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Jacobi Bennett Miller.



Come and Welcome
T O
JESUS CHRIST;
Or, a plain and profitable
DISCOURSE
On JOHN vi. 36.

S H E W I N G,
The Cause, Truth, and Manner of the Co-
ming of a Sinner to JESUS CHRIST;
with his happy Reception, and blessed
Entertainment.

Written by JOHN BUNYAN, Author of
the Pilgrim's Progress.

And they shall come which were ready to perish,
Isaiah xxvii. 13.

THE TWELFTH EDITION.

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COME and WELCOME
 T O
 JESUS CHRIST.

JOHN CHAP. VII. VER. 37.

All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

A Little before, in this Chapter, you may read, that the Lord Jesus walked on the Sea, to go to *Capernaum*, having sent his Disciples before in a Ship, but the Wind was contrary; by which Means the Ship was hindred in her Pallage. Now, about the fourth Watch of the Night, Jesus came walking upon the Sea, and overtook them; at the Sight of whom they were afraid.

Note, When Providences are black and terrible to God's People, the Lord Jesus shews himself

to them in a wonderful manner; the which, sometimes they can as little bear, as they can the things that were before terrible to them.

They were afraid of the wind and water; they were also afraid of their Lord and Saviour, when he appeared to them in that state.

But he said, Be not afraid, It is I.

Note, That the end of the appearing of the Lord Jesus unto his people, (tho the manner of his appearing be never so terrible) is to allay their fears and perplexities.

Then they received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at land whether they went.

Note, When Christ is absent from his people, they go on but slowly, and with great difficulty; but when he joineth himself unto them, Oh! how fast they steer their course; how soon they are at their journey's end!

The people now among whom he last preached, when they saw that both Jesus was gone and his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him, they wonderingly asked him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? But the Lord Jesus slighting their complement, answered, Verily, verily, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

Note, A people may follow Christ far for base ends, as these went after him beyond sea for loaves; a man's belly will carry him a great way in religion; yea a man's belly will make him venture far for Christ.

Note again, They are not feigning complements, but gracious intentions, that crown the work in the eye of Christ: *Or thus,* It is not the toil, and business of professors, but their love to him, that makes him approve of them.

Note

Note again, When men shall look for friendly entertainment at Christ's hand (if their hearts be rotten) even then will they meet with a check and rebuke. Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

Ye'll observe again, He doth not refuse to give, even to these, good counsel; he bids them labour for the meat that endureth to eternal life. ¶ how willing would Jesus Christ have even those professors that come to him with pretences only, come to him sincerely that they may be saved.

The text, you will find, is, after much more discourse with and about this people, and it is, uttered by the Lord Jesus, as the conclusion of the whole; and intimateth that since they were professors in pretence only, and therefore such as his soul could not delight in, as such, that he would content himself with a remnant that his Father had bestowed upon him. As who should say, I am not like to be honoured in your salvation; but the Father hath bestowed upon me a people and they shall come to me in truth, and in them will I be satisfied. The text before may be called, Christ's repose; in the fulfilling whereof, he rested himself content, after much labour and many sermons, spent as it were in vain. As he saith by the prophet, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain. Isa. 49. 4.

But as there he saith, My judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God; so in the text he saith, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. By these words therefore the Lord Jesus comforteth himself under the consideration of the dissimulation of some of his followers. He also thus betook himself to rest under the consideration of the little effect that his ministry had in Capernaum, Corazin, and Bethsaida; I thought

thee, O Father, said he, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so Father, for it seemed good in thy sight, Mat. 11. 25. Luke 10. 12.

The text, in the general, standeth in two parts, and hath special respect to the Father and the Son; as also in their joint management of the salvation of the people. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

The first part of the text (as is evident) respecteth the Father and his gift; the other part the Son, and his reception of that gift.

First, For the gift of the Father, there is this to be considered; *to wit,*

The gift itself; and that is a gift of certain persons to the Son. The Father giveth, and that gift shall come: And him that cometh: The gift then is of persons; The Father giveth persons to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Next, you have the Son's reception of this gift, and that sheweth itself in these particulars.

1. In his hearty acknowledgement of it to be a gift: The Father giveth me.

2. In his taking notice after a solemn manner, of All, and every part of the gift: All that the Father giveth me.

3. In his resolution to bring them to himself, All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.

4. And in determining, that not any thing shall make him dislike them in their coming. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

These things might be spoken to at large, as they are in this method presented to view: But I shall choose to speak to the words.

1. By way of explication.
2. By way of observation.

First, By way of explication, (*All*) that the Father giveth me. This word *All* is often used in scripture, and is to be taken more largely, or more strictly, even as the truth or argument, for the sake of which it is made use of, will bear: Wherefore, that we may the better understand the mind of Christ, in the use of it here, we must consider, that it is limited and restrained only to those that shall be saved, to wit, to those that shall come to Christ; even to those whom he will in no wise cast out. Thus also the words, All Israel, is sometimes to be taken (tho sometimes it is taken for the whole family of Jacob) and so All Israel shall be saved, Rom. 11. By all Israel, here he intendeth, not all of Israel, in the largest sense; for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, They who are the children of the flesh; these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed, Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8.

This word *All*, therefore must be limited and enlarged, as the truth and argument, for the sake of which it is used, will bear; else we shall abuse scriptures, and readers, and ourselves, and all. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, said Christ, will draw All men after me, John 12. 32. Can any man imagine, that by All, in this place, he should mean All, and every individual man in the world; and not rather, that All, that is consonant to the scope of the place? And if by being lifted up from the earth, he means, as he should seem, his being taken up into heaven; and if by drawing All men after him, be meant a drawing them into that place of glory; then must he mean by all men, those, and only those, that shall

come: For God hath concluded them All in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon All, Rom. 11. 32. Here again you have All and All, two Alls; but yet a great disparity between the All made mention of in the first place, and that All made mention of in the second. Those intended in this text, are the Jews, even all of them, by the first All that you find in the words. The second All doth also intend the same people; but yet only so many of them as God will have mercy upon. He hath concluded them All in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon All. The All also in the text, is likewise to be limited and restrained to the saved, and to them only. But again.

The word (giveth) or, hath given, must be restrained after the same manner, to the same limited number. All that the Father giveth me. Not all that are given. If you take the gift of the Father to the Son, in the largest sense, for in that sense, there are many given to him that shall never come unto him: Yea, many are given unto him, that he will cast out. I shall therefore first shew you the truth of this, and then in what sense the gift in the text must be taken.

First, That all that are given to Christ, if you take the Gift of the Father to him, in the largest sense, cannot be intended in the text, is evident.

1. Because then all the men, yea, all the things in the world must be saved. All things, saith he, are delivered unto me by the Father, Matth. 11. 27. This, I think, no rational man in the world will conclude. Therefore the gift intended in the text, must be restrained to some, to a gift that's given by way of speciality by the Father to the Son.

2. It must not be taken for All, that in any sense

ſenſe are given by the Father to him; becauſe the Father hath given ſome, yea, many to him, to be daſhed in pieces by him. Ask of me, ſaid the Father to him, & I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion: But what muſt be done with them? Muſt he ſave them all? No, thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potters veſſel, Pſal. 2. This method he uſeth not with them that he ſaveth by his grace, but with thoſe that himſelf and ſaints ſhall rule over in juſtice and ſeverity, Rev. 2 26. 27. Yet, as you ſee, they are given to him. Therefore the gift intended in the text, muſt be reſtrained to ſome; to a gift that is given by way of ſpeciality by the Father to the Son.

In Pſalm 18. He ſaith plainly, that ſome are given to him that he might deſtroy them; Thou haſt given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might deſtroy them that hate me, verſe 40. Theſe therefore cannot be of the number of thoſe that are ſaid to be given in the text; for thoſe, even all of them ſhall come to him, and he will in no wiſe caſt them out.

3. Some are given to Chriſt, that he by them might bring about ſome of his high and deep deſigns in the world. Thus Judas was given to Chriſt, to wit, that by him, even as he was determined before, he might bring about his death, and ſo the ſalvation of his elect by his blood. Yea, and Judas muſt ſo manage his buſineſs, as that he muſt loſe himſelf, for even bringing it to paſs. Therefore the Lord Jeſus, even in his loſing of Judas, applies himſelf to the judgment of his Father, if he had not in that thing done that which was right, even in ſuffering of Judas ſo to bring about his Maſter's death, as that he might by ſo doing bring about his own eternal damnation alſo.

Those, said he, that thou gavest me, have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled, John 17. 12. Let us then grant, that Judas was given to Christ, but not as others are given to him; not as those made mention of in the text; for then he should have failed to have been so received by Christ, and kept to eternal life. Indeed he was given to Christ, but he was given to him to lose him, in the way that I have mentioned before; he was given to Christ, that he by him might bring about his own death, as was before determined; and that in the overthrow of him that did it. Yea, he must bring about his dying for us in the loss of the instrument that betrayed him, that he might even fulfill the scripture in his destruction, as well as in the salvation of the rest. And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The gift therefore in the text must not be taken in the largest sense, but even as the words will bear, *to wit*, for such a gift as he accepteth, and promiseth to be an effectual means of eternal salvation to. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Mark! They shall come that are in special given to me; and they shall by no means be rejected: For this is the substance of the text.

Those therefore intended, as the gift in the text, are those that are given by covenant to the Son; those that in other places are called the elect, the chosen, the sheep, and the children of the promise, &c.

These, be they that the Father hath given to Christ to keep them; those that Christ hath promised eternal life unto; those, to whom he hath given his word, and that he will have with him in his kingdom to behold his glory.

This

This is the will of the Father that hath sent me; that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And I gave 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. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word; I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for those that thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

Keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, John 6. 39. chap. 10. 28. chap. 17. 2, 6, 9, 10, 24.

All these sentences are of the same import with the text; and the *Alls* and *Monies*, *These*, *They*, &c. in these several sayings of Christ, are the same with the *All* given in the text. *All* that the Father giveth.

So that (as I said before) the word *All*, as also other words, must not be taken in such sort as our foolish fancies or groundless opinions will prompt us to, but to admit of an enlargement, or a restriction, according to the true meaning and intent of the text. We must therefore diligently consult the meaning of the text, by comparing it with the other sayings of God; so shall we be better able to find out the mind of the Lord,

in the word which he has given us to know it by.

All that the (Father) giveth.

By this word (*Father*) Christ describeth the person giving; by which we may learn several useful things: 1. That the Lord God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is concerned with the Son, in the salvation of his people. True, his acts, as to our salvation, are diverse from those of the Son; he was not capable of doing *that*, or *these* things for us, as did the Son; he died not, he spilt not blood for our redemption, as the Son; but yet he hath a hand, a great hand in our salvation too: As Christ saith, The Father himself loveth you, and his love is manifest in choosing of us, in giving of us to his Son; yea, and in giving his Son also to be a Ransom for us. Hence he is called the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. For here even the Father hath himself found out and made way for his grace to come to us through the sides, and the heart-blood of his well beloved Son, Col. 1. 12. The Father therefore is to be remembered and adored as one having a chief hand in the salvation of sinners. We ought to give thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; for the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, 1 John 4. 14. Col. 1. 12. As also we see in the text, the Father giveth the sinner to Christ to save him.

Secondly, Christ Jesus the Lord by this word Father, would familiarize the Giver to us. Naturally the name of God is dreadful to us, especially when he is discovered to us by those names that declare his justice, holiness power, and glory; but now this word, Father, is a familiar

word

word, it frighteth not a sinner, but rather inclineth his heart to love and be pleased with the remembrance of him. Hence Christ also, when he would have us to pray with godly boldness, puts this word *Father* into our mouths, saying, When ye pray, say, Our *Father* which art in heaven; concluding thereby, that by the familiarity, that by such a word is intimated, the children of God may take more boldness to pray for, and ask great things. I myself have often found, that when I can say but this word *Father*, it doth me more good, than when I call him by any other scripture name; 'tis worthy your noting, that to call God by his relative title, was rare among the saints in Old-testament times; seldom do you find him called by this name, no, sometimes not in three or four books; but now in the New testament times, he is called by no name so often as this, both by the Lord Jesus himself, and by the apostles afterwards. Indeed the Lord Jesus was he that first made this name common among the saints, and that taught them, both in their discourses, their prayers, and in their writings, so much to use it; it being more pleasing to, and discovering more plainly our interest in God, than any other expression; for by this one name we are made to understand, that all our mercies are the off-spring of God, and that we also that are called, are his children by adoption.

All that the Father (giveth.)

This word (*giveth*) is out of Christ's ordinary dialect, and seemeth to intimate at the first sound, as if the Father's gift to the son, was not an act that is past, but one that is present & continuing; when indeed this gift was bestowed upon Christ, when the covenant, the eternal covenant was made between them, before all worlds. Wherefore in those other places, when this gift is mentioned,

tioned, it is still spoken of as of an act that is past : As, All that he hath *given* me; to as many as thou hast *given* me; Thou *gavest* them me, and those which thou hast *given* me. Therefore of necessity this must be the first and chief sense of the text. I mean of this word (*giveth*) otherwise the doctrine of election, and of the eternal covenant which was made between the Father and the Son, (in which covenant this gift of the Father is most certainly comprised) will be shaken, or at least wise questionable by erroneous and wicked men : For they may say, That the Father gave not all those to Christ that shall be saved, before the world was made, for that this act of *giving* is an act of continuation.

But again, this word (*giveth*) is not to be rejected, for it hath its proper use, and may signify to us,

First, That though the act of giving among men doth admit of the time past, or the time to come, and is to be spoken of with reference to such time; yet with God it is not so. Things past, or things to come, are always present with God, and with his Son Jesus Christ : He calleth things that are not (that is to us) as though they were. And again ; Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world: All things to God are present, and so the gift of the Father to the Son, although to us, as is manifest by the word, it is an act that is past, Rom. 4. 17. Acts 14. 10.

Secondly, Christ may express himself thus, to shew that the Father hath not only given him this portion in the lump, before the world was ; but that those that he had so given, he will give him again ; that is, will bring them to him at the time of their conversion ; For the Father bringeth them to Christ, John 6. 43.

As it is said, She shall be brought unto the King in rayment of needle-work ; that is, in the righteousness of Christ, for it is God that imputeth that to those that are saved, Psalm 45. 14. 1 Cor. 1.

A man giveth his daughter to such a man, first in order to marriage, and this respects the time past, and he giveth her again at the day appointed, in marriage : And in this last sense, perhaps, the text may have a meaning ; that is, that all that the Father hath (before the world was) given to Jesus Christ, he giveth them again to him in the day of their espousals.

Things that are given among men are oft times best at first, to wit, when they are new, and the reason is, because all earthly things wax old ; but with Christ it is not so ; the gift of the Father is not old and deformed, and unpleasant in his eyes ; and therefore to him 'tis always new. When the Lord spake of giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites, he saith not, that he had given, or would give it to them ; but thus, The Lord thy God giveth thee this good land, Deut. 9. 6. Not but that he had given it to them while they were in the loins of their fathers, hundreds of years before. Yet he saith now, he giveth it to them ; as if they were now also in the very act of taking possession, when as yet they were on the other side Jordan. What then should be the meaning ? Why, I take it to be this : That the land should be to them always as new ; as new, as if they were taking possession thereof but now. And so is the gift of the Father mentioned in the text to the Son ; it is always new, as if it were always new.

• *All that the Father giveth (Me.)*

In these words you find mention made of two Persons,

Persons, the Father, and the Son; the Father giving, and the Son receiving, or accepting of this gift. This then, in the first place, clearly demonstrateth, that the Father and the Son, tho they, with the Holy Ghost, are one and the same eternal God; yet as to their personality, are distinct; the Father is one, the Son is one, the Holy Spirit is one. But because there is in this text mention made but of Two of the Three, therefore a word about these two. The Giver and Receiver cannot be the same person in a proper sense, in the same act of giving, and receiving. He that giveth, giveth not to himself, but to another; the Father giveth not to the Father, to wit, to Himself; but of the Father: So when the Father giveth commandment, he giveth it not to Himself, but to another; as Christ saith, He hath given *Me* a commandment, John 12. 49. So again, I am one that beareth witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me, John 10. 18.

Further, here is something implied that is not expressed, to wit, that the Father hath not given all men to Christ; that is, in that sense as is intended in the text, tho in a larger, as was said before, he hath given him every one of them; for then all should be saved. He hath therefore disposed of them another way. He gives some up to idolatry; he gives some up to uncleanness, to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. Now, these he disposeth of in his anger, for their destruction, (Acts 7. 42. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28.) that they may reap the fruit of their doings, and be filled with the reward of their own ways. But neither he hath thus disposed of all men; he hath even of mercy reserved some from these judgments, and those are they that he will pardon, as
he

he saith: For I will pardon them whom I reserve, Jer. 50. 20. Now these he hath given to Jesus Christ by will as a legacy and portion. Hence the Lord Jesus says, 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, John 36. 29.

The Father therefore in giving of them to him to save them, must needs declare unto us these following things.

1. That he is able to answer this design of God, to wit, to save them to the uttermost sin, the uttermost temptation &c. Heb. 7. 25. Hence he is said to lay help upon one that is mighty, mighty to save: And hence it is again, that God did even of old promise to send his people a Saviour, a great One, Psal. 89. 19. Isa. 63. 1. To save, is a great work, and calls for Almightyness in the Undertaker. Hence he is called the mighty God, the wonderful counsellor, &c. Sin is strong, Satan is also strong, death and the grave are strong, and so is the curse of the law; therefore it follows, that this Jesus must needs be by God the Father accounted Almighty, in that he hath given his elect to him to save them, and deliver them from these, and that in despite of all their force and power.

And he gave us testimony of this his might, when he was employed in that part of our deliverance that called for a declaration of it. He abolish'd death; he destroyed him that had the power of death; he was the destruction of the grave; he hath finished sin, and made an end of it, as to its damning effects upon the persons that the Father hath given him; he hath vanquished the curse of the law, nailed it to his cross, triumphed over them upon his cross, and made a shew of these things openly, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb 2.

14, 15. Hof. 3. 14. Dan. 24. Gal. 33. 13. Col. 2. 14, 15.

Yea, and even now, as a sign of his triumph and conquest, he is alive from the dead, and hath the keys of hell and death in his own keeping, Rev. 1. 18.

2. The Father's giving of them to him to save them, declares unto us, that he is, and will be faithful in his office of Mediator, and that therefore they shall be secured from the fruit and wages of their sins, which is eternal damnation, by his faithful execution of it. And indeed it is said, even by the Holy Ghost himself, That he is faithful to him that appointed him: that is, to this work of saving those that the Father hath given him, for that purpose; as Moles was faithful in all his house; yea, and more faithful too, for Moles was faithful in God's house, but as a servant; but Christ as a Son over his own house, Heb. 3.

And therefore this Man is counted worthy of more glory than Moles, even upon this account, because more faithful than he, as well as because of the dignity of his person. Therefore in him, and in his truth and faithfulness God rested well-pleased, and hath put all the government of his people upon his shoulders. Knowing that nothing shall be wanting in him, that may any way perfect this design. And of this, He, to wit, the Son, hath already given a proof: for when the time was come that his blood was by divine Justice required for their redemption. Washing and cleanting, he as freely poured it out of his heart, as if it had been water out of a vessel; not thinking to part with his own-life, that the life which was laid up for his people in heaven, might not fail to be bestowed upon them. And upon this account (as well as upon any other) it is that God calleth him his Righteous Servant, Is. 53.

For

For his righteousness could never have been compleat, if he had not been to the uttermost faithful to the work he undertook: It is also, because he is faithful and true, that in righteousness he doth judge and make work for his Peoples deliverance. He will faithfully perform his trust reposed in him: The Father knows this, and hath therefore given his elect unto him.

Thirdly, The Father giving of them to him, to save them, declares that he is, and will be gentle and patient towards them, under all their provocations and miscarriages. It is not to be imagined, the trials and provocations that the Son of God hath all along had with these people that hath been given to him that saves them: indeed he is said to be a tried stone; for he has been tried, not only by the Devil, guilt of sin, death and the curse of the law, but also by his peoples ignorance, unruliness, falls into sin, and declining into errors in life and doctrine. Were we but capable of seeing how the Lord Jesus has been tried even by his people, ever since there was one of them in the world, we should be amazed at his patience and gentle carriage to them. It is said indeed, The Lord is very pitiful, slow to anger, and of great mercy: And indeed, if he had not been so, he could never have endured their manners, as he has done from Adam hitherto. Therefore is his pity towards his church, preferred above the pity and howels of a mother towards her child. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee, saith the Lord, Isa. 49. 15.

God did once give Moses, as Christ's servant an handful of his people, to carry them in his bosom, but no farther than from Egypt to Canaan; and this Moses, as is said of him by the Holy Ghost, was

was the meekest man that was then to be found on the earth; yea, and he loved the people at a very great rate, yet neither would his meekness nor love hold out in this work; he failed and grew passionate, even to provoking his God to anger under this work. And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? But what was the affliction? Why the Lord had said unto him, Carry this people in thy bosom as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land that he sware unto their fathers. And how then, Not I, says Moses, I am not able to bear all this people, because it is too heavy for me; if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, and let me not see my wretchedness, Numb. 11. 11, 12, 13, 14. God gave them to Moses, that he might carry them in his bosom, that he might shew gentleness and patience towards them, under all the provocations wherewith they would provoke him for that time, till he had brought them to their land; but he failed in the work; he could not exercise it, because he had not that sufficiency of patience towards them: But now it is said of the person speaking in the text, That he shall gather his lambs with his arm, shall carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young, Isa. 40. 10, 11. Intimating, that this is one of the qualifications that God looked for, and knew was in him, when he gave his elect to him to save them.

Fourthly, The Father giving of him to save them, declares that he hath a sufficiency of wisdom to wage with all those difficulties that would attend him in bringing of his sons and daughters unto glory, 1 Cor. 1. 30. He hath made him to us to be wisdom; yea, he is called wisdom itself; and God saith moreover, That he shall deal prudently, Isa. 52. 13. And indeed he that shall take
upon

upon him to be the Saviour of the people, had need be wise, because their adversaries are subtile above any. Here they are to encounter with the serpent, who for his subtilty out-witted our father and mother, when their wisdom was at highest. (Gen. 3.) But if we talk of wisdom, our Jesus is wise, wiser than Solomon, wiser than all men, wiser than all angels; he is even the Wisdom of God. Christ the wisdom of God, (Col. 1. 1.) And hence it is, that he turneth temptations, sin, persecution, falls, and all things, for good unto his people, Rom. 8.

Now these things thus concluded on do shew us also the great and wonderful love of the Father, in that he should chooie out one every way so well prepared for the work of man's salvation.

Herein indeed perceive we the love of God. Hiram gathered, that God loved Israel, because he had given them such a king as Solomon, (2Chr. 2. 11.) But how much more may we behold the love that God hath bestowed upon us, in that he hath given us to his Son, and also given his Son for us.

All that the Father giveth me (shall come.)

In all these words, there is closely inserted an answer unto the Father's end in giving of his elect to Jesus Christ, the Father's end was, that they might come to him, and be saved by him; and that says the Son, shall be done; neither sin nor Satan, neither flesh nor world, neither wisdom nor folly, shall hinder their coming to me. They shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Here therefore the Lord Jesus positively determineth to put forth such a sufficiency of all grace as shall effectually perform this promise, They shall come; that is, he will cause them to come, by infus-

infusing of an effectual blessing into all the means that shall be used to that end. As was said to the evil spirit that was sent to persuade Ahab to go and fall at Ramoth Gilead; Go: Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also; go forth, and do so, 1 King 22. 22. So will Jesus Christ say to the means that shall be used for the bringing of thole to him, that the Father hath given him. I say he will bless it effectually to this very end; it shall persuade them, and shall prevail also. Else, as I said, the Father's end should be frustrate: For the Father's will is, That, of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day; in order next unto himself, Christ the First fruits, afterwards thole that are his, at his coming (1 Cor. 15.) But this cannot be done, if there should fail to be a work of grace effectually wrought, tho but in any one of them. But this shall not fail to be wrought in them, even in all the Father hath given him to save. All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me, &c. But to speak more distinctly to the words, *They shall come.* Two things I would shew you from these words:

First, What it is to come to Christ?

Secondly, What force there is in this promise to make them to come to him.

First, I would shew you what it is to come to Christ. This word *Come*, must be understood spiritually, not carnally; for many came to him carnally, or bodily, that had no saving advantage by him; multitudes did thus come unto him in the days of his flesh, yea, innumerable companies. There is also at this day a formal customary coming to his ordinances and ways of worship, which availeth not any thing, but with them I shall not now meddle; for they are not intended in the text. The coming then intended in the text, is to be understood of the coming of the mind

mind to him, even the moving of the heart towards him. I say, the moving of the heart towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

This description of coming to Christ, divideth itself into two heads.

First, That coming to Christ is a moving of the mind towards him.

Secondly, That it is a moving of the mind towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

To speak to the First, That it is a moving of the mind towards him. This is evident, because coming hither or thither, if it be voluntary, is by an act of the mind or will; so coming to Christ, is through the inclining of the will. Thy people shall be willing, Psal. 110. 3. This willingness of heart, is it which sets the mind a-moving after, or towards him. The church expresseth this moving of the mind towards Christ, by the moving of her bowels. My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him, Song 5. 4. My bowels, the passions of my mind and affections; which passions of the affections are expressed by the yearning and founding of the bowels, the yearning or passionate working of them, the founding of them, or their making a noise for him, Gen. 43. 30. 1 Kings 3. 26. Ilia. 16. 11.

This then is the coming to Christ, even a moving towards him with the mind. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth whithersoever the waters shall come, shall live, Ezek. 47. 9.

The water in this text, is the grace of God, in the doctrine of it: the living things are the children of men, to whom the grace of God, by the

the gospel is preached. Now, saith he, Every living thing which moveth whithersoever the waters shall come, shall live. And see how this word (*Moveth*) is expounded by Christ himself in the book of the Revelation: The Spirit and the bride saith, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, that is willing, let him take the water of life freely, Rev. 22. 17.

So that to move in thy mind and will after Christ, is to be coming to him. There are many poor souls that are coming to Christ, that yet cannot tell how to believe it; because they think that coming to him, is some strange and wonderful thing; and indeed so it is: But I mean they overlook the inclination of their will, the moving of their mind, and the sounding of their bowels after him: And count these none of this strange and wonderful thing; when indeed it is a work of greatest wonder in this world, to see a man who was sometimes dead in sin, possessed of the Devil, an enemy to Christ, and to all things spiritually good: I say, to see this man moving with his mind after the Lord Jesus Christ, is one of the highest wonders in the world.

Secondly, It is a moving of the mind towards him from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation. Indeed, without this sense of a lost condition without him, there will be no moving of the mind towards him: A moving of the mouth there may be; With their mouth they have much love, Ezek 33. 31. Such a people as this will come as the true people cometh, that is in shew and outward appearance: And they will sit before God's ministers, as his people sit before them; and they will hear his words too, but they will not do them;

them; that is, will not come inwardly with their mind; For with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart (or mind) goeth after their covetousness. Now all this is because they want an effectual sense of the misery of their state by nature; for not until they have that, will they in their mind move after him. Therefore thus it is said concerning the true comers, At that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and They shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the out-calls of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mountain at Jerusalem, Isa. 27. 13. They are then (as you see) the out-calls, and those that are ready to perish, that indeed have their minds effectually moved to come to Jesus Christ. This sense of things, was that which made the Three thousand come, that made Saul come, that made the Saylor come, and that indeed makes all others come that come effectually, Acts 2. 8. 16.

Of the true coming to Christ, the three Lepers were a famous semblance, of whom you read, 2 Kings 7. 3. &c. The famine in those days was sore in the land, there was no bread for the people; and as for that sustenance that was, which was asses flesh, and doves dung, that was only in Samaria; and of these the lepers had no share, for they were thrust without the city. Well, now they sat in the gate of the city, and hunger was, as I may say, making his last meal of them; and being therefore half dead already, what do they think of doing? Why, first, they display'd the dismal colours of death before each others faces, and then resolve what to do, saying, If we say, we will go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there, if we sit still here, we die also; now therefore come, let us fall into the host of the Syrians; if they

save us alive, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but die. Here now was *necessity* at work, and this *necessity* drove them to go thither for life, whither else they would never have gone for it. Thus it is with them that in truth come to Jesus Christ: Death is before them, they see it, and feel it; he is feeding upon them, and will eat them quite up, if they come not to Jesus Christ; and therefore they come, even of Necessity, being forced thereto by that sense they have of their being utterly and everlastingly undone, if they find not safety in him.

These are they that will come; indeed these are they that are invited to come, Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28.

Take two or three things to make this more plain: to wit, That coming to Christ floweth from a sound sense of the absolute need that a man hath of him as afore.

1. They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a plain way wherein they shall not stumble, Jer. 31. 9. Mind it! They come with weeping and supplication; they come with prayers and tears. Now prayers and tears are the effects of a right sense of the need of mercy. Thus a senseless sinner cannot come, he cannot pray, he cannot cry, he cannot come sensible of what he sees not, nor feels. In those days, and at that time, the children of Israel shall come; they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: They shall seek the Lord their God; they shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten, Jer. 50. 4. 5.

Secondly,

Secondly, This coming to Christ, it is called a running to him, as flying, to him; a flying to him from wrath to come. By all which terms, is set forth the sense of the man that comes; to wit, That he is affected with the sense of his sin, and the death due thereto; that he is sensible that the avenger of blood pursues him, and that therefore he is cut off, if he makes not speed to the Son of God for life, Mat. 3. 7. Psalm 143. 9. Flying is the last work of a man in danger, all that are in danger do not fly; no, not all that see themselves in danger: Flying is the last work of a man in danger; all that hear of danger will not fly. Men will consider if there be no other way to escape before they fly. Therefore, as I said, Flying is the last thing. When all refuge fails, & a man is made to see that there is nothing left him but sin, death and damnation, unless he flies to Christ for life; then he flies, and not till then.

Thirdly, That the true coming is from a sense of an absolute need of Jesus Christ to save, &c. is evident by the out-cry that is made by them to come, even as they are coming to him, Matth. 14. 30. Acts 2. 37. Acts 16. 30. Lord, save me, or I perish; Men and brethren, what shall we do? Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And the like. This language doth sufficiently discover that the truly coming souls are souls sensible of their need of salvation by Jesus Christ, and moreover, that there is nothing else that can help them but Christ.

