was consecrated to be a mediator, he was king, priest, and prophet of the church. Look, as David was king before God as soon as he was anointed, long before he possessed the throne and was crowned at Hebron, 1 Sam. xvi. 13, for he was king when he wandered up and down, and was hunted like a flea or like a partridge upon the mountains; so Christ in the time of his humiliation was a king, but did not exercise his kingdom. Chiefly, then, he was sent into the world the first time to redeem and instruct the world. To redeem the world: 1 John iv. 10, 'God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' This was Christ's first errand, to make satisfaction for sins; afterwards he will come to destroy his enemies at his second coming. And to instruct the world; that is of special consideration in this place: 'As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I sent them into the world.' Christ sent disciples as a prophet, and in this sense he is the 'apostle of our profession;' an ambassador sent from heaven, God's representative; in this sense he is called 'the angel of the covenant,' Mal. iii. 1. The solemnest messenger that ever God sent into the world: Isa. lxi. 1, 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek,' &c. Christ was anointed principally for this work, to preach the gospel; he came from heaven to show us the way of life: Heb. i. 1, 2, 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' He hath spoken to us by apostles, pastors, and teachers. Why doth he make mention only of Christ? Because in the roll of gospel preachers, Christ is the first, Christ's name is first enrolled, he was first in commission, and he sent forth apostles, and the apostles others. The

mystery of redemption was never clearly known till Christ came to preach it; then all the deep counsel of God for man's salvation came out, which was hidden before. Christ brought out of God's bosom the doctrine of the gospel.

## APPLICATION.

We learn hence many things. As—

1. The distinction of the persons in the Trinity. Christ is a distinct subsistence from the Father; for he that sendeth and he that is sent are distinct. Mark, it implies a distinction, but not an inferiority; against the Arians. Persons equal by mutual consent may send one another; as the elders of Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas, but it doth not follow that they were inferior to the elders of Antioch. So here it implies distinction, but not inferiority.

2. The knowledge of Christ's person; he was 'sent into the world,' therefore is God-man. He was one that was sent, therefore had a being before he was incarnate; and was 'sent into the world,' therefore there was an assumption of the human nature.

3. It showeth us the love of God; he would not intrust an angel nor archangel with our salvation, but sent his Son: 1 John iv. 10, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' There is nothing too near nor too dear for us. It will take the more with us, if we consider the infinite complacency and contentment God had in Christ, yet he sent his Son. Man's love is defensive; he loves his children out of design of immortality, because he lives in them. God had no reason to do so; he had many reasons to the contrary, yet he sent his Son to die for us, when we were enemies. And his Son is sent; what to do? Not only to treat with us, not only to borrow a tongue to speak to us, but to take a body to die for us, to be substituted in our room and stead.

4. It informs us of the great condescension of Christ, that he submitted to be sent: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' He was ready, when God would send him, like a servant ready to be despatched upon his errand. That Christ would be sent, that he would take our nature, not while it was innocent, but when it was guilty, liable to the wrath of God, when all mankind were proclaimed traitors and outlaws, and whoever partaked of our nature was to partake of our sorrow; yet then was Christ sent: he came 'in the similitude of sinful flesh,' Rom. viii. 3. Christ did not partake of the infection of our nature; he was not a sinner, by being born of our stock; the infection was stopped by the Holy Ghost; but he took our nature, when it was sinful, tainted with sin, and in this message and errand he laid aside his majesty, and by an unspeakable dispensation he abstains from the full use and exercise of the godhead, not from the godhead itself. Therefore, he prays, John xvii. 5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' He begs for his glory again, which he had laid aside for a while. It cannot be meant of the divine nature, for to that nothing can be given;

it cannot be meant of human nature, because that is not capable of the glory which Christ had before the world was. The meaning is, he desires to be restored to the full use of the godhead, from which he had abstained by an unspeakable dispensation a long time, and by the interposition of his human nature, the glory of the godhead was, as it were, eclipsed, as a candle in a dark lantern; and therefore he desires that the veil might be taken away, and he might return again to the full use of the godhead, having done his work. It is irksome to us to go back a few degrees in pomp and pleasure, even upon just and convenient reasons; but how did Christ condescend and stoop, when he was thus sent into the world by God for our sakes!

5. Here is some ground of comfort to them that believe; you may offer to God a mediator of his own choosing, one that was authorised by himself. When you plead with God, you may say, 'Lord, thou hast sent thy Son.' Or when you plead with your own hearts, you may urge them with this, 'God sent him to be helpful to my soul.' These things may be observed from the first thing, the mission of Christ.

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## SERMON XXXI.

*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*—JOHN XVII. 18.

SECONDLY, I come to the mission of the apostles, 'So have I sent them into the world, as thou hast sent me.' The words intimate a comparison between God's sending of Christ into the world, and Christ's sending the apostles into the world.

But how doth the comparison hold good? Christ was sent to redeem, they to preach; the apostles were no redeemers. Christ was sent, not only as a prophet, but as a priest, as we have seen before. And again, for the manner, Christ was sent by being incarnate, God-man in one person, he must be man, if sent; but they were men, and therefore there is a difference. Christ was sent as the supreme officer of the church, as God with original authority, they as ministers and servants. Christ could teach immediately, outwardly by his word, inwardly by his Spirit; they only outwardly. How then could it be said, 'As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I sent them into the world'?

I answer—There is an ὁμοιότης, not an ἰσότης, some likeness, but not an equality. As the union of the apostles is compared with the unity of the Trinity, so the mission of the apostles with the mission of Christ. The similitude holdeth in several things. They were authorised ministers and officers of the church, as Christ was. Christ was authorised by God, and the apostles by Christ; they were his deputies and representatives, as he was God's; that is the notion of *apostle*, or one sent, in the New Testament; not as bare messengers, but as proxies (see Hammond); and we read of 'messengers of the churches,' ἀπόστολοι, the church's deputies and representatives. Yea, they had

power to send others, as Christ had. The world was bound to acknowledge them for such. To despise Christ was to despise God, whose deputy he was; and to despise them was to despise Christ; to hear them was to hear Christ, and to hear Christ was to hear God: Mat. x. 40, 'He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me;' and Luke x. 16, 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.'

But why doth Christ urge this argument in this place, 'They were sent,' and 'sent as I was sent'?

I answer—It is an argument as to God, and it is a ground of hope to the apostles. An argument fit to be urged to God in prayer, 'they are sent as I was.' Thou didst send me to redeem the world out of thy grace, and they are sent to preach this redemption, and therefore it is fit they should be preserved and sanctified. It is a fit ground of hope for the apostles to meditate upon; they were sent as Christ was. If they be in great poverty, want the help and assistance of the world, so did Christ. All God's witnesses prophesy in sackcloth.

Well, then, here we have the first rise of a gospel ministry. Christ was sent by God, the apostles by Christ, and others are their successors, authorised and sent by them.

