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Presented by
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Tombhill Birnie

1867

To Mary Larcher

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Birnie

1867

CHRIST'S FAMOUS TITLES ;

AND A

BELIEVER'S GOLDEN CHAIN ;

ALSO,

A CABINET OF JEWELS, OR A GLIMPSE OF ZION'S
GLORY, TOGETHER WITH CHRIST'S VOICE TO
LONDON, OR A CALL TO SINNERS.

By WILLIAM DYER.

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

COURTEOUS READER,—It is the great unhappiness of our age, that the greatest part of men busy themselves most in that which concerns them least. Look into the world among rich and poor, high and low, young and old, and see whether it appear not by the whole scope of their conversations, that they set more by something else than Christ and salvation. So they may have but some of the earth in their hands, they care for nothing of heaven in their hearts, though gold can no more fill their hearts, than grass their purses.

Most men are like that silly woman, that when her house was on fire, so minded the saving of her goods, that she left her child roasting in the flames; at last, being put in remembrance of it, she cries out, O my child, my child! Oh! how many men are there that drop into perdition, merely for a little wealth.

There are many that are temporally miserable, that are eternally happy; and there are many that are temporally happy, that shall be eternally miserable. Oh! there is a great vanity in all worldly excellencies; the earth is big in our hope, but little in our hands; it cannot satisfy the sense of men, much less can it satisfy the souls of men.

Dear children, according to my talents received, I have endeavoured to set forth the riches, the loveliness, the preciousness, and ex-

excellencies which are in Christ, to draw the heart after him, and to be sick of love for him. Oh! Jesus Christ is a fountain of life, light, love, grace, glory, comfort, joy, goodness, always full and flowing, yea, overflowing. Paul was so much taken with Christ, that he was ever in his thoughts, always near his heart, and upon his tongue: he names him six or seven times in one chapter, 1 Cor. i. O, that our hearts and tongues were thus busied about Christ, and taken up with Christ, and these treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in him.

The design of this piece is not the ostentation of the author, but the edification of the reader; though the author be contemptible, yet the matter is comfortable. I hope none will blow out such a candle upon earth, by the light of which themselves may see the way to heaven. If God had given in more of himself to me, I should have given more out to thee; but God looks not for what he gives not. If God may have glory, and the church edification, by these labours of mine, I shall have my end. Now, the good Lord bring thy heart more and more in love with Christ, who is altogether lovely, that shortly thou mayest enjoy endless felicity in his bosom. This shall be the prayer for thee of him that is thy servant in Christ,

WILLIAM DYER

LONDON, 1665.

CHRIST'S FAMOUS TITLES.

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

* *He is altogether lovely.*"—CANT. v. 16.

OUT of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, comes better and sweeter honey, than out of Sampson's lion; that is the sweetest honey which we suck out of Christ's hive: for the face of none is so comely in a saint's eye, as the face of Christ: and the voice of none is so pleasant in a saint's ear, as the voice of Christ. O christian! the God whom thou servest is so excellent, that no good can be added to him; and so infinite, that no good can be diminished in him. He makes happy, and is not the less happy; he shews mercy to the full, and yet remains full of mercy. O come, eat and drink abundantly! O beloved, there is no fear of excess here; though one drop of Christ be sweet, yet the deeper the sweeter.

The wine that Christ draws, is the best wine that a Christian drinks: this whole book of Canticles is bespangled with the praises of Jesus Christ. The subject matter of this book is, a declaration of the mutual intercourse of love and affection between Christ and his church: what spiritual entertainment is given on both sides, with the sweet content they have in each other's beauty: Here you may see the king in his glory,

the spouse in her beauty: here you may see Christ giving her sweet promises, adorning her with sundry excellencies, communicating his love, and commending her graces: here you may also see the church even ravished with the consideration and contemplation of Christ's love and beauty; his beauty is taking, his love is ravishing, his voice is pleasing, his goodness is drawing, his manifestations are enticing; he is the beloved Son, and the Son of love; he is nothing but love to those that are his love.

But I shall no longer entertain you with a crumb at the door, but carry you to the chapter out of which my text is taken, and so lead you to the cabinet where the jewel lieth.

Brethren and beloved, you have a glorious description of Christ in this chapter, and that from ver. 10—16. where the spouse is setting forth the riches, the dignity, the excellency, the beauty, the majesty, the glory, the preciousness, and loveliness of Jesus Christ. "He is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars." And thus she sets forth her beloved, and at last winds up all with this rare expression, "He is altogether lovely."