Fourthly, It is yet farther evident by these few things that follow; it is said that such are pricked in their hearts, that is, with the sentence of death by the law; and the least prick in the heart kills a man, Acts 2. 37. Such are said, as I said before, to weep, to tremble and to be astonished at themselves at the evident and unavoidable dan-

per that attend them, unless they flee to Jesus Christ, Acts 9. 16.

Fifthly, Coming to Christ is attended with an honest and sincere forsaking all for him. If any man come unto me and hateth 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, Luke 14. 26, 27.

By these and the like expressions else-where, Christ describeth the true comer, or the man that indeed is coming to him; he is one that casteth all behind his back; he leaveth all, he forsaketh all, he hateth all things that would stand in his way to hinder his coming to Jesus Christ. There are a great many pretended comers to Jesus Christ in the world. And they are much like to the man that you read of in Matth. 21. 30. that said to his father's bidding, I go sir, and went not. I say, there are a great many such comers to Jesus Christ; they say, when Christ calls by his gospel, I come. Sir, but still they abide by their pleasures, and carnal delights. They come not at all, only they give him a courtly complement; but he takes no notice of it, and will not let it pass for any more than a lie. He said, I go sir, but went not; he dissembled and lied. Take heed of this, you that flatter yourselves with your own deceivings. Words will not do with Jesus Christ: Coming is Coming, and nothing else will go for Coming with him.

Before I speak to the other head, I shall answer some objections that ly usually in the way of those that in truth are coming to Jesus Christ.

Object. 1. Tho I cannot deny, but my mind runs after Christ, and that too as being moved thereto from a light and consideration of my
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condition, (for I see without him I perish) yet I fear my ends are not right in coming to him.

Quest. Why, what is thine end in coming to Christ?

Ans. My end is, that I might have life, and be saved by Jesus Christ.

This is the objection: Well, let me tell thee, that to come to Christ for life, and to be saved, altho at present thou hast no other end, is a lawful and good coming to Jesus Christ. This is evident, because Christ propoundeth life as the only argument to prevail with sinners to come to him, and so also blameth them because they come not to him for life, And ye will not come to me that ye might have life, John 5. 3. Besides, there are many other scriptures whereby he allureth sinners to come to him, in which he propoundeth nothing to them but their life. As, He that believeth on him shall not perish; he that believeth is passed from death to life. He that believeth shall be saved. He that believeth on him, is not condemned. And believing and coming are all one. So that you see to come to Christ for life is a lawful coming, and good.

1. In that he believeth, that he hath alone made attonment for sin, Rom. 2.

And let me add over and above, that for a man to come to Christ for life, tho he came to him for nothing else but life, it is to give much honour to him.

First, He honoureth the word of Christ, and consenteth to the truth of it; and that in these two general heads.

1. He consenteth to the truth of all those sayings that tellify, that sin is most abominable in itself, dishonourable to God, and damnable to the soul of man; for thus saith the man that cometh to Jesus Christ, Jer. 44. 4. Rom. 2. 23. chap. 6. 13. 2 Thell. 2. 13.

2. In that he believeth as the word hath said, that there is in the world's best things righteousness and all, nothing but death and damnation; for so : He says the man that comes to Jesus Christ for life, Rom. 7. 24, 25. Chap. 8. 2, 3. 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8.

Secondly, He honoureth Christ's person, in that he believeth that there is life in him, and that he is able to save him from death, hell, the Devil, and damnation; for unless a man believe this, he will not come to Christ for life, Heb. 7. 24, 25.

Thirdly, He honoureth him, in that he believeth that he is authorized of the Father to give life to those that come to him for it, John 5. 11, 12. chap. 17. 1, 2, 3.

Fourthly, He honoureth the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

2. In that he believeth that Christ hath more power to save from sin by the sacrifice that he hath offered for it, than hath all the law, Devils, death, or sin to condemn: He that believes not this, will not come to Jesus Christ for life, Acts 13. 38. Heb. 2. 14, 15. Rev. 1. 17, 18.

Thirdly, In that he believeth that Christ, according to his office, will be most faithful and merciful in the discharge of his office. This must be included in the faith of him that comes for life to Jesus Christ, 1 John 2. 1, 2, 3. Heb. 2. 17, 18.

Fourthly, Further, he that cometh to Jesus Christ for life, taketh part with him against sin, and against the ragged and imperfect righteousness of the world; yea, and against false Christs, and damnable errors, that set themselves against the worthiness of his merits and sufficiency: This is evident, for that such a soul singeth Christ out from them all, as the only one that can save.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Therefore, as Noah, at God's command, thou preparest this ark, for the saving of thyself; by the which also thou condemnest the world and art become heir of the righteousness which is by faith, (Heb. 11. 7.) Wherefore coming sinner, be content, he that cometh to Jesus Christ believeth too that he is willing to shew mercy to and have compassion upon him (tho' unworthy) that comes to him for life. And therefore thy soul lyeth not only under a special invitation to come, but under a promise too of being accepted and forgiven, Mat. 11. 28.

All these particular parts and qualities of faith, are in that soul that comes to Jesus Christ for life, as is evident to any indifferent judgment.

For, will he that believeth not the testimony of Christ concerning the baseness of sin, and the insufficiency of the righteousness of the world come to Christ for life? No.

He that believeth not the testimony of the word, *comes not*: He that believeth that there is life any where else, *comes not*; he that questions whether the Father hath given Christ power to forgive, *comes not*; he that thinketh that there is more in sin, in the law, in death, and the Devil to destroy, than there is in Christ to save, *comes not*; he also that questions his faithful management of his priesthood for the salvation of sinners, *comes not*.

Thou then, that art indeed the *coming* sinner, believest all this: True, perhaps thou dost not believe with that full assurance, nor hast thou leisure to take notice of thy faith as to these distinct acts of it; but yet all this faith is in him coming to Christ for life. And the faith that thus worketh, is the faith of the best and purest kind; because this man comes alone as a sinner, and is seeing that life is to be had only in Jesus Christ.

Before I conclude my answer to this objection, take into thy consideration these two things.

First, That the cities of refuge were erected for those that were dead in the law, and that yet would live by grace, even for those that were to fly thither for life from the avenger of blood that pursueth after them. And 'tis worth your noting, that those that were upon their flight thither, are in a peculiar manner called the people of God. Cast ye up, cast ye up, saith God, prepare ye the way; take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people, Isa. 57. 14. This is meant of preparing the way to the city of refuge, that the slayers might escape thither: which fleeing slayers are here, by way of specialities, called the people of God; even those of them that escaped thither for life.

Secondly, Consider that of Ahab, when Benhadad sent to him for life saying, Thus saith thy son Benhadad, I pray thee let me live. Tho Benhadad had sought the crown, kingdom, yea, and also the life of Ahab, yet how effectually doth Benhadad prevail with him? Is Benhadad yet alive? said Ahab, he is my brother; yea, go ye, bring him to me: So he made him to ride in his chariot, 1 Kings 20.

Coming sinner, what thinkest thou? If Jesus Christ had as little goodness in him as Ahab, he might grant an humble Benhadad life; thou neither beggest of him his crown and dignity: Life, eternal life will serve thy turn. How much more then shalt thou have it, since thou hast to deal with him who is goodness and mercy itself? Yea, since thou art also called upon, yea, greatly encouraged by a promise of life, to come unto him for life? Read also these scriptures, Numb. 35. 11, 14, 15. Josh. 20. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Heb. 6. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Object 2. When I say I only seek myself, I mean

mean I do not find that I do desire God's glory in mine own salvation by Christ, and that makes me fear, I do not come right.

Ans^r. Where doth Christ Jesus require such a qualification of those that are coming to him for life, Come thou for life, and trouble not thy head with such objections against thyself, and let God and Christ alone to glorify themselves in the salvation of such a worm as thou art. The Father saith to the Son, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. God propoundeth life to sinners, as the argument to prevail with them to come to him for life; and Christ says plainly, I come that ye might have life; John 12. 10. He hath no need of thy desires, though thou hast need of his eternal life, pardon of sin, and deliverance from wrath to come, Christ propounds to thee, and these be the things that thou hast need of: Besides, God will be gracious and merciful to worthless, undeserving wretches; come then as such an one, and lay no stumbling blocks in the way to him, but come to him for life, and live, John 5. 24. Chap. 10. 10. Chap. 3. 36. Mat. 10. 21. Prov. 8. 36, 37. 1 Thes. 11. John 11. 25, 26.

When the Jaylor said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Paul did not so much as once ask him, What is your end in this question; do you desire the glory of God in the salvation of your soul? He had more wit; he knew that such questions as these would have been but fools baubles about, instead of a sufficient salve to so weighty a question as this. Wherefore, since this poor wretch lacked salvation by Jesus Christ, I mean to be saved from hell and death, which he knew (now) was due to him for the sins that he had committed; Paul bids him like a poor condemned sinner as he was, to proceed still in this his way of self-seeking, saying, Believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16. 30, 31, 32. I know that afterwards thou wilt declare to glorify Christ, by walking in the way of his precepts; but at present thou wantest life; the avenger of blood is behind thee, and the Devil like a roaring lion is behind thee: Well, come now, and obtain life from these; and when thou hast obtained some comfortable persuasion that thou art made partaker of life by Christ, then, and not till then, thou wilt say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy soul from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies, Psalm 103. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Object. 2. But I cannot believe that I am come to Christ aright, because sometimes I am apt to question his very being and office to save.

Thus to do is horrible; but mayst thou not judge amiss in this matter.

How can I judge amiss, when I judge as I feel? Poor soul! Thou mayst judge amiss for all that, Why, saith the sinner, I think that those questionings come from my heart.

Ans. Let me answer: That which comes from thy heart, comes from thy will and affections, from thy understanding, judgment and conscience, for there must acquiesce in thy questioning, if thy questioning be with thy heart. And how sayst thou (for to name no more) dost thou with thy affections and conscience thus question?

Ans. No, my conscience trembles when such thoughts come into my mind; and my affections are otherwise inclined.

Then I conclude, that these things are either suddenly injected by the devil, or else are the fruits

of that body of sin and death that yet dwells within thee, or perhaps from both together.

If they come wholly from the Devil, as they seem, because thy conscience and affections are against them, or if they come from that body of death that is in thee, (and be not thou curious in enquiring from whether of them they come, the safest way is to lay enough at thy own door) nothing of this should hinder thy coming, nor make thee conclude thou comest not right.

And before I leave thee, let me a little query with thee about this matter.

First, Dost thou like these wicked blasphemies?

Ans. No, no, their presence and working kills me.

Secondly, Dost thou mourn for them, pray against them, and hate thyself because of them?

Ans. Yes yes; but that which afflicts me is, I do not prevail against them.

Thirdly, Dost thou sincerely choose (mightest thou have thy choice) that thy Heart might be affected and taken with the things that are best, most heavenly and holy.

Ans. With all my heart, and death the next hour (if it were God's will) rather than thus to sin against him. Well then, thy not liking of them, thy mourning for them, thy praying against them, and thy loathing thyself because of them, with thy sincere choosing of those thoughts for thy delectation that are heavenly and holy; clearly declares that those things are not countenanced either with thy will, affections, understanding, judgment or conscience; and so, that thy heart, is not in them, but that rather they come immediately from the Devil, or arise from the body of death that is in thy flesh; of which thou oughtest thus to say, Now then, 'tis no more I that do it, but sin that dwells within me, Rom. 7. 16, 17.

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I will give thee a pertinent instance, in Deut. 22. Thou mayest read of a betrothed damsel, one betrothed to her beloved, one that hath given him her heart and mouth, as thou hast given thy self to Christ, yet she was met with as she walked in the field, by one that forced her, because he was stronger than she. Well, what judgment now doth God the righteous Judge pass upon the damsel for this? The man only that lay with her, saith God, shall die; but unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death. For as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter: he found her in the field and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her, Deut. 22. 26, 27.

Thou art the damsel, the Man that forced thee with these blasphemous thoughts is the Devil; and he lighted upon thee in a fit place, even in the fields, as thou art wandering after Jesus Christ; but thou criest out, and by the cry didst shew that thou abhorrest such wicked lewdness. Well, the Judge of all the earth will do right; he will not lay the sin at thy door, but at his that offered the violence. And for thy comfort take this into consideration, That he came to heal them that were oppressed with the Devil, Acts 10. 38.

Object. 4. But, saith another, I am so heartless, so slow, and, as I think, so indifferent in my coming, that to speak truth, I know not whether my kind of coming ought to be called a coming to Christ.

Ans. You know that I told you at first, that coming to Christ was a moving of the heart and affections towards him.

But, saith the soul, my dulness and indifference in all holy duties, demonstrates my heartlessness in coming: and to come, and not with
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the sincere heart of repentance, signifies nothing at all.

Ans^r. The moving of the heart after Christ : is not to be discerned at all times, by thy sensible affectionate performance of duties ; but rather by those secret groanings and complaints which thy soul makes to God, against that sloth that attends thee in duties.

Secondly, But grant it be even as thou sayst it is that thou comest so slowly, &c. Yet since Christ bids them come that come not at all ; surely they may be accepted that come, though attended with those infirmities, which thou at present groanest under. He saith, And him that cometh : He saith not, If they come sensible so fast. But, And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. He saith also in the eight of Proverbs, As for him that wanteth understanding, that is, An heart ; for oftentimes the understanding is taken for the heart : Come eat of my bread and drink of the wine that I have mingled.

Thirdly, Thou mayest be vehement in thy spirit coming to Jesus Christ, and yet be plagued with sensible sloth. So was the church, when she cried draw me, we will run after thee ; and Paul, when he said, When I would do good, evil is present with me : (Song 14. Rom. 7. Gal. 5. 16.) the works, strugglings, and oppositions of thy flesh are more manifest than are the works of the Spirit in our hearts, and so are sooner felt than they, What then ? let us not be discouraged at the sight and feeling of our own infirmities, but run the faster to Jesus Christ for salvation.

Fourthly, Get thy heart warmed with the sweet promise of Christ's acceptance of the coming sinner, and that will make thee make more haste to him. Discouraging thoughts, they are like unto cold weather, they benumb the senses, and make us go ungainly about our business ; but the sweet
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and warm gleads of the promise, are like the comfortable beams of the sun, which enliveneth and refresheth. You see how little the bee and the fly do play in the air in winter; why the cold hinders them from doing it; but when the wind and the sun is warm, who so busy as they?

Fifthly, But again, he that comes to Christ, flies for his life? Now there is no man that flies for his life, that thinks he speeds fast enough on his journey; no, could he, he would willingly take a mile at a step. Oh my sloath and heartlessness, sayst thou! Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest? I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest, Psal. 55. 6. 8.

Poor coming soul, thou art like the man that would ride full gallop, whose horse would hardly trot: now the desire of his mind is not to be judged by the low pace of the dull jade he rides on, but by the hitching, and kicking, and spurring, while he sits on his back. The flesh is like this dull jade, it will not gallop after Christ; it will be backward, tho thy soul and heaven ly at stake; but be of good comfort, Christ judgeth not according to the fierceness of outward motion, Mark 10. 17. but according to the sincerity of the heart, and inward parts, John 1. 41. Psal. 51. 6. Mat. 26. 41.

Sixthly, Ziba in appearance came to David much faster than did Mephibosheth; but yet his heart was not so upright in him to David, as was his. 'Tis true Mephibosheth had a check from David, for, said he, Why wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth? But when David came to remember that Mephibosheth was lame, (for that was his plea) Thy servant is lame, 2 Sam. 19. he was content, and concluded he would have come after him faster than he did. And Mephibosheth appealed to

David

David, who was in those days as an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth, if he did not believe that the reason of his backwardness lay in his lameness and not in his mind. Why poor coming sinner, thou canst not come to Christ with that outward swiftness of career, as many others do: But doth the reason of thy backwardness ly in thy mind and will, or in the sluggishness of the flesh? Canst thou say sincerely, The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak? Mat. 26. 1. Yea, canst thou appeal to the Lord Jesus, who knoweth perfectly the very inmost thought of thy heart, that this is true; Then take this for thy comfort? he hath said, I will assemble him that halteth, I will make her that halteth a remnant, and I will save her that halteth, Micah 4. 6, 7. Zeph. 3. 19. What canst thou have more from the sweet lips of the Son of God? But,

Seventhly, I read of some that are to follow Christ in chains; I say to come after him in chains; Thus saith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: They shall come after thee; in chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto thee: They shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely there is none else to save, Isa. 54. 14. Surely they that come after Christ in chains, come to him in great difficulty, because their steps by the chains are strained.

And what chain so heavy, as those that discourage thee? Thy chain which is made up of guilt and filth, is heavy, it is a wretched band about thy neck, by which thy strength doth fail, Lam. 1. 14. chap 3. 17. But come thou thou comest in la chains; Tis glory to Christ, that

that a sinner comes after him in chains. The thinking of thy chains tho troublesome to thee, are not, nor can be obstruction to thy salvation; 'Tis Christ's work and glory to save thee from thy chains, to enlarge thy steps, and set thee at liberty. The blind man, tho called, surely could not come apace to Jesus Christ, but Christ could stand still, and stay for him. True, He rideth upon the wings of the wind; but yet he is long-suffering, and his long-suffering is salvation to him that cometh to him, Matth. 19. 49. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Rightly, Hadst thou seen those that came to the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, how slowly, how hobblingly they came to him, by reason of their infirmities, and also how friendly, and kindly, and graciously he received them, and gave them the desire of their hearts, thou wouldest not as thou dost, make such objections against thyself, in thy coming to Jesus Christ.

Object. 5. But, says another, I fear I come too late, I doubt I have staid too long; I am afraid the door is shut.

Ans. Thou canst never come too late to Jesus Christ, if thou dost come. This is manifest by two instances.

First, By the man that came to him at the eleventh hour. This man was idle all the day long; he had a whole gospel-day to come in; and he played it all away save only the last hour thereof. But at last, at the eleventh hour he came, and goes into the vineyard to work with the rest of the labourers, that had born the brithen and heat of the day. Well, but how was he received by the Lord of the vineyard? Why, when pay-day came, he had even as much as the rest; yea, he had money first. True the others murmured at him; but what did the Lord Jesus

Jesus answer them? Is thine eye evil, because mine is good? I will give unto this last even as unto thee, Mat. 20.

2dly, The other instance is, The thief upon the cross; he came late also, even at an hour before his death; yea, he staid from Jesus Christ as long as he had liberty to be a thief, and longer too; for could he have deluded the judge, and by lying words escaped his just condemnation, for ought I know, he had not come as yet to his Saviour; but being convicted and condemned to die, yea, fastned to the cross that he might die like a rogue, as he was in his life; behold the Lord Jesus, when this wicked one, *even now*, desireth mercy at his hands, tells him, and that without the least reflection upon him, for his former mispent life; To day thou shalt be with me in Paradise, Luke 23. 43.

Let no man turn this grace of God into wantonness; my design is now to encourage the coming soul.

Object. But is not the door of mercy shut with some before they die?

Ans. Yea, and God forbids that prayers should be made to him for them, Jer. 7. 16. Jude 22.

Quest. Then why may not I doubt that I may be one of these?

Ans. By no means, if thou art coming to Jesus Christ; because when God shuts the door upon men, he gives them no heart to come to Jesus Christ, None comes but those to whom it is given of the Father: but thou comest, therefore it is given thee of the Father.

Be sure therefore as the Father hath given thee an heart to come to Jesus Christ, the gate of mercy yet stands open to thee: For it stands not with the wisdom of God to give strength to come to the birth, and yet to shut up the womb, Isa. 66. 9. To

give

give grace to come to Jesus Christ, and ye shut up the door of his mercy upon thee. Encline thine ear, saith he, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David, Isa. 55. 3.

Object. But it is said, that some knocked when the door was shut.

Ans. Yes, But the texts in which these knockers are mentioned, are to be referred till the day of judgment, and not to the coming of the sinner to Christ in his life. See the texts, Mat. 25. 11. Luke 13. 24, 25.

These therefore concern thee nothing at all, thou art coming to Jesus Christ, thou art coming now! Now is he accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Now God is upon the mercy-seat; now Christ Jesus sits by continually pleading the victory of his blood for sinners, and now, even as long as this world lasts, this word of the text shall still be free and fully fulfilled; And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out: Sinner, the greater sinner thou art, the greater need of mercy thou hast, and the more will Christ be glorified thereby. Come then, come and try: Come taste and see how good the Lord is to an undeserving sinner.

Object. But, says another, I am fallen since I began to come to Christ; therefore I fear I do not come aright, and consequently, that Christ will not receive me.

Ans. Falls are dangerous; for they dishonour Christ, wound the conscience, and cause the enemies of God to speak reproachfully. But it is no good argument, I am fallen, therefore I was not coming aright to Jesus Christ. If David, & Solomon, & Peter had thus objected against themselves, they had added to their griefs; and yet a
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least, they had as much cause as thou. A man whose steps are ordered by the Lord, and whose goings the Lord delights in, may yet be over taken with a temptation that may cause him to fall, Plal. 33. 3. 34. Did not Aaron fall; yea, & Moses himself? What shall we say of Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat? There are therefore *falls* and *falls*, falls pardonable, and falls unpardonable; falls unpardonable, are falls against light, from the faith, to the despising of, and trampling upon Jesus Christ & his blessed undertakings, (Heb. 6. 2, 3, 4, 5. chap. 10. 28, 29.) Now, as for such, there remains no more sacrifice for sin: Indeed, they have no heart, no mind, no desire to come to Jesus Christ for life, therefore they must perish; Nay, says the Holy Ghost, 'Tis impossible that they should be renewed again unto repentance. Therefore, *these* God hath no compassion for, neither ought we; but for other falls, tho they be dreadful (and God will chastise his people for them) they do not prove thee a graceless man, one not come to Jesus Christ for life.

It is said of the child in the gospel, That, while he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tore him, Luke 9. 4.

Dejected sinner, it is no wonder that thou hast caught a fall in coming to Jesus Christ. It is not neither to be wondred at, that thou hast not caught before this, a thousand times a thousand falls, considering;

1. What fools we are by nature.
2. What weakneses are in us,
3. What mighty powers the fallen angels, our implacable enemies are.
4. Considering also how often the coming man is benighted in his journey, and also what stumbling-blocks do ly in the way.
5. Also his familiars (that were so before)

now.

now watch for his halting, and seek by what means they may, to cause him fall by the hand of their strong ones.

What then? Must we, because of the temptations, incline to fall? No. Must we not fear falls? Yes, Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Yet let him not utterly be casten down; The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up those that are bowed down. Make not light of falls. Yet hast thou fallen: Ye have, said Samuel, done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve him with a perfect heart, and turn not aside, for the Lord will not forsake his people (and he counted the coming sinner one of them) because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people, 1 Sam. 12. 20, 21, 22.

(Shall come to Me.)

Now we come to shew what force there is in this promise to make them come to him. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.

I will speak to this promise;

First, In general. Secondly, In particular.

In general. This word *(shall)* is confined to These *(All)* that are given to Christ. All that the Father giveth Me, *shall* come to Me. Hence I conclude,

First, That coming to Jesus Christ aright, is an effect of their being (of God) given to Christ before. Mark, *they shall come*. Who? *Those* that are given: They *come* then, because they were *given*: Thine they were and thou gavest them me. Now this is indeed a singular comfort to them that are coming in truth to Christ, to think that the reason why they come is, because they were given of the Father before to him. Thus then may the coming soul reason with himself as I come

comes. Am I coming indeed to Jesus Christ? This coming of mine is not to be attributed to me, or my goodness, but to the grace and gift of God to Christ; God gave first my person to him, and, therefore hath now given me a heart to come.

Secondly, This word, *shall come*, maketh thy coming, not only the fruit of the gift of the Father, but also of the purpose of the Son; for these words are a divine purpose; They shew us the heavenly determination of the Son. The Father hath given them to me, and *they shall*; yea, *they shall* come to me. Christ is as full in his resolution to save those given to him, as is the Father in giving of them. Christ piled the gift of his Father, he will lose nothing of it; He is resolved to save it every whit by his blood, and to raise it up again at the last day. And thus he fulfills his Father's will, and accomplisheth his own desires, John 6. 39.

Thirdly, These words, *shall come*, make thy coming to be also the effect of an absolute promise; coming sinner, thou art concluded in a promise; thy coming is the fruit of the faithfulness of an absolute promise. 'T was this promise, by vertue of which thou at first received'st strength to come: And this is the promise, by the vertue of which thou shalt be effectually brought to him. It was said to Abraham, At this time will I come, and Sarah *shall* have a son. The son was Isaac. Mark; Sarah *shall* have a son: There is the promise; and Sarah had a son: There was the fulfilling of the promise: And therefore was Isaac called the child of the promise, Gen. 17. 19. Chap. 18. 10. Rom. 9. 9. Sarah *shall* have a son, but how if Sarah be past her age? Why, still the promise continues to say, Sarah *shall* have a son; but how if Sarah be barren? Why still the promise says, Sarah *shall* have a son. But Abraham's
body

body is now dead; why the promise is still the same, Sarah shall have a son. Thus you see what vertue there is in an absolute promise. It carrieth enough in its own bosom to accomplish the thing promised, whether there be means or no in us to effect it. Wherefore this promise in the text being an absolute promise, by vertue of it, not by vertue of ourselves, or by our own inducements do we come to Jesus Christ, for so are the words of the text, *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.*

Therefore is every sincere comer to Jesus Christ called also a child of the promise. Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are called Children of the promise, Gal. 4. 28. That is, We are the children that God hath promised to Jesus Christ, and given to him; yea, the children that Jesus Christ hath promised shall come to him. All that the Father giveth me shall come.

Fourthly, This word (*shall come*) engageth Christ to communicate all manner of grace to those thus given him, to make them effectually come to him. They *shall come*, that is, not if they will, but if grace, all grace, if power, wisdom, a new heart, and the Holy Spirit, and all joining together can make them come. I say, this word (*shall come*) being absolute, hath no dependance upon our will or power, or goodness; but it engageth for us even God himself, Christ himself, the Spirit himself. When God had made this absolute promise to Abraham, That Sarah should have a son, Abraham did not at all look at any qualification in himself, because the promise looked at none, but as God had by the promise absolutely promised him a son; to be considered now, not his own body now dead, nor yet the barrenness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God thro' unbelief, but

but was strong in the faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able to perform, Rom. 4. He had promised, and had promised absolutely, Sarah shall have a son: Therefore Abraham looks that *He*, to wit, God must fulfill the condition of it. Neither is this expectation of Abraham disapproved by the Holy Ghost, but accounted good & laudable; it being that by which he gives glory to God. The Father also hath given to Christ a certain number of souls for him to save; and he himself hath said, They shall come to him. Let the Church of God then live in a joyful expectation of the utmost accomplishment of this promise; for assuredly it shall be fulfilled, and not one thousand part of a title thereof shall fail; They *shall* come to me.

And now before I go any further, I will more particularly enquire into the nature of an absolute promise.

First, We call that an absolute promise, that is made without any condition; or more fully, thus; That is an absolute promise of God, or of Christ, which maketh over to this, or that man any saving spiritual blessing without a condition to be done on our part, for the obtaining thereof. And this we have in hand is such an one; Let the best master of arts on earth shew me if he can, any condition in this text depending upon any qualification in us, which is not by the same promise concluded, shall be by the Lord Jesus effected in us.

Secondly, An absolute promise therefore is, as we say; without *if* or *and*; that is, it requireth nothing of us, that itself might be accomplished. It saith not, They shall, if they will; but, They shall: Not, they shall, if they use the means; but, They shall. You may say, that a will, and the

the use of the means is supposed, though not expressed. But I answer, No, by no means; this is as a condition of this promise: If they be at all included in the promise, they are included there as the fruit of the absolute promise, nor as if excepted the qualification to arise from us. The people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Psal. 110. 3. That is another absolute promise. But doth that promise suppose a willingness in us as a condition of God's making us willing? They shall be willing, if they are willing: or they shall be willing, if they will be willing. This is ridiculous; there is nothing of this supposed. The promise is absolute, as to us, all that it engageth for its own accomplishment is the mighty power of Christ, and his faithfulness to accomplish.

The difference therefore betwixt the absolute and conditional promise is this;

First, They differ in their terms; the absolute promises say, I will, and you shall; the other, will, if you will; or do this, and thou shalt live. Jer. 30. 31, 32, 33. Ezek. 36. 24. to 28. Heb. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Jer. 4. 1. Ezek. 18. 30, 31, 32. Mat. 19. 21.

Secondly, They differ in their way of communicating of good things to men, the absolute ones communicate things freely, only of grace: the other, if there be that qualification in us, that the promise calls for, not else.

Thirdly, The absolute promises therefore engage God, the other engage us: I mean God only, us only.

Fourthly, Absolute promises must be fulfilled: conditional may, or may not be fulfilled. The absolute ones must be fulfilled, because of the faithfulness of God, the other may not, because of the unfaithfulness of men.

Fifthly

Fifthly, Absolute *promises* have therefore a sufficiency in themselves to bring about their own fulfillings: the conditional have not so. The absolute *promise* is therefore a big-bellied *promise*, because it hath in itself a fulness of all desired things for us; and will, when the time of that promise is come, yield to us mortals that which will verily save us, yea, and make us capable of answering of the demands of the *promise* that is conditional. Wherefore, tho there be a real, yea, an eternal difference in these things (with others) betwixt the conditional and absolute promise; yet again, in other respects, there is a blessed harmony betwixt them; as may be seen in these particulars.

First, The conditional *promise* calls for repentance, the absolute gives it, Acts 30. 31.

Secondly, The conditional *promise* calls for faith, the absolute *promise* gives it, Zeph. 3. 12. Rom. 15. 12.

Thirdly, The conditional *promise* calls for a new heart, the absolute *promise* gives it, Ezek. 36.

Fourthly, The conditional *promise* calleth for holy obedience, the absolute *promise* giveth it, or causeth it, Ezek. 36. 27.

And as they harmoniously agree in this; so again the conditional *promise* blesteth the man, who by the absolute *promise* is endued with its fruit: As for instance,

First, The absolute promise maketh men upright, and then the conditional follows, saying, Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord, Psal. 119. 1.

Secondly, The absolute *promise* giveth to this man the fear of the Lord, and then the conditional followeth, saying, Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, Psal. 128. 1.

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, The absolute promise giveth faith, and then this conditional follows, saying, Blessed is he that believeth, Zeph. 3. 12. Luke 1. 45.

Fourthly, The absolute promise brings free forgiveness of sins; and then says the conditional, Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered, Rom. 4. 7. 8.