The points which I shall handle are two:—

1. The necessity of a call to the ministry.

2. The dignity of those that are so called. Both are implied in the word *sent*.

Before I enter upon the discussion, let none take offence that I apply that to the ministry in general which is spoken of the apostles in the text, 'I have sent them;' which I do for two reasons:—

1. Partly because we may compare ordinary ministers and the apostles together, if their mission be compared with Christ's. As Christ's mission had something extraordinary and peculiar, by which it was distinguished from the mission of the apostles, so the apostles' mission hath something peculiar; but both agree in this, that they must be sent; this they have in common: Rom. x. 14, 'How can they preach except they be sent?' Mark, the apostles were sent as Christ was sent (though Christ was sent to redeem, as well as to prophesy and teach), and so ministers are sent; they must be authorised, as well as the apostles, though the apostles had somewhat peculiar and proper to that office, as the infallibility of doctrine, power of working miracles, the largeness of their circuit, which was the whole world, whereas ordinary ministers are set over one church, and fastened to one place. Again, the apostles were appointed to write scriptures, and pastors and teachers to apply scripture. The apostles were authorised by Christ himself, received their call immediately from his mouth; ordinary ministers are called by a power derived; yet they both agree in this, that they serve in the work of the gospel, and that they are officers that must be called and sent; as not only they are the king's officers, who are immediately appointed by the king, but those also that are appointed by subordinate powers.

2. Partly because a part of the comparison lieth in this, that as Christ was sent by God, and had power to call others, so the apostles

were sent by Christ, and had a power to send and constitute others, and so the succession was to continue. That this was a part of their power appeareth, because Christ, when he gave them their commission, saith, 'He will be with them to the end of the world,' Mat. xxviii. 20; that is, with them in their persons and their successors, who are taken into the same patent and commission, and have a power to call others to the end of the world; and therefore the 'apostles ordained elders in every city,' Acts xiv. 23; and those elders ordained others, as the apostle giveth leave to Titus so to do: Titus i. 5, 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.' Christ was not only sent to be a prophet himself, but to authorise others; so the apostles not only were sent to preach the gospel themselves, but to authorise others, and they others, even to the end of the world.

This being premised, I come to handle—

First, The necessity of a call. That none can enter upon this work, or upon the office of the ministry, without a call, is, I suppose, out of controversy. All the difficulty will be to show you what a call is. Gifts merely do not make a call, but something else. Now a call is either extraordinary or ordinary.

1. Extraordinary, and that is an immediate call from God himself, by voice, vision, or oracle, or by Christ in person. So was Moses called to his office; so the Baptist, so the apostles; and so also was Paul called, because he not seen Christ in person, which it seemeth was necessary to the call of an apostle; he was called by Christ appearing from heaven; and therefore he saith, Gal. i. 1, 'Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,' &c. Now this extraordinary call may be pretended, but cannot be expected in these latter days. Many have pretended to an extraordinary call. Eusebius in his sixth book tells us of some that pretended they had a book sent from heaven, according to which they were to instruct their disciples; and Sozomen speaketh of a monk that pretended that the instruction that he offered to the church was written by an angel; and since in all ages, especially in ours, do men pretend to illuminations, teachings, and voices within. Thus it may be pretended, but it cannot be expected; for an immediate extraordinary calling hath only place in establishing a new doctrine; but now the canon of faith is closed up: 'This doctrine of the kingdom is to be preached to all nations, till the end come,' Mat. xxiv. 14. And the ordinances of the church are settled, and put into a stated course till Christ come; and therefore we cannot reasonably expect new miracles and new calls. And besides, every extraordinary call is manifested by some vision, miracle, or special effect and gift of the Holy Ghost, by which the truth of that calling may be made out to others, and hath been always sealed with extraordinary effects, which are ceased in these days.

2. The ordinary call then is that which we should chiefly regard, and that is twofold—either inward or outward.

[1.] The inward calling, that is to be regarded in the first place. Be sure you be ministers of Christ's making. There can be no true calling unless you see God in it as well as men. And the Lord taketh

it to be his prerogative to bestow officers upon the church, *dabo evangelistam ;* 'I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings,' Isa. xli. 27. He did not only appoint the office, but doth design the persons. Now, what is this inward call? I answer—God calleth us when he maketh us able and willing; the inclination and the ability is from God. The inclination: 'He thrusts out labourers into his harvest,' Mat. ix. 38; and the ability: 'He makes us able ministers of the New Testament,' 2 Cor. iii. 6; and both these are required of us. Ability there must be. Look, as princes count it a point of honour, when they send out ambassadors to foreign nations, to employ those that are fit, so it is for the honour of God that all his messengers should be gifted and fitted. Gifts and abilities are our letters of credence that we bring to the world, that we are called of God and authorised to this work. Certainly if the Spirit of God fitted Bezaleel and Aholiab for the material work of the tabernacle, much more doth spiritual work require proportionate abilities. It is true there is a latitude and difference in the degree of abilities, but all that can look upon themselves as called of God must be able and apt to teach. The apostle took this for a call: 1 Tim. i. 12, 'I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.' If ever God put us into the ministry, he first enableth us, and bestows suitable gifts and graces. But that is not all; a man must be willing too: 1 Tim. iii. 1, 'If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.' There must be a strong inclination, that carries us out to such a course of life, if the Lord shall give us a call; yea, in some cases, in the conscience of the inward call, a man may offer himself, his gifts to trial, and his person to acceptance, so it be done modestly, and not in a vainglorious confidence. As Antisthenes said in the case of magistracy, that a man should deal with magistracy as with fire; a man would not come too near the fire lest he burn himself; nor stand at too great a distance, lest he grow stiff with cold; so of the ministry, a man must not be too forward nor too backward. In some cases it is good to expect the fair invitation of providence; an inclination there must be, if the Lord vouchsafe a call. In some cases we may offer ourselves to the acceptation of the church, if the Lord see fit that we be chosen. But to return; he hath the inward call who is able and willing; I mean upon spiritual grounds, having first counted the charges, difficulties, duties, dangers of this calling. Well, then, if men be willing, but not fit, they are not called of God; or if fit, yet not willing, they have not warrant enough to undergo the difficulty; much more they that are neither fit nor willing, but only thrust themselves upon the office by the carnal importunity of friends, or corrupt aims at honour and secular advantage. Thus you see what the inward call is.