This text is a sacred cabinet, which contains in it,

1. The jewel Christ, in this word He.

2. The price of the jewel, *Altogether lovely.*

The observation, or doctrine, is this, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. He is the most amazing and delightful object. The very name of Jesus Christ is as precious ointment poured forth. It is said, that the letters of his name were found graven upon Ignatius' heart. Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart, and nothing can do better there; for "he is altogether lovely." That Jesus Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear in four manner of ways:

First, By titles.

Secondly, By types.

Thirdly, By resemblances.

Fourthly, By demonstrations.

I shall speak only to the first of these. Our Lord Jesus hath seven famous and lovely titles, which are as so many jewels of his crown.

First, The Desire of all Nations.

Secondly, The King of kings.

Thirdly, The Mighty God.

Fourthly, The Everlasting Father.

Fifthly, The Prince of Peace.

Sixthly, The Elect Precious.

Seventhly, Wonderful.

We will begin with the first of these famous titles, viz. *The Desire of all Nations.*

This title you have in the second of Haggai and 7th verse: "And the Desire of all nations shall come." But you shall say, How is Christ the desire of all nations? Do not all the nations abhor him, and say, We will not have this man to rule over us? "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed," Ps.

ii. 2. The kings of the earth are afraid, lest Christ's government should unking them; the rulers are jealous, lest it will depose them from their dignities; even the reformers, that have adventured all to set it up, are jealous, lest it will eneroach upon their power and privileges: kings are afraid of it, and think themselves but half-kings, where Christ doth set up his power and discipline: lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gain, and the laws of Christ should overtop the laws of the land: the people are afraid of it, lest it should compel them to subjection to the law and way which their souls abhor. Oh, how long hath the world rebelled against Jesus Christ, and his government!

But tell me, Have the people gained any thing by resisting Christ, his gospel and government; by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy ways? or doth it make the crown sit faster on the heads of kings? I shall leave you to judge of this.

But, beloved, for all this, Jesus Christ is the Desire of all nations.

And that I shall shew you in five particulars.

Though Jesus Christ be not actively desired by all nations, yet he is rightly styled, *The Desire of all Nations.*

First, Because he is most desirable in himself, and all things that are desirable are in him.

Beauty is in Christ, bounty is in Christ, riches and honour are in Christ, Prov. viii. 18.

Jesus Christ is the treasure hid in the gospel, the pearl of great price: he is the sun in the firmament of the scripture, whom to know is everlasting life: he is a spring full of the water of life, a hive of sweetness, a magazine of riches, a river

of pleasures, therein you may bathe your souls to all eternity.

O! he is fulness and sweetness. "The chiefest among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10. He is more precious than rubies; and all things thou canst desire, are not to be compared to him, Prov. iii. 15.

Alas! what are all the crowns and kingdoms of the world, all the thrones and sceptres of kings, to Christ! I say, what are the treasures of the east, the gold of the west, the spices of the south, and the pearls of the north to him? These, or whatsoever thou dost imagine, are not to be compared unto the blessed Jesus! Beloved, the glories and excellencies of Christ excel all others. As all waters meet in the sea, and as all the lights meet in the sun; so all the perfections and excellencies of all the saints and angels meet in Christ. Nay, sirs, Christ hath not only the holiness of angels, the loveliness of saints, and the treasure of heaven, but also the fulness of the Godhead; the riches of the Deity are in him: Col. i. 9. "For it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," fulness of grace, fulness of knowledge, fulness of love, fulness of glory. He is lovely to the Father, lovely to the angels, lovely to the saints, and lovely to the soul. And therefore he may well be called the Desire of all Nations, for all desirable things are in him.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because his desire is after all nations, though he hath no need of them; he hath thousands of angels before him, and ten thousand daily minister unto him: yet such infinite love doth he bear to the sons of men in

whom there is no loveliness, that he himself saith, "My delight is with the sons of men," Prov. viii. 31. That our Lord Jesus had a strong desire after the nations to convert them, and save the nations, will appear by three things:

1. By what he did before he came into the world.

2. By what he did when he was in the world.

3. By what he doth now when he is out of the world.

First, Our Lord Jesus had a great desire after the poor nations before he came into the world, or else he would never have left his crown, his royal court, his Father's bosom, his glorious robes, to come into this world to be spit upon by men, and to be murdered by men; nay; he did not only become a laughing-stock to men, but a gazing-stock to angels. Now, beloved, do ye not think that Jesus Christ had a great desire after the nations' good, that he would leave all his glory, and greatness, and pomp, and riches, to come into this world, to be poor, to be hungry, to be weary, to be tempted, to be betrayed, to be sold?