Fifthly, The absolute promise says, that God's elect shall hold out to the end; Then the conditional follows with this blessing: He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved, 1 Pct. 1. 4, 5, 6. Mat. 24.

Thus do the promises gloriously serve one another and us, in this their harmonious agreement.

Now the promise under consideration, is an absolute promise: *All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me.*

This promise therefore is, as is said, a big-bellied promise, and hath in itself all those things to bestow upon us, that the conditional calleth for at our hands. *They shall come!* Shall they come? Yes. *They shall come.* But how if they want those things, those graces, power, and heart, without which they cannot come? Why, *Shall come* answereth all this, and all things else that may in this matter be objected. And here I will take the liberty to amplify things.

Object. 1. But they are dead, dead in trespasses and sins, how shall they then come.

Ans. Why, *Shall come* can take them from this death. The hour is coming, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, & they that hear shall live. Thus therefore is this impediment by *Shall come* removed out of the way. They shall hear, they shall live.

Object. 2. But they are satan's captives; he takes them captives at his will, and he is stronger than they; how then can they come.

Ans.

Anfw. Why, *Shall come* hath also provided an help for this. Satan hath bound that daughter of Abraham so, that she could by no means lift up herself; but yet *Shall come* set her free both in body and soul. Christ will have them turned from the power of Satan to God. But what! Must it be, if they turn themselves, or do something to merit of him to turn them? No, he will do it freely, of his own good will. Alas! man whose soul is possessed by the devil, is turned whithersoever that governour listeth, is taken captive by him, notwithstanding its natural powers at his will; but what will he do? Will he hold him when *Shall come* puts forth itself (will he, will then let him) for coming to Jesus Christ? No, that cannot be! his power is but the power of a fallen angel; but *shall come* is the word of God; therefore *Shall come* must be fulfilled; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

There were seven devils in Mary Magdalene, too many for her to get from under the power of; but when the time was come, that *Shall come* was to be fulfilled upon her, they gave place, she from her, and she comes indeed to Jesus Christ; according as it is written, All that the Father giveth Me, *Shall come* to Me.

The man that was possessed with a legion, Mark was too much by them captivated, for him by humane force to come; yea, had he had (to boot) all the men under heaven to help him, had he that God, he shall come, withheld his mighty power: but when this promise was to be fulfilled upon him, then he comes; nor could all their power hinder his coming. It was also this (*Shall come*) that preserved him from death; when by these evil spirits he was hurled hither and thither; and it was by the virtue of (*shall come*) that at

But he was set at liberty from them, and enabled indeed to come to Christ. *All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me.*

Object. 3. They *shall* (you say;) but how if they will not? And if so, then what can, *shall come*, do?

Ans. True, there are some men say, We are lords, we will come no more to thee, Jer. 2. 31. But as God says in another case (if they are concerned in *shall come* to Me) They shall know whose word shall stand, mine or theirs. Jer. 44. 28. Here then is the case, we must now see who will be the liar; He that saith, I will not, or he that saith, He shall come to me. You shall come, says God; I will *not* come, saith the sinner. Now as sure as he is concerned in this *shall come*, God will make that man eat his own words; for I will *not*, is the unadvised conclusion of a crazy headed sinner; but *shall come*, was spoken by him that is of power to perform his word. Son, go work to day in my vineyard, said the Father; but he answered, and said, I will *not* come. What now! will he be able to stand to his refusal? will he pursue his desperate denial? No, he afterwards repented and went. But how came he by that repentance? Why, it was wrapped up for him in the absolute *promise*; and therefore notwithstanding he said, I will not, he afterwards repented, and went: By this parable, Jesus Christ sets forth the obstinacy of the sinners of the world, as touching their coming to him; they will not come, tho' threatned; yea, tho' life be offered them upon condition of coming.

But now, when *shall come*, the absolute promise of God, come to be fulfilled upon them, then they come, because by that promise a cure is provided against the rebellion of their will; They shall be willing in the day of thy power. Psalm 100. 3. Thy people, what people? Why

the people that thy Father hath given thee. The obstinacy and plague that is in the will of that people shall be taken away; and they shall be made willing, *shall come* will make them willing to come to thee.

He that had seen Paul in the midst of his outrages against Christ, his gospel and people, would hardly have thought that he would ever have been a follower of Jesus Christ, especially since he went not against his conscience in his persecuting of them. He thought verily that he ought to do what he did. But we may see what (*shall come*) can do, when it comes to be fulfilled upon the soul of a rebellious sinner, he was a chosen vessel, given by the Father to the Son; and now the time being come, that (*shall come*) was to take him in hand, behold he is over-mastered, astonished, and with trembling and reverence in a moment becomes willing to be obedient to the heavenly call, Acts 9.

And were not they far gone (that you read of Acts 2.) Who had their hands and hearts in the murder of the Son of God; and to shew their resolvedness never to repent of that horrid fact, said, His blood be on us, and our children? But must their obstinacy rule? Must they be bound to their own ruin by the rebellion of their stubborn wills? No, not *those* of *these* the Father gave to Christ; wherefore at the times appointed, *shall come* breaks in among them, the absolute promise takes them in hand, and then they come indeed, crying out to Peter, and the rest of the apostles, Men & brethren, what shall we do? No stubbornness of man's will can stand when God hath absolutely said the contrary, *shall come* can make them come as doves to their windows, that had afore resolved never to come to him.

The Lord spake unto Manassah, and to his people,

ple (by the prophets) but would he hear? No, he would not: but shall Marasseh come off this? No, he shall not. Therefore, he being also one of those whom the Father had given to the Son, and so falling within the bounds and reach of Shall come, at last Shall come takes him in hand, and then he comes indeed, He comes bowing and bending; he humbles himself greatly, and made supplication to the Lord, and prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, and had mercy upon him, 2 Chron. 3. 33.

The thief upon the cross, at first, did rail with his fellow, upon *Jesus Christ*; but he was one that the Father had given to him, and therefore, Shall come, must handle him and his rebellious will. And behold, so soon as he is dealt withal, by virtue of that absolute promise, how soon he buckleth, leaves his railing, falls to supplicating of the Son of God for mercy; Lord, saith he, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom, Mat. 7. 44. Luke 3. 40, 41, 42.

Object. 4. They shall come, say you, but how if they be blind and see not the way? For some are kept off from Christ, not only by the obstinacy of their will, but by the blindness of their mind. Now, if they be blind, how shall they come?

Ans. The question is not, Are they blind? but, are they within the reach and power of Shall come; if so, that *Christ* that said, *They shall come*, will find them eyes, or a guide, or both, to bring them to himself. Must, is for the king. If they shall come, they shall come; no impediment shall hinder.

The Thessalonians darkness did not hinder them from being the children of light: I am come, saith Christ, that they that see not, might see. And he saith, See ye blind that have eyes; who shall hinder it? Eph. 5. 8. John. 9. 39. Isa. 39. 18. Chap. 43. 8,

This promise therefore is, I said, A big-bellied promise, having in the bowels of it, all things that shall occur to the compleat fulfilling of itself. They *shall* come. But 'tis objected, that they are blind: Well, *shall come* is still the same, and continueth to say, They shall come to me. Therefore he saith again, I will bring the blind by a way that they know not. I will lead them in paths that they know not. I will make darknels light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them, Isa. 42. 16.

Mark, I will bring them, tho they be blind; I will bring them by a way they know not; I will, I will; and therefore, they shall come to me.

Object. 5. But how if they have exceeded many in sin, and so made themselves far more abominable? They are the ring-leading sinners in the country, the town, or family.

Ans. What then? Shall that hinder the execution of *shall come*? It is not transgressions, nor sins, nor all their transgressions in all their sins (if they by the Father are given to Christ to save them) that shall hinder this promise, that it should not be fulfilled upon them. In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, Jer. 32. 33. Not that they had none (for they abounded in transgression, 2 Chron. 33. 9. Ezek. 16. 48.) But God would pardon, cover, hide, and put them away, by vertue of this absolute promise, by which they are given to Christ to save them. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquity, whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me

for a name of joy, a praise, and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I procure to it, Jer. 33. 8, 9.

Object. 6. But how if they have not faith and repentance? how shall they come then?

Ans. Why, he that saith, *They shall come*, shall he not make it good? If they shall come, they shall come, and he that hath said, *They shall come*, if faith and repentance be the way to come, as indeed they are, then faith and repentance shall be given to them; for *shall come* must be fulfilled on them.

First, Faith shall be given to them: I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. There shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; and in him shall the Gentiles trust, Zeph. 3. 12. Rom. 15. 12.

Secondly, They shall have repentance: He is exalted to give repentance: They shall come weeping, and seeking the Lord their God. And again, With weeping and supplication will I lead them, Acts 5. 29. 31. Jer. 31. 9.

I told you before, that an absolute promise hath all conditional ones in the belly of it, and also provision to answer all those qualifications that they propound to him, that seeketh for their benefit; And it must be so; for if *shall come* be an absolute promise, as indeed it is, then it must be fulfilled upon every of those concerned therein. I say, it must be fulfilled, if God can by grace and his absolute will, fulfil it. Besides, since coming and believing is all one, (according to John 6. 35) He that cometh to me, shall never hunger,

hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.

Then, when he saith they shall come, 'tis as much as to say, they shall believe, and consequently repent to the saving of the soul. So then, the present want of faith and repentance, cannot make this promise of God of none effect; because that this promise hath in it to give, what others call for and expect. I will give them an heart, I will give them my Spirit, I will give them repentance, I will give them faith. Mark these words, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. But how came he to be a new creature, since none can create but God? Why, God indeed doth make them new creatures. Behold, saith he, I make all things new. And hence it follows, even after he had said, they are new creatures, And all things are of God; that is, all this new creation standeth in its several operations, and special workings of the Spirit of grace, who is God, 2 Cor. 5. 17, 18.

Object. 7. But how shall I escape all those dangerous and damnable opinions, that like rocks and quick-sands are in the way in which I am going?

Ans^r. Indeed, this age is an age of errors, if ever there was an age of errors in the world; but yet the gift of the Father, laid claim to by the Son in the text, must needs escape them, and in conclusion come to him. There are a company of *shall comes* in the Bible that doth secure them. Not but that they may be assaulted by them, yea, and also for the time entangled and detained by them from the Bishop of their souls; but the *shall comes* will break those chains and letters, that those given to Christ are entangled in, and they *shall come*, because he hath said, They shall come to him. Indeed errors are like that whore, of

whom you read in the Proverbs, that sitteth in her seat in the high places of the city, To call passengers who go right on their way, (Prov. 9. 13. 14. 15. 16.) But the persons, as I said, that by the Father are given to the Son to save them, are fit one time or other, secured by *shall come to me*.

And therefore of such it is said, God will guide them with his eye, with his counsel, by his Spirit, and that in the way of peace; by the springs of water, and into all truth, Psalm 32. 8. Psal. 34. John 16. 13. Luke 1. 79. Isa. 47. 17. So then, he that hath such a guide, (and all that the Father giveth to Christ shall have it) he shall escape those dangers, he shall not err in the way; yea, tho he be a fool, he shall not err therein, Isa. 33. for of every such an one 'tis said, Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left, Isa. 30. 21.

There were thieves and robbers before Christ's coming, as they are also now: But, saith he, *The Sheep did not hear them*.

And why did they not hear them, but because they were under the power of *Shall come*; that absolute promise, that had that grace in itself to bellow upon them, as could make them able rightly to distinguish voices. My sheep hear my voice. But how came they to hear it? Why, to them it is given to know and to hear, and that distinguishingly, John 10. 8. 16. Chapter 5. 25. Eph. 5. 14.

Further, The very plain sentence of the text makes provision against all these things; for, saith it, All that the Father giveth me, *shall come to me*; that is, shall not be stopped, or be allured to take up any where short of Me, nor shall they turn aside, to abide with any besides Me.

Shall

Shall come (to Me)

To Me.) By these words there is further insinuated (tho not expressed) a double cause of their coming to him.

First, There is in Christ a fulness of all sufficiency of that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy.

Secondly, Those that indeed come to him, do therefore come to him, that they may receive it at his hand.

For the first of these, There is in Christ a fulness of all sufficiency of all that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy. Hence it is said, for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell. And again, Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace, Col. 1. 9. John 1. 16. It is also said of him, that his riches are unsearchable, The unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. 3. 8. Hear what he saith of himself, Riches and honour are with me, even durable riches and righteousness: My fruit is better than gold; yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver: I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance. And I will fill their treasures, Prov. 18, 19, 20, 21.

This in general: But more particularly,

First, There is that light in Christ, that is sufficient to lead them out of, and from all that darkness, in the midst of which all others, but them that come to him, stumble and fall, and perish. I am the light of the world, saith he, he that followeth me, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life, John 8. 12. Man by nature is in darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knows not whether he goes, for darkness,

nels hath inclined his eyes; neither can any thing but Jesus Christ lead men out of this darkness; natural conscience cannot do it; the ten commandments, tho in the heart of man cannot do it: This prerogative belongs only to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, There is life in Christ, that is to be found no where else, John 5. 20. Life is a principle in the soul, by which it shall be acted and enabled to do that which through him is pleasing to God. He that believeth in, or cometh to me, saith he, as the scriptures have said, Out of his belly *shall* flow rivers of living water, John 7. 38. Without this life a man is dead, whether he be bad, or whether he be good; that is, good in his own, and other mens esteem, there is no true or eternal life but what is in *Me* that speaketh in the text.

There is also life, for those that come to him, to be had by faith in his flesh and blood, He that eateth me, *shall* live by me, John 6. 57.

And this is a life against that death that comes by the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, under which all men are, and for ever must be, un'els they eat *Me* that speaks in the text; Whoso findeth me, saith he, findeth life, deliverance from that everlasting death and destruction that without Me he shall be devoured by, Prov. 8.

Nothing is more desirable than life to him that hath in himself the sentence of condemnation; and here only is life to be found. This life, to wit eternal life, this life is in his Son, that is, in him that saith in the text, All that the Father hath given Me, shall come to Me, 1 John 5. 10.

Thirdly, The person speaking in the text is he alone by whom poor sinners have admittance
to,

to, and acceptance with the Father, because of the glory of his righteousness, by, and in which he presenteth himself amiable and spotless in his light; neither is there any way besides him, so to come to the Father; I am the way, saith he, The truth and the life; no man cometh to the Father, but by Me, John 14. 6. All other ways to God are dead and damnable, the destroying cherubims stand with flaming swords, turning every way to keep all others from his presence, Gen. 3. 24. I say, all others but them that come by him.

I am the door, by Me, saith he, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, John 10. 1. 2.

The person speaking in the text, is He, & only He, that can give stable and everlasting peace, therefore he saith, My peace I give unto you. My peace which is a peace with God, peace of conscience, and that of an everlasting duration. My peace, peace that cannot be matched, not as the world giveth, give I unto you; for the world's peace is but carnal and transitory; but mine is divine and eternal. Hence it is called the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Fourthly, The person speaking in the text, hath enough of all things truly spiritually good, to satisfy the desire of every longing soul. And Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. And to him that is a-thirst I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely, John 7. 37. Rev. 21. 6.

Fifthly, With the person speaking in the text is power to perfect, and defend, and deliver those that come to him for safe-guard. All power, saith he, in heaven and in earth are given unto me, Mat. 28. 18.

Thus might I multiply instances of this nature in abundance. But,

Secondly,

2dly, They that in truth do come to him, do therefore come to him, that they may receive it at his hand. They come for light, they come for life, they come for reconciliation with God; they also come for peace, they come that their souls may be satisfied with spiritual good, and that they may be protected by him against all spiritual and eternal damnation; and he alone is able to give them all this to the filling of their joy to the full, as they also find when come to him. This is evident.

First, From the plain declaration of those that already are come to him. Being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access with boldness into his grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Rom 5.

Secondly, 'Tis evident also, in that while they keep their eyes upon him, they never desire to change him for another, or to add to themselves some other thing, together with him to make up their spiritual joy. God forbid, said Paul, that I should glory; save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, and I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ 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 of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.

Thirdly, 'Tis evident also by their earnest desires, that others might be made partakers of their blessedness. Brethren, said Paul, my heart's desire & prayer to God for Israel is, That they might be saved; that is, that way that he expected to be saved

saved himself. As he saith also to the Galatians, Brethren, saith he, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are; that is, I am a sinner as ye are. Now I beseech you seek for life, as I am seeking of it; as who should say, For there is a sufficiency in the Lord Jesus both for me and you.

Fourthly, 'Tis evident also, by the triumph that such men make over their enemies, both bodily and ghostly. Now thanks be to God, said Paul, who causeth us always to triumph in Jesus Christ. And who shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord? And again, O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory thro our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 55. 56.

Fifthly, 'Tis evident also, for that they are made by the glory of that which they have found in him, to suffer and endure what the Devil and hell itself hath or could invent, as a means to separate them from him. Again, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? 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 counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8.

Shall come (to Me) O the heart attracting glory

glory that is in Christ Jesus, (when he is discovered) to draw those to him that are given to him of the Father. Therefore, those that came of old, rendred this, as the cause of their coming to him, And we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, John 1. 14. And the reason why others come not, but perish in their sins, is for want of a sight of his glory. 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 that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4.

There is therefore heart-pulsing glory in Jesus Christ, which when discovered, draws the man to him, wherefore, he *shall come to Me*. Christ may mean, when his glory is discovered, then they *must come*, then they *shall come to me*. Therefore as the true comers come with weeping and relenting, as being sensible of their own vileness : So again, it is said, That the ransomed of the Lord, shall return, and come to Zion, with singing, and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away : That is, at the light of the glory of that grace, that shews itself to them now, in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the hopes that they now have of being with him in the heavenly tabernacles. Therefore, it saith again, With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought ; they shall enter into the King's palace, Isa. 35. 10. Chapter 41. 11. Psal. 45. 15.

There is therefore heart attracting glory in the Lord Jesus Christ ; which, when discovered, subjects the heart to the word, and makes us come to him.

'Tis said of Abraham, That when he dwelt in Mesopotamia, the God of glory appeared unto him (Acts 7. 2.) Saying, Get thee out of thy country. And what then? Why, away he went from his house and friends, and all the world could not stay him. Now, as the Psalmist says, Who is the King of glory? He answers, The Lord mighty in battle: And who was that, but he that spoiled principalities and powers, when he did hang upon the tree, triumphing over them thereon? And who was that, but Jesus Christ, even the person speaking in the text: Therefore, he said of Abraham, He saw his day. Yea, saith he to the Jews, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad, Psalm 24. 8. Col. 2. 14, 15. James 1. 1. John 8. 56.

Indeed, the carnal mans say, at least, in his heart, Isa. 53. 1, 2, 3. There is no form or comeliness in Christ, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him: But he lies: This he speaks as having never seen him. But they that stand in his house, and look upon him through the glass of his word, by the help of his Holy Spirit, they will tell you other things. But we, say they, all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3. 17, 18. They see glory in his person, glory in his undertakings, glory in the merit of his blood, and glory in the perfection of his righteousness. Yes, heart-affecting, heart sweetning, and heart changing glory.

Indeed, his glory is veiled, and cannot be seen, but as discovered by the Father, (Matth. 11. 27.) It is veiled with flesh, with means of descent from the flesh, and with that ignominy

ignominy and shame that attended him in the flesh; but they that can in God's light, see through these things, they shall see glory in him; yea, such glory as will draw and pull their hearts unto him.

Moses was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter; and for ought I know, had been king at last, had he now conformed to the present vanities that was there at court; but he could not: he would not do it: Why, what was the matter? Why, he saw more in the worth of Christ (bear with the expression) than he saw in the best of all the treasures of the land of Egypt. 'He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: Esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect to the recompence of reward. He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: But what emboldned him thus to do? Why, he endured; for he had a sight of the person speaking in the text: He endured as seeing him who is invisible. But I say; Would a sight of Jesus have thus taken away Moses' heart from a crown and a kingdom, &c. Had he not by that sight seen more in him, than was to be seen in them, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26.

Therefore, when he saith, Shall come to me, he means, they shall have a discovery of the glory of the grace that is in him; and the beauty and glory of that, is of such virtue, that it constraineth, and forceth with a blessed Violence, the hearts of them that are given to him.

Moses, of whom we spake before, was no child when he was thus taken with the beauteous glory of this Lord: He was forty years old, and

so consequently was able, being a man of that wisdom and opportunity as he was, to make the best judgment of the things, and of the goodness of them that was before him in the land of Egypt. But he, even he it was that set that low esteem upon the glory of Egypt, as to count it not worth the meddling with, when he had a sight of this Lord Jesus Christ. This wicked world thinks, that the fancies of a heaven and a happiness hereafter, may serve well enough to take the heart of such, as either have not the world's good things to delight in; or that are fools, and know not how to delight themselves therein: But let them know again, that we have had men of all ranks and qualities, that have been taken with the glory of our Lord Jesus, and have left all to follow him: As Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon; and who not, that had either wit or grace, to favour heavenly things? Indeed none can stand off from him, nor any longer out against him, to whom he reveals the glory of his grace. And him that cometh to me (I will in no wise cast out.)

By these words our Lord Jesus doth let forth (yet more amply) the great goodness of his nature toward the coming sinner. Before he said, *They shall come*, and he declareth, That with heart and affections he will receive them. But by the way, let me speak one word or two, to the seeming conditionality of this promise, with which now I have to do. And him that cometh to me, I will not cast out. Where it is evident, (may some say) that Christ's receiving us to Mercy, depends upon our coming, and so our salvation by Christ is conditional; if we come we shall be received; if not, we shall not; for that is fully intimated by the words. The promise

mile of reception is only to him that cometh. And him that cometh. I answer, that the coming in these words mentioned, as a condition of being received to life, is that which is promised yea concluded to be effected in us by the promise going before. In those latter words, coming to Christ, is implicitly required of us; and in the words before, that grace that can make us come is positively promised to us. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. We come to Christ, because it is said, We shall come; because it is given to us to come: So that the condition, which is expressed by Christ in these latter words, is absolutely promised in the words before. And indeed, the coming here intended, is nothing else but the effect of shall come to me. They shall come, and I will not cast them out.

(And him that cometh.)

He saith not, and him that is come, but him that cometh.

To speak to these words,

1. In general.
2. More particularly.

In general. They suggest unto us these four things.

First That Jesus Christ doth build upon it that since the Father gave his people to him, they shall be enabled to come to him. And him that cometh: As who should say, I know that since they are given to me, they shall be enabled to come unto me. He saith not, If they come, or I suppose they will come; but, and him that cometh. By these words, therefore he shews us, that he addresseth himself to the receiving of them whom the Father gave to him, to save them: I say He addresseth himself, or prepareth himself to receive them: By which, as I said, he concluded

eth or buildeth upon it, that they shall indeed come to him. He looketh that the Father should bring them into his bosom, and so stands ready to embrace them.

Secondly, Christ also suggesteth by these words, that he very well knoweth who are given to him, not by their coming to him, but by their being given to him. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh, &c. This *him* he knoweth to be one of them that the Father hath given him; and therefore he receiveth him, even because the Father hath given him to him, John 10. I know my sheep, saith he: Not only those that already have knowledge of him; but those too, that yet are ignorant of him. Other sheep have I, said he, which are not of this fold: Not of the Jewish church: But those that ly in their sins, even the rude and barbarous Gentiles. Therefore, when Paul was afraid to stay at Corinth, from a supposition, that some mischief might befall him there: Be not afraid (said the Lord Jesus to him) but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city, John 10. 16. Acts 18. 9. 10. The people that the Lord here speaks of were not at this time accounted his by reason of a work of conversion that already had passed upon them, but by vertue of the gift of the Father, for he had given them unto him! Therefore was Paul to stay here, to speak the word of the Lord to them, that by his speaking, the Holy Ghost might effectually work over their souls, to the causing them to come to him; who was also ready with heart and soul to receive them.

Thirdly, Christ by these words also suggesteth, That no more come unto him than indeed are given him of the Father: For the *him* in this place is one of the *All* that by Christ was mentioned before

before. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and every *him* of that *all*, I will in no wise cast out. This the apostle insinuateth, where he saith, He give some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and some teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.

Mark, as in the text, so here he speaketh of *All*, Until we all come. *We all!* All who? Doubtless, *All* that the Father giveth to Christ. This is farther insinuated, because he calleth this *All*, The body of Christ, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: By which he means, the universal number given, to wit, The true elect church; which is said to be his body and fulness, Eph. 1. 22, 23.

Fourthly, Christ Jesus by these words farther suggesteth, that he is well content with this gift of the Father to him. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. I will heartily, willingly, and with great content of mind receive him.

They shew us also, That Christ's love in receiving is as large as his Father's love in giving, and no larger. Hence he thanks him for his gift, and also thanks him for hiding of him, and his things from the rest of the wicked, Mat. 11. 25. Luke 10. 21.

But secondly, and more particularly, And *him* that cometh. And *him!* This word *him*; by it Christ looketh back to the gift of the Father, not only in the lump and whole of the gift; but

to the very *Him* of that lump. As who should say, I do not only accept of the gift of my Father in the general, but have a special regard to every one of them in particular; and will secure not only some, or the greatest part, but every *Him*, every dust; not one hoof of them shall be lost, or left behind. And indeed, in this he consenteth to his Father's will, which is, That of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, John

8. 39. *And him*) Christ Jesus also, by his thus dividing the gift of his Father into *Hims*, and by his speaking of them in the Singular Number, shews, what particular work shall be wrought in each one, at the time appointed of the Father. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the prophet, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river, to the stream of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. Here are the *Hims* gathered one by one unto him by the Father, Isa. 27. 12.

He shews also hereby that no lineage, kindred, or relation, can at all be profited by any outward or carnal union, with the person that the Father hath given to Christ. 'Tis only *him*, the *given him*, the *coming him*, that he intends absolutely to secure. Men make a great ado with the children of believers; & Oh the children of believers: But if the child of the believer is not in the *him* concerned in this absolute promise, it is not his mens great cry, nor yet what the parent or child can do, that can interest him in this promise of the Lord Jesus Christ; this absolute promise.

And him) There are diverse sorts of persons, that the Father hath given to Jesus Christ; they are not all of one rank, of one quality. Some are high, some low; some wise, some fools; some

some are more civil, and complying with the law; some more prophane, and averse to him and his gospel. Now, since those that are given to him, are in some sense so diverse; and again since he yet saith, *And him* that cometh, &c. He by that doth give us to understand, that he is not as men, for picking and clouting, to make a bell, and leave a worst, but he is for *him* that the Father hath given him, and that cometh to him. He will not alter nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good, Lev. 27. 9. 10. but will take him as he is, and will save his Soul.

There is many a sad wretch given by the Father to Jesus Christ; but not one of them all is despised, or slighted by him.

It is said of those that the Father hath given to Christ, that they have done worse than the heathen; that they were murderers, thieves, drunkards, unclean persons, and what not? But he hath received them, washed them, and saved them. A fit emblem of this sort is that wretched instance mentioned in the sixteenth of Ezekiel, that was cast out in a stinking condition, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born: a creature in such a wretched condition, that no eye pitied, to do any of the things there mentioned unto it, or to have compassion upon it. No eye, but his that speaketh in the text.

And him) Let him be as red as blood, let him be as red as crimson: Some men are blood-red sinners, crimson-sinners, sinners of a double dye; dipt and dipt again, before they come to Jesus Christ. Art thou that readest these lines such a one? Speak out man: Art thou such a one? And art thou now coming to Jesus Christ for the mercy of justification, that thou mightest be made white in his blood, and be covered with

with his righteousness? Fear not; for as much as this thy coming betokeneth that thou art of the number of them that the Father hath given to Christ; for he will in no wise cast thee out, Come now, saith Christ, and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be as red as crimson, they shall be made as wool, Isa. 1. 8.

And Him.) There was many a strange *Him* came to Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh; but he received them all, without turning any away. Speaking unto them of the kingdom of God, and healing such as had need of healing, Luke 9. 11. chap. 4. 40. These words, and *him*, are therefore words to be wondered at: That not one of them, who by vertue of the Father's gift and drawing are coming to Jesus Christ; I say, that not one of them, whatever they have been, whatever they have done, should be rejected or set by, but admitted to a share in his saving grace. 'Tis said in Luke, that the people wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, Luke 4. 22. Now this is one of his gracious words; these words are like drops of honey, as it is said, Prov. 16. 24. Pleasant words are as an honey comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. These are gracious words indeed, even as full as a faithful and merciful High Priest could speak them. Luther saith, when Christ speaketh, he hath a mouth as wide as heaven and earth; that is, to speak fully to the encouragement of every sinful *him* that is coming to Jesus Christ. And that this word is certain, hear how himself confirms it: Heaven and earth, saith he, shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away, Isa. 63. 1. Mat. 24. 35.

It is also confirmed by the testimony of the
 D four

four evangelists, who gave faithful relation of his loving reception of all sorts of coming sinners, whether they were publicans, harlots, thieves, possessed of the devil, bedlams, and what not; Luke 19. 1. to 9. Mat. 21. 21. Luke 15. & chap. 23. 41. 42. Mark 19. 9. chap. 5. 1, 2, 3, to 9.

This then shews us,

First, The greatness of the merits of Christ.

Secondly, The willingness of the heart to impute them for life to the great, if coming sinners.

First, This shews us the greatness of the merits of Christ; for it must not be supposed, that his words are bigger than his worthiness, he is brought to execute his word; he can do, as well as speak. He can do exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think, even to the uttermost, and out-side of his word, Eph. 3. 20.

Now then, since he concludeth any coming *him*, it must be concluded that he can save to the uttermost sin, any coming *him*.

Do ye think, I say, that the Lord Jesus did not think before he spake; he speaks all in righteousness, and therefore by his word we are to judge how mighty he is to save, Isa. 63. 1.

He speaketh in righteousness, in very faithfulness, when he began to build this blessed gospel-fabrick; the text, it was for that, he had first laid down and counted the cost; and for that he knew he was able to finish it! What Lord, *Any him?* *Any him* that cometh to thee! This is a Christ worth looking after, this is a Christ worth coming to.

This then should learn us diligently to consider the natural force of every word of God; and to judge of Christ's ability to save, not by our sins, or by our shallow apprehensions of his grace, but by his word, which is the true measure of grace.