[2.] There is an outward call. The inward call is not enough; to preserve order in the church, an outward call is necessary. As Peter, Acts x., was called of God to go to Cornelius; and then, besides that, he had a call from Cornelius himself. So must we, having an inward call from the Spirit, expect an outward calling from the church, otherwise we cannot lawfully be admitted to the exercise of such an office and function. As in the Old Testament, the tribe of Levi and house

of Aaron were by God appointed to the service of the altar, yet none could exercise the calling of a Levite, or serve as a high priest, till he was anointed and purified by the church: Exod. xxviii. 3, 'And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to me in the priest's office.' The like is repeated, Num. iii. 3. So the ministers of the gospel, though called by God, must have their external separation, and setting apart to that work by the church; as the Holy Ghost saith, Acts xiii. 2, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.' Mark, the Spirit of God had chosen them, and yet calls upon the church, the elders of Antioch, to separate them for the work of the ministry. But now, in what order this is to be done, and by whom this separation is to be made, is the great controversy. Politicians, and with them Erastians, make it to be the magistrate's right; the Anabaptists, with some others, make it the people's right; papists and others give it to the bishops; others, to presbyters and elders of the church. To examine every claim at large would take up a great deal of time; let us compound the difference as well as we can. In short, there are three pretenders to the power of the external call—the people, the elders, the magistrate; and we may divide it among them, and give every one their share, and then the call will be complete. I say, there are but three pretenders, for we need not to speak of the bishops' plea, for bishops, and presbyters, or elders, in the scripture are all one. The apostle writes 'to the bishops and deacons at Philippi,' Phil. i. 1. The apostle taketh notice of no other officer in that church. And Chrysostom's gloss is of weight, What is the reason, the apostle saith to bishops? were there more than one of one city? The reason is, saith he, because bishops and elders or presbyters are the same. So when the apostle bids Titus, chap. i. 5, 6, 'Ordain elders in every city, if any be blameless,' &c., he adds, ver. 7, 'For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God.' To lay aside this, then, we shall speak to the claim of the people, the elders, and the magistrate, and give every one its due; for in the external call there are three parts—election, ordination, and confirmation. Election, that belongeth to the people; ordination, which standeth in examination of life and doctrine, together with authoritative mission, that is the right of the presbytery; and confirmation, that belongs to the magistrate.

(1.) Election is the people's right. This appeareth because their consent and suffrage is required in all offices, even in the choice of an apostle. Acts i. 15, 26, the one hundred and twenty nominate Matthias in the room of Judas, and God decided it by lot; and in the choice of a deacon: Acts vi. 3, 'Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost,' &c.; and of an elder: Acts xiv. 23, 'And when they had ordained them, *χειροτονήσαντες*, elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord.' I know I tread upon thorns, but yet this seemeth to have been the constant practice of the church in after ages. Leo the great, in an epistle of his, is for *vota civium*, the vote of the people, in the election of ministers. And Cyprian more clearly before him, lib. i. epist. 4, *Videmus de authoritate divina descendere ut sacerdos, plebe*

*præsente, sub omnium oculis deligatur, et dignus atque idoneus publico judicio ac testimonio comprobetur*—The minister should be propounded to the people, and approved by their vote and suffrage. And just before, *Plebs illa maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi*—The people have a power to choose those that are worthy, and refuse those that are unworthy. Certainly all allow some consent to the people, a full use of the judgment of discretion 'to try the spirits,' 1 John iv. 1, and to distinguish 'the voice of a stranger from the voice of a shepherd,' John x. 5. It seemeth to be most agreeable to scripture that the people should by suffrage propound the person, and then he is to be authoritatively determined by the presbytery: Acts vi. 3, 'Look out from among you seven men of honest report, &c., whom we may appoint over this business.' The apostles did not take to themselves an absolute power, but referred the nomination to the people, though still they reserve the determination and ordination to themselves. Election is the people's right, because he is chosen for their good; but ordination is the elders' right, because that is done in the name of Christ, and therefore must be done by his deputies and proxies, as an evidence that the matter is confirmed by Christ, and that he accepts him for his servant in the work of the ministry. Christ himself, as head of the church, had his ordination from God, and his election from the church. God hath appointed him to be head of the church: Eph. i. 22, 'And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.' And the church ratifies it by her consent: Hosea i. 11, 'Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head,' &c. And it is notable that in Paul's vision the call is managed by a man of Macedonia, that represented the people of that place: Acts xvi. 9, 'A vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.' Not *Go thou*, but *Come over* and help us.

(2.) Ordination, which consists in the trial of gifts and authoritative commission, that is the right of the elders. That appeareth, because to them is the power of the keys given for the people's good; and Acts xiii. 2, 'The Holy Ghost saith, Separate to me Paul and Barnabas unto the work whereunto I have called them.' Who were those that were to separate? They were prophets and teachers of Antioch, as appeareth ver. 1. And elsewhere the scripture speaketh of 'the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,' 1 Tim. iv. 14. Approbation of doctrine and life is the elders' right, who are best able to judge of men's fitness and abilities. To Titus, an officer, is this given: Titus i. 5, 6, 'To ordain elders in every city: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife,' &c. And then for imposition of hands, it is a custom most conform to apostolical practice; it is not founded on a precept, but only on apostolical practice.

(3.) Confirmation is the magistrate's right. The christian magistrate hath his share, to see that all things are done orderly by the people and elders. Now magistrates are concerned, not only as principal members of the church, and of the first rank, but as *episcopi ad extra*, as nursing fathers, to whom care and inspection belongeth, that

all things be done decently, and according to the mind and will of God. The christian magistrate is *custos utriusque tabulæ.* And upon this ground would the apostle have us to pray for the conversion of magistrates, that they might be converted from paganism: 1 Tim. ii. 2, 'That under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.' The magistrate is not only to interpose when differences arise about honesty, but also about godliness; there is *judex, index, vindex.* In all controversies the word is *judex,* in it the mind and will of God is declared; the minister is *index,* it is his office to preserve knowledge, and out of the word of God to show his mind and will; and the magistrate is *vindex,* he is to see that duty be not neglected, that the administrations of the church be not ill managed, and carried on contrary to Christ's appointment, because he is the 'nursing father of the church,' Isa. xlix. 23. Again, the magistrate is concerned as the head of the commonwealth, and so to consider who shall be encouraged by public maintenance, and allowed to preach publicly without disturbance, the commonwealth being concerned in it. And there wants not precedents in scripture for this. David and Solomon did exercise such a power. Solomon deposed Abiathar: 1 Kings ii. 26, 'And to Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields, for thou art worthy of death,' &c. And 'Jehoshaphat sent Levites and priests to teach in every city,' 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9. And as soon as magistrates turned christian in after ages, they were much concerned in the votes and suffrages of the church. The power of princes herein hath been much debated, especially by those that have pleaded the rights of princes against the encroachment of the Romish synagogue, who abundantly prove that the election of the pope himself is not valid without the consent of the emperor. So in ancienter history, Socrates showeth that when Ambrose was chosen by the people of Milan, the election was confirmed by the Roman emperor, lib. iv. cap. 25. And Theodoret showeth that when Athanasius had nominated one Peter for his successor, and the people had given consent, they solemnly asked the magistrate's leave and confirmation. I might heap up many other instances, but let these suffice.