But you may perhaps say, that Christ little thought his own countrymen would have shed his blood, and that one of his own family would betray him.

Why, beloved, do you think he did not know it? Yea, he knew it before he came into the world, that the Jews would crucify him, and that Judas would betray him, John vi. 46. He knew it from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. Christ knew it before he came from Heaven, what coarse entertainment he should have upon earth. Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me,

had not Jesus Christ a desire after us, before he came to us, that he would uncrown himself to crown us; and put off his robes, to put on our rags; and come out of heaven, to keep us out of hell? He fasted forty days, that he might feast us to all eternity! He came from heaven to earth, that he might send us from earth to heaven.

The Son of God became the Son of man; that we the sons of men might become the sons of God; and all this he did to save the nations.

Secondly, He had a longing desire after the nations when he was in the world.

O! Christ would fain have saved the nations, and healed them, and enlightened them: therefore he sends forth his apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19. and bids them "Go and teach all nations:" the people were in his eyes, and upon his heart; and so in Matt. xxii. Christ sends forth his servants, once, twice, thrice, as if he would take no denial, but they would not come. Nay, beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ did not only send others to poor souls, to beseech them, to entreat them to come in, to repent and to believe in their Saviour, that their souls might be saved; but he went himself, and desired them; nay, that is not all, beloved, he cried to *them*, and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, John vii. 37.

O! how earnest was Jesus Christ with poor souls to come to him. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. x. 28. So in Luke xiv. 23. "Go to the high ways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be full."

Do you see this, christians, what vehement desires Jesus Christ had after the nations, and

souls of men, that he might ever make them happy, when he was in the world? and he hath the same desire still. How often would Jesus Christ have healed the Jews, that poor nation, as he himself speaketh in Matt. xxiii. 37. "How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her young ones, and ye would not!" Nay, when he hath done all this, he doth not leave them, but weeps over them: his eyes were wet, because their eyes were dry. So this is clear, from what Christ did when he was in the world, that he desired much the healing and converting of nations,

First, In his bearing with them;

Secondly, In his proffers unto them.

Thirdly, He hath a great desire after the nations, now he is out of the world. Though he be gone to heaven, and entered into glory, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father; yet, I say, his desires are as much after poor souls as ever. This will appear by two things:

1st, In his forbearance and long-sufferance.

O! how long hath Christ borne with the sinful nations, and yet he bears with them still, notwithstanding they have broke his laws, and despised his gospel, and contemned his ordinances, and shed his saints' blood, grieved his Spirit, and abused his mercies: this and much more have they done, and yet he spared them that he might be gracious to them, Isa. xxx. 1, 8. "And therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious to you."—"Therefore will he be exalted that he may shew mercy."

Now, beloved, do you think that Jesus Christ would take all this at the nations' hands, but that he is unwilling to destroy them, and most willing to save them.

2dly, His love appears, not only by his bearing with them, but by his proffers to them.

O beloved, how doth God stand day after day, month after month, and year after year, proffering himself, his Son, his mercy, his love, his grace, and his glory, to poor souls!

Many have the space of repentance, who have not the grace of repentance.

Now, my brethren, by these things you may see that Jesus Christ hath a great desire after the nations.

3dly, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because it is he only that can make any person, family, or nation, truly desirable.

Oh! beloved, what is the reason that the Lord of hosts prefers his people before all the sons of men? The Lord prefers his little remnant before all the world besides, Exod. xix. 5. "You shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people,—the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," Prov. xii. 26. Though his neighbour be a prince, a king, or emperor, or a pope, yet if he be more righteous, he is more excellent than he; they are but base born. Believers be these worthies, of whom the world was not worthy, Heb. xi. 35. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Pet. ii. 6. Believers are not only diligent christians, but excellent christians.

Now, what is the reason, beloved, that the saints are thus excellent above all others? Is it for their birth, breeding, or learning, or riches, or greatness, or honour? No, no, it is for none of these: but if you would know the reason, it is because Christ is formed in them, and married to them; they have the new name, the new nature, the new heart, the new spirit. Oh,

this is the reason, if there were any thing beside Christ that would make any nation, or family, or person, truly desirable, it must be either birth, or greatness, or learning, or riches, or beauty, or wisdom, or strength. Now all these do not make any one desirable; for if they did, then those that sit upon the nations would be the most desirable persons under heaven, because they have the most of these. But for this, see Dan. iv. 17. And settest over them the basest of men, Rev. xvii. 15. "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;" so that none of these can do it, but Christ only, Rev. v. 10.