And if we do not judge thus, we shall dishonour his grace, lose the benefit of his word, and needlessly fright ourselves into many discouragements, tho coming to Jesus Christ. *Him, Any him* that cometh, hath sufficient from this word of Christ, to feed himself with hopes of salvation. As thou art therefore coming, O thou coming sinner, judge thou whether Christ can save thee, by the true sense of his words: Judge, coming sinner, of the efficacy of his blood, of the perfection of his righteousness, and of the prevalency of his intercession, by his word. And him, saith he, that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. In no wise, that is, for no sin: Judge therefore by his word, how able he is to save thee. It is said of God's saying to the children of Israel, There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel; all came to pass. And again, Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you, all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof, Josh. 21. 45. chap. 23. 14.

Coming sinner, what promise thou findest in the word of Christ, strain it whither thou canst, so thou dost not corrupt it, and his blood and merits will answer all, what the word saith, or any true consequence that is drawn therefrom, that we may boldly venture upon; as here in the text he saith, And *him* that cometh, indefinitely; without the least intimation of the rejection of any, though never so great, if he be a coming sinner. Take it then for granted, that thou, whoever thou art, if coming, are intended in these words; neither shall it injure Christ at all, if, as Benhadad's servants served Ahab, thou shalt catch him at his word. Now, saith the text, The man

did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, to wit, any word of grace: and did hastily catch it. And it happened that Ahab had called Benhadad his brother. The men replied therefore, Thy brother Benhadad! catching him at his word, 1 Kings 20. 33. Sinner, coming sinner, serve Jesus Christ thus, and he will take it kindly at thy hands. When in his argument he called the Canaanitish woman Dog, she caught him at it, and said, Truth Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters table, I say she caught him thus in his words, and he took it kindly, saying, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt, Mat. 15. 26. Catch coming sinner, catch him in his words, surely he will take it kindly, and will not be offended at thee.

Secondly, The other thing that I told you, is shewed from these words, is this: The willingness of Chrill's heart, to impute his mercies for life, to the great, if coming sinner. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

The awakened coming sinner doth not so easily question the power of Chrill, as his willingness to save him; Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst bid one, Mark 1. 40. He did not put the *if* upon his power but upon his will. He concluded he could, but he was not as fully persuaded that he would. But we have the same ground to believe he will, as we have to believe he can: and indeed ground for both, is the word of GOD. If he was not willing, Why did he promise? Why did he say he would receive the Coming sinner; Coming sinner, take notice of this, wile to plead practices with men, and why not with God likewise? I am sure we have no more ground for one than the other; for we have to plead the promise of a faithful God. Jacob took his

him there: Thou Lid'lt, said he, I will surely do thee good, Gen. 32. 12. For, from this promise he concluded, that it followed in reason, He must be willing.

The text also gives some ground for us to draw the same conclusion. And he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Here is willingness asserted, as well as his power suggested. It is worth your observation, that Abraham's faith considered rather God's power, than his willingness; that is, he drew his conclusion, I will have a child; from the power that was in God to fulfil the promise to him: for he concluded he was willing to give him one, else he would not have promised one. He staggered not at the promise of GOD through unbelief, but was fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform, Rom. 4. 20, 21. But was not his faith exercised or tried, about his willingness too? No there was no shew of reason for that, because he had promised it; indeed had he not promised it, he might lawfully have doubted it; but since he had promised it, there was left no ground at all for doubting, because his willingness to give a son, was demonstrated in his promising him a son. These words therefore are sufficient ground to encourage any coming sinner, that Christ is willing to his power to receive him; and since he hath power also to do what he will, there is no ground at all left to the coming sinner any more to doubt; but to come in full hope of acceptance and of being received into grace and mercy. *And him that (cometh.)* He will not, *And him that is come;* but, *And him that cometh;* that is, and him whose heart begins to move after me, who is leaving all for my sake; *him,* who is looking out, who is on his journey to me. We

must therefore distinguish betwixt coming and being come to Jesus Christ. He that is come to him, has attained of him more sensibly what he felt before he wanted, than he has that but yet is coming to him.

A man that is come to Christ hath the advantage of him that is but coming to him; and that in seven things.

First, He that is come to Christ, is nearer to him than he that is but coming to him: for he that is but coming to him, is yet, in some sense, at a distance from him, as it is said of the coming prodigal, And while he was yet a great way off, Luke 15. Now, he that is nearer to him, hath the best sight of him; and so is able to make the best judgment of his wonderful grace and beauty, as God saith, Let them come near, then let them speak. And as the apostle John saith, And we have seen, and do testify, That God sent his son to be the saviour of the world, 1 Jo. 4. 14. He that is not yet come, tho he is *coming*, is not fit, not being indeed capable to make that judgment of the worth and glory of the grace of Christ, as he that is come to him, and hath seen and beheld it. Therefore, sinner, suspend thy judgment, till thou art come nearer.

Secondly, He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming, in that he is eased of his burthen; for he that is but coming, is not eased of his burthen, Mat. 11. 28. He that is come, has cast his burthen upon the Lord; by faith he hath seen himself released thereof; but he that is but coming, hath it yet as to sense and feeling upon his own shoulders. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, implies that their burthen, tho they are coming, is yet upon them; and so will be, until indeed they are come to him.

Thirdly

Thirdly, He that is come to Christ has the advantage of him that is but coming in, this also, namely, he hath drunk of the sweet and soul-refreshing water of life; but he that is but coming hath not, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

Mark, He must come to him before he drinks; according to that of the prophet, Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. He drinketh not as he cometh, but when he is come to the waters, John 7. 37. Isa. 55. 1.

Fourthly, He that is come to Christ, hath the advantage of him that as yet is but coming, in this also, to wit, He is not terrified with the noise, and as I may call it, Hue and cry, which the avenger of blood makes at the heels of him that yet is but coming to him. When the slayer was upon his flight to the city of refuge, he had the noise or fear of the avenger of blood at his heels; but when he was come to the city, and was entered thereinto, that noise ceased; even so it is with him that is coming to Jesus Christ: He heareth many a dreadful sound in his ears: Sounds of death and damnation, which he that is come is at present freed from. Therefore, he saith, Come, and I will give you rest: And so, He saith again, We that have believed, do enter into rest, as he said, &c. Heb. 4.

Fifthly, He therefore that is come to Christ, is not so subject to those dejections, and castings down, by reason of the rage and assaults of the evil one, as is the man that is but coming to Jesus Christ, (tho he hath temptation too) and while he was yet coming, the Devil threw him down, and tore him, Luke 9. 42. For he has (though Satan still roareth upon him) those experimental comforts and refreshments, to wit, in his treasury, to present himself with, in

times of temptation and conflict, which he that is but coming, has not.

Sixthly, He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming to him, in this also, to wit, he hath upon him the wedding-garment, &c. But he that is coming has not. The prodigal when coming home to his Father, was clothed with nothing but rags, and was tormented with an empty belly; but when he was come, the best robe is brought out; also the gold ring, and the shoes, yea, they are put upon him to his great rejoycing. The fatted calf was killed for him; the mulick was struck up to make him merry: And thus also the Father himself sang of him, This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found, Luke 15. 18, 19. 20. 21.

Seventhly, In a word, he that is come to Christ, his groans and tears, his doubts and fears, are turned into songs and praises: For that he hath now received the atonement, and the earnest of his inheritance: But he that is but yet a coming, hath not those praises, nor songs of deliverance with him, nor has he yet received the atonement and earnest of his inheritance, which is the sealing testimony of the Holy Ghost, through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon his conscience; for he is not yet come, Rom. 5. 11. Eph. 1. 12. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.

And him that (Cometh.)

There is further to be gathered from this word (*Cometh*) these following particulars.

First, That Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, and takes notice of the first moving of the heart of a sinner after him: Coming sinner, thou can't not move with desires after Christ, but he sees the working of those desires in thy heart. All my desires, said David, are before thee, and my groanings

groanings are not hid from thee, Psal. 139. 9. This he spake as he was coming (after he had back-slidden) to the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis said of the Prodigal, That while he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, had his eye upon him, and upon the going out of his heart after him, Luke 15. 20.

When Nathaniel was come to Jesus Christ, the Lord said to them that stood before him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. But Nathaniel answered him, whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. There I suppose Nathaniel was pouring out his soul to God for mercy, or that he would give him good understanding about the Messiah to come: And Jesus saw all the workings of his honest heart at that time, John 1. 47, 48.

Zaccheus also had some movings of heart, such as they were, toward Jesus Christ, when he ran before, and climbed up the tree to see him; and the Lord Jesus Christ had his eye upon him; therefore, when he was come to the place, He looked up to him, bids him come down; For to day, saith he, I must abide at thy house; to wit, in order to the further compleating the work of grace in his soul, Luke 19. 1.-----9. Remember this coming sinner.

Secondly, As Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, so he hath his heart open to receive the coming sinner. This is verified by the text: And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. This is also discovered by his preparing of the way, in his making of it easy (as it may be) to the coming sinner: which preparation is manifested by these blessed words, I will in no wise cast out. Of which more when we come to the place. And while he was yet a great way off, his Father saw

him, & had compassion on him; and ran & fell on his neck, and kissed him, Luke 15. 20. All these expressions do strongly prove, that the heart of Christ is open to receive the coming sinner.

Thirdly, As Jesus Christ had his eye upon, and his heart open to receive; so he had resolved already, that nothing shall alienate his heart from receiving the coming sinner. No sins of the coming sinner, nor the length of time that he hath abode in them, shall by any means prevail with Jesus Christ to reject him. Coming sinner thou art coming to a loving Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, These words are therefore drop'd from his blessed mouth, on purpose that the coming sinner might take encouragement to continue on their journey until he be come indeed to Jesus Christ. It was doubtless a great encouragement to blind Bartimeus that Jesus Christ stood still and called him, when he was crying Jesus, thou son of David have mercy upon me: therefore 'tis said he cast away his garment, rose up, and came to Jesus, Mark 10. 46. &c. Now, if a call to come, hath such encouragement in it, what is a promise of receiving such, but an encouragement much more? And observe it, tho he had a call to come, yet not having a promise, his faith was forced to work upon a mere consequence, saying, He calls me; and surely, since he calls me, he will grant unto me my desire. Ah! but coming sinner, thou hast no need to go so far about, as to draw (in this matter) consequences, because thou hast plain promises; And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. Here is full, plain, yea, what more encouragement can one desire. For suppose thou wert admitted to make a promise thyself, and Christ should attest that he would fulfill it upon the sinner that cometh to him? Could't thou make a better promise? Could't thou invent
a more

a more full, free or larger promise: A promise that looks at the first moving of the heart after Jesus Christ! A promise that declares, yea, that engageth *Christ Jesus* to open his heart, to receive the coming sinner: Yea, farther, a promise that demonstrateth that the Lord Jesus is resolved freely to receive, and will in no wise call out, nor means to reject the soul of the coming sinner: For all this lieth fully in this promise, and doth naturally flow therefrom. Here thou needest not make use of far-fetched consequences, nor strain thy wits, to force encouraging arguments from the text: Coming sinner, the words are plain: And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise call out:

And him that (cometh.)

There are two sorts of sinners that are coming to Jesus Christ.

First, Him that hath never, till of late at all begun to come.

Secondly, Him that came formerly, and after that went back, but hath since bethought himself, and is now coming again:

Both these sorts of sinners are intended by the *Him* in the text, as is evident; because *Both* are now the coming sinner.

And him that cometh, &c.

For the first of these, the sinner that hath never, till of late, begun to come, his way is more easy; I do not say more plain and open, to come to Christ, than is the other, (those last not having the clag of a guilty conscience for the sin of backsliding hanging at their heels.) But all the encouragement of the gospel, with what invitations are therein contained to coming sinners, are as free, and open to the one as to the other; so that they may with the same freedom

dem and liberty, as from the world, both alike claim interest in the promise. All things are ready : All things for the coming backsliders, as well as for the others : Come to the wedding, and let him that is athirst come, Mat. 22. 1, 2, 3, 4-Rev. 22. 17.

But having spoken to the first of these already, I shall here pass it by, and shall speak a word or two to him that is coming, after back-sliding, to Jesus Christ for life.

Thy way, O thou sinner of a double dye, thy way is *open* to come to Jesus Christ ; I mean *thee*, whole heart, after long back-sliding, doth think of turning to him again. Thy way, I say, is open to him, as is the way of the other sorts of comers ; as appears by what follows,

First, Because the text makes no exception against thee : It doth not say, And any him, but a back-slider ; any him, but him. The text doth not thus object, but indefinitely openeth wide its golden arms to every coming soul, without the least exception : Therefore, thou mayst come. And take heed that thou shut not that door against thy soul by unbelief, which God has opened by his grace.

Secondly, Nay the text is so far from excepting thy coming, that it strongly suggelleth, that thou art one of the souls indeed, O thou coming back-slider, else what need that clause have been so inserted, I will in *no wise* cast out ; As who should say, tho those that come now, are such as have formerly back-sliden : I will in *no wise* cast away the fornicator, the covetous, the railer, the drunkard, nor the common sinners, nor yet the back-slider neither,

Thirdly, That the back-slider is not intended, is evident.

First, For that he is sent to by name, Go tell *his*

his disciples, and Peter, Mark 16. 7. But Peter was a godly man. True, but he was also a backslider, yea, a desperate back slider: He had denied his Master once, twice, thrice, curling and swearing that he knew him not. If this was not back sliding, if this was not an high and eminent back-sliding, yea a higher back-sliding than thou art capable of, I have thought amiss.

Again, when David had back-slidden, and had committed adultery and murder in his back-sliding, he must be sent to by name. And, saith the text, The Lord sent Nathan to David. And he sent him to tell him, after he had brought him to unfeigned acknowledgment, The Lord hath also put away, or forgiven thy sin, 2 Sam. 12. 1.

This man was also far gone: He took a man's wife, and killed her husband, and endeavoured to cover all with wicked dissimulation, he did this, I say, after God had exalted him and shewed him great favour; wherefore his transgression was greatned also by the prophet with mighty aggravations; yet he was accepted, and that with gladness, at the first step he took in returning to Christ; for the first step of the backsliders return, is to say sensibly and unfeignedly, I have sinned: But he had no sooner said thus, but a pardon was produced, yea, thrust into his bosom, And Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath also put away thy sin.

Secondly, As the person of the backslider is mentioned by name, so also is his sin, that if possible, thy objections against thy returning to Christ may be taken out of the way; I say, thy sin also is mentioned by name, and mixed, as mentioned with words of grace and favour, I will heal their backsliding and love them freely, Hosea 14. 4. What sayest thou now, back slider?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Nay farther, thou art not only mentioned by Name, and thy sin, by nature of it; but thou thyself, who art a returning backslider, put,

First, Amongst God's Israel, Return, O backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever, Jer. 3. 12.

Secondly, Thou art put among his children, among his children to whom he is married, Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married unto you, verse 14.

Thirdly, Yea, after all this, as if his heart was so full of grace for them, that he was pressed until he had uttered it before them; he adds, Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.

Fourthly, Nay, farther, the Lord hath considered, that the flame of thy sin hath stopped thy mouth, and made thee almost a prayerless man; and therefore he saith unto thee, Take with you words and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; See his grace, that himself should put words of encouragement into the heart of a backslider; as he saith in another place, I taught Ephraim to go, taking him by the arms. This is teaching him to go indeed, to hold him up by the arms, by the chin, as we say, Hosea 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. Chap. 11. 3.

From what hath been said, I conclude, even as I said before, that the *him* in the text, and *him that cometh*, includeth both these sorts of sinners, and therefore both should freely come.

Quest. But where doth Jesus Christ, in all the words of the new testament, expressly speak to a returning backslider with words of grace and peace?

peace? For what ye have urged as yet, from the new testament, is nothing but consequences drawn from this text. Indeed it is a full text for carnal ignorant sinners that come, but to me who am a backslider, it yieldeth but little relief.

Answ. First, How! but little encouragement from the text, when it is said, I will in no wise cast out. What more could have been said? What is here omitted that might have been inserted, to make the promise more full and free? Nay, take all the promises in the Bible, all the freest promises, with all the variety of expressions of what nature or extent soever, and they can but amount to the expressions of this very promise, I will in no wise cast out: I will for nothing, by no means, upon no account, however they have sinned, however they have backslidden, however they have provoked, cast out the coming sinner. But,

Secondly, Thou say'st, Where doth Jesus Christ, in all the words of the new testament, speak to a returning backslider with the words of grace and peace? that is, under the name of a backslider?

Answ. Where there is such plenty of examples in receiving backsliders, there is the less need of express words to that intent: One promise, as the text is, with those examples that are annexed, are instead of many promises. And besides, I reckon that the act of receiving is of as much, if not of more encouragement, than is a bare promise to receive; for receiving is as the promise, and the fulfilling of it too; so that in the old testament thou hast the promise, and in the new, the fulfilling of it; and that in diverse examples.

First, In Peter, Peter denied his Master once, twice, thrice, and that with an open oath; yet

Christ

Christ receives him again, without any the least hesitation or stick. Yea, he slips, stumbles, falls again in down-right dissimulation, and that to the hurt and fall of others; but neither of this doth Christ make a bar to his salvation, but receives him again at his return as if he knew nothing of the fault, Gal. 2.

Secondly, The rest of the disciples, even all of them back-slide, and leave the Lord Jesus in his greatest straits. Then all his disciples forsook him, and fled; they returned (as he foretold) every one to his own, and left him alone; But this also he passeth over as a very light matter; not that it was so indeed of itself, but the abundance of grace that was in him did lightly roll it away; for after his resurrection, when he at first appeared unto them, he gives them not the least check for their perfidious dealing with him, but salutes them with words of grace, saying, All hail, be not afraid, Peace be unto you; All power in heaven and earth is given unto Me. True, he rebuked them for their unbelief, for the which also thou deservest the same: For it is unbelief that alone puts Christ and his benefits from us, Mat. 26. 56. John 16. 52. Mat 28. 9, 10, 18. Luke 24. 39. Mark 16. 14.

Thirdly, The man that after a large profession, lay with his father's wife, committed a high transgression, even such an one as at that day was not heard of, no not among the Gentiles. Wherefore this was a desperate back-sliding; yet at his return, he was received and accepted again to mercy, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 6, 7, 8.

Fourthly, The thief that stole, was bid to steal no more; nor at all doubting but that Christ was ready to forgive him this act of back-sliding, Eph. 4. 28.

Now

Now all these examples, are particular instances of Christ's readiness to receive the backsliders to mercy; and observe it, examples and proofs that he hath done so, are to our unbelieving hearts, strong encouragements than bare promises, that so he will do. But again, the Lord Jesus hath added to these for the encouragement of returning backsliders, to come to him.

First, A call to come, and he will receive them, Rev. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22. Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, Wherefore New Testament backsliders have encouragement to come.

Secondly, A declaration of readiness to receive them that come, as here in the text, and in many other places, is plain: Therefore, Set thee up these marks, make thee these high heaps. (of the golden grace of the gospel) set thine heart towards the high-way, even the way that thou wentest (when thou didst backslide) turn again, O virgin of Israel; turn again to these thy cities, Jer. 31. 21.

And him that (*cometh*) He saith not, And him that taketh, that professeth, and maketh a shew, a noise, or the like, but *him that cometh*, Christ will take leave to judge, who, among the many that makes a noise, they be that indeed are *coming to him*. It is not him that saith he comes, nor him of whom others affirm that he *comes*; but him that Christ himself shall say, *Doth come*; that is concerned in this text. When the woman that had the bloody issue came to him for cure, there were others, as well as she, that made a great bustle about him, that touched, yea thronged him; Ah, but Christ could distinguish this woman from them all. And he looked round about upon them all, to see her that had done this thing, Mark 25. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

He

He was not concerned with the thronging or touching of the rest; for theirs were but accidental, or at best, void of that which made his touch acceptable. Wherefore, Christ must be judge who they be, that in truth are coming to him: Every man's way is right in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits: It standeth therefore every one in hand to be certain of their coming to Jesus Christ; for as thy coming is, so shall thy salvation be: If thou comest indeed, thy salvation shall be indeed; but if thou comest but in outward appearance, so shall thy salvation be: but of coming see before, as also afterwards in the use and application.

And him that cometh (to Me.)

These words (*to Me*) are also to be well-heeded; for by them, as he secureth those that come to him, so also he shews himself unconcerned with those that in their coming, rest short, or turn aside to others: For you must know, that every one that comes, comes not to Jesus Christ; some that come to Moses and to the law, and then take up for life; with these Christ is not concerned; with these this promise hath not to do. Christ is become of none effect unto you; whoso of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace, Gal. 5. 3, 4. Again, some that come, come no farther than the gospel ordinances, and there stay; they come not thorough them to Christ: with these neither is he contented; nor will their Lord Lord avail them any thing in the great and dismal day. A man may come to, and also go from the place and ordinances of worship, and yet not be remembered by Christ. So I saw the wicked buried, said Solomon, who had come and gone from the place of the Holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done; this is also vanity, Eccles. 8. 10.

(To

(*To Me.*) These words therefore are by Jesus Christ very warily put in, and serve for caution and encouragement: For caution, lest we take up in our coming any thing short of Christ: and for encouragement, to those that shall in their coming, come past all, till they come to Jesus Christ. And him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.

Reader, if thou lovest thy soul, take this caution kindly at the hands of Jesus Christ. Thou feelest thy sickness, thy wound, thy necessity of salvation; well, go not to king Jereb, for he cannot heal thee nor cure thee of thy wound, Hos. 5. 13. Take the caution (I say) lest Christ instead of being a Saviour unto thee, becomes a lion, a young lion to tear thee, and go away, ver. 4.

There is a coming but not to the most High, there is a coming but not with the whole heart; but as it were feignedly; therefore take the caution kindly, Jer. 30. 10. Hos. 7. 16.

And him that cometh (*To Me*) Christ, as a Saviour will stand alone, because his own arm alone hath brought salvation unto him; he will not be joyned with Moses, nor suffer John Baptist to be tabernacled by him: I say, they must vanish, for Christ will stand alone (Luke 9. 28. 36.) yea, God the Father will have it so; therefore they must be parted from him, and a voice from heaven must come to bid the disciples hear, only the beloved Son. Christ will not suffer *my* law, ordinance, statute or judgment to be partners with him in the salvation of the sinner. Nay, he saith not, And him that cometh to my word, but, and him that cometh to me. The word of Christ, even his most blessed and free promises, such as this in the text, are not the saviour of the world; for that is Christ himself, Christ himself only.

The

The promises therefore are but to encourage the coming sinner to come to Jesus Christ, and not to rest in them short of salvation by him.

And him that cometh (*to Me*;) the man therefore that comes aright, casts all things behind his back, and looketh at (nor hath his expectation from ought but) the Son of God alone, as David said, My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him; he only is my rock, & my salvation; he is my defence, I shall not be moved, Psalm 92. 5. His eye is to Christ, his heart is to Christ, and his expectation is from him, from him only.

Therefore the man that comes to Christ is one that hath had deep considerations of his own sins, slighting thoughts of his own righteousness, and high thoughts of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; yea, he sees, as I have said, more vertue in the blood of Christ to save him, than there is in all his sins to damn him. He therefore setteth Christ before his eyes; there is nothing in heaven or in earth he knows, that can save his soul, and secure him from the wrath of God but Christ; that is, nothing but his personal righteousness and blood.

And him that cometh to me, I will (*in no wise*) cast out. *In no wise*: By these words there is something expressed, and something implied. That which is expressed, is Christ Jesus his unchangeable resolution to save the coming sinner; *I will in no wise* reject him, or deny him the benefit of my death and righteousness. This word therefore is like that which he speaks of the everlasting damnation of the sinner in hell fire, he shall by no means depart thence; that is, never, never come out again; no, not to all eternity, Mat. 5. 25. Chap. 25. 46. So that he that is condemned into hell fire, hath no ground of hope
for

for his deliverance thence; so him that cometh to Christ, hath no ground to fear he shall ever be cast in thither.

Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, or the foundation of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast away all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord, Jer. 31. 37.

Thus saith the Lord, If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob. But heaven cannot be measured, nor the foundations of the earth searched out beneath; his covenant is also with day and night, and he hath appointed the ordinances of heaven; therefore, he will not cast away the seed of Jacob, who are the coming ones; but will certainly save them from the dreadful wrath to come, Jer. 33. 25, 26. chap. 50. 4, 5. By this therefore it is manifest, that it was not the greatness of sin, nor the long continuance in it, no, nor yet the backsliding, nor the pollution of thy nature, that can put in a bar against, or be an hindrance of the salvation of the coming sinner: For if indeed this could be, then would this solemn and absolute determination of the Lord Jesus, of itself fall to the ground, and be made of none effect: But his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: That is, his pleasure in this; for his promise, this irreversible conclusion ariseth of his pleasure; he will stand *to it*, and will fulfil it, because it is his pleasure.

Suppose that one man had the sins, or as many sins as an hundred; and another should have an hundred times as many as he; yet if they come, this word *I will in no wise cast out*, secures them both alike.

Suppose

Suppose a man hath a desire to be saved, and for that purpose is coming in truth to Jesus Christ; but he by his debauched life has damned many in hell: Why, the door of hope is by these words set as open for him, as it is for him that hath not the thousand part of his transgressions: And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Suppose a man is coming to Christ to be saved, and hath nothing but sin and an ill spent life to bring with him; why, let him come and welcome, to Jesus Christ, and he will in no wise cast him out, Luke 7. 41. Is not this love that passeth knowledge? Is not this love the wonderment of angels? And is not this love worthy of all acceptance at the hands and hearts of all coming sinners?

Secondly, That which is implied in the words is,

First, The coming souls have those that continually ly at Jesus Christ to cast them off.

Secondly, The coming souls are afraid, that those will prevail with Christ to cast them off.

For these words are spoken to satisfy us, and to stay up our spirits against these two dangers; I will in no wise cast out.

First, For the First, Coming souls have those that continually ly at Jesus Christ to cast them off.

And there are three things that thus bend themselves against the coming sinner.

First, There is the devil, the accuser of the brethren, that accuses them before God day and night, Rev. 12. 10. This prince of darkness is unwearied in this work; he doth it, as you see, day and night; that is, without ceasing: He continually puts in his caveats against thee, if so be he may prevail. How did he ply it against that good man Job, if possible he might have obtained his destruction in hell-fire; he ob-

jected

ected against him, that he served not God for ought, and tempted God to put forth his hand against him; urging, that if he did it, he would curse him to his face; and all this, as God witnesseth, He did without a cause, Job 1. 9, 10, 11. chap. 2. 4, 5. How did he ply it with Christ against Joshua the high priest? And he shewed the Joshua, said the prophet, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him, Zech. 3. To resist him, that is, to prevail with the Lord Jesus Christ to resist him: Objecting the uncleannels and unlawful marriage of his sons with the Gentiles; for that was the crime that Satan laid against them, Ezra 10. 18. Yea, and for ought I know, Joshua was also guilty of the fact: but if not of that, of crimes no whit inferior; for he was clothed with filthy garments, as he stood before the angel: neither had he one word to say in vindication of himself, against all that this wicked one had to say against him. But notwithstanding that, he came off well; but he might for it thank a good Lord Jesus, because he did not resist him; but contrariwise took up his cause, pleaded against the devil, excusing his infirmity, and put justifying robes upon him before his adversary's face.

And the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire? And he answered, and spake to those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garment from him; and to him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee, and will clothe thee with change of raiment.

Again, how did Satan ply it against Peter, when
he

he desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat? That is, if possible, sever all grace from his heart, and leave him nothing but flesh and filth, to the end he might make the Lord Jesus loath and abhor him: Simon, Simon, said Christ Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat. But did he prevail against him? No, But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. As who should say, Simon, Satan hath desired me, that I would give thee up to him, and not only thee, but all the rest of thy brethren (for that the word *You* imports;) But I will not leave thee in his hand, I have prayed for thee thy faith shall not fail; I will secure thee to the heavenly inheritance, Luke 21. 30, 31, 32.

Secondly, As Satan, to every sin of the coming sinner, comes in with a voice against him, perhaps they may prevail with Christ to cast off the soul. When Israel was coming out of Egypt to Canaan, how many times had their sins called them out of the mercy of God, had not Moses, a type of Christ, stood in the breach to turn away his wrath from them, Psalm 106. 23. Our iniquities testify against us; and would certainly prevail against us, to our utter dejection & damnation, had we not an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous, 1 John 2. 1, 2.

The sins of the old world cryed them down to hell; the sins of Sodom fetched upon them fire from heaven which devoured them; the sins of the Egyptians cried them down to hell, because they came not to Jesus Christ for life. Coming sinner, thy sins are no whit less than any: Nay, perhaps they are as big as all theirs: Why, is it then that thou livest when they are dead, and that thou hast a promise of pardon when they had not? Why, thou art come to Jesus Christ, and therefore sin shall not be thy ruin.

Thirdly

Thirdly, As Satan and Sin, so the law of Moses, as it is a perfect holy law, hath a voice against you, before the face of God. There is one that accuſeth you, even the law of Moses, John 5. Yea, it accuſeth all men of transgression, that have sinned against it; for as long as sin is sin, there will be a law to accuse for sin; but this accusation shall not prevail against the coming sinner; because 'tis Christ that died, and that ever lives, to make intercession for them that come to him, by him, Rom. 8. Heb. 7. 25.

These things, I say, do accuse us before Christ Jesus; yea, and also to our own faces, if perhaps they might prevail against us. But these words, I will in no wise cast out, secureth the coming sinner from them all.

The coming sinner is not saved, because there is none that comes in against him; but because the Lord Jesus will not hear their accusations; will not cast out the coming sinner.

When Shimei came down to meet king David, and to ask pardon for his rebellion; up starts Abishai, and puts in his caveat, saying, Shall not Shimei die for this? This is the Gale of him that comes to Christ; he hath this Abishai, and that Abishai that presently steps in against him, saying, Shall not this rebel's sin destroy him in hell? Read farther: But David answered, what have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruah, that you should this day be adversaries to me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel, for do not I know that I am king this day over Israel? 2 Sam. 19. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. 22.

This is Christ's answer by the text, to all that accuse the coming Shimeis; What have I to do with you, that accuse the coming sinners to me? I count you adversaries that are against my shewing mercy to them. Do not I know, that I am

exalted this day to be King of righteousness, and King of peace? I will in no wise cast them out.

Secondly, But again, these words do closely imply, that the coming souls are afraid, that these accusers will prevail against them, as is evident, because the text is spoken for their relief and succour: For that need not be, if they that are coming were not subject to fear, and despond upon this account: Alas! there is guilt, and the curse lies upon the conscience of the coming sinner!