Having spoken to the call, I come to show the necessity of a call. Now such a call, or authoritative mission is necessary—

1. In respect of God. God enableth those whom he employeth: 1 Tim. i. 12, 'I thank Jesus Christ my Lord, who hath enabled me; for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.' And this is the ground upon which Christ builds his prayer in this place, 'Sanctify them through thy truth;' for 'I have sent them into the world.' *Αὐτόκλητοι,* those that run of their own heads without a call, cannot expect God's blessing, but those only that are regularly sent can expect the increase of gifts and success of their ministry; for the word worketh not by its own force, but by God's blessing. Blessing dependeth altogether upon the institution, and therefore the institution must be carefully observed if we would have the blessing. God is said to employ not only those who are called extraordinarily, but in the ordinary way. The elders of Ephesus had no extraordinary call, yet it is said, 'The Holy Ghost had made them overseers,' Acts xx. 28.

2. In respect of Satan. He will soon spy out our want of commission, as he did in the sons of Sceva: Acts xix. 14, 15, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?' I know Jesus as the Lord, Paul as an authorised minister, one that had a lawful commission, 'But who are ye?' And then the devil fell upon them, and wounded them, ver. 16. It is true, we have not such visible instances of the devil's power now as then, because God rules the world now by wisdom, not by power; but yet we may observe the secret power of the devil upon those that run of their own accord, and venture upon the office of the ministry without a call. None are more apt to be led aside into errors, and those of the grossest nature, than those that venture upon this office without a call. Origen's errors are by many ascribed to his neglect or want of ordination. And the Arians, saith the synod of Alexandria, were *famosi vitio suæ creationis*, infamous for want of a right call to the ministry, and therefore fell into that damnable error.

3. In regard of yourselves, that you may digest difficulties with the more patience. You can never endure anything with comfort but when you can thus say, I am in God's way, doing God's work. This is a great ground of patience. Conscience in a time of danger will take hold of the least faulty circumstance. Uzzah had little comfort in his stroke, because he was out of God's way: Jude 11, 'Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, &c., and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.' Korah was a sad instance.

4. In respect of the church. This external mission is necessary, that the church may receive you comfortably. It is made a character of Christ's sheep, 'not to hear the voice of a stranger,' John x. 5, nor of such as 'do not enter in by the door,' ver. 1. And in the Old Testament it is often said, 'Hearken not to them, for I have not sent them.' In the primitive church this was strictly observed. When Chrysostom was banished, and Arsanius unduly succeeded him, the people would not so much as hear him. Theodoret witnesseth that some of them would rather go into banishment than join with him in public worship. So when Felix was set over Rome instead of Liberius, against the consent of the church, the people would not enter while he was present, though Felix was orthodox, and nothing could be objected against his doctrine. This instance is approved by Luther in his comment on the Psalms of Degrees, and (in his way of expression) he saith, the same should be done to an angel or archangel, though he came with never so good tidings, if we knew they came without lawful commission.

*Use* 1. Information in two things—that the ministry is an office, and a standing office.

1. The ministry is an office, not a work of charity, which every one must perform; there must be fit persons sent; therefore it is said, Acts x. 41, that Christ appeared 'not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, whom he commanded to preach unto the people.' Therefore he that cannot say he is chosen of God for this work, must not take this honour upon him, lest he run before he be sent, and so they do but prattle, not preach, for preaching is an ordinance. So the Lord said to Ananias concerning Paul, Acts ix. 15, 'He is a chosen vessel before me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.' He is called 'a chosen vessel,' not in regard of

eternal election, but in regard of designation to the work of the gospel. Every one is bound by the law of charity to use his gifts to the edification of others, but still in a regular way. A king hath many subjects, but all his subjects are not courtiers and special servants. All members of the church are subjects of Christ's kingdom, but all are not officers, for these are chosen members.

2. That the ministry is a standing office. When Christ was about to depart, then he sendeth apostles with a promise that he would be with them to the end of the world. He sendeth them that they may send others, and so continue the succession. So that the apostles are not only sent by Christ, but the ministers of the gospel virtually, being sent by Christ's deputies; as they are the king's officers that are not only immediately created by the king, but by his power. Still God hath ever had an ordinary standing ministry in the church. In the Old Testament there were not only prophets, that were immediately called to deliver God's message, and to write scripture, but an ordinary ministry, to open the law and the prophets, and to preserve knowledge in the church: Mal. ii. 6, 7, 'The law of the truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips, &c. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.' Therefore the ordinary Levites are called *νομοδιδάσκαλοι*, teachers of the law. In the New Testament, Christ gave not only apostles to write scripture, but pastors and teachers to open scripture: Eph iv. 11, 'He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.' The Bible is not enough for your edification without this institution; the same Christ that instituted apostles to write scripture, instituted pastors and teachers to open and apply scripture. This is always necessary, though religion be never so thoroughly planted in a nation, for we need continual remembrancers. And the end of preaching is not only to learn what we knew not before, but that we may have spiritual things always before our eyes, and in the view and consideration of conscience, and that the heart be always kept lively and soft and tender by the frequent droppings of the word, and that we may receive new influences of grace in God's way. Yea, for nations, how soon would they degenerate without a monitor and standing ministry, and all things would be wrapt up in error and darkness! This was the first occasion of idolatry among the nations, when their monitors ceased, and religion began to be confined to a few families. Experience will best show the necessity of such a standing office in the church.

*Use* 2. Reproof of those that invade the minister's office, and of those that countenance them. Jude says of them, 'They perished in the gainsaying of Korah,' Jude 11. God's judgments will overtake them. Korah's sin was levelling of offices in the church: 'All the Lord's people are holy;' why should any take a special office upon them? It is a horrible abuse. Remember the breach of Uzzah; God is jealous even of a circumstance in his institution. Christ himself had his call to authorise him: 'Thou hast sent me into the world;' therefore much more should you have a call to authorise you. If the work doth not lie within the compass of your office, you do not glorify God, and cannot please him; and it will be ill for your account; you

cannot, when you die, say as Christ, John xiv. 7, 'I have glorified thee upon the earth, I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do.' You do not glorify God with anything but that which he hath given you to do. It is notable that Christ would not intermeddle out of his calling. When one came to entreat him to 'speak to his brother to divide the inheritance with him,' he said to him, Luke xii. 4, 'Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?' Who was fitter to judge than Christ? yet this was not the work he came about. If troubles arise, you cannot suffer them comfortably. All the disorders abroad will lie in a great measure upon your score. Invading of callings hath been the source of those mischiefs that abound among us. Augustine saith, *Pax est tranquillitas ordinis,* when all things keep their place. In natural things, elements, when out of their place, breed confusion; the sea out of its place makes an inundation; and the air out of its place, imprisoned in the bowels of the earth, causeth an earthquake. It is true in this case also; when men are out of their place it begets confusion and disorder. Never do I look for the peace of the church, and power of the gospel, till men have learned to keep within the compass of their callings. You pretend gifts and abilities; if you have a desire to the work for the work's sake, why do you not submit to the regular way of sending? The angel that appeared to Cornelius biddeth him send for Peter, Acts x. 5. Why did not the angel teach him himself? His commission was only to bring a message from God, not to preach the gospel; that was Peter's work, therefore he sent him to Peter. Nay, Christ himself sendeth Paul to Ananias, Acts ix. 6. If any should usurp the place of an ambassador, without the prince's leave and command, it would be accounted horrible pride. No prince can endure a servant whom he hath not chosen; and how then can Christ take it well at your hands? It is but an itch of pride, if we search it to the bottom. There are regular ways of exercising your gifts, in private meditation, and family instruction, and gracious conferences, by way of interchangeable discourse, with less pride and usurpation, and more spiritual profit and comfort, than in public sermons.