He hath made us unto our God, kings and priests. O! O Christ hath made every believer a king, it is Christ's beauty that makes us beautiful; it is his riches that makes us rich; it is his righteousness that makes us righteous; he only makes us truly honourable and desirable. Well may Christ be called the Desire of all Nations; it is he that can make a nation desirable.

4thly, Jesus Christ is called "the Desire of all Nations," because all nations stand in need of him: nay, not only all nations, but all persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low. He that will be saved, must have a Saviour to save him, or else he can never be saved. The apostle tells us, Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved." And Christ saith, John xiv. 6. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me:" so that not only all nations, but all persons stand in need of him.

You may go to heaven without health, without wealth, without honour, without pleasure, without friends, without learning; but you can never go to heaven without Christ.

What will you do, if you begin to die naturally, before you begin to live spiritually?

If the tabernacle of nature be taken down before the temple of God be raised up: if your paradise be laid waste, before the tree of life be set up in it; if you give up the ghost, before you ever receive the Holy Ghost; if the sun of your life be set within you, before the Sun of Righteousness shines upon you; if the body be fit to be turned into the earth, before the soul be fit to be taken to heaven; if the second birth have no place in you, the second death shall have power over you.

Though the nations need nothing more than Christ, yet they slight nothing more than Christ.

Tell me how you will live when you die, that are dead whilst you live?

O, beloved, is it not sad that the nations should resist Christ, his gospel and government as they do?

Indeed, if men might be their own judges, then Christ had no enemies; we are all his friends.

If the Jews might so have been their own judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified, but an enemy to Caesar. It was not Paul a saint they persecuted, but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow: some men will say now, they do not persecute the saints of God, but seditious lunatics: but God will shortly take off the vail of hypocrisy from their faces.

O grieve for them that cannot grieve for themselves.

And thus you see that all nations stand in need of Christ, who is the Desire of all Nations.

5thly, Our Lord Jesus is called the Desire of all Nations, because when he sets up himself in any one as their Desire, then they run after him, and count nothing too dear for him: so the church of God, Isa. xxvi. 8, 9. "The desire of our soul is to thy name; with my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early."

Oh! when the Desire of all Nations once setteth up himself in the soul, then he becomes the desire of the soul.

When he hath thus endeared himself to their souls, they count nothing too dear for him, all shall be at his command; their gold, their silver, their strength, their lives, Rev. x. 11. "They loved not their lives unto the death." So that, beloved, let men be enemies to Jesus Christ, yet as soon as Christ sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him.

Now, sirs, put all these together, and it will fully prove Christ to be the Desire of all Nations.

I shall make but a short use of it, and so conclude.

Is it so that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Desire of all Nations, and that all things desirable are in him! Oh! then, let me beg of you, Oh! let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, and for your soul's sake, make Christ Jesus the desire of your souls.

He is the desire of all nations, and shall he not be the desire of your souls? whom will ye love, if not the KING of saints? whom will ye long for, if not for the Desire of all Nations!

whom will ye prize, if not the Prince of Peace? He is the Son of God, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, before whom angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven bow before him. He is the glory of glories, the crown of crowns, the heaven of heavens; he is a light in darkness, joy in sadness, riches in poverty, life in death: it is he that can resolve all your doubts, secure you in danger, save your souls, and bring you to glory, where all joy is enjoyed. O therefore, let all the glory of your glory be to give all glory, and yourselves to him. So much or so little for this time.

THE KING OF KINGS.

"He is altogether lovely."—CANT. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

I now proceed to the second title, which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is, King of kings. Augustine desired to have seen three things before he died, *First*, Rome in her glory and purity. *Secondly*, Paul in the pulpit preaching. *Thirdly*, Christ in the flesh upon earth.—Cato, the heathen, repented himself of three things, *First*, That ever he spent a day idle. *Secondly*, That ever he revealed his secrets to a woman. *Thirdly*, That ever he went by water, when he might have gone by land.—Thales gives thanks for three things, *First*, That he was endued with reason, and was not a beast.

Secondly, That he was a man, and not a woman. *Thirdly*, That he was a Grecian, and not a Barbarian.—And I, poor I, desire to see three things before I die, *First*, Babylon's ruin. *Secondly*, Christ's reigning. *Thirdly*, Satan's binding.—The angel hath sworn by him that lives for ever and ever, "That time should be no longer," Rev. x. 6.—Who will not believe his sacred oath? did he say it?—No, he swore it; how? by himself? No, by HIM that lives for ever.—What?—that time must be a little?—No; it must be no longer—The time shall be no longer. "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come," said the prophet in Mal. iii. 1. They who keep the word of God's patience, God will keep them in the hour of temptation.