Besides, he is conscious to himself, what a villain, what a wretch he hath been against God and Christ. Also he now knows, by woful experience, how he hath been at Satan's beck, and at the motion of every lust. He hath now also new thoughts of the holiness and justice of God: Also, he feels, that he cannot forbear sinning against him: For the motions of sin, which are by the law, doth still work in his members, to bring forth fruit unto death, Rom. 7. But none of this needs be, since we have so good, so tender-hearted, and so faithful a Jesus to come to; who will rather overthrow heaven and earth, than suffer a title of this text to fail: And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Now, we have yet to enquire into two things that ly in the words, to which there hath been nothing said: As,

1. What it is to be cast out.

2. How it appears that Christ hath power to save or cast out.

For the first of these, What it is to cast out. To this I will speak,

1. Generally. 2. More particularly.

More generally.

First, To cast out, is to slight and despise, and contemn; as it is said of Saul's shield, it was vilely cast away; that is slighted and contemned.

Thus

Thus it is with the sinners that come not to Jesus Christ: He slights, despises and contemns them; that is, Calls them away, 2 Sam. 1. 2.

Secondly, Things cast away are reputed as men-
struous cloths, and as the dirt of the street, Isa.
3. 22. Psalm 18. 42. Matth. 5. 13. chap. 15. 17.
And thus it shall be with the men that come not
to Jesus Christ, they shall be counted as men-
struous, and as the dirt in the streets.

Thirdly, To be cast out, or off, it is to be ab-
horred, not to be pitied; but to be put to a per-
petual shame, Psalm 44. 9. Psalm 87. 38. Amos
1. 11.

But more particularly, To come to the text:
The casting out here mentioned, is not limited to
this or the other evil: Therefore it must be ex-
tended to the most extreme and utmost misery:
Or thus,

He that cometh to Christ, shall not want any
thing that may make him gospelly happy in this
world, or that which is to come; nor shall he
want any thing that cometh not, that may make
him spiritually and eternally miserable.

But farther, As it is to be generally taken, so it
respecteth things that shall be hereafter.

For the things that are now, they are either,

1. More general. 2. Or more particular.

First, More general, thus,

It is to be cast out of the presence and favour of
God.

Thus was Cain cast out, Thou hast driven (or
cast) me out this day, from thy face, (that is,
from thy favour) shall I be hid. A dreadful com-
plaint! but the effect of a more dreadful judgment,
Gen. 4. 13, 14. Jer. 23. 39. 1 Chron. 28. 9.

Secondly, To be cast out, is to be cast out of
God's light; God will look after them no more
care for them no more; nor will he watch over

them any more for good, (2 Kings 17. 20. Jer. 2. 15.) Now they that are so, are left like blind men, to wander and fall into the pit of hell. This therefore is also a sad judgment ! Therefore here is mercy to him that cometh to Christ, he shall not be left to wander at uncertainties. The Lord Jesus Christ will keep him, as a shepherd doth his sheep, Psal. 23. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Thirdly, To be cast out, is to be denied a place in God's house, and to be left as fugitives and vagabonds, to pass a little time away in this miserable life, and after that to go down to the dead, Gal. 4. 30. Gen. 4. 13. chap 21. 10. Therefore here is the benefit of him that cometh to Christ, he shall not be denied a place in God's house. They shall not be left like vagabonds in the world, him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. See Prov. 14. 26. Isa. 56. 3, 4, 5. Eph. 2. 19, 20, 21, 22. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23.

Fourthly, In a word, To be cast out, is to be rejected as are the fallen angels : For their eternal damnation began at their being cast down from heaven to hell. So then, not to be cast out, is to have a place, a house and habitation there ; and to have a share in the privileges of elect angels.

These words therefore, I will not cast out, will prove great words one day to them that come to Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 2. 4. John 21. 31. Luke 10. 35.

Secondly, And more particularly.

First, Christ hath everlasting life for him that cometh to him, and he shall never perish, For he will in no wise cast him out : But for the rest, they are rejected, cast out, and must be damned, John 10. 27, 28.

Secondly, Christ hath everlasting righteousness to clothe them with that come to him, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment ;

but

but the rest shall be found in the filthy rags of their own stinking pollutions, and shall be wrapt up in them, as in a winding sheet, and so bear their shame before the Lord, and also before the angels, Dan. 9. 24. Isa. 57. 2. Rev. 3, 4, 13. chap. 15. 16.

Thirdly, Christ hath precious blood, that like an open fountain stands free for him to wash in, that comes to him for life, And he will in no wise cast him out: But they that come not to him are rejected from a share therein, and are left to ireful vengeance for their sins, Zech. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. John 13. 8. chap. 3. 36.

Fourthly, Christ hath precious promises, and they shall have a share in them that come to him for life. For he will in no wise cast them out: But they that come not, can have no share in them, because they are true only in him: For in him, and only in him all the promises are *Yea*, and *Amen*. Wherefore they that come not to him, are no whit the better for them, Psalm 50. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 20, 21.

Fifthly, Christ hath also fulness of grace in himself, for them that come to him for life, And he will in no wise cast them out: But those that come not unto him, are left in their graceless state, and as Christ leaves them, death, hell and judgment finds them. He that findeth me (saith Christ) findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord; but he that sins against me wrongeth his own soul. All that hate me, love death, Prov. 8. 33, 34, 35.

Sixthly, Christ is an Intercessor, and ever liveth to make intercession for them that come to God by him: But their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another (or other) Gods, (their sins and lusts :) Their drink-offerings will be not offer, nor take up their names into his lips, Psalm 16. 4. Heb. 7. 25.

Seventhly, Christ hath wonderful love, bowels and compassion for those that come to him: For he will in no wise cast them out. But the rest will find him a lyon rampant, he will one day tear them all to pieces. Now consider, this saith he, ye that forget God, least I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psalm 90. 12.

Eightly, Christ is known, by, and for whose sake those that come to him, have their persons and performances accepted of the Father: And he will in no wise cast them out. But the rest must fly to the rocks and mountains for shelter, but all in vain, to hide them from his face and wrath, Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.

But again, these words (*cast out*) have a special look to what will be hereafter, even at the day of judgment: For then, and not till then, will be the great *Anathema* and *casting out*, made manifest, even manifest by execution. Therefore, here to speak to this, and that under these two heads. As,

1. Of the casting out itself.
2. Of the place into which they shall be cast, that shall then be cast out

First, The casting out itself, standeth in two things.

1. In a preparatory work.
 2. In the manner of executing the act.
- The preparatory work standeth in these three things.

First, It standeth in their separation, that have not come to him, from them that have; at that day. Of this, At the day of the great *casting out*, those that have not (*now*) come to him, shall be separated from them that have; for them that have, He will not cast out. When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all

all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, Mat. 25. 31, 32.

This dreadful separation therefore shall then be made betwixt them that (*now*) come to Christ, and them that come not. And good reason; for since they would not with us come to him; *now* they have time; why should they stand with us, when judgment is come?

Secondly, They shall be placed before him according to their condition; they that have come to him in great dignity, even at his right hand, for he will in no wise cast them out; but the rest shall be set at his left-hand; the place of disgrace and shame; for they did not come to him for life.

Distinguished also shall they be by fit terms: Those that come to him he calleth Sheep, but the rest are Frowish Goats. And he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and the sheep will be set on the right-hand, (next heaven's gate, for they came to him) but the goats on the left, to go from him into hell, because they are not of his sheep.

Thirdly, Then will Christ proceed to conviction of these that came not unto him, and will say, I was a stranger, and ye took me not in, or did not come unto me. Their excuse of themselves he will slight as dirt, and proceed to their final judgment. Now when these wretched rejectors of Christ shall thus be set before him in their sins, and convicted; this is the preparatory work upon which follows the manner of executing the act which will be done.

First, In the presence of all the holy angels.

Secondly, In the presence all them that in their life time came to him, by saying unto toem, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; with the reason annexed to it, For you were cruel to me,

and mine particularly discovered in these words: For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not, Mat. 25. 41. 42. 43.

Lastly, Now it remains that we speak of the place into which these shall be cast, which in the general you have heard already, to wit, the fire prepared for the devil and his angels; but in particular, it is thus described:

First, It is called Tophet: For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king (the Lucifer) 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, Isa. 30. 32.

Secondly, It is called hell: It is better for thee to enter into life, halt or lame, than having two feet, to be cast into hell, Mark 9. 45.

Thirdly, It is called, The wine press of the wrath of God: And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, (that is them, that did not come to Christ) and cast them into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, Rev. 14. 19.

Fourthly, It is called, A lake of fire. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life; was cast into the lake of fire, Rev. 20. 15.

Fifthly, It is called, A Pit. Thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North,-----Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the Pit, Isa. 14. 13, 14. 15.

Sixthly, It is called, A bottomless Pit, out of which the smoke and locust came, and into which the

the

the great dragon was cast; and it is called bottomless, to shew the endlessness of the fall that they will have into it, that come not in the acceptable time to Jesus Christ, Rev. 9. 1, 2. chap. 20. 3.

7thly, It is called, Outer darkness: Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, and cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Mat. 22. 13. chap. 25. 30.

Eightly, It is called, A furnace of fire. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world: The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and he shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth: And again, So shall it be in the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, Matth. 13. 41, 42, 43. 48, 49. 50.

Lastly, It may not be amiss if in the conclusion of this, I shew in few words, to what the things that torment them in this state are compared. Indeed some of them have been occasionally mentioned already, as that they are compared,

First, To wood that burneth.

Secondly, To fire.

Thirdly, To fire and brimstone: But,

Fourthly, It is compared to a worm, a gnawing worm, a never dying gnawing worm: They are cast into hell where their worm dieth not, Mark 9. 44.

Fifthly, It is called, Unquenchable fire; He will gather his wheat into his garner; but will

burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, Mat. 4. 12. Luke 3. 17.

Sixthly, It is called, Everlasting Destruction. The Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God; and that 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, 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9.

Seventhly, It is called, Wrath without mixture, and is given them in the cup of his indignation. If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, Rev. 14. 9, 10.

Eighthly, It is called, The second Death. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, this is the second death. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, Rev. 20. 14. chap. 2. 8.

Ninthly. It is called, Eternal Damnation. But he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of Eternal Damnation.

Oh! these three words! Everlasting Punishment, Eternal Damnation, For Ever and Ever.

How will they gnaw and eat up all the expectation of the end of the misery of the cast-away sinners. And the smoke of the torment ascended for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, &c. Rev. 14. 11.

Their behaviour in hell is set forth by four things as I know of.

1. By

1. By calling for help and relief in vain. 2. By weeping. 3. By wailing. 4. By gnashing of teeth.

And now we come to the second thing that is to be inquired into; Namely,

How it appears that Christ hath power to save, or to cast out: For by these words, I will in no wise cast out, he declareth that he hath power to do both.

Now this inquiry admits us to search into two things.

1. How it appears that he hath power to save.

2. How it appears that he hath power to cast out.

That he had power to save appears by that which follows.

First, To speak only of him as he is Mediator: He was authorized to this blessed work by his Father, before the world began. Hence the apostle said, He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, with all those things that effectually will produce our salvation. Read the same chapter with 2 Tim. 1. 9.

Secondly, He was promised to our first parents, that he should in the fulness of time, bruise the serpent's head; and, as Paul expounds it, Redeem them that were under the law: Hence, since that time, he hath been reckoned as slain for our sins; by which means, all the Fathers under the First Testament were secured from the wrath to come; hence he is called, The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. 13. 8. Gen. 3. 15. Gal. 4. 5.

Thirdly, Moses gave testimony of him by the types and shadows, and bloody sacrifices, that he commanded from the mouth of God, to be in use to the support of his peoples faith, until the time of reformation, which was the time of Jesus his death, Heb. 9 & 10th chapters.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, At the time of his birth, 'twas testified of him by the angel, That he should save his people from their sins, Mat. 1. 20, 21.

Fifthly, It is testified of him in the days of his his flesh, that he had power on earth to forgive sins, Mark 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Sixthly, It is testified also of him by the apostle Peter, That God had exalted him with his own right-hand to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins, Acts 30. 31.

Seventhly, In a word, this is every where testified of him, both in the old testament & the new.

And good reason that he should be acknowledged and trolled as a Saviour.

1. He came down from heaven to be a Saviour, John 6. 38, 39, 40.

2. He was anointed when on earth to be a Saviour, Luke 3. 22.

3. He did the works of a Saviour: As.

First, He fulfilled the law, and became the End of it for righteousness, for them that believe in him, Rom. 10. 3, 4.

Secondly, He laid down his life as a Saviour; He gave his life as a ransom for many, Mat. 20. 28. Mark 10. 45. 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Thirdly, He hath abolished death, destroyed the devil, put away sin, got the keys of hell and death, is ascending into heaven; is there accepted of God, and bid sit at the right hand as a Saviour; and that because his sacrifice for sins pleased God, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 2. 15. Eph. 4. 7, 8. John 16. 10, 11. Acts 5. 30, 31. Heb. 10. 12, 13.

Fourthly, God hath sent out, and proclaimed him as a Saviour, and tells the world that we have redemption through his blood, that he will justify us, if we believe in his blood, and that he can faithfully and justly do it. Yea, God doth

doth beseech us to be reconciled to him by his Son; which could not be, if he were not anointed by him to this very end, and also if his works and undertakings were not accepted of him as considered a Saviour, Rom. 3. 14, 15. 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Fifthly, God hath already received millions of souls into his Paradise, because they have received this Jesus for a Saviour; and is resolved to cut them off, and to cast them out of his presence, that will not take him for a Saviour, Heb. 12. 22.-----25.

I intend brevity here; therefore a word to the second, and so conclude.

How it appears that he hath power to call out.
This appears also by what follows:

First, The Father (for the service that he hath done him as a Saviour) hath made him Lord of all, even Lord of quick and dead. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and living, Rom. 14. 9.

Secondly, The Father hath left it with him to quicken whom he will, to wit, with saving grace, and to cast out whom he will, for their rebellion against him, John 5. 21.

Thirdly, The Father hath made him Judge of quick and dead, hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and appointed that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, John 22. 5.

Fourthly, God will judge the world by this Man; the day is appointed for judgment, and he is appointed for judge. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, Acts 17. 31, 32.

Therefore we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in the body, according to what

what they have done. If they have closed with him, heaven and salvation; if they have not, hell and damnation.

And for these reasons he must be Judge.

First, Because of his humiliation. Because of his Father's word he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; both of things in heaven; and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This hath respect to his being Judge, and his sitting in judgment upon angels and men, Phil. 2. 8. --- 11.

Secondly; That all men might honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, John 5. 22, 23.

Thirdly, Because of his righteous judgment, this work is fit for no creature; it is only fit for the Son of God. For he will reward every man according to his ways, Rev. 2. 2.

Fourthly, Because he is the Son of man. He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man, John 5. 27.

Thus have I in brief passed through this text, by way of explication; my next work is to speak to it by way of observation; but I shall be also as brief in that, as the nature of the thing will admit.

All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37.

And now come to some observations, and a little

little briefly to speak to them, and then conclude the whole.

The words thus explained, afford us many; some of which are these.

First, That God the Father, and Christ the Son, are two distinct Persons in the God-head.

Secondly, That by them (not excluding the Holy Ghost) is contrived and determined the salvation of fallen mankind.

Thirdly, That this contrivance resolved itself into a covenant between these Persons in the God-head, which standeth in giving on the Father's part; and receiving on the Son's. All that the Father giveth me, &c.

Fourthly, That every one that the Father hath given to Christ (according to the mind of God in this text) shall certainly come to him.

Fifthly, That coming to Jesus Christ, is therefore not by the will, wisdom or power of man; but by the gifts, promise, and drawing of the Father. All that the Father giveth me, shall come.

Sixthly, That Jesus Christ will be careful to receive, and will not in any wise reject those that come, or are coming to him. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

There are besides these some other truths implied in the words. As,

Seventhly, They that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

Eighthly, Jesus Christ would not have them that in truth are coming to him, once think that he will cast them off.

These observations by all of them in the words, and are plentifully confirmed by the scriptures of truth; but I shall not at this time speak to them all, but shall pass by the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth, partly because I design brevity, and partly, because they are touched upon, in the explicatory

plicatory part of the text. I shall therefore begin with the fifth observation, and so make that the first in order, in the following discourse.

First then, Coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom or power of man, but by the gift, promise and drawing of the Father. This observation standeth of two parts :

First, That coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom or power of man.

Secondly, But by the gift, promise and drawing of the Father.

That the text carrieth this truth in its bosom, you will find if you look into the explication of the first part thereof before ; I shall therefore here follow the method propounded, viz. shew,

First, That coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom or power of man : This is true, because the word doth positively say it is not.

First, It denieth it to be wholly by the will of man. Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. And again, 'Tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, John 1. 14. Rom. 9. 16.

Secondly, It denieth it to be of the wisdom of man, as is manifest from these considerations.

First, In the wisdom of God it pleased him, that the world by wisdom should not know him. Now, if by their wisdom they cannot know him, it follows, by that wisdom, they cannot come unto him ; for coming to him is not before, but after some knowledge of him, 1 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 13. 27. Psalm 9. 10.

Secondly, The wisdom of man, in God's account, as to the knowledge of Christ, is reckoned foolishness, Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world ? And again, The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

If God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world, And again, If the wisdom of this world is fool-

foolishness with him, then verily it is not likely, that by that a sinner should become so prudent, as to come to Jesus Christ; especially if you consider,

Thirdly, That the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and so of salvation by him, is the very thing that is counted foolishness to the wisdom of the world; Now, if the very doctrine of the crucified Christ be counted foolishness by the the wisdom of this world, it cannot be, that by that wisdom a man should be drawn out in his soul, to come to him, 1 Cor. 1. 20. chap. 2. 14. chap. 3. 19. chap. 1. 18. 23.

Fourthly, God counted the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, therefore by that wisdom no man can come to Jesus Christ. For it is not likely that one of God's greatest enemies should draw a man to that which best of all pleaseth God, as coming to Christ doth. Now, that God counteth the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, is evident.

First, For that it casteth the greatest contempt upon his Son's undertaking, as afore is proved, in that he counts his crucifixion foolishness: Tho that be one of the highest demonstrations of divine wisdom, Eph. 1. 7, 8.

Secondly, Because God hath threatned to destroy it, and bring it to nought, and cause it to perish: which surely he will not do, was it not an enemy; would it direct men to, and cause them to close with Jesus Christ, see Ita. 29. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 19.

Thirdly, He hath rejected it from helping in the ministry of his word, as fruitless business, and a thing that comes to nought, 1 Cor. 2. 4, 6, 12, 13.

Fourthly, Because it causeth to perish those that seek it, and pursue it, 1 Cor. 1. 18, 19.

Fifthly, And God has proclaimed, That if any man will be wise in this world, he must be a fool in

in the wisdom of the world, and that's the way to be wise in the wisdom of God. If any man will be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19, 20.

Thirdly, Coming to Christ is not by the power of man. This is evident, partly,

First, From that which goeth before: For man's power, in the putting forth of it, in this matter, is either stirred up by love, or sense of necessity; but the wisdom of this world neither gives man love to, or sense of a need of Jesus Christ; therefore his power lieth still, as upon that.

Secondly, What power has he that is dead; as every natural man spiritually is; even dead in trespasses and sins? Dead even as dead to God's new testament things, as he that is in his grave, is dead to the things of this world. What power hath he then, whereby to come to Jesus Christ, John 5. 25. Eph. 2. 1. Col. 2. 13.

Thirdly, God forbids the mighty man to glory in his strength, and says positively, By strength shall no man prevail; and again, Not by might, nor by power, but my spirit, saith the Lord, Jer. 9. 23, 24. 1 Sam. 2. 9. Zech. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 27. 28, 29, 30, 31.

Fourthly, Paul acknowledgeth that man; nay, converted man of himself, hath not a sufficiency of power in himself to think a good thought: if not to do that which is least, for to think is less than to come; then no man by his own power can come to Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Fifthly, Hence we are said to be made willing to come by the power of God; to be raised from a state of sin, to a state of grace, by the power of God; and to believe, that is, to come through
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the exceeding working of his mighty power, Psalm 110. 3. Col. 2. 12. Eph. 1. 18, 20. See also Job 46. 14.

But this needed not, if either man had power or will to come; or so much as graciously to think of being willing to come (of themselves) to Jesus Christ.

I should now come to the proof of the second part of the observation, but that is occasionally done already in the explicatory part of the text; to which I refer the reader: For I shall here only give thee a text or two more to the same purpose, and so come to the use and application.

First, It is expressly said, No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. By this text, there is not only insinuated, that in man is want of power, but also of will, to come to Jesus Christ, they must be drawn, they come not if they be not drawn; and observe, it is not man, nor all the angels in heaven, that can draw one sinner to Jesus Christ. No man cometh to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him, John 6. 44.

Secondly. Again, No man can come to me, except it were given him of my Father, John 6. 65. It is an heavenly gift that maketh man come to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly. Again, it is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God; every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me, John 5. 45.

I shall not enlarge, but shall make some use and application, and so come to the next observation.

First, Is it so, Is coming to Jesus Christ, not by the will, wisdom, or power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then they are to blame that cry up the will, wisdom,

dom and power of man; as things sufficient to bring men to Christ.

There are some men who think they may not be contradicted, when they plead for the will, wisdom and power of man, in reference to the things that are of the kingdom of Christ: But I will say to such a man, he never yet came to understand, that himself is what the scripture teacheth concerning him: Neither did he never know, what coming to Christ is, by the teaching gift, and drawing of the Father. He is such a one that hath set up God's enemy in opposition to him, and that continueth in such acts of defiance; and what his end without a new birth will be, the scripture teacheth also: But we will pass this.

Secondly, Is it so? Is coming to Jesus Christ, by the gift, promise and drawing of the Father, then let saints here learn to ascribe their coming to Christ, to the gift, promise and drawing of the Father. Christian man, bless God who hath given thee to Jesus Christ by promise, and again, Bless God for that he hath drawn thee to him. And why is it thee? Why not another? O that the glory of electing love should rest upon thy head, and that the glory of the exceeding grace of God should take hold of thy heart, and bring thee to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Is it so? That coming to Christ is by the Father, as aforesaid? then this should teach us to set a high esteem upon them that are indeed coming to Jesus Christ: I say, an high esteem on them for the sake of him, by vertue of whose grace they are made to come to Jesus Christ.

We see, that when men, by the help of humane abilities, do arrive at the knowledge of, and bring to pass that which, when done, is a wonder to the world; how he that did it is esteemed and commended. Yea, how are his wits, parts, industry,

dusky and unwearied in all, admired? and yet the man as to this is but of the world, and his work the effectual natural ability: The things also attained by him, and in vanity and vexation of spirit. Further, perhaps in the pursuit of these his achievements, he sins against God, wastes his time vainly, and at long run loses his soul by neglecting of better things. Yet he is admired! But I say, if this man's parts, labour, diligence, and the like, will bring him to such applause and esteem of the world: what esteem should we have of such an one that is by the gift, promise, and power of God, coming to Jesus Christ.

First, This is a man with whom God is, in whom God works and waits; a man whose motion is governed and steered by the mighty hand of God, and the effectual working of his power, Here's a Man.

Secondly, This man, by the power of God's might, which worketh in him, is able to cast a whole world behind him, with all the lusts, and pleasures of it; and to charge through all the difficulties that men and devils can set against him: Here's a Man!

Thirdly, This man is travelling to mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem: The city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels; and the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the judge of all, and to Jesus: Here's a Man!

Fourthly, This man can look upon death with comfort, can laugh at destruction when it comes; and long to hear the sound of the last trumpet; and to see the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven; Here's a Man indeed!

Let Christians then esteem each other as such; I know you do, but do it more and more. And that

that you may consider the e two or three things.

First, These are the objects of Christ's esteem, *Math. 12. 48. chap 15. 22, 23, 24, 25. to 29. Luke 7. 29.*

Secondly, These are the objects of the esteem of angels, *Dan. 9. 12. chap. 10. 11. chap. 12. 4. Heb. 1. 14.*

Thirdly, These have been the objects of the esteem of heathens, when but convinced about them, *Dan. 5. 10. Acts 15. 15. 1 Cor. 14. 24. 25.*

Let each of you then esteem each other better than themselves, *Phil. 3. 2.*

Fourthly, Again, Is it so, That no man comes to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom and power of man; but by the gift, power and drawing of the Father? Then this shews us how horribly ignorant of this such are, who make the man that is coming to Christ the object of their contempt and rage. These are also unreasonable and wicked men, men in whom is no faith, *1 Thess. 3. 2.*

Sinners, did you but know what a blessed thing it is, to come to Jesus Christ, and that by the help and drawing of the Father, they do indeed come to him; you would hang and burn in hell a thousand years before you would turn your spirit as you do, against him that God is drawing to Jesus Christ, and also against the G O D that draws him.

But faithless sinners, let us a little expostulate the matter. What hath this man done against thee, that is coming to Jesus Christ. Why do'st thou make him the object of thy scorn? Doth his coming to Jesus Christ offend thee? Doth his pursuing of his own salvation offend thee? Doth his forsaking of his sins and pleasures offend thee?

Poor coming man! Thou sacrificest the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will

will they not stone thee, Exodus 8. 26.

But I say, Why offended at this? Is he ever the worse for coming to Jesus Christ, or for his loving and serving of Jesus Christ? Or is he ever the more a fool for flying from that which will drown thee in hell fire, and for seeking eternal life? Besides, pray first, consider it, this he doth not of himself, but by the drawing of the Father. Come, let me tell thee in thine ear, thou that will not come to him thyself, and him that would, thou hinderest.

First, Thou shalt be judged for one that hath hated, maligned, and reproached Jesus Christ to whom this poor sinner is coming.

Secondly, Thou shalt be judged too, for one that hath hated the Father, by whose powerful drawing, the sinner doth come.

Thirdly, Thou shalt be taken and adjudged, for one that hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace in him, that is, by its help coming to Jesus Christ. What say'st thou now? Wilt thou stand by thy doings? Wilt thou continue to contemn and reproach the living God? Thinkest thou that thou shalt weather it out well enough at the day of judgment? Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, In the days that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord? John 15. 18, ----- 26. Jude 14, 15. Thess. 4. 8. Ezek. 22. 14.

Fifthly, Is it so, That no man comes to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, promise and drawing of the Father? Then this sheweth us how it comes to pass, that weak means is so powerful as as to bring men out of their sins, to a hearty pursuit after Jesus Christ: When God bid Moses speak to the people, he said, I will speak with thee, Exodus 19. When God speaks, when God works, who can let it? None, none,

none. Then the work goes on. Elias threw his mantle upon the shoulders of Elisha; and what wonderful work followed! When Jesus fell in with the crowing of the cock, what work was there! O when God is in the means, then that that means (be it never so weak and contemptible in itself) work wonders, 1 Kings 19. 19. Mat. 26. 74, 75. Mark 14. 71, 72. Luke 22. 60. 61. 62.

The world understand not, nor believe that the walls of Jericho shall fall at the sound of rams horns; but when God will work, the means must be effectual. A word weakly spoken, spoken with difficulty, in temptation, and in the midst of great contempt and scorn, works wonders: Is the Lord thy God will say so too.

Sixthly, Is it so? Doth no man come to Jesus Christ, by the will, wisdom and power of man; but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then here is room for Christians to stand and wonder at the effectual workings of God's providences that he hath made use of, as means to bring them to Jesus Christ.

For altho men are drawn to Christ by the power of the Father; yet that power putteth forth itself in the use of means; and that means is divers, sometimes this, sometimes that; for God is at liberty to work, by which, and when, and how he will; but let the means be what it will, and as contemptible as may be; yet God, that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and that out of weakness can make strong; can, may doth oft-times make use of a very unlikely means to bring about the conversion & salvation of his people. Therefore, you that are come to Christ (& that by unlikely means) say yourselves; and wonder, and wondering magnify Almighty power, by the work of which, the means have been made effectual to bring you to Jesus Christ.

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What was the providence that God made use of, as means either more remote, or more near, to bring thee to Jesus Christ? Was it the removing of thy habitation, the change of thy condition, the loss of relations, estate, or the like? Was it the casting of thine eye upon some good book, thy hearing of thy neighbour talk of heavenly things, the beholding of God's judgments as executed upon others, or thine own deliverance from them; or thy being strangely cast under the ministry of some godly man. O take notice of such providence or providences! they were sent and managed by mighty power to do the good; God himself, I say, hath joyned himself to this chariot: Yea, and so blessed it, that it failed not to accomplish the things for which he sent it.

God bleſseth not to every one his providences in this manner: How many thousands are there in this world, that pass every day under the same providences; but God is not in them, to do that work by them, as he hath done to thy poor soul, by his effectual working with them. O! that Jesus Christ should meet thee in this providence, that dispensation, or the other ordinance! This is grace indeed! At this therefore it will be thy wisdom to admire, and for this to bless God.

Give me leave to give you a taste of some of those providences that have been effectual, thro the management of God, to bring salvation to the souls of his people.

First, The first shall be that of the woman of Samaria: It must happen, that she must needs go out of the city to draw water (not before nor after, but) just when Jesus Christ her Saviour was come from far, and set to rest him (being weary) upon the well: What a blessed providence was this! Even a providence managed by the Almighty

ty wisdom, and almighty power, to the conversion and salvation of this poor creature. For by this providence was this poor creature and her Saviour brought together; that blessed work might be fulfilled upon the woman, according to the purpose afore determined by the Father, John 4.

Secondly, What a providence was it, that there should be a tree in the way for Zacheus to climb, thereby to give Jesus opportunity to call that chief of the publicans home to himself, even before he came down therefrom Luke 19.

Thirdly, Was it not also wonderful that the thief which we read of in the gospel, should by the providence of God be cast into prison, to be condemned even at the sessions that Christ himself was to die; nay, and that it should happen too, that they must be hanged together, that the thief might be in hearing and observing of Jesus in his last words, that he might be converted by him before his death, Luke 23.

Fourthly, What a strange providence was it, and as strangely managed by God, that Onesimus, when he was run away from his master, should be taken, and as I think, cast into that very prison, where Paul lay bound for the word of the gospel; that he might there be by him converted, and then sent home again to his master Philemon? Behold all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose, Rom. 8.

Nay, I have myself known some that have been made to go to hear the word preached against their wills; others have gone not to hear, but to see and to be seen; nay, to jeer and flout others; as also to catch and carp at things. Some also to feed their adulterous eyes with the sight of beautiful objects, and yet God hath made use of even these things, and even of the wicked and
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sinful proposals of sinners to bring them under the grace that might save their souls.