*Use* 3. Advice to ministers and people.

1. To ministers. Strive to make out your calling to your people, to evidence it to the consciences of your auditory, by your sincerity and success.

[1.] By your sincerity: 2 Cor. iv. 2, 'We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.' Success is not in our power, but yet our aim should be sincere. Delight not in vain applause; let not this satisfy thee, but that others may feel the power of truth. Let it not satisfy thee when thy hearers go away and say, Oh! how learnedly, how eloquently, with what subtlety and sublimity of reason doth he preach! what excellent gifts of memory, wit, elocution! This did not satisfy Christ. Christ had made an excellent sermon; a woman in the company cries out, Luke xi. 22, 28, 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that thou hast sucked! But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and

keep it!' It is far better, when they go away from hearing, to be more mindful of themselves than of us; of what is spoken to their consciences, rather than what are our gifts; condemning themselves, rather than commending us; bewailing their own hearts and lives, rather than applauding and admiring our sermons; smiting their own breasts, and saying, not so much, How well hath he preached! but how ill have I lived! how carnal am I, subject to sin!

[2.] By success. This you should covet above all things; this is the seal of your ministry in the people's consciences. Every ambassador sent out from a prince hath not only instructions and commands, but his commission sealed; so a minister must not only look to his instructions to preach the gospel, but for a seal of his ministry, as his letters of credence and recommendation. Now our seal is spiritual, as all other the parts of our administration are. What is this spiritual seal? God's owning and blessing our endeavours: 2 Cor. iii. 1–3, 'Do we begin again to commend ourselves; or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.' Success in the hearts of the people doth authorise our commission. So 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 'Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.' This is a proof that we come to you in Christ's stead, and speak in his name and power. It is not who can speak most finely and plausibly, but most effectually to the heart: 1 Cor. ii. 4, 'My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' That is the evidence, not luscious gifts. Carnal men may have these, for the good of the body, that have no inward calling. I remember Paul putteth the false teachers upon this experiment and proof of their calling: 1 Cor. iv. 19, 'I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.' I will not examine them by their speech, but by the spiritual efficacy of their ministry, which is the chiefest sign of God's approbation and blessing, not their pomp and eloquence. And therefore this is the seal that you should look after.

2. Here is advice to the people, to own them that are called, and sent to you in the name of Christ. Own their persons by a cordial submission to them: Heb. xiii. 17, 'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account.' In the particular places where you are disposed by the care of providence, they are sent by God to you. There is much in the designation of God's providence, and cohabitation is an excellent friend to church communion. That is the sphere of your activity; where God hath appointed your dwelling, there you are in the greatest capacity to serve God, and to promote the ends of church-fellowship and communion. And do not only own the persons, but the calling of the ministers, as a gospel institution. Pray for it;—how importunately doth Paul beg the people's prayers everywhere!—

and countenance and plead for it in the gates. Wicked men could never obtain that power they have over ministers, were there not some backwardness and faintness in the people of God to own them. Herod could have put John to death, 'but he feared the multitude, because they counted him for a prophet,' Mat. xiv. 5. The putting down the ministry will not only be imputed to the violence of others, but to your coldness and ingratitude. Therefore let the world know by some public vindication that you are not afraid to own Christ's institutions. If we have a charter given us by a prince, how zealous are we that it might not be infringed! Whatever the world thinks of it, this is Christ's royal gift in the day of his inauguration: Eph. iv. 11, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.' Therefore stand, and plead for it more. Paul took notice, 2 Tim. iv. 16, 'At my first answer no man stood with me; but all men forsook me.' It is a crime to forsake ministers in their defence, much more to forsake the ministry. Are we so backward that we do not think Christ's gift worthy a public vindication? Nothing hath been accounted so near and dear to the church of God, that hath put them upon such frequent prayers and zealous endeavours, as this, that their ministers may not be taken from them. Therefore own their calling, and own the institution.

Before I come to speak to the dignity of ministers, I shall answer an objection or two against what hath been said.

*Object.* 1. If none but such as have an outward call are to preach, what call had the first reformers? I answer—

1. The first reformers, most of them had a lawful call, being pastors and teachers before the reformation; and though they had it from antichrist, as some plead, or the popish clergy, yet that did not make it less valid. The apostles say of Judas, Acts i. 17, 'He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.' Wicked Judas, *in foro ecclesiæ*, was a true and lawful apostle, and whatever he did by virtue of his office was valid and lawful. So the Roman clergy, they have obtained part of this ministry with us, and *in foro ecclesiæ*, at least before the reformation, were lawful ministers; it is disputable whether as yet God hath given such a total divorce, that all their ecclesiastical acts are nullities.

2. Others were stirred up by the special instinct of the Holy Ghost to undertake the work, and being received of their own churches, their call was valid; for things of order must give way to things of absolute necessity, and where an ordinary calling cannot be had, God calleth men out of order. It is the duty of all saints to contend for the faith; and when God, by a special instinct, stirreth up holy men to do this work, they are thereby authorised; especially when there is a general defection and corruption among the officers of the church. Who would expect the reformation of stews from bawds and panders? It is necessary the church should have pastors and teachers; and where ordination cannot be had, the election and consent of the people sufficeth, God especially accompanying them with his presence, and the men being furnished with gifts and necessary qualifications, both as to life and doctrine, for that office.

*Object. or Case.* 2. What shall be done in case of propagating the gospel, where no lawful call can be had, or all die at a time?

I answer—In extraordinary cases, God supplieth the want by extraordinary ways; that may be done at one time that is not lawful at another, especially in matter of order, as eating the shew-bread in case of necessity. Edesius and Frumentius, travelling into the Indies, had an opportunity of spreading the gospel; though the last afterwards returned, and was ordained by Athanasius. Natural bodies have their ordinary qualities; yet *ad fugam vacui*, they act contrary to them, as water will ascend contrary to the gravity of it. Before deacons were instituted, the apostles served tables, though it was a thing not meet for them: Acts vi. 2, 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.' Philip, of a deacon, was made an extraordinary evangelist, Acts viii.

## SERMON XXXII.

*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*—JOHN XVII. 18.

SECONDLY, I now come to speak of the dignity that is put upon them that are called to the work of the ministry; they are sent by Christ as his deputies and ambassadors, as those who impersonate Christ, and represent him to the world: 2 Cor. v. 20, ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβέυομεν, 'Wherefore we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.' Ministers are sent out as Christ's proxies.

Here I shall show—(1.) Who are sent; (2.) From whom; (3.) To whom; (4.) Why, or about what business.

1. Who are sent? Principally the apostles, but secondarily the ordinary ministers of the gospel; the apostles as ambassadors extraordinary, but we as liegers and agents. The apostles were immediately sent by Christ, and furnished with extraordinary gifts, as infallibility of doctrine, gifts of miracles, gifts of tongues; as ambassadors are sent forth with more pomp and state than agents. But now ministers are sent by a power derived and delegated from Christ; and we have not like authority and infallibility as the apostles had, but the substance of the commission and of the work is the same; we are to open the mind of God to men, and in Christ's name and authority to pray you to be reconciled to God. And therefore both apostles and ordinary ministers of the gospel, ordinary pastors and teachers of the church, are sent.

2. From whom they are sent. From Christ, who is the king of the church, though with the consent of all the persons in the Trinity. The Father sendeth, Christ sendeth, the Holy Ghost sendeth: Gal. i. 1, 'Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.' Paul raiseth up his commission as far as the grant and consent of God the Father. And the Holy Ghost sendeth: Acts xx. 28, 'Take heed therefore unto

yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.' So Acts xiii. 2, 'As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called them.' In short, then, we are sent by the decree and will of the Father, qualified by the Holy Ghost, and commissioned by the authority of Christ as king of the church. And therefore the apostles were to tarry at Jerusalem till Christ was ascended, and seated on the throne, and seized upon the kingdom, and poured out the Holy Ghost upon them. None are sent but such are also called and chosen by the Holy Ghost, by whom also they are gifted, with respect to God the Father's consent, and Christ's authority.

3. To whom are they sent? I answer—To all, without any distinction of nation, sex, person, or condition: Mark xvi. 15, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Men send an embassy to kings and princes, but Christ to every mean creature, without any restraint. It is true, the motion and course of the gospel is directed by a special providence, to some places and not to others: Acts xvi. 7, 'After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not.' But doth the Holy Ghost hinder the preaching of the gospel? We must distinguish between the grant of power and the exercise of it. Though there be a general grant, that the pale of the church shall be enlarged, yet this grant is to be made good as the Lord will. There is a general grant that the gospel shall be preached unto all nations, but as for the exercise and making good this grant, God will have the world to know that the preaching of the gospel is a privilege and a special favour, and therefore he sendeth it to some and not to others, as a token of his love. It is a thing that doth not come by chance, or by the counsels of men, but by his special grant and designation. Therefore it is notable that the apostles were guided by the Spirit, not only in their doctrine, but in their journeys; and the external means are distributed by the will of God, as well as internal grace, that wherever it cometh we may acknowledge it as a special favour; to some it cometh later, to others sooner, but to all as God will. He oweth it to none; and therefore, though the pale be enlarged, and there is a general grant that all creatures that live within the precincts of the round world shall have the gospel in their turn, yet to some it is sent before others: Acts iii. 26, 'Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you.' The Jews had the first offer and liberty of choice or refusal. So Acts xiii. 26, 'Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, unto you is the word of this salvation sent.' He doth not say, it is *brought* by me, but *sent*. The preaching of the gospel is governed by God's special providence and care; as the scriptures 'came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,' 2 Peter i. 21. So it is not preached by the will of men. It is not your purses that procure it, nor your goodness that deserveth it, but good ministers are sent to you by Christ's special love and care, and so should you acknowledge it. I tell you, many have laboured for the gospel, fought for the gospel, and yet they have missed it,

because they do not consider him that hath the stars in his hand, and directeth and guideth their motions. God will have this mercy taken out of his own hand, as a special token of his love; therefore because they do not acknowledge God, though they fight, strive, and labour for it, yet the gospel is taken from them.

4. For what are they sent, or the end and scope of the gospel? Ever since the fall, there is a quarrel between God and man; and God might send heralds to proclaim war, as he sendeth ambassadors of peace 'to pray you to be reconciled,' 2 Cor. v. 20; that is the purport and drift of our message, to gain men to lay down the weapons of their defiance, and to accept of Christ, that in him they may find life and peace. God might send messengers into the world, as he sent Jonah to Nineveh, to warn the world of their destruction, or as he revealed the law upon Mount Sinai, to make men sensible of their bondage, and obnoxiousness to divine wrath and justice; but he sendeth messengers of peace, with an olive branch in their mouths, to tell the world of God reconciled, and God pacified by Christ, and invite them to be in favour and peace with God, that so they may enjoy communion with him in grace here and glory hereafter: Col. i. 27, 28, 'Christ in you, the hope of glory. Whom ye preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.' There is the subject of our ministry, communion with Christ, and reconciliation with God by Christ, as 'the hope of glory;' the manner of managing it, 'with wisdom warning' every man; the persons with whom we treat, 'every man,' without distinction; and our aim and scope, 'that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.'

*Use* 1. It informeth us of four things:—

1. The excellency and dignity of the ministry. They are Christ's ambassadors; they are sent, not as a post or letter-carrier, but as honourable messengers. An ambassador usually is one of the nobility, sent by a prince, or the supreme power of a nation; not to private men, but to their fellow-princes or states; not upon a light cause, but to treat of matters of moment; and not in a low or base manner, but with an equipage and pomp answerable to the dignity of him that sendeth. Or, in short, an ambassador is an eminent person, sent from some chief prince, with dignity and authority to transact affairs of the greatest moment; and because he representeth the person from whom he is sent, therefore credit and honour is to be given to him suitable to his place and office. Now the greater the king or potentate is from whom he is sent, the more honour is done him; if from an emperor, it is more honour than from an ordinary prince; and the greater and more welcome the business is, still the greater honour. If the nature of the business be to require satisfaction for injuries, to denounce war, yet still he is respected according to his place; but if it be a matter of peace, he is more welcome; or if it be to establish a correspondence of traffic between nation and nation, much more if it be about a treaty of marriage, and to propound terms of the highest amity and friendship, he is much more respected; and yet more especially if the state or prince to whom he is sent be inferior to the other that sent him. Now these are the terms upon which the

ministers of the gospel are sent; they are Christ's ambassadors, they are sent from the greatest monarch that ever was, from Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords; and they are sent to miserable and wretched men, to rebels to the crown of heaven; and their message is not to denounce war, but to propose terms of friendship and amity, to tell you that God is willing to be reconciled to, and to be at peace with, his creatures. Oh! 'how beautiful upon the mountains should their feet be that publish such glad tidings!' Isa. lii. 7. It is an allusion to the dirty feet of travellers, that come about weighty business; the dirt of the journey doth not render them defiled, but beautiful. Nay, this is not all; they are furnished with authority, with power of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins: John ii. 23, 'Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' To them are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to open and shut; not as they please, but so as the Lord ratifies their regular proceedings in the court of heaven. They have a power, in God's name, to take up the controversy between God and you, and they bear God's name, that is, represent his person. And they are set forth with an answerable equipage, with plentiful gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are, as it were, their letters of credence, with gifts of knowledge, experience, and comfort, above the ordinary sort of christians.