Seventhly, Doth no man come to Jesus Christ, but by the drawing &c. of the Father? Then let me here caution these poor sinners, that are spectators of the change that God hath wrought in them that are coming to Jesus Christ, not to attribute this work and change to other things and causes.

There are some poor sinners in the world, that plainly see a change, a mighty change in their neighbours and relations that are coming to Jesus Christ; but as I said, they being ignorant and not knowing whence it comes, and whether it goes, for so is every one that is born of the Spirit, John 3. 8.

Therefore they attribute this change to other causes: As,

1. Melancholy. 2. To sitting alone. 3. To over much reading. 4. Their going to too many sermons. 5. To too much studying and musing on what they hear.

Also, they conclude on the other side;

First, That it is for want of merry company.

Secondly, For want of physick, and therefore they advise them to leave off reading, going to sermons, the company of sober people, and to be merry, to go a gossiping, to busy themselves in the things of this world; not to sit musing alone, &c.

But come poor ignorant sinner, let me deal with thee, it seems thou art turned counsellor for satan; I tell thee, thou knowest not what thou doest. Take heed of spending thy judgment after this manner; thou judgest foolishly, And sayest this to every one that passeth by, Thou art a fool.

What I count convictions for sin, mourning for sin, and repentance for sin, melancholy;

This is like those that on the other side said, Those men are drunk with new wine, &c. Or as he that said, Paul was mad, Acts 23. chap 26. 24.

Poor ignorant sinner, can thou judge no better? What! is sitting alone perlive under God's hand; reading the scriptures, and hearing of sermons, &c. the way to be undone? The Lord open thine eyes, and make thee to see thine error: Thou hast set thyself against God, thou hast despised the operation of his hands, thou attemptest to murder souls. What! canst thou give no better counsel touching these whom God hath wounded, than to send them to the ordinances of hell for help? Thou bidst them be merry and light some; but dost thou not know that The heart of fools is in the house of laughter, Eccel. 7.

4. Thou biddest them shun the hearing of thundering preachers: But it is no better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools verile 5. Thou biddest them busy themselves in the things of this world; but dost thou not know that the Lord bids, First seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, Mat. 3. 36.

Poor ignorant sinner, hear the counsel of God to such, and learn thyself to be wiser. Is any afflicted, let him pray: Is any merry, let him sing psalms: Blessed is he that heareth me, and hear for time to come: Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Search the scripture, give attendance to reading. It is better to go to the house of mourning, Jam. 5. 13. Prov. 8. 32. 33. Acts 2. 40. John 5. 39. 1 Tim. 4. 23. Eccl. 1. 2, 3.

And wilt thou judge him that doth thus! Art thou almost like Elimas the forcerer, that sought to turn the deputy from the faith? thou seekst to pervert the right ways of the Lord; take heed
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lest some heavy judgment overtake thee, Acts 13: 8. -----13.

What! teach men to quench convictions, take men off from a serious consideration of the evil of sin, of the terrors of the world to come, and of how they shall escape the same. What! teach men to put God and his word out of their minds, by running to merry company, by running to the world, by gossiping, &c. This is as much as to bid them say to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; or, what's the Almighty that we should serve him? or, what profit have we, if we keep his ways? Here's a Devil in-grain; what! bid men walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. 2.

Object. But we do not know that such are coming to Jesus Christ, truly we wonder at them, and think they are fools.

Ans. First, Do you not know that they are coming to Jesus Christ? They may be coming to him, for ought you know; and why will you be worse than the brute, to speak evil of the things you know not? What, are you made to be taken and destroyed, must ye utterly perish in your own corruptions? 2 Peter 2. 12.

Secondly, Do you not know them? Let them alone then. If you cannot speak good of them, speak not bad. Refrain from these men, and let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God, Acts 5. 38. 39.

Thirdly, But why do you wonder at a work of conviction and conversion? Know you not that this is the judgment of God upon you?

Ye despisers, To behold, and wonder, and perish,
Acts 13. 40, 41.

Fourthly, But why wonder, and think they are fools? Is the way of the just an abomination to you? See the passage and be ashamed, He that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked, Prov. 9. 17.

Fifthly, Your wondering at them, argues that you are strangers to yourselves, to conviction for sin, and to hearty desires to be saved; as also to coming to Jesus Christ.

Object. But how shall we know that such men are coming to Jesus Christ.

Answer. Who can make them see that Christ has made blind? John 2. 3. 9. Nevertheless, because I endeavour thy conviction, conversion, and salvation, consider,

1. Do they cry out of sin, being burthened with it, as an exceeding bitter thing?

2. Do they fly from it, as from the face of a deadly serpent?

3. Do they cry out of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, as to justification, in the sight of God.

4. Do they cry out after the Lord Jesus, to save them?

5. Do they see more worth and merit in one drop of Christ's blood to save them, than in all the sins of the world to damn them?

6. Are they tender of sinning against Jesus Christ?

7. Is his name, person and undertakings more precious to them than is the glory of the world?

8. Is this world more dear unto them?

9. Is Faith in Christ (of which they are convinced by God's Spirit of the want of, and that without it they can never close with Christ) precious to them?

10. Do they savour Christ in his word and do they

they leave all the world for his sake? And are they willing (God helping them) to run hazards for his name, for the love they bear to him.

11. Are his laments precious to them?

If these things be so, whether thou seest them or no, these men are coming to Jesus Christ, Rom. 6. 9. 10, 11. 12, 13, 14. Psalm 38. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. Heb. 6. 18, 19, 20. Isa. 64. 6. Philip. 3. 7. 8. Psal. 54. 1. Psal. 109. 26. Acts 16. 30. Psal. 51. 78. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Rom. 7. 24. 2 Cor. 5. Acts 5. 41. Jam. 2. 7. Phil. 3. 7, 8. Song 5. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Psal. 119. John 13. 35. 1 John 4. 7. chap. 3. 14. John 16. 9. Rom. 14. 23. Heb. 11. 6. Psal. 19. 10, 11. Jer. 15. 16. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27. Acts 20. 22, 23, 24. chap. 22. 13. Tit. 3. 15. 2 John 1. Eph. 4. 16. Phil. 7. 1 Cor. 16. 24.

The Second Observation.

I come now to the second Observation propounded to be spoken to, viz.

That they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft times heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them.

I told you that this observation is implied in the text, and I gather it from the largeness and openness of the promise, (I will in no wise cast out.) For had there not been a proneness in us to fear casting out, Christ needed not to have, as it were way-laid our fear, as he doth by this great and strange expression, *In no wise; (And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out)* There needed not, as I may say, such a promise be invented by the wisdom of heaven, worded at such a rate, as it were, on purpose to dash in pieces at one blow, all the objections of coming sinners; if they were not prone to admit of such objections, to the discouraging of their own souls. For this word, *in no wise*, cutteth the throat of all objections; and it was dropt by the Lord Jesus

for that very end; and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief.

And it is, as it were the sum of all promises; neither can any objection be made upon the unworthiness that thou findest in thee, that this promise will not avail.

But I am a great sinner, say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I am an old sinner say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I am an hard hearted sinner say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out says, Christ.

But I am a backsliding sinner, say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have served Satan all my days, say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have sinned against light, say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have sinned against mercy, say'th thou.

I will in no wise cast out says Christ.

But I have no good thing to bring with me, say'th

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ. (thou.

Thus I might go on to the end of things, and shew you that still this promise was provided to answer all objections, and doth answer them. But, I say, what need it be, if they that are coming to Jesus Christ are not sometimes, yea, oftentimes heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will cast them out.

I will give you now two instances that seem to imply the truth of this observation.

In the ninth of Matthew, at the second verse, you read of a man that was seek of the pally: and he was coming to Jesus Christ, being born upon a bed by his friends: He also was coming himself, and that upon another account than any of his friends were aware of, even for the pardon of sins, and the salvation of his soul. Now so soon as ever he was come into the presence of

Christ,

Christ, Christ bids him *be of good cheer*: It seems then, his heart was fainting, but what was the cause of his fainting? Not his bodily infirmity, for the cure of which his friends did bring him to Christ, but the guilt and burthen of his sins? for the pardon of which himself did come to him, therefore he proceeds, *Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.*

I say, Christ saw him sinking in his mind, about how it would go with his most noble part: and therefore, first, he applies himself to him upon that account. For tho his friends had faith enough as to the cure of the body, yet he himself had little enough as to the cure of his soul: Therefore, Christ takes him up as a man falling down, saying, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

That about the prodigal seems pertinent also to this matter; When he was come to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my Father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish for hunger? I will arise now, and go to my Father. Heartily spoken, but how did he perform his promise? I think not so well as he promised to do: And my ground for my thought is because his Father, so soon as he was come to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him; implying, methinks, as if the prodigal by this time was dejected in his mind; and therefore his Father gives him the most sudden and familiar token of reconciliation.

And kisses were of old time often used to remove doubts and fears. Thus Laban and Elia kiss Jacob. Thus Joseph killed his brethren, and thus also David killed Abialom, Gen. 31. 55. chap. 33. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. chap. 48. 9, 10. 2 Sam. 14. 33.

'Tis true, as I said, at first setting out, he spoke heartily, as sometimes sinners also did in their beginning

ginning to come to Jesus Christ; but might not he, yea, in all probability he had (between the first step he took, and the last by which he accomplished that journey) many a thought, both this way and that? As whether his Father would receive him or no? As thus I said, I would go to my Father: But how, if when I come at him, he should ask me, Where I have all this while been? What must I say then? Alas, if he ask me, What is become of the portion of goods that he gave me? What shall I say then? If he ask me, Who have been my companions? What shall I say then? If he also should ask me, What hath been my preferment in all the time of my absence from him? What shall I say then? Yea, and if he ask me, Why I came home no sooner? What shall I say then? Thus I say, might he reason with himself; and being conscious to himself, that he could give but a bad answer to any of these interrogations, no marvel if he stood in need first of all, of a kiss from his Father's lips. For had he answered the first in truth, he must say, I have been a hunter of taverns and ale-houses; and as for my portion, I spent it in riotous living; my companions were whores and drabs; as for my preferment, the highest was, That I became a Hoggard; and as for not coming home till now, could I have made shift to stay abroad any longer, I had not lain at thy feet for mercy now.

I say, these things considered, and considering again, how prone poor man is to give way, when truly awakened to despondings and heart-milgivings, no marvel, if he did link in his mind, between the time of his first setting out, and that of his coming to his Father.

3. But thirdly, Methinks I have for the confirmation of this truth, the consent of all the saints that are under heaven, to wit, That they that are
coming

coming to Jesus are oft times heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

Quest. But what should be the reason?

I will answer to this question thus,

First, It is not for want of the revealed will of God, that manifesteth grounds for the contrary, for of that there is a sufficiency; yea, the text itself hath laid a sufficient foundation for the encouragement of them that are coming to Jesus Christ, And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Secondly, It is not for want of any invitation, to come, for that is full and plain; Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28

Thirdly, Neither is it for want of manifestation of Christ's willingness to receive, as those texts above-named, with that which follows, declare, If any thirst, let him come unto me, and drink, John 7. 3.

Fourthly, It is not for want of exceeding great and precious promises, to receive them that come. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. 6. 27, 28.

Fifthly, It is not for want of solemn oath and engagement to save them that come. For because he could swear by no Greater, he swore by himself. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us, Heb. 6. 15, 16, 17, 18.

Sixthly, Neither is it for want of great examples of God's mercy, that have come to Jesus Christ, of which we read most plentifully in the word.

There-

Therefore it must be concluded, it is for want of that which follows :

First, It is for want of the knowledge of Christ. Thou knowest but little of the grace and kindness that is in the heart of Christ : Thou knowest but little of the vertue and merit of his blood ; Thou knowest but little of the willingness that is in his heart to save thee : And this is the reason of the fear that riseth in thy heart, and that causeth thee to doubt that Christ will not receive thee. Unbelief is the daughter of ignorance. Therefore Christ saith, O fools, and slow of heart to believe, Luke 24. 25.

Slowness of heart to believe, flows from thy foolishness in the things of Christ ; this is evident to all that are acquainted with themselves, and are seeking after Jesus Christ : The more ignorance, the more unbelief ; the more knowledge of Christ, the more faith. They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee, Psalm 9. 10. He therefore that began to come to Christ but the other day and hath yet but little knowledge of him, he fears that Christ will not receive him. But he that hath been longer acquainted with him, he is strong, and hath overcome the wicked one, 1 John 2.

When Joseph's brethren came into Egypt, to buy corn, it is said, Joseph knew his brethren, but his brethren knew not him. What follows ? why, great mistrust of heart about their speeding well : especially if Joseph did but answer them roughly, calling them spies, and questioning their truth, and the like. And observe it, so long as their ignorance about their brother remained with them, whatsoever Joseph did, still they put the worst sense upon it. For instance, Joseph upon a time bids the steward of his house bring them home to dine with him, to dine even in Joseph's house ; And how this is relented by them ? Why, they

they were afraid : And the men were afraid, because they were brought unto (their brother) Joseph's house. And they said, He seeketh occasion against us, and will fall upon us, and take us for bond men, and our asses, Gen. 42. chap. 43. What! afraid to go to Joseph's house? He was their brother; he intended to feast them; to feast them, and to scall with them. Ah, but they were ignorant, That he was their brother : And so long as their ignorance lasted, so long their fear terrified them. Just thus it is with the sinner that but of late is coming to Jesus Christ : He is ignorant of the love and pity that is in Christ to coming sinners : Therefore he doubts, therefore he fears, therefore his heart misgives him.

Coming sinner, Christ inviteth thee to dine and sup with him; he inviteth thee to a banquet of wine, yea to come into his wine cellar, and his banner over thee shall be love, Rev. 30. 20. Song 2. chap. 5. But I doubt it, says the sinner; but 'tis answered, He calls thee, invites thee to his banquet. Flaggons, apples, to his wine, and to the juice of the pomgranate; O I fear, I doubt, I mistrust; I tremble in expectation of the contrary, Come out of the man thou bastardly ignorance. Be not afraid, sinner, only believe, He that cometh to Christ, he will in no wise cast out.

Let the coming sinner therefore seek after more of the good knowledge of Jesus Christ; press after it, seek it as silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure. This will embolden thee; this will make thee wax stronger and stronger. I know whom I have believed, I know him, said Paul. And what follows? Why, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day, 2 Tim. 1. 13.

What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ? The answer is, He had committed to him his soul. But why did he commit his soul to him? Why, because he

he knew him: He knew him to be faithful, to be kind; he knew he would not fail him, nor forsake him: And therefore he laid his soul down at his feet, and committed it to him, to keep against that day. But,

Secondly, Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may be also a consequent of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him. For this I observe, that strong desires to have, are attended with strong fears of missing. What man most sets his heart upon, and what his desires are most after, he oft-times most fears he shall not obtain. So the man, ruler of the synagogue, had a great desire that his daughter should live; and that desire was attended with fear, that she should not; Wherefore Christ saith unto him, Be not afraid, Mark 5. 36.

Suppose a young man should have his heart much set upon a virgin, to have her to wife, if ever he fears he shall not obtain, it is when he begins to love; now thinks he, some body will step in betwixt my love and the object of it; either, they will find fault with my person, my estate, my condition or something.

Now Thoughts begin to work, she doth not like me, or something. And thus it is with the soul at first coming to Jesus Christ, thou lovest him, and thy love produceth jealousy, and that jealousy oft-times begets fears.

Now thou fearest the sins of thy youth, the sins of thine old age, the sins of thy calling, the sins of thy Christian duties, the sins of thy heart, or something: Thou thinkest something or other will alienate the heart or affections of Jesus Christ from thee; thou thinkest he likes something in thee, for the sake of which he will refuse thy soul.

But be content, a little more knowledge of him will make thee take better heart; thy earnest desires

desires shall not be attended with such burning fears; thou shalt hereafter say, This is my infirmity, Phil. 77.

Thou art sick of love, a very sweet disease, and yet every disease has some weakness attending of it; yet I with this distemper (if it be lawful to call it so) was more epidemical. Die of that disease, I would gladly do; 'tis better than life itself, tho it be attended with fears. But thou cryest out, I cannot obtain. Well, be not too hasty in making conclusions: If Jesus Christ had not put his finger in at the hole of the lock, thy bowels would not have been troubled for him, Song 5. Mark how the prophet hath it, They shall walk after the Lord, he shall roar like a lion? when he shall roar, the children shall tremble from the East, they shall tremble like a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria, Hof. 11. 10, 11.

When God roars (as often times the coming soul hears him roar) what man that is coming can do otherwise than tremble? Amos 3. 8. But trembling he comes, He sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, Acts 16.

Should we ask him that we mentioned but now, How long is it since you began to fear you should miss of this daniel you love so? The answer will be, ever since I began to love her. But did you not fear it before? No, nor should I fear now, but that I vehemently love her. Come sinner, let us apply it: How long is it since thou beganest to fear that Jesus Christ will not receive thee? Thy answer is, Ever since I began to desire that he would save my soul. I began to fear, when I began to come. And the more my heart burns in desires after him, the more I feel my heart fear, I shall not be saved by him.

See now, did I not tell thee, that thy fears were

were but the consequence of strong desires? Well, fear not, coming sinner, thousands of coming souls are in thy condition, and yet they will not get safe into Christ's bosom. Say (says Christ) to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, Fear not: Your God will come and save you, Isa. 35. 4. chap. 63. 1.

Thirdly, Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of thine own unworthiness. Thou see'st what a poor, sorry, wretched, worthless creature thou art. And seeing this, thou fear'st Christ will not receive thee. Alas, say it thou, I am the vilest of all men; a town-sinner! a ring-leading sinner! I am not only a sinner myself, but have made others two-fold worse the children of hell also besides. Now I am under some awakenings and stirrings of mind after salvation, even now I find my heart rebellious, carnal, hard, treacherous, desperate, prone to unbelief, to despair; it forgetteth the word, it wandereth, it runneth to the ends of the earth; There is not (I am persuaded) one in all the world, that hath such a desperate wicked heart as mine is: My soul is careless to do good, but none more earnest to do that which is evil.

Can such a one as I am live in glory? Can an holy, a just, and a righteous God once think (with reverence to his name) of saving such a vile creature as I am? I fear it. Will he shew wonders for such a dead dog as I am? I doubt it.

I am cast out to the loathing of my person, yea, I loathe myself; I stink in mine own nostrils. How can I then be accepted by a holy & sin-abhorring God? Psal. 38. 5, 6, 7. Ezek. 10. chap. 20. 42, 43, 44. Saved I would be, and who is there that would not, were they in my condition? Indeed, I wonder at the madness & folly of others, when I see them leap & skip so carelessly about the mouth of hell! Bold sinner, how dar'st thou tempt God, by laughing at the breach

breach of his holy law? But alas, they are not so had one way, but I am worle another: I wish my self were any body but myself: And yet here again, I know not what to wish. When I see such as I believe are coming to Jesus Christ, O I bleis them; But am confounded in myself, to see how unlike (as I think) I am to a very good many in the world. They can hear, read, pray, remember, repent, be humble, and do every thing better than do vile a wretch as I.

I, vile wretch, am good for nothing, but to burn in hell-fire, and when I think of that, I am confounded too.

Thus the sense of unworthiness creates and heightens fears in the hearts of them that are coming to Jesus Christ, but indeed it should not: For who needs the physician but the sick? Or, who did Christ come into the world to save, but the chief of sinners? Mark 8. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Wherefore, the more thou seest thy sins, the faster fly thou to Jesus Christ. And let the sense of thine own unworthiness prevail with thee yet to go faster. As it is with the man that carrieth his broken arm in a sling to the bone-fetter, still as he thinks of his broken arm, and as he feels the pain and anguish, he hastens his pace to the Man; and if Satan meets thee, and asketh, whether goest thou? Tell him, thou art maimed, and art going to the Lord Jesus. If he objects thine own unworthiness, tell him, that even as the sick seeketh the phylician; as he that hath broken bones seeks him that can set them: So thou art going to Jesus Christ for cure and healing, for thy sin-sick soul.

But it oft-times happeneth to him that flees for his life; he despairs of escaping, and therefore delivers himself up into the hands of the pursuer. But up, up, sinner, be of good cheer, Christ came to save the unworthy one: Be not faithless, but

but believe. Come away man, the Lord Jesus calls thee, saying, And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Fourthly; Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of the exceeding mercy of being saved: Sometimes salvation is in the eyes of him that desires so great, so huge, so wonderful a thing, that the very thoughts of the excellency of it ingenders unbelief about obtaining it, in the heart of those that unfeignedly desire it. Seemeth it to you, saith David, a light thing to be a king's son in law? 1 Sam. 18. 23. So the thoughts of the greatness and glory of the thing propounded; as heaven, eternal life, eternal glory; to be with God and Christ, and angels: These are great things, things too good, (saith the soul that is little in his own eyes,) things too rich (saith the soul that is truly poor in spirit) for me.

Besides the Holy Ghost hath a way to greatness heavenly things to the understanding of the coming sinner, and at the same time to greatness too the sin and unworthiness of that sinner. Now the soul staggeringly wonders, saying, What to be made like angels, like Christ, to live in eternal blest, joy and felicity? This is for angels, and for them that can walk like angels.

If a prince, a duke, an earl, should send (by the hand of his servant) for some poor, sorry, beggarly scrub, to take her for his master to wife, and the servant should come and say, My Lord & Master such an one, hath sent me to thee, to take thee to him to wife, he is rich, beautiful, and of excellent qualities, he is loving, meek, humble, well-spoken, &c. What now would this poor, sorry, beggarly creature think? What would she say? Or, how would she frame an answer? When king David sent to Abigail, upon this account, and tho she was a rich woman, yet

yet she said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, I Sam. 25. 40, 41. She was confounded, she could not well tell what to say, the offer was so great, beyond what could in reason be expected.

But suppose this great person should second his suit, and send to this sorry creature again, What would she say now? Would she not say? You mock me. But what if he affirms, that he is in good earnest, and that his Lord must have her to wife; yea, suppose he should prevail upon her to credit his message, and to address herself for her journey? Yet behold, every thought of her pedigree confounds her; also her sense of want of beauty makes her ashamed; and if she doth but think of being embraced, the unbelief that is mixed with that thought, whirls her into tremblings: And now she calls herself fool, for believing the messenger, and thinks not to go: If she thinks of being bold, she blushes, and the least thought that she shall be rejected, when she comes at him, makes her look as if she would give up the ghost.

And it is a wonder then to see a soul that is drowned in the sense of glory, and a sense of its own nothingness, to be confounded in itself, and to fear that the glory apprehended, is too great, too good, and too rich for such an one.

That thing, Heaven and eternal glory, is so great, and I that would have it so small, so sorry a creature, that the thoughts of obtaining confounds me.

Thus, I say, doth the greatness of the things desired quite dash and overthrow the mind of the desirer; O it is too big! It is too big; it is too great a mercy.

But coming sinner, let me reason with thee; Thou sayest it is too big, too great. Well, will things that are less satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing

thing than heaven, than glory and eternal life answer thy desires? No, nothing less: Yet these they are too big, and too good for me, even to obtain. Well, as big and as good as they are, God giveth them to such as thou; they are not too big for God to give. No, nor too big to give freely; be content, let God give like himself; he is that eternal God, and giveth like himself. When kings give they do not use to give as poor men do. Hence it is said, that Nabal made a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And again, All these things did Aramnah, as a king, give unto David, 1 Sam. 25. 2 Sam. 24. Now God is a great king, let him give like a king; may let him give like himself, and do thou receive like thyself: He hath all, and thou hast nothing. God told his people of old, that he would save them in truth and in righteousness; and that they should return to, and enjoy the land, which before, for their sins, had spued them out: And then adds, under a supposition of their counting the mercy too good, or too big: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of his people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes, saith the Lord of hosts? Zech. 8. 6.

As who should say, they are now in captivity and little in their own eyes; therefore they think the mercy of returning to Canaan, is a mercy too marvelously big for them to enjoy; but if it be so in their eyes, it is not so in mine: I will do for them like God, if they will but receive my bounty like sinners.

Coming sinner, God can give his heavenly Canaan, and the glory of it unto thee; yea, none ever had them but as a gift, a free gift: He hath given us his Son, How shall he then not with him also freely give us all things?

It was not the worthiness of Abraham or Moses
or

David, or Peter, or Paul, but the mercy of God, that made them inheritors of heaven. If God thinks thee worthy, judge not thyself unworthy; but take it, and be thankful. And it is a good sign, he intends to give thee, if he hath drawn out thy heart to ask, O Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their hearts, thou wilt encline thine ear, Psalm 10. 17.

When God is said to encline his ear, it implies an intention to bestow the mercy desired: Take it therefore, thy wisdom will be to receive, not sticking at thine own unworthiness. It is said, He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory. Again, He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth some needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people, 1 Sam. 2. 8. Psalm 117. 7. 8.

You see also, when God made a wedding for his Son, he called not the great, nor the rich, nor the mighty, but the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. Mat. 22. Luke 14.

Fifthly, Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from the hideous roaring of the devil, who peruses thee. He that hears him roar, must be a mighty Christian, if he can at that time deliver himself from fear. He is called a roaring lion, and then to allude to that in Isaiah, If one look into them, they have darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkness in their very heaven, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Isa. 5. 8.

There are two things, among many, that satan useth to roar out after them that are coming to Jesus Christ.

1. They that are not elected. Or,
2. They that have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To both these I answer briefly.

First,

First, Touching election, out of which the fear of thou art excluded. Why, coming sinner, even the text itself affordeth thee help against this doubt, and that by a double argument.

First, That coming to Christ is, by vertue of the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father; but thou art a coming, therefore God hath given thee, promised thee, and hath drawn thee to Jesus Christ; coming sinner, hold to this: And when Satan beginneth to rore again: Answer, But I feel my heart moving after Jesus Christ. But that would not be, if it were not given of promise, and drawn to Christ by the power of the Father.

Secondly, Jesus Christ hath promised that him that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out. And if he hath said it, will he not make it good. I mean even thy salvation: For as I have said already, not to cast out, is to receive and admit to the benefit of salvation; If then the Father hath given thee, as is manifest by thy coming; and Christ will receive thee, thou coming soul; as 'tis plain he will, because he hath said, He will in no wise cast thee out. Then be confident, and let those conclusions that as naturally flow from the text, as light from the sun, or water from the fountain thy thee.

If Satan therefore objecteth, But thou art not elected, Answer, But I am coming, Satan, I am coming; and that I could not be, but that the Father draws me; and I am coming to such a Lord Jesus as, will in no wise cast me out. Further, Satan, were I not elect, the father would not draw me, nor would the son so graciously open his bosom to me. I am persuaded that not one of the non-elect shall be able to say, no, not in the day of judgment, I did sincerely come to Jesus Christ. Come they may feignedly, as Judas and Simon Magus did; but that is not our question. Therefore, O thou honest-hearted coming

anner, be not afraid but come.

As to the second part of the objection, about sinning the sin against the Holy Ghost: The same argument overthrows that also. But I will argue thus.

First, Coming to Christ, is by vertue of a special gift from the Father; but the Father giveth no such gift to them that have sinned that sin; therefore thou that art coming hast not committed that sin. That the Father giveth no such gift unto them that have sinned that sin, is evident,

1. Because they have sinned themselves out of God's favour; They shall never have forgiveness, Matthew 12. 32. But it is a special favour of God to give unto a man, to come to Jesus Christ; because thereby he obtaineth forgiveness. Therefore he that cometh, hath not sinned that sin.

2. They that have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, have sinned themselves out of an interest in the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; there remains for such no more sacrifice for sin: but God giveth not grace to any of them to come to Christ, that have not a share in the sacrifice of his body and blood. Therefore thou that art coming to him, hast not sinned that sin, Heb. 9. 26.

Secondly, Coming to Christ is by the special drawing of the Father, No man cometh to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: But the Father draweth not him to Christ, for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness by his blood; Therefore they that are coming to Jesus Christ, have not sinned that sin. because he hath allotted them forgiveness by his blood, John 6. 44.

That the Father cannot draw them to Jesus Christ, for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness of sins, is manifest to sense: For that would be a plain mockery, a sham: neither becoming

his wisdom, justice, holiness nor goodness.

Thirdly, Coming to Jesus Christ, lays a man under the promise of forgiveness and salvation. But it is impossible that he that hath sinned this sin, should ever be put under a promise of this. Therefore he that hath sinned that sin, can never have heart to come to Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, Coming to Jesus Christ, lays a man under his intercession; For he ever liveth to make intercession for them that come, Heb. 7. 25. Therefore he that is coming to Jesus Christ cannot have sinned that sin.

Christ has forbidden his people to pray for them that have sinned that sin; and therefore will not pray for them himself; but he prays for them that come.

Fifthly, He that hath sinned this sin, Christ to him of no more worth than is a man that is dead; For he hath crucified to himself the Son of God; yea, and hath also counted his precious blood, as the blood of an unholy thing, Heb. 6. 10. Now, he that hath this low esteem of Christ, will never come to him for life; but a coming man has an high esteem of his person, blood and merits. Therefore he that is coming has not committed that sin.

Sixthly, If he that has sinned this sin, might yet come to Jesus Christ, then must the truth of God be overthrowen, which saith in one place He hath never forgiveness; and in another, I will in no wise cast him out. Therefore, that he may never have forgiveness, he shall never have heart to come to Jesus Christ. It is impossible that such an one should be renewed either to or by repentance, Heb. 6. Wherefore, never trouble thy head, nor heart about this matter: He that cometh to Jesus Christ, cannot have sinned against the Holy Ghost.

Seventhly, Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee

nee, may arise from thine own folly in inventing ;
 ea, in thy chalking out to God a way to bring thee
 ome to Jesus Christ. Some souls that are coming
 o Jesus Christ are great tormentors of themselves
 pon this account : They conclude, that if their
 oming to Jesus Christ be right, they must needs
 e brought home thus and thus : As to instance,
 1. Says one, If God be bringing of me to Jesus
 Christ, then will he load me with the guilt of sin,
 ill he makes me rore again.

2. If God be indeed a bringing me home to Je-
 sus Christ, then must I be assaulted with dreadful
 temptations of the Devil.

3. If God be indeed a bringing me to Jesus
 Christ, then even when I come at him, I shall
 ave wonderful revelations of him.