2. It informeth us of the duty of the ministry, as well as their dignity; their duty both in their life and conversation, and in their ministry and calling.

[1.] In their life and conversation. Remember the gravity and state of ambassadors; you represent Christ's person, and you must be examples and patterns to others. You should not be guilty of levity, or be given to the pomp and vanities of the world, as others are; not only that you may not disparage your ministry, and hinder the ends of it, but that you may the better represent the person of him that hath sent you, and not disgrace Christ. An imprudent, vain, carnal minister is a disgrace to Jesus Christ: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God.' Principally that text concerns ministers; so Beza, Calvin, and others expound it; for there he is comparing the ministry of the New Testament with the ministry of the legal dispensation; that as Moses, by conversing with God, his face shone, so ministers of the gospel have their glory too; by conversing with Christ, they carry away his image. So that a minister should be a representative of Christ. It is a spiritual dignity, not a temporal, to be Christ's ambassadors; and therefore you must excel, not in place only, but in grace: 1 Tim. iv. 12, 'Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.' This is the duty of a minister, to appear like Christ's deputy, just as he was in the world. This will make way for your esteem, though young for age, and mean in birth and estate. The apostle doth not write to others, and say, 'See you do not despise Timothy;' but he writes to Timothy, 'Let no man despise thee.' Our disesteem cometh from ourselves, when we let fall the majesty of our conversations. Well,

then, let the dignity of your office be in your eye, that you may not be a disgrace to him that sent you, but may walk with all religious circumspection, gravity, and prudence.

[2.] In their ministry and calling there is also required faithfulness, gravity, and sincerity.

(1.) Faithfulness. Propound nothing to others but what you have in command from God, and what you know to be certainly agreeable to his will; as an ambassador must not go beyond his commission, that is, upon his own score, and to his own peril. When Christ gave us our commission, this he gave us in charge' Mat. xxviii. 20, 'Teach them all things which I have commanded you.' The first mischief in the church came from dogmatising; men would be wise above the word, and that made way for foul abuses, and they for heresies; when you press things without warrant, others question all. You shall see the Lord Christ often avoucheth how punctually he kept to his commission: John xii. 49, 'For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me commandment what I should say and what I should speak.' Christ would not go a tittle nor hair's-breadth from his instructions. When we are adding to the word, others will detract from it. It is sweet when we can say, John vii. 16, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me;' this I have in charge from God; when we have clear evidence from the word, and a strong instinct from the Spirit to deliver such a message; not the visions of our own brain, but the counsel of God to the people.

(2.) With gravity. God's message must be delivered like his message, speaking 'as the oracles of God,' 1 Peter iv. 11; with affection, as having experience of it in our souls, feeling the divine power of the word on our hearts. And with authority: thou art delivering Christ's message, in the presence of Christ and his holy angels; and therefore it must not be delivered with frothy gayish eloquence, but with majesty and power. Vainglorious preaching, such as is intermixed with strains of wit, and fancies, and idle speculations, ill becometh God's ambassadors. Such speak as if they were in jest, not as if they had a serious message to deliver from God; this becometh the stage rather than the pulpit.

(3.) With sincerity. It is required of an ambassador that he be faithful to him that sent him. He is not sent abroad to seek his own ends, and enter into a confederacy with foreign princes, to gratify his interest by secret combinations, but must be faithful to him that sent him: Prov. xiii. 17, 'A wicked messenger falleth into mischief, but a faithful ambassador is health;' health to himself, and health to the prince that sendeth him; and therefore we must not seek ourselves, but be faithful to God. You seek yourselves most when you do not seek yourselves, when you are faithful to God, when you do nothing for fear or favour of men, but are bold upon the Lord's commission. Your work is to go for another, not for yourselves. God himself will reward his own messengers, and will set the crown upon their heads with his own hand. And that is one reason why he permits them to have bad entertainment in the world, that they may not take up with men, and that he himself might crown them, and give them their reward

3. It informeth us of the mercy and love of God to mankind. He was the offended party, and yet he first sendeth about terms of reconciliation. In us there is *infirmitas et animositates,* weakness and strength of stomach; though we have done the injury, yet we are not ready to offer terms of reconciliation. As David speaks of the mercy of the covenant in general, 2 Sam. vii. 19, 'And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?' Was it ever heard that he that is offended should be so solicitous and careful to send about agreement and reconciliation? But this God doth, not out of any need that he hath of our friendship, as men sometimes in policy seek to those who have injured them, for God is stronger than we; but out of pure love. The first ambassador God sent was his own Son: 1 John iv. 10, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;' and ver. 19, 'We love him, because he first loved us.' Christ cometh out from the bosom of God. The law was delivered by an angel, but the gospel by Christ himself. And then God sendeth apostles with extraordinary gifts, and power of working miracles, to lay a foundation: 1 Cor. iii. 10, 'According to the grace that is given unto me, as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation.' And then pastors and teachers, men of like passions with ourselves, weak men, but furnished with gifts proper to their calling. There is a mercy in this institution. We cannot endure God's presence: Deut. v. 25, 'If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die.' Moses trembled and quaked when a voice was heard out of the clouds and darkness. Therefore God sends men of like infirmities with ourselves, that our defects might be borne with patience, because they have experience of the hardness and obstinacy of their own hearts; and that our ignorance might be familiarly instructed, and knowledge dropped in by degrees; we are to learn by little and little, here a line, and there a line; God, in condescension to our weakness, hath appointed this help.