This is the way that some sinners appoint for
 God : But perhaps he will not walk therein ; yet
 will he bring them to Jesus Christ. But now be-
 cause they come not the way of their own chalk-
 ing out, therefore they are at a loss. They look for
 heavy load and burthen : but perhaps God gives
 them a sight of their lost condition, and addeth
 not that heavy weight and burthen. They look
 for fearful temptations of Satan ; but God sees
 not yet they are not fit for them : Nor is the
 time come that he should be honoured by them
 uch a condition. They look for great and glo-
 rious revelations of Christ, grace and mercy.
 ut perhaps, God only takes the yoke from off
 their jaws, and lays meat before them. And now
 gain, they are at a loss, yet a coming to Christ ;
 drew them (saith God) with the cords of a
 man, with the bands of love : I took the yoke
 om off their jaws, and laid meat unto them,
 ol. 11. 14.

Now I say, If God brings thee to Christ, and
 t by the way that thou hast appointed, then
 ou art at a loss ; and for thy being at a loss, Thou
 G mayest

may't thank thyself. God hath more ways than thou knowest of to bring a sinner to Jesus Christ. But he will not give thee before hand an account by which of them he will bring them to Christ. Isa. 40. 13. Job 33. 13.

Sometimes he hath his way in the whirl-wind but sometimes the Lord is not there, Neh. 12. 1 Kings 19. 11.

If God will deal more gently with thee, than with others of his children, grudge not at it, refuse not the waters that go softly, lest he bring up to thee the waters of the rivers, strong and many even these two smoking fire-brands, the Devil and guilt of sin, Isa. 8. 6, 7. He saith to Peter Follow me: And what thunder did Zacheus hear or see? Zacheus, come down, said Christ; and he came down (says Luke) and received him joyfully.

But had Peter or Zacheus made the objection that thou hast made, and directed the Spirit of the Lord, as thou hast done; they might have looked long enough, before they had found themselves coming to Jesus Christ.

Besides, I will tell thee, that the greatness of sense of sin, the hideous roaring of the Devil yea, and abundance of revelations, will not prove that God is bringing the soul to Jesus Christ: A Balaam, Cain, Judas, and others can witness.

Further, consider, that what thou hast not of these things here, thou mayest have another time and that to thy distraction; Wherefore, in stead of being discontent, because thou art not in the fire, because thou hearest not the sound of the trumpet, and alarm of war; Pray that thou enter not into temptation; yea, come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in that time of need, Plal. 88. 15. Mat. 40. 41. Heb. 4. 16.

Poor creature! Thou criest, If I were tempted, I could come faster, and with more confidence.

lence to Jesus Christ: Thou sayest thou knowest not what. What says Job? Withdraw thy hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid: Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me, Job 23. 21. It is not the over heavy load of sin, but the discovery of mercy; not the roaring of the devil, but the drawing of the Father, that makes a man come to Jesus Christ; I myself know all those things.

True, sometimes, yea, most an end, they that come to Jesus Christ, come the way that thou desirest; the loading, tempted way; but the Lord also leads some by the waters of comfort. If I was to choose, when to go a long journey, I would wit, Whether I would go it in the dead of winter, or in the pleasant spring (tho if it was a very profitable journey as that of coming to Christ is) I would choose to go it through fire and water, before I would lose the benefit;) but I say, If I might choose the time, I would choose to go it in the pleasing spring, because the way would be more delightful, the days longer and warmer, the nights shorter, and not so cold. And it is observable, that that very argument that thou usest to weaken thy strength in the way, that very argument Christ Jesus useth to encourage his beloved to come to him.

Arise, saith he, my love, my fair one, and come away; Why? For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine, with her tender grapes, give a good smell: Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, Song 2. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Trouble not thyself, Coming sinner, if thou wilt thy lost condition by original and actual

fin; If thou seest thy need of the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ; if thou art willing to be found in him; and to take up thy cross, and follow him. Then pray for a fair wind and good weather, and come away. Stick no longer in a mule and doubt about things, but come away to Jesus Christ: Do it, I say, lest thou tempt God to lay the sorrows of a travelling woman upon thee. Thy folly in this thing may make him do it. Mind what follows, Thy sorrows of a travelling woman shall come upon him: Why? He is an unwise son; so he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children, Hos. 13. 13.

Seventhly, Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from those decays that thou findest in thy soul, even while thou art coming to him: Some even as they are coming to Jesus Christ, do find themselves grow worse and worse. And this is indeed a sure trial to the poor coming sinner.

To explain myself: There is such an one coming to Jesus Christ; who when at first he began to look out after him, was sensible, affectionate and broken in spirit; but now is grown dark, senseless, hard-hearted, and inclining to neglect spiritual duties, &c. Besides, he now finds in himself inclination to unbelief, atheism, blasphemy, and the like; now he finds he cannot tremble at God's word, his judgment, nor at the apprehension of hell fire. Neither can he, as he thinketh, be sorry for these things. Now this is a sad dispensation: The man under the sixth head, complaineth for want of a temptation, but thou hast enough of them; art thou glad of them, tempted, coming sinner? They that never were exercised with them, may think it a fine thing to be within their rage; but he that is there, is ready to sweat blood for sorrow of heart, and to howl for vexation of spirit. The

This man is in the wilderness among wild beasts: Here he sees a bear, there a lion, yonder a leopard, a wolf, a dragon: Devils of all sorts, doubts of all sorts, fears of all sorts, haunt and molest his soul; here he sees smoke, yea feels fire and brimstone scattered upon his secret places; he hears the sound of an horrible tempest.

O! my friends, even the Lord Jesus, that knew all things, even he saw no pleasure in temptations, nor did he desire to be with them; Wherefore one text saith, He was led; and another, He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, Matth. 1. 4. Mark 1. 12.

But to return, thus it happeneth sometimes to them that are coming to Jesus Christ. A sad hap indeed; one would think, that he that is flying from wrath to come, has little need of such clogs as these; and yet so it is, and woful experience proves it: The church of old complaineth That her enemies overtook her between the streights: Just between hope and fear, heaven & hell. Lam. 1.

This man feeleth the infirmity of his flesh; he findeth a proneness in himself to be desperate: now he chides with God, flings and tumbles like a wild bull in a net, and till the guilt of all returns upon himself to the crushing of him to pieces: Yet he feeleth his heart so hard, that he can find, as he thinks, no kind falling under any of his miscarriages. Now he is a lump of confusion in his own eyes, whose spirit and actions are without order.

Temptations serve the Christian, as the shepherd's dog serveth the silly sheep that is coming behind the flock, he runs upon it, pulls it down, worries it, wounds it, and grievously bedabbles it with dirt and wet, in the lowest places of the

furrows of the field, and not leaving it until it is half-dead, nor then neither, except God rebuke.

Here is now room for fear of being cast away. Now I see I am lost, says the sinner: This is now coming to Jesus Christ, says the sinner: Such a desperate hard and wretched heart as mine cannot be a gracious one, saith the sinner: And bid such an one be better, he says, I cannot, no I cannot.

Quest. But what will you say to a soul in this condition?

Answer. I will say, That temptations have attended the best of God's people; I will say, that temptations come to do us good; and I will say also that there is a difference betwixt growing worse and worse, and thy seeing more clearly how bad thou art.

There is a man of an ill-favour'd countenance who hath too high a conceit of his beauty; and wanting the benefit of a glass, he still stands in his own conceit; at last a linnen is sent unto him, who draweth his ill-favour'd face to the life; now looking thereon, he begins to be convinced he is not half so handsome as he thought he was. Coming sinner, thy temptations are these painters, they have drawn out thy ill-favour'd heart to the life; and have let it before thine eyes, & now thou seest how ill-favour'd thou art.

Hezekiah was a good man, yet when he lay sick (for ought I know) he had somewhat too good an opinion of his heart; and for ought I know also, the Lord might upon his recovery leave him to a temptation, that he might better know all that was in his heart. Compare Isa. 38. 1, 2, 3. with 2 Chron. 32. 31.

Alas! we are sinful out of measure, but see it not to the full, until an hour of temptation comes: But when it comes, it doth as the painter doth, he draweth out our heart to the life. Yet the sight of what we are should not keep us from coming to Jesus Christ. There

There are two ways by which God lets a man into a sight of the naughtiness of his heart: One is, by the light of the word and spirit of God; and the other is, by the temptations of the Devil. But by the first, we see our naughtiness one way, and by the second another. By the light of the word, and Spirit of God, thou hast a sight of thy naughtiness, and by the light of the sun, thou hast a sight of the spots and defilements that are in thy house or raiment. Which light gives thee to see a necessity of cleansing, but maketh not the blemishes to spread more abominably. But when Satan comes, when he tempts he puts life & rage into our sins, and turns them, as it were, into so many devils within us. Now like prisoners they attempt to break through the prison of our body; they will attempt to get out at our eyes, mouth, ears, any ways; to the scandal of the gospel, & reproach of religion, to the darkening of our evidences, and damning of our souls.

But I shall say, as I said before, this hath oft-times been the lot of God's people. And, No temptation hath overtaken thee but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able, 1 Cor 10. 13. See the book of Job, the book Psalms, and that of Lamentations. And remember farther, that Christ himself was tempted to blaspheme, to worship the Devil, and to murder himself, Matthew 4. Luke 4. (Temptations worse than which thou canst hardly be overtaken with.) But he was sinless, that is true: And he is thy Saviour, and that is as true: Yea, it is as true also, that by his being tempted, he became the Conqueror of the tempter, and a Succourer of these that are tempted, Col. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 15. chap. 4. 15, 16.

Quest. But what should be the reason that some that are coming to Christ should be so lamentably cast down and buffeted with temptations?

Ans. It may be for several causes.

First, Some that are coming to Christ, cannot be persuaded, until the temptation comes, that they are so vile as the scripture saith they are. True they see so much of their wretchedness, as to drive them to Christ; but there is an *over* and *above* of wickedness, which they see not. Peter little thought that he would have had cursing, swearing and lying, and an inclination in his heart to deny his Master, before the temptation came: But when that indeed came upon him, then he found it there to his sorrow, John 13. 36, 37, 38. Mark 14. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 68, 70, 71, 72.

Secondly, Some that are coming to Jesus Christ, are too much affected with their own graces, and too little taken with Christ's person; wherefore God, to take them off from doting on their own jewels, and that they may look more to the person undertaking, and merits of his Son, plunges himself into the ditch by temptations. And this I take to be the meaning of Job: If I wash me, said he, with snow water, and make myself never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me, Job 9. 30. Job had been a little too much tampering with his own graces, and setting his excellencies a little too high; as these texts make manifest, Job 33. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. chap. 34. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. chap. 35. 2, 3. chap. 38. 1, 2. chap. 40. 1, 2, 3, 4. chap. 42. 3, 4, 5, 6. But by that the temptations were ended, you find him better taught.

Yea, God doth oft-times even for this thing, as it were, take our graces from us, and so leave us almost quite to ourselves, and the tempter, that we may learn not to love the picture more than

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the person of his Son. See how he dealt with them in the 16th of Ezekiel, and the 2d of Hosea.

Thirdly, Perhaps thou hast been given too much to judge thy brother, to condemn thy brother, because a poor tempted man: And God, to bring down the pride of thy heart, letteth the tempter loose upon thee, that thou also mayst feel thyself weak. For pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall, Prov. 16. 18.

Fourthly, It may be thou hast dealt a little too roughly with those that GOD hath this way wounded; not considering thyself lest thou also be tempted: And therefore God hath suffered it to come unto thee, Gal. 6. 1.

Fifthly, It may be thou wast given to slumber & sleep, and therefore these temptations were sent to awake thee. You know that Peter's temptation came upon him after his sleeping; then, instead of watching and praying, then he denied, and denied, and denied his master, Mat. 26.

Sixthly, It may be thou hast presumed too far, and stood too much in thine own strength, and therefore is a time of temptation come to thee. This was also one cause why it fell upon Peter! Tho all men forsake thee, yet will not I. Ah! that's the way to be tempted indeed, John 13. 36, 37, 38.

Seventhly, It may be God intends to make thee wise, to speak a word in season to others that are afflicted; and therefore he suffereth thee to be tempted. Christ was tempted that he might be able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. 2. 18.

Eighthly, It may be Satan hath dared God to suffer him to tempt thee; promising himself, that if he would but let him do it, Thou wilt curse him to his face. Thus he obtained leave against Job; wherefore take heed tempted soul, lest thou prove the devil's sayings true, Job 1. chap 2.

Ninthly, It may be thy graces must be tried in the
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fire,

fire that that rule that cleaveth to them, may be taken away, and themselves proved, both before angels and devils, to be far better than of gold that perisheth; it may be also, that thy graces are to receive special praises and honour, and glory at the coming of the Lord Jesus to judgment for all the exploits that thou has acted by them against hell, and its infernal crew, in the day of thy temptation, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.

Tenthly, It may be God would have others learn by thy sighs, groans and complaints under temptations, to beware of those sins; for the sake of which thou art at present delivered to thy tormentors.

But to conclude this, put the worst to the worst and then things will be bad enough; suppose that thou art to this day without the grace of God, yet thou art but a miserable creature, sinner, that has need of a blessed Saviour; and the text presents thee with one as good as thy kind, as heart can wish: who also for thy encouragement, saith, And him that cometh to me, will in no wise cast out.

To come therefore to a Word of Application.

IS it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ are oft-times heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this teacheth us these things:

First, That faith and doubting, may at the same time have their residence in the same soul. O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? Matth. 14. 31. He saith not, *O thou of no faith* but, *O thou of little faith*. Because he had a *Little Faith* in the midst of his so many doubts. The same is true, even of many that are coming to Jesus Christ: They come, and they fear they

come

come not, and doubt they come not. When they look upon the promise, or a word of encouragement by faith, then they come; but when they look upon themselves, or the difficulties that ly before them, then they doubt. Bid me come, said Peter: Come, said Christ. So he went down out of the ship to go to Jesus, but his hap was to go to him upon the water; there was the trial. So it is with the poor desiring soul: Bid me come, says the sinner; Come, says Christ, and I will in no wise cast thee out: So he comes, but his hap is to come upon the water, upon drowning difficulties; if therefore, the wind of temptations blow, the waters of doubts and fears will presently arise, and this coming sinner will begin to sink, if he has but little faith.

But you will find here in Peter's little faith, a two fold act, to wit, Coming and crying: Little faith cannot come all the way without crying: So long as its holy boldness lasts, so long it can come with peace; but when its so, it can come no further, it will go the rest of the way with crying. Peter went as far as his little faith would carry him: He also cried as far as his little faith would help, Lord, save me, I perish: And so with coming and crying he was kept from sinking, tho he had but a little faith. Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Secondly, Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this shews us a reason of that dejection, and those castings down, that very often we perceive to be in them that are coming to Jesus Christ. Why, it is because they are afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them. The poor world they mock us, because we are a dejected people; I mean, because
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we are sometimes so; but they do not know the cause of our objections. Could we be persuaded even then, when we are dejected, that Jesus Christ would indeed receive us, it would make us fly over their heads, and would put more gladness into our hearts, than in the time in which their corn wine and oyl increases, Psal. 4. 6, 7.

Thirdly, Is it so, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid, that he will not receive them? Then this shews, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are awakened, sensible, considering people: For fear cometh from sense, consideration of things. They are sensible of sin, sensible of the curse due thereto; they are also sensible of the glorious Majesty of God, and of what a blessed, blessed thing it is to be received of Jesus Christ: The glory of heaven, and the evil of sin, these things they consider, and are sensible of. When I remember, I am afraid; when I consider, I am afraid. Job 21. 6. chap. 36. 15.

These things dash their spirits, being awakened and sensible. Were they dead like other men they would not be afflicted with fear as they are. For dead men fear not, feel not, care not; but the living and sensible man, he it is that is oft-time heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will not receive him. I say, the dead & senseless are not distressed. They presume, they are groundlessly confident. Who so bold as blind Byard? These indeed should fear, and be afraid, because they are not coming to Jesus Christ. O the hell, the fire, the pit, the wrath of God, and torment of hell, that are prepared for poor neglecting sinners: How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Heb. 2. 3. But they want sense of things, and so cannot fear.

Fourthly, Is it so, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ are oft-times heartily afraid that he will

will not receive them? Then this would teach old Christians to pity and pray for young comers; You know the heart of a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. You know the fears, and doubts, and terrors, that take hold of them; for that they sometimes took hold of you. Wherefore, pity them, pray for them, encourage them: they need all this: Guilt hath overtaken them, fear of the wrath of God hath overtaken them: Perhaps they are within the light of hell-fire, and the fear of going thither is burning hot within their hearts. You may know how strangely Satan is suggesting his devilish doubts up to them, if possible he may sink and drown them, with the multitude and weight of them. Old Christians mend up the path for them, take the stumbling blocks out of the way, lest that which is feeble and weak be turned aside, but let it rather be healed. Heb. 12.

I come now to the next Observation, and shall speak a little to that; to wit,

THAT Jesus Christ would not have them that in truth are coming to him, Once think that he will cast them out.

The text is full of this: For he saith, *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Now, if he saith, *I will not*; he would not have us think, *He will.*

This is yet farther manifest by these considerations;

First, Christ Jesus did forbid even them that as yet were not coming to him, once to think him such an one. Do not think, said he, that I will accule you to the Father, John 5. 45.

These, as I said, were such that as yet were not coming to him; for he saith of them a little before

before : And ye will not come to me : For the respect they had to the honour of men kept them back. Yet, I say Jesus Christ gives them to understand, that tho he might justly reject them yet he would not, but bids them not once think that he would accuse them to the Father. Now not to accuse (with Christ) is to plead for : For Christ in these things stands not neuter between the Father and sinners. So then, if Jesus Christ would not have them think that yet will not come to him, that he will accuse them ; then he would not that they should think so that in truth are coming to him ; And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Secondly, When the woman taken in adultery (even in the very act) was brought before Jesus Christ ; so he carried it both by words and actions, that evidently enough made it manifest, that condemning and calling out, were such things, for the doing of which he came not into this world.

Wherefore, when they had set her before him, and had laid to her charge her hainous fact, he stooped down, and with his finger wrote upon the ground, as tho he heard them not. Now, what did he do by this his carriage, but testify plainly that he was not for receiving accusations against poor sinners, whoever accused by ? And observe, though they continue asking, thinking at last to force him to condemn her ; yet then he so answered, as that he drove all condemning persons from her. And then he adds for her encouragement to come to him, Neither do I condemn thee, go, and sin no more, John 8. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. &c.

Not but that he indeed abhorred the fact, but he would not condemn the woman for the sin, because that was not his office : He was not sent into the world to condemn the world, but that the world

world through him might be saved, John 3. 17. Now if Christ tho urged to it, would not condemn the guilty woman, tho she was far at present from coming to him, he would not that they should once think, that he will cast them out that in truth are coming to him; And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Thirdly, Christ plainly bids the coming sinner, come; and forbids them to entertain any such thought as that He will cast them out. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Isa. 55. 7.

The Lord by bidding the unrighteous forsake his thoughts, doth in special forbid (as I have said) viz. those thoughts that hinder the coming man in his progress to Jesus Christ, His unbelieving thoughts.

Therefore he bids him not only forsake his ways but his thoughts; Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. 'Tis not enough to forsake one if thou wilt come to Jesus Christ; because the other will keep thee from him. Suppose a man forsakes his wicked ways, his debauched and filthy life; Yet if these thoughts, That Jesus Christ will not receive him be entertained and nourished in his heart; them thoughts will keep him from coming to Jesus Christ.

Sinner, coming sinner; art thou for coming to Jesus Christ: Yes, says the sinner. Forsake thy wicked ways then. So I do, says the sinner. Why comest thou then so slowly? Because I am hindered. What hinders? Has God forbidden thee? No. Art thou not willing to come faster? Yes, yet I cannot. Well, pri-thee be plain with me and tell me the reason and ground of thy discouragement: Why (saith the sinner) tho God

forbids me not, and though I am willing come faller; yet there naturally ariseth this, and that, and the other thought in my heart, that hinders my speed to Jesus Christ. Sometimes I think I am not cholen; sometimes I think I am not called; sometimes I think I am come too late, and sometimes I think I know not what it is to come. Also, one while I think I have no grace, and then again, that I cannot pray; and then again, I think that I am a very hypocrite; and these things keep me from coming to Jesus Christ.

Look ye now, did not I tell you so? These are thoughts yet remaining in the heart, even of those who have forsaken their wicked ways, and with those thoughts they are more plagued than with any thing else; because they hinder their coming to Jesus Christ; for the sin of unbelief, (which is the original of all these thoughts) is that which besets a coming sinner more easily than doth his ways, Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4.

But now since Jesus Christ commands thee to forsake these thoughts, forsake them coming sinner; and if thou forsake them not, thou transgresseth the commands of Christ, and abidest thine own tormentor, and keepest thyself from establishment in grace: If ye will not believe ye shall not be established, Ita. 7. 9.

Thus you see how Jesus Christ setteth himself against such thoughts that any way discourage the coming sinner, and thereby truly vindicate the doctrine we have in hand; viz. That Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think, that he will cast them out. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

I come.

I come now to the Reasons of the Observation.

1. **I**F *Jesus Christ* should allow thee *once* to think, that he will cast thee out: He must allow thee to think, that he will falsify his words; for he hath said, *I will in no wise cast out.* But Christ would not that thou shouldst count him as one that will falsify his word: For he saith of himself, *I am the Truth.* Therefore, he would not, that any that in truth are coming to him, should *once* think, that he will cast them out.

Secondly, If *Jesus Christ* should allow the sinner that in truth is coming to him, *once* to think, that he will cast him out; then he must allow and do countenance the first appearance of unbelief; the which he counteth his greatest enemy, and against which he has bent even his holy gospel. Therefore *Jesus Christ* would not, that they that in truth are coming to him, should *once* think, that he will cast them out. See Matth. 14. 31. chap. 21. 21. Mark 11. 23. Luke 24. 25.

Thirdly, If *Jesus Christ* would allow the coming sinner *once* to think, that he will cast him out: Then he must allow him to make a question, Whether he is willing to receive his Father's gift; for the coming sinner is his Father's gift; as also says the text; but he tellieth, All that the Father giveth him, shall come to him: And him that cometh, he will in no wise cast out. Therefore, *Jesus Christ* would not have him, that in truth is coming to him, *once* to think, that he will cast him out.

Fourthly, If *Jesus Christ* should allow them *once* to think (that indeed are coming to him) that he will cast them out, he must allow them to think, that he will despise and reject the drawing of his Father.

Father: For no man can come to him, but who the Father draweth. But it would be high blasphemy, and damnable wickedness once to imagine thus. Therefore Jesus Christ would not have him that cometh, once think that he will cast him out.

Fifthly, If Jesus Christ should allow those that indeed are coming to him, once to think, that he will cast them out; he must allow them to think that he will be unfaithful to the trust and charge that his Father hath committed to him, which is to save, and not to lose any thing of that which he hath given unto him to save, John 6. 36. But the Father hath given him a charge, to save the coming sinner; Therefore, it cannot be, that he should allow, that such an one should once think that he will cast him out.

Sixthly, If Jesus Christ should allow, that they should once think, that are coming to him, that he will cast them out; then he must allow them to think, that he will be unfaithful to his office of priesthood: For, as by the first part of it, he paid price for, and ransomed souls; so by the second part thereof, he continually maketh intercession to God for them that come, Heb. 7. 25. But he cannot allow us to question his faithful execution of his priesthood. Therefore he cannot allow us once to think, That the coming sinner shall be cast out.

Seventhly, If Jesus Christ should allow us once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out: Then he must allow us to question his will, or power, or merit to save. But he cannot allow us once to question any of these: Therefore not once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out.

1. He cannot allow us to question his will: For he saith in the text, *I will* in no wise cast out.

2. He cannot allow us to question his Power. For

For the Holy Ghost saith, he is able to save to the utmost them that come.

2. He cannot allow us to question the efficacy of his merit: For the blood of Christ cleaneth he cometh from all sin, 1 John 1. Therefore he cannot allow, That he that is coming to him, should once think, that he will cast him out.

Eightly, If Jesus Christ should allow the coming sinner once to think that he will cast him out; he must allow him to give the lye to the manifest testimony of the Father, Son and Spirit; yea, to the whole gospel contained in Moses, the Prophets, the book of Psalms, and that commonly called the New Testament. But he cannot allow of this; Therefore, not that the coming sinner should once think, That he will cast him out.

Ninthly, Lastly, If Jesus Christ should allow him that is coming to him, Once to think that he will cast him out: He must allow him to question his Father's oath; which he in truth, and righteousness hath taken; that they might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to Jesus Christ: But he cannot allow this; therefore he cannot allow that the coming sinner should once think, that he will cast him out. Heb. 6.

I come now to make some General Use and Application of the Whole, and so to draw towards a Conclusion.

THE first use, *A Use of Information*: And it informeth us, that men by nature are far off from Christ.

Let me a little more improve this use, by speaking to these three questions.

1. Where is he that is coming to Jesus Christ?

2. What

2. What is he that is coming to Jesus Christ?
3. Whither is he to go that cometh to Jesus Christ.

First: Where is he?

1. *Answer.* He is far from God, he is without him, even alienate from him, both in his understanding, will, affections, judgment and conscience, Eph. 2. 12. chap. 4. 8.

2. He is far from Jesus Christ, who is the only deliverer of men from hell-fire, Psal. 73. 27.

3. He is far from the work of the Holy Ghost, the work of regeneration and a second creation, without which no man shall see the kingdom of heaven, John 3. 3.

4. He is far from being righteous, from the righteousness that should make him acceptable in God's sight, Isa. 46. 14.

5. He is under the power and dominion of sin. Sin reigneth in and over him; it dwelleth in every Faculty of his soul, and member of his body; so that from head to foot there is no place clean, Isa. 1. 6. Rom. 3. 9. ----- 18.

6. He is in the pest-house with Uzziah; and excluded the camp of Israel with the lepers, 2 Chron. 26. 21. Numb. 5. 3.

7. His life is among the unclean: He is in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, Job 36. 14. Numb. 5. 3.

8. He is in sin, in the flesh, in death, in the snare of the Devil, and is taken captive by him at his will, 1 Cor. 15. 17. Rom. 8. 8. 1 John 3. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

9. He is under the curse of the law, and the Devil dwells in him, and hath the mastery of him, Gal. 3. 13. Eph. 2. 2, 3. Acts 26. 18.

10. He is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goes; for darkness has blinded his eyes.

11. He

11. He is in the broad way that leadeth to Destruction; and holding on, he will assuredly go at the broad gate, and so down the stairs to hell.

Secondly, What is he that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. He is counted one of God's enemies, Luke 9. 14. Rom. 8. 7.

2. He is a child of the Devil, and of hell; so the Devil begat him as to his sinful nature; and hell must swallow him at last, because he cometh not to Jesus Christ, John 8. 44. 1 John 3. 8. Mat. 4. 15. Psalm 9. 7.

3. He is a child of wrath, an heir of it; 'tis his portion, and God will repay it him to his face, Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.

4. He is a self-murderer, he wrongeth his own soul, and is one that loveth death, Prov. 1. 18. Chap. 8. 35, 36.

5. He is a companion for devils, and damned men, Prov. 21. 16.

Thirdly, Whither is he like to go, that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. He that cometh not to him, is like to go farther from him; so every sin is a step farther from Jesus Christ, Hos. 11.

2. As he is in darkness, so he is like to go on in it. For Christ is the light of the world, and he that comes not to him, walketh in darkness, John 8. 12.

3. He is like to be removed at last, as far from God and Christ, and heaven, and all felicity, as an infinite God can remove him, Mat. 12. 14.

But Secondly, This doctrine of coming to Christ informeth us, Where poor destitute sinners may find life for their souls, and that is in Christ. This life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath life. And again, Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord, Prov. 8.

Now

Now for farther enlargement, I will also here propound three more questions,

1. What life is in Christ? 2. Who may have it? 3. Upon what terms?

First, What life is in Jesus Christ?

1. There is justifying life in Christ. Man by sin, is dead in law; and Christ only can deliver him by his righteousness and blood, from this death into a state of life: For God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him, 1 John 4. 9. That is, through the righteousness which he should accomplish, and the death that he should die.

2. There is eternal life in Christ; life that's endless; life for ever and ever. He hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John 5.

Now justification and eternal salvation being both in Christ, and no where else to be had for men, who would not come to Jesus Christ?

Secondly, Who may have this life?

I answer, Poor, helpless, miserable sinners: Particularly,

1. Such as are willing to have it; Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life, Rev. 22. 17.

2. He that thirsteth for it, I will give to him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life, Rev. 22. 17.

3. He that is weary of his sins. This is the rest, whereby you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing, Isa. 28. 12.

4. He that is poor and needy, He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

5. He that followeth after him, Cryeth for life. He that follows me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, John 8. 12.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Upon what terms may he have this?

Answer. Freely, sinner do'st thou hear? Thou shalt have it freely. Let him take of the water of life freely: I will give him of the fountain of the water of life freely; And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both, Luke 7.

Freely, without money, or without price, Holy one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: and he that hath no money, come, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price, Isa. 55. 1.

Sinner, art thou thirsty? Art thou weary? Art thou willing? Come then, and regard not our stuff; for all the good that is in Christ, is offered to the coming sinner, without money, and without price. He has life to give away to such as want it, and that have not a penny to purchase it; and he will give it freely. Oh, what a blessed condition is the coming sinner?

But, Thirdly, This doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informeth us, That it is to be had no where else: Might it be had any where else, the text, and him that spoke it, would be of little set by: For what great matter is there, I will in no wise cast out, If another stood by that could receive them: But here appears the glory of Christ, that none but he can save. And here appears his love, that none can save but he, yet he is not coy in saving. But him that cometh to me, (saith he) I will in no wise cast out.

That none can save but Jesus Christ is evident from Acts 4. 12. Neither is there salvation in any other: And he hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. If life could have been had
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any where else, it should have been in the law. But it is not in the law; For by the deeds of the law no man living shall be justified; and if not justified, then no life.

Therefore life is no where else to be had, but in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3.

Quest. But why would God so order it, That life should be had no where else, but in Jesus Christ?

Ans. There is reason for it; and that both with respect to God and us.

First, With respect to God.

First, That it might be in a way to justice, as well as mercy. And in a way of justice it could not have been, if it had not been by Christ; because he, and he only, was able to answer the demand of the law, and give for sin what the justice thereof required. All angels had been crushed down to hell for ever, had that curse been laid upon them for our sins, which was laid upon Jesus Christ; but it was laid upon him, and he bare it, and answered the penalty, and redeemed his people from under it, with that satisfaction to Divine Justice, that God himself doth now proclaim, that he is faithful and just to forgive us, if by faith we shall venture to Jesus and trust to what he has done for life, Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26. John 1. 9.