4. It informeth us of the madness of the world, that use Christ's ambassadors ill, when they come about such a message. It is against *jus gentium,* the law of nations, to offer violence to ambassadors; let their message be never so displeasing, their persons are secured by the civility of all nations. Yet Christ's ambassadors are often ill entreated: Mat. xxiii. 37, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee!' It is England's sin to malign and hate God's messengers, though they come with terms of peace. Never was the ministry more evangelical, yet never more hated than now. What should be the reason of this madness? No calling is more profitable to human society, to civilise a people, to take them off from their brutishness and fierceness, and yet none more opposed. Partly out of a Gadarene temper; they grow weary of Christ's ministers. But chiefly out of a natural enmity against them. Since the fall, man is an enemy to his own happiness. In bodily miseries it is otherwise; a blind man loves his guide, and as Elymas, when stricken blind, they seek about for some to lead them. A sick man loveth his physician; but spiritual blindness and sickness is of another nature; men hate those that offer to lead them and cure them. The guilty world would fain take a nap and rest; and because God's mes-

sengers will not let them alone, therefore they hate them. Errors and lusts are touchy. *Mundus senescens patitur phantasias.* The world, as it grows old, is given to dreams and dotage, and is loath to be disturbed. A thief would have the candle put out that discovereth him. Christ's messengers, though instruments of common good, yet often meet with public hatred: Eph. vi. 20, 'For whom I am an ambassador in bonds, ἐν ἁλύσει, in chains.' A man would think he meant golden chains, because he speaks of his ambassadorship. No; he means hard iron chains, which he suffered for Christ's sake; and usually this is the lot of Christ's ambassadors.

*Use* 2. Advice both to people and ministers.

1. To people. If ministers be sent by Christ, then it adviseth you to respect their message, their calling, their persons.

[1.] Accept their message. When we speak for the honour and dignity of the ministry, we plead for a spiritual respect to them, not for a temporal domination and precedency in all meetings and companies. Our king whom we serve is a spiritual king; his kingdom is not of this world; he came not with external pomp and splendour; therefore these are not things we should look after. Though some respect is due to their persons, yet chiefly we plead for a respect to their doctrine. Do not despise the message which they bring, though their persons be obscure and despicable. Doctrines delivered from the scripture have a divine authority; it is God's message, as if it had been spoken from heaven. And therefore, if we must speak as the oracles of God, you must hear it as God's word: 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' Never can you expect the word should work with you till you have this respect and reverence for it.

But you will say, Is all gospel that is delivered by one in office?

I answer—No; but you must humbly consider what is brought to you in Christ's name. When Ehud said to Eglon, Judges iii. 20, 'I have a message from God unto thee,' he arose out of his seat. See what it is, and let it move you more to look to your ways.

[2.] Respect the calling more. Many seek to undermine it, as if it were grown the burden of the christian world; others think disgracefully and meanly of it, as if it were below their parts or rank and place. Let me tell you it is the highest honour that can be put upon a creature to be Christ's messenger. No nobility of birth, antiquity of house, plenty of estate is to be compared with it; all worldly honours and titles are beneath it; and so shall we judge when once we come to see a prophet's reward. Do not think scornfully of the calling. It is a great mercy if God should choose any of thine to this work, the best and chiefest of thy family. The first-born were separated to God before the priesthood was settled upon the tribe of Levi. Usually men consecrate the worst to God, if any be lame, blind, unfit for work; like the deceiver, Mal. i. 14, 'Which hath a male in his flock, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.' I speak the more in this matter, because if God suffer the wickedness of the age

to go on, if maintenance go away, nobles must put their necks to the yoke, to serve Christ in this employment, as some have done in other churches.

[3.] Respect their persons. Something is due to them for the work's sake: 1 Thes. v. 12, 13, 'And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake;' Gal. iv. 14, 'Ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus;' whose deputy he was, though compassed with weaknesses. Certainly there is some good-will due to the persons that bring such glad tidings from heaven. We reward a messenger that bringeth a token from a friend, and these come to you from your best friend, Jesus Christ. There is a promise made to that respect that you show to the persons of Christ's messengers: Mat. x. 42, 'Who shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no-wise lose his reward.' It was said of Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, Acts v. 34, he was τίμιος πάντι τῷ λάῳ, 'in reputation among the people.' The original word signifies he was precious to the people. If a doctor of the law was in such esteem, something is due to the teachers of the gospel. Do not say we plead for ourselves; it is fit you should hear your duty pressed.

2. To ministers. It quickeneth you to your work, notwithstanding great afflictions, and the inconveniences you meet with in the world. Remember you are sent, as Christ was, to an unthankful world. It will hold good not only in regard of authority but condition: 'The disciple is not above his Lord,' Mat. x. 35, 'Nor he that is sent, greater than he that sent him,' John xiii. 16. Comfort yourselves against contempt. God hath vouchsafed this high favour and prerogative to you above many others that seemed worthy to be preferred before you, that have quicker parts and higher abilities; above the nobles and the princes of the world. You have no cause to envy them nor their greatness, though you are counted the dregs of the world, and made a daily reproach. Paul balanceth his office and his afflictions: Eph. vi. 20, 'For which I am an ambassador in bonds.' There is his ambassadorship and his bonds, the greatness of his office and the straitness of his condition; his dignity before God and the church, and his shame and disgrace in the world.

*Use* 3. Reproof to those that wrong Christ's messengers, their persons with reproach and violence, or their estate by sacrilegious hands, seeking to deprive them of their maintenance. Take heed what you do; the persons and goods of ambassadors are privileged. You rob God and Christ, whose receivers they are, and to whom these things are consecrated: Rom. ii. 22, 'Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?' God will wink at the superstition of former times, that had no better light, when he will not at the unthankfulness, rapine, avarice, and robbery of these times; and therefore take heed what you do.

1. The affronts you put upon them redound to Christ, whose deputies and proxies they are. They represent his person, therefore he takes it as done to himself: Luke x. 16, 'He that despiseth you

despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.' It goes up to God himself, from messengers to Christ, from Christ to God. As the Lord tells Samuel, 1 Sam. viii. 7, 'They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.' Christ counts it as done to himself in his own person.

2. It showeth you do not prize the word when you hate the messengers of it, when you offer violence to their persons, and rob them of their good names: Isa. lii. 7, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!' The messengers of Christ are precious to those that have received benefit by them. If ever you tasted the power of the word, certainly you would love the instruments more. Take heed of rotten hypocrisy. You profess you detest the persecutions of former times, of pagans, and antichrist, that so furiously persecuted the church; and, alas! you do the same when you oppose God's messengers, that live in your age, whom Christ hath put into office, to deliver his counsel to the people. So the scribes and pharisees: Mat. xxiii. 29, 30, 'Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous; and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Dathan and Abiram were as odious and accursed to the wicked Jews in Christ's days as the memory of Judas and Julian can be to us. Therefore do not flatter yourselves that you detest the persecution of former ages, when your heart is carried out with such rage and malice against the messengers of Christ now.

3. God will not always suffer it. Prophet-hating is a deadly sin. It is said of Herod, Luke iii. 20, 'He added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.' So 2 Chron. xvi. 10, 'Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison-house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing.' Were these scriptures written for our instruction, and yet are you guilty of prophet-hating, that seek, by sacrilegious violence to rob and deprive ministers of that which is their portion before God and men? So Hosea iv. 4, 'This people are as they that strive with the priest.' Enter your protest against it, have no hand in this sin.

THE END OF VOL. X.

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