Seventhly, Life must be by Jesus Christ, that God might be adored and magnified, for finding out this way. This is the Lord's doings, that in all things he might be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thirdly, It must be by Jesus Christ, that life might be at God's dispose, who hath great pity for the poor, the lowly, the meek, the broken in heart, and for them that others care not for, Psalm 34. 6. Psalm 138. 6. Psalm 25. Psalm 51.

Fourthly, Life must be in Christ, to cut off boasting from the lips of men. This also is the Apostle's reason in Rom. 3. 20, 27. & Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Secondly, Life must be in Jesus Christ, with respect to us.

First, That we might have it upon the easiest terms, to wit, Freely; as a gift, not as wages; was it in Moses' hand, we should come hardly at it; was it in the Pope's hand, we should pay soundly for it. But thanks be to God, it is in Christ, hid up in him, and by him to be communicated to sinners upon easy terms even for receiving, accepting, and embracing with thanksgiving, as the scriptures plainly declare, John 1. 11. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 4. Heb. 11. 13. Col. 3. 13, 14. 15.

Secondly, Life is in Christ for us, that it might not be upon so brittle a foundation as indeed it would had it been any where else. The Law itself is weak because of us, as to this: But Christ is a tried Stone, a sure Foundation, One that will not fail to bear thy burthen, and to receive thy soul, coming sinner.

Thirdly, Life is in Christ, that it might be sure to all the seed. Alas! the best of us, was life left in our hands, to be sure we should forfeit it over, and over, and over: Or, was it in any other and, we should by our often backslidings offend him, that at last he would shut up his bowels, in everlasting displeasure against us. But now it is in Christ, it is with One that can pity, pray for pardon, yea, multiply pardons: It is with One that can have compassion upon us, when we are out of the way, with One that hath a heart to fetch us again, when we are gone away, with One that can pardon without upbraiding. Blessed be God, that life is in Christ, or now 'tis sure to all the seed.

But Fourthly, This doctrine of coming to Jesus
H Christ

Christ for life, informs us of the evil of unbelief; that wicked thing that is the only, or chief hinderance to the coming sinner. Doth the text say, Come, doth it say, And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out? Then what an evil is that, that keepeth sinners from coming to Jesus Christ? and that evil is unbelief? For by faith we come; by unbelief we keep away. Therefore it is said to be that, by which a soul is said to depart from God; because it was that which at first caused the world to go off from him, and that also that keeps them from him to this day. And it doth the more easily, because it doth it with a wile.

This sin may be called, The white Devil, for it often times in its mischievous doing in the soul, shews as if it was an angel of light: yea, it acteth like a counsellor of heaven. Therefore a little to discourse of this evil disease.

First, It is that sin, above all others, that hath some shew of reason in its attempt: For it keeps the soul from Christ, by pretending its present unsuitness, and unpreparedness; as want of more sense of sin, want of more repentance, want of more humility, want of a more broken heart.

Secondly, It is the sin that most suiteth with the conscience; The conscience of the coming sinner tells him, that he hath nothing good, that he stands inditible for ten thousand talents; that he is a very ignorant, blind, and hard-hearted sinner, unworthy to be once taken notice of by Jesus Christ; and will you (says unbelief) in such a case as you now are, presume to come to Jesus Christ?

Thirdly, It is the sin that most suiteth with our sense of feeling. The coming sinner feels the working of sin, of all manner of sin and wretchedness in his flesh; he also feels the wrath and judgment of God due to sin, and oft-times stagger

vers under it. Now, says unbelief, you may see you have no grace, for that which works in you is corruption! You may also perceive that God doth not love you, because the sense of his wrath abides upon you. Therefore, how can you bear the face to come to Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, It is that sin above all others, that most suiteth the wisdom of our flesh. The wisdom of our flesh thinks it prudence to question a while, to stand back a while, to hearken to both sides a while, and not to be rash, sudden or unadvised in too bold a presuming upon Jesus Christ. And this wisdom unbelief falls in with.

Fifthly, It is this sin above all other, that continually is whispering the soul in the ear with mistrusts of the faithfulness of God in keeping promise to them that come to Jesus Christ for life. It also suggests mistrust about Christ's willingness to receive it, and save it. And no sin can do this so artificially, as unbelief.

Sixthly, It is also that sin which is always at hand to enter an objection against this, or that promise, that by the Spirit of God is brought to our heart to comfort us: And if the poor coming sinner is not aware of it, it will by some exception, slight, trick, or cavil, quickly wrest from him the promise again, and he shall have but little benefit of it.

Seventhly, It is that above all other sins, that weakens our prayers, our faith, our love, our diligence, our hope and expectations: It even taketh the heart away from God in duty.

Eighthly, Lastly, This sin, as I have said even now, it appears in the soul with so many sweet pretences to safety and security, that it is, as it were, counsel sent from heaven, bidding the soul be wise, wary, confederate, well advised, &c. take heed of too rash a venture upon believing. Be sure first, that God loves you; take hold

of no promise until you are forced by God unto it; neither be you sure of your salvation, doubt it still, tho the testimony of the Lord has been often confirmed in you: Live not by faith but by sense: And when you can neither see nor feel, then fear and mistrust, then doubt and question all. This is the devilish counsel of unbelief, which is so covered over with specious pretences, that the wisest Christian can hardly shake off these reasonings.

But to be brief; let me here give the *Christian Reader* a more particular description of the qualities of unbelief, by opposing faith unto it, in these twenty five particulars.

First, Faith believeth the word of God, but unbelief questioneth the certainty of the same, *Plal. 106. 24.*

Secondly, Faith believeth the word, because it is true, but unbelief doubteth thereof, because it is true, *1 Tim. 4. 3. John 8. 45.*

Thirdly, Faith sees more in a promise of God to help, than in all other things to hinder. But unbelief, notwithstanding God's promise, faith, How can these things be? *Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21. 2 Kings 7. 2. John 3. 11, 12.*

Fourthly, Faith will make thee see love in the Heart of Christ, when with his mouth he giveth reproofs. But unbelief will imagine wrath in his heart, when with his mouth and word he saith, he loves us, *Mat. 15. 22-----28. Numb. 13. 2. 2 Chron. 14. 3.*

Fifthly, Faith will help the soul to wait, tho God defers to give. But unbelief will take sin and throw up all, if God makes any tarrying, *Plalm 25. 5. Isa. 8. 17. 2 Kings 6. 33. Plalm 100. 13, 14.*

Sixthly, Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears; but unbelief causeth fears in the midst

comfort, 2 Chron. 20. 20, 21. Matth. 8. 26
Luke 24. 36, 37.

Seventhly, Faith will suck sweetness out of God's
od, but unbelief can find no comfort in his great-
est Mercies, Psal. 13. 4. Numb. 21.

Eightly, Faith maketh great burthens light;
but unbelief maketh light ones intolerably heavy,
Cor. 14. 14, --- 18. Mal. 1. 12, 13.

Ninthly, Faith helpeth us when we are down;
but unbelief throws us down when we are up,
Mic. 7. 8, 9, 10. Heb. 4. 11.

Tenthly, Faith brings us near to God, when
we are far from him; but unbelief puts us far
from God when we are near to him, Heb. 10. 22.
chap. 3. 12, 13.

Eleventhly, Where faith reigns, it declareth
men to be the friends of God; but where unbe-
lief reigns, it declareth them to be his enemies,
James 5. 23. Heb. 3. 18. Rev. 21. 8.

Twelfthly, Faith putteth a man under grace;
but unbelief holdeth him under wrath, Rom. 3.
25, 26. chap. 14. 16. Eph. 2. 8. John 3. 38.
John 5. 10. Heb. 3. 18. Mark 16. 16.

Thirteenthly, Faith purifieth the heart, but
unbelief keepeth it polluted and impaired, Acts 15.
Tit. 1. 15, 16.

Fourteenthly, By Faith the righteousness of
Christ is imputed to us; but by unbelief we are
set up under the law to perish, Rom. 4. 23, 24.
chap. 11. 32.

Fifteenthly, Faith maketh our work acceptable
to God through Christ, but whatsoever is of unbe-
lief is sin: For without faith it is impossible to
please him, Heb. 11. 4, 5. Rom. 14. 23.

Sixteenthly, Faith gives us peace and comfort
to our souls; but unbelief worketh trouble and
disturbings, like the restless waves of the sea, Rom.
1. James 6. 1.

Seventeenthly, Faith makes us see preciousness

in Christ; but unbelief sees no form, beauty or comeliness in him, 1 Pet. 2. 7. Isa. 51. 1, 2, 3.

Eighteenthly, By faith we have our life in Christ's fulness; but by unbelief we starve and pine away, Gal. 2. 20.

Nineteenthly, Faith giveth us the victory over the law, sin, death, the Devil, and all evils; but unbelief leaveth us obnoxious to them all, 2 John 5. 4, 5. Luke 12. 26.

Twentieth, Faith will shew us more excellency in things not seen than in things that are; but unbelief sees more in things that are, than in things that will be hereafter, 2 Cor. 4. 14. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27. 1 Cor. 15. 32.

Twenty first, Faith makes the ways of God pleasant and admirable; but unbelief maketh them heavy and hard, Gal. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 10, 11. John 6. 60. Psal. 2. 3.

Twenty second, By faith, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob possessed the land of promise; but because of unbelief, neither Aaron, nor Moses, nor Miriam, could get thither, Heb. 11. 9. chap. 3. 19.

Twenty third, By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red-sea, but by unbelief the generality of them perished in the wilderness, Heb. 11. 20. Jude 5.

Twenty fourth, By faith Gideon did more with three hundred men, and a few empty pitchers, than all the twelve tribes could do; because they believed not God, Judges 7. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Numb. 14. 11, 14.

Twenty fifth, By faith Peter walked upon the water; but by unbelief he began to sink, Mat. 14. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Thus might many more be added, which for brevity-sake I omit, Beseeching every one that thinketh he hath a soul to save, or be damned, to take heed of unbelief. Lest seeing there is a promise

promise left us of entering into his rest, any of us by unbelief should indeed come short of it.

The Second Use : an Use of Examination.

WE come to an *Use of Examination*. Sinner, thou hast heard of the necessity of coming to Christ ; also of the willingness of Christ to receive the coming soul : Together with the benefit that they by him shall have that indeed come to him. Put thyself now upon this serious enquiry. Am I indeed come to Jesus Christ ?

Motives plenty I might here urge, to prevail with thee to a conscientious performance of this duty : As,

1. Thou art in sin, in the flesh, in death, in the snare of the Devil, and under the curse of the law, if you are not coming to Jesus Christ.

2. There is no way to be delivered from these, but by coming to Jesus Christ

3. If thou comest, Jesus Christ will receive thee, and will in no wise cast thee out.

4. Thou wilt not repent in the day of judgment, if now thou comest to Jesus Christ.

5. But thou wilt surely mourn at last, if now thou shalt refuse to come ; And,

6. Lastly, Now thou hast been invited to come ; now will thy judgment be greater, and thy damnation more fearful, if thou shalt yet refuse, than if thou hadst never heard of coming to Christ.

Object. But we hope we are come to Jesus Christ.

Answer. 'Tis well if it proves so. But lest thou shoudst speak without ground, and so fall unawares into hell-fire ; let us examine a little.

First, Art thou indeed coming to Jesus Christ ? What hast thou left behind thee ? What didst thou come away from, in thy coming to Jesus Christ ?

When Lot came out of Sodom, he left the Sodomites behind him, Gen. 19.

When Abraham came out of Chaldea, he left his country and kindred behind him, Gen. 12. Acts 7.

When Ruth came to put her trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel, she left her father and mother, her gods and the land of her nativity behind her, Ruth 1. 15, 16, 17. chap. 2. 11, 12.

When Peter came to Christ, he left his nets behind him, Mat. 4. 18.

When Zacheus came to Christ, he left the receipt of custom behind him, Luke 18.

When Paul came to Christ he left his own righteousness behind him, Phil. 3. 7, 8.

When those that used curious arts came to Jesus Christ, they took their curious books and burned them, tho in another man's eye they were counted worth Fifty thousand pieces of silver Acts 19. 18, 19, 20.

What say'lt thou man? Hast thou left thy darling sins, thy Sodomitish pleasures, thy acquaintance and vain companions, thy unlawful gain, thy idol gods, thy righteousness, and thy unlawful curious arts behind thee? If any of these be with thee, and thou with them, in thy heart and life, thou art not yet come to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Art thou come to Jesus Christ? Pristh tell me what moved thee to come to Jesus Christ? Men do not usually come or go to this or that place, before they have a moving cause; or rather a cause moving them thereto: No more do they come to Jesus Christ: (I do not say) before they have a cause, but before that cause moveth them to come: What say'lt thou? Hast thou a cause moving thee to come? To be at present in a state of condemnation, is a cause sufficient for
men

men to come to Jesus Christ for life: But that will not do except the cause move them; the which it will never do, until their eyes be opened, to see themselves in that condition: For it is not a man's being under wrath, but his seeing it, that moveth him to come to Jesus Christ: Alas! All men by sin are under wrath; but yet few of that All come to Jesus Christ: And the reason is, because they do not see their condition. Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come, Mat. 2. 7. Until men are warned, and also receive the warning, they will not come to Jesus Christ.

Take three or four Instances for this.

1. Adam and Eve came not to Jesus Christ, until they received the allarm, the conviction of their undone state by sin. Gen. 3.
2. The children of Israel cried not out for a Mediator, before they saw themselves in danger of death by the law, Exod. 20. 18, 19.
3. Before the Publican came, he saw himself lost and undone, Luke 18. 13.
4. The prodigal came not, until he saw death at the door ready to devour him, Luke 15. 17. 18.
5. The three thousand came not, until they knew not what to do to be saved, Acts 2. 37, 38, 39.
6. Paul came not until he saw himself lost and undone, Acts 3. 3,-----11
7. Lastly, Before the jailor came, he saw himself undone, Acts 16. 29, 30, 31. And I tell thee, It is an easier thing to persuade a well man to go to the phylician for cure, or a man without hurt to seek a plaister to cure him, than it is to persuade a man, that sees not his soul disease, to come to Jesus Christ. The whole have no need of a Phylician. Then why should they go to him?

The full pitcher can hold no more; then why should it go to the fountain? And if thou comest full thou comest not aright; and be sure Christ will send thee empty away. But he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. Mark 2. 17. Psal. 47. 3. Luke 1. 3, 5.

Thirdly, Art thou coming to Jesus Christ? Pristhree tell me, what seest thou in him, to allure thee to forsake all the world to come to him? I say, what hast thou seen in him? Men must see something in Jesus Christ, else they will not come to him.

1. What comeliness hast thou seen in his person. Thou comest not, if thou seest no form, nor comeliness in him, Isa. 56. 2, 3.

2. Until those mentioned in the Song were convinced that there was more beauty, comeliness and desirableness in Christ, than in ten thousand, they did not so much as ask, where he was, nor incline to turn aside after him, Song 5. chap. 6.

There be many things on this side heaven, that can and do carry away the heart; and so will do, so long as thou livest, if thou shalt be kept blind, and not be admitted to see the beauty of the Lord Jesus.

Fourthly, Art thou come to the Lord Jesus, what hast thou found in him, since thou comest to him?

Peter found with him the word of eternal life, John 6: 68.

They that Peter makes mention of, found him a living stone, even such a living stone as communicated life to them, 1 Pet. 2.

He saith himself, they that come to him, &c. shall find rest unto their souls; hast thou found rest in him, for thy soul? Mat. 11.

Let us go back to the times of the old testament.

First,

First, Abraham found that in him, that made him leave his country for him, and become for his sake a pilgrim and stranger in the earth, Gen. 12. Heb. 11.

Secondly, Moses found that in him, that made him forsake a crown, a kingdom for him too.

Thirdly, David found so much in him, that he counted to be in his house one day, was better than a thousand; yea, to be a door-keeper thereon, was better in his esteem, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, Psal. 84. 10.

Fourthly, What did Daniel and the three children find in him, to make them run the hazards of the fiery furnace, and the den of lions for his sake, Dan. 23. chap. 6.

Let's come down to martyrs.

First, Stephen found that in him, that made him joyful, and quietly yield up his life for his name, Acts 17.

Secondly, Ignatius found that in him, that made him choose to go through the torments of the Devil and hell itself, rather than not to have him, *Acts and Monuments*, Vol. IV. Page 25.

Thirdly, What saw Romanus in Christ, when he said to the raging emperor, who threatened him with fearful torments: Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace, and refuse not to be sacrificed-----by as cruel torments as thou canst invent, Page 116.

Fourthly, What saw Menas the Egyptian in Christ, when he said under most cruel torments, There is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven; neither is all the world, if it was weighed in a balance, to be preferred with the price of one soul; who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? and I have learned of my Lord and king, not to fear them that kill the body, &c. Page 117.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, What did Eulaliah see in Christ, when she said, as they were pulling her one joint from another; Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee: what a pleasure it is for them, O Christ! that remember thy triumphant victory, Page 121.

Sixthly, What think you did Agnes see in Christ, when rejoycingly she went to meet the soldier that was appointed to be her executioner, I will willingly, said she, receive into my paper the length of this sword, and into my breast will draw the force thereof, even to the hilt, that thus, I being married to Christ my Spouse, may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world, Page 121.

Seventhly, What do you think did Jolitta see in Christ, when at the emperor's telling of her, That except she would worship the gods, she should never have protection, laws, judgment, nor life. She replied, Farewel life, welcome death; farewel riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I give, rather than speak one wicked and blasphemous word against my Creator, Page 123.

Eightly, What did Marcus Arethusius see in Christ, when after his enemies had cut his flesh, anointed him with honey, and hanged him up in a basket, for flies and bees to feed on, he would not give, to hold up idolatry, one half-penny to save his life, Page 129.

Ninthly, What did Constatine see in Christ, when he used to kiss the wounds of them that suffered for him? Page 135.

Tenthly, But what need I thus give particular instances of words and smaller actions when by their laws, their blood, their enduring hunger, sword,

word, fire, pulling asunder, and all torments that the devil and hell could devise, for the love they bear to Christ, after they were come to him.

What hast thou found in him sinner?

What! come to Christ and find nothing in him, (when all things that are worth looking for are in him) or if any thing, yet not enough to wean thee from thy sinful delights and fleshy lusts! Away, thou art not come to Jesus Christ.

He that hath come to Jesus Christ hath found in him, That (as I said) that is not to be found any where else: As,

First, He that is come to Christ, has found God in him, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and so God is not to be found in heaven and earth besides, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

Secondly, He that is come to Jesus Christ hath found in him a fountain of grace sufficient not only to pardon sin, but to sanctify the soul, and to preserve it from falling in this wicked world.

Thirdly, He that is come to Jesus Christ hath found vertue in him: That vertue, that if he does but touch thee with his word; or thou him by faith; life is forthwith conveyed into thy soul: It makes thee wake as one that is waked out of his sleep? it awakes all the powers of the soul, Psalm 30. 11, 12. Song 6. 12.

Fourthly, Art thou come to Jesus Christ? Thou hast found glory in him. Glory that surmounts and goes beyond. Thou art more glorious than the mountains of prey, Psalm 76. 4.

Fifthly, What shall I say? Thou hast found righteousness in him; Thou hast found rest, peace,

peace, delight, heaven, glory, and eternal, life.

Sinner, be advised; ask thy heart again, saying, Am I come to Jesus Christ? For upon this question, Am I come, or, Am I not, hangs heaven or hell as to thee. If thou canst say, I am come, and God shall approve that saying: Happy, happy, happy man art thou! But if thou art not come, what can make thee happy? Yea, what can make that man happy, that for his not coming to Jesus Christ for life, must be damned in hell?

The third Use; an Use of Encouragement.

COMING Sinner, I have now a word for thee, be of good comfort, He will in no wise cast thee out. Of all men thou art the blessed of the Lord; the Father hath prepared his Son to be a sacrifice for thee, and Jesus Christ thy Lord is gone to prepare a place for thee, John 1. 29. Heb. 10.

What shall I say to thee? Thou comest to a full Christ, thou canst not want any thing for soul, or body, for this world, or that to come, but it is to be had in or by Jesus Christ.

As it is said of the land that the Danites went to possess; so, and with much more truth it may be said of Christ: He is such an one with whom there is no want of any good thing that is in heaven or earth.

A full Christ is thy Christ.

First, He is full of grace, grace is sometimes taken for love: never any loved like Jesus Christ, Jonathan's love went beyond the love of women; but the love of Christ passes knowledge. It is beyond the love of all the earth, of all creatures,
even

even of men and angels. His love prevailed with him to lay aside his glory, to leave the heavenly place, to clothe himself with flesh, to be born in a stable, to be laid in a manger, to live a poor life in the world, to take upon him our sickness, infirmities, sins, curse, death, and the wrath that was due to man. And all this he did for a base, and undeserving, unthankful people; yea, for a people that was at enmity with him. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man, some would even dare to die. But God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved by his life. For if when we were enemies, we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Secondly, He is full of truth, Full of grace and truth. Truth, that is faithfulness in keeping promise, even this of the text, (with all other) I will in no wise cast out. Hence it is said, that his words be true, and that he is the faithful God that keepeth covenants. And hence it is also that his promise is called truth, Thou wilt fulfil thy truth unto Jacob, and thy mercy unto Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old. Therefore it is said again, that both himself and words are truth, I am the truth, the scriptures of truth, thy word is truth, thy law is truth, and my mouth, saith he, shall speak truth, John 14. 6. Dan. 10. 21. John 17. 17. 2 Sam. 7. 28. Prov. 8. 7. Psal. 119. 142. Eccles. 12. 10. Isa. 25. 1. Mal. 2. 6. Acts 26. 25. 2 Tim. 2. 42, 13.

Now

Now I say, his word is truth, and he is full of truth, to fulfill his truth, even to a thousand generations. Coming sinner, he will not deceive thee, come boldly to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, He is full of wisdom, he is made unto us of God wisdom: Wisdom to manage the affairs of his church in general, and the affairs of every coming sinner in particular. And upon this account he is said to be head over all things, 1 Cor. 1. Eph. 1. Because he manages all things that are in the world by his wisdom, for the good of his church; all mens actions, all Satan's temptations, all God's providences and crosses and disappointments: All things whatever are under the hand of Christ (who is the wisdom of God) and he ordereth them all for good to his church, and can Christ help it, (and be sure he can) nothing shall happen or fall out in the world, but it shall in despite of all opposition have a good tendency to his church and people.

Fourthly, He is full of the Spirit, to communicate it to the coming sinner: He hath therefore received it without measure, that he may communicate it to every member of his body; according as every ones measure thereof is allotted him by the Father. Wherefore he saith, that he that comes to him, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, John 3. 34. Titus 3. 5, 6. Acts 1. John 7. 31, to 38.

Fifthly, He is indeed a Storehouse, full of all the graces of the Spirit. Out of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Here is more faith; more love, more sincerity, more humility, more of every grace; and of this, even more of this he giveth to every lowly, humble, penitent, coming sinner: Wherefore, coming soul, thou comest

comest not to a barren wilderness, when thou comest to Jesus Christ.

Sixthly, He is full of bowels and compassion : and they shall feel and find it so that come to him for life. He can bear with thy weakness, he can pardon thy ignorance, he can be touched with the feeling of thy infirmities, he can affectionately forgive thy transgressions, he can heal thy bickerings and love thee freely. His compassions fail not : And he will not break a bruised reed, nor crush a smouking flax : He can pity them that are eye pities, and be afflicted in all thy afflictions, Mat. 26. 41. Heb. 5. 2. chap 2. 18, 19. Mat. 9. 13. Hos. 14. 4. Ezek. 15. 5, 6. Isa. 63. 9. Psal. 78. 38. Psal. 86. 15. Psal. 111. 4. Psal. 112. 4. Lam. 3. 22. Isa. 42. 3.

Seventhly, Coming soul, the Jesus that thou art coming to, is full of might, and terrible-ness for thy advantage : He can suppress all thine enemies : He is the prince of the kings of the earth : He can bow all mens designs for thy help : He can break all snares laid for thee in the way ; he can lift thee out of all difficulties where-with thou mayst be surrounded : He is wise in heart, and mighty in power : Every life under heaven is in his hand ; yea, the fallen angels trembled before him : And he will save thy life, coming sinner, 1 Cor. 1. 24. Rom. 8. 28. Mat. 18. 18. Rev. 15. Psal. 19. 3. Psal. 25. 5, 6. Job 9. 4. John 17. 2. Matth. 8. 29. Luke 8. 28. James 2. 19.

Eightly, Coming sinner, the Jesus to whom thou art coming is lowly in heart ; he despiseth not any. 'Tis not thy outward meanness nor thy inward weakness ; 'tis not because thou art poor, or bale, or deformed, or a fool, that he will despise thee : He hath chosen the foolish, the
bale,

base and despised things of this world, to confound the wise and mighty. He will bow his ear to thy stammering prayers; he will pick out the meaning of thy inexpressible groans; he will respect thy weakest offering, if there be in it but thy heart, Mat. 11. 20. Luke 14. 21. Prov. 9. 4. 5, 6. Isa. 38. 14, 15. Song 5. 16. John 4. 27. Mark 12. 33, 34.

Now, is not this a blessed Christ, coming sinner? Art thou not like to fare well, when thou hast embraced him, coming sinner? But,

Secondly, Thou hast yet another advantage by Jesus Christ, thou art coming to him: For he is not only full but free: He is not sparing of what he has; he is open-hearted, and open-handed. Let me in a few particulars shew thee this:

First, This is evident because he calls thee: He calls upon thee to come unto him; the which he would not do, was he not free to give: Yea, he bids thee when come, Ask. Seek, Knock; and for thy encouragement, adds to every command a promise; Seek, and ye shall find: Ask, and ye shall have: Knock, & it shall be opened unto you. If the rich man should say this to the poor, would not he be reckoned a free-hearted man? I say, should he say to the poor, Come to my door, Ask at my door, Knock at my door, and you shall find and have: Would he not be counted liberal? Why, thus doth Jesus Christ. Mind it coming sinner, Isa. 5. 53. Psalm 50. 15. Mat. 7. 7, 8, 9.

Secondly, He doth not only bid thee come, but tells thee, he will heartily do thee good: Yea, he will do it with rejoycing; I will rejoyce over them to do them good with my whole heart, and with my whole soul, Jer. 32. 41.

Thirdly, It appeareth that he is free, because he giveth without twitting: He gives to all men
liberally

berally, and upbraideth not, James 1. 5. There are some that will not deny to do the poor a pleasure, but they will mix their mercies with so many *Twitts*, that the persons on whom they bestow their charity shall find but little sweetness in it. But Christ doth not do so, coming sinner. He calleth all thine iniquities behind his back; thy sins and iniquities he will remember no more, Isa. 8. 17. Heb. 8. 12.

Fourthly, That Christ is free, is manifest by the complaints that he makes against them that will not come to him for mercy: I say. He complains, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not, Math. 22. 37. I say, He speaks it by way of complaint. He saith also in another place; But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, Isa. 43. 22. Coming sinner, see here the willingness of Christ to save; see here how free he is to communicate life, and all good things, to such as thou art; he complains, if thou comest not; he is displeased, if thou callest not upon him.

Hark, coming sinner, once again; when Jerusalem would not come to him for safe-guard, He beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes, Luke 19. 41.

Fifthly, Lastly, He is open and free hearted to do thee good, as is seen by the joy and rejoycing that he manifesteth at the coming home of poor prodigals; he receives the lost sheep with rejoycing; the lost groat with rejoycing: Yea, when the prodigal came home, what joy and mirth,

mirth, what musick and dancing was in his Father's house, Luke 15.

Thirdly, Coming sinner, I will add another encouragement for thy help.

First, GOD hath prepared a mercy-seat, a throne of grace to sit on; that thou mayst come thither to him, and that he may from thence hear thee and receive thee: I will commune with thee (saith he) from above the mercy-seat, Exodus 25. 22.

As who shall say, sinner, when thou comest to me, thou shalt find me upon the mercy-seat where also I am always found of the undone, coming sinner: Thither I bring my pardon; there I hear and receive their petitions, and accept them to my favour.

Secondly, God hath also prepared a golden altar for thee to offer thy prayers and tears upon: A golden altar! It is called a golden altar, to shew what worth it is of in God's account: for this Golden Altar is Jesus Christ: This Altar sanctifies thy gift, and makes thy sacrifices acceptable. This Altar then makes thy groans, golden groans; thy tears golden tears, and thy prayers golden prayers, in the eye of that God thou comest to, coming sinner, Rev. 8. Mat. 23. 19. Heb. 10. 10. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

Thirdly, God hath strowed all the way (from the gate of hell where thou wast, to the gate of heaven, whither thou art going) with flowers out of his own garden: Behold how the promises, invitations, calls and encouragements, like lillies, ly round about thee; (Take heed that thou dost not tread them under foot, sinner!) with promises did I say? Yea, he hath mixed all those with his own name, his Sons name also with the name of

of mercy, goodness, compassion, love, pity, grace, forgiveness pardon, and what not, that may encourage the coming sinner.

Fourthly, He hath also for thy encouragement hid up the names, and set forth the sins of those that have been saved: In his book they are fairly written, that thou through patience and comfort of the scriptures mightest have hope.

1. In this book is recorded Noah's name and sin; and how God had mercy upon him.

2. In this record is fairly written the name of Lot, and the nature of his sin; and how the Lord had mercy upon him.

3. In this record thou hast also fairly written the names of Moses, Aaron, Gideon, Samson, David, Solomon, Peter, Paul; with the nature of their sins, and how God had mercy upon them, and also to encourage thee, coming sinner.

Fourthly, I will add yet another encouragement for the man that is coming to Jesus Christ. Art thou coming? Art thou coming indeed? Why?

1. Then this thy coming is, by vertue of God's call, thou art called; calling goes before coming; coming is not of works, but of him that calleth. He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came to him, Mark

3.
Secondly, Art thou coming? This is also the vertue of illumination. God has made thee see, and therefore thou art coming. So long as thou wast darkness, thou lovedst darkness, and couldst not abide to come, because thy deeds were evil; but being now illuminated and made to see, what and where thou art; and also, what and where thy Saviour is: Now thou art coming to Jesus Christ, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee,
(saith

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