Well, the second title of Jesus Christ is, KING of kings. I pray you take notice of it, it is now to be handled; in Rev. xix. 16. "He had a name written," saith the text, "KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords." Here is a title now, KING of kings.—Beloved, Jesus Christ is a threefold King.

First, His enemies' King.—*Secondly*, His saints' King.—*Thirdly*, His Father's King.

The first, he rules over—The second, he rules in—The third, he rules for.

I shall begin with the first, and take them in order.

First, Christ is his enemies' King, that is, he is King over his enemies. Christ is a King above all kings, and over all kings, and therefore the scripture calls HIM "King of kings," as you have it in 1 Tim. vi. 15. Christ is a king above all kings; for if he were not a King above all kings, he could not be a King over all kings. Now that he is a King above all kings, two

scriptures prove it, Ps. lxxxix. 27. Saith God the Father there, "I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth." Now, who is the first-born? Why, it is Jesus Christ; as he is elsewhere called, "the first-born of every creature."—"Now," saith God, "I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth,"—higher in glory, higher in power, higher in majesty. So in Rev. i. 5. There Christ is called, "the Prince of the earth." Alas! alas! what are all the mighty men, the great, the honourable men of the earth to Jesus Christ? they are but like a little bubble in the water; for if all the nations, in comparison to God, be but as the drop of the bucket, or the dust of the balance, as the prophet speaks in Isa. xl. 15. O! how little then must be the kings of the earth.

Nay, beloved, Christ Jesus is not only above the kings of the earth, and higher than kings, but he is higher than the angels; yea, he is the head of angels; and therefore all the angels in heaven are commanded to worship him, he is the head of all angels, Col. ii. 12. "He is the head of all principalities and powers," which includes angels. And in Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him." God will have the angels worship Christ, as well as men.

Oh! sirs, Christ is a King, before whom angels veil their faces, and the kings of the earth do cast down their crowns.

Again, as he is a King above all kings, so he is a King over all kings too. Jesus Christ is an universal King. He is the King over all kingdoms, over all nations, over all governments, over all powers, over all people, Dan. vii. 14. "There was given to him," saith the

text, "dominion, and power, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, were to serve him." Now, who was this? in the 13th verse it is clearly meant of Jesus Christ, "All people, and all nations, and languages, and kingdoms, were to serve him;" so that you see Christ is not only King of saints, but King of nations too; and therefore you find in Psal. li. 8. it is a text often read, but little observed, "Ask of me," saith the Father, "and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." The very heathens are given to Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

As the Lord Jesus Christ hath all the kingdoms of the earth given to him, so likewise he hath all power given to him, or else what would he do with a kingdom? in Matt. xxviii. 18. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Oh! sirs, here is a text that should revive the hearts of saints, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," saith Christ to his apostles. So that it is he that binds kings in chains, and princes in fetters of iron, as the last Psalm, saving one, speaks. It is he that suffers no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproves kings for their sakes, and breaks mighty kings in pieces for the saints' sake, Psal. cv. 13. And therefore it is he that overrules kings, and overcomes the kings of the earth, that make war with the saints. In Rev. xvii. 14 the ten kings made war with the Lamb, but the Lamb prevailed; and why? because he was King of kings, and Lord of lords. This is the first: Jesus Christ is his enemies' King, that is, he is a King above their kings, and over their kings.

Secondly, As Jesus Christ is his enemies' King, so he is his saints' King: I will give you two scriptures to prove it, though I need not, yet I will, because of making of things very clear as I go on, Rev. xv. 3. There Jesus Christ is called the saints' King, "Thou king of saints."—So also in Matt. xxi. 5., "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh."—So that by these two Scriptures, you see Jesus Christ is King of saints. Now, beloved, I beseech you here to mind me: Jesus Christ, you see, is King of the bad, and of the good; but as for the wicked, he rules over them by his power and might; but the saints, he rules in them by his Spirit and graces; now to this the scripture witnesseth, that Jesus Christ rules in the saints, and is the king of the saints: and therefore it tells them, Col. i. 17., "Christ is in you the hope of glory," and elsewhere, "Know ye not that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates."—Mark here, Christ must be in you, "Christ in you the hope of glory." So in Psal. xxiv. 7., "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in."—Here Christ is called the King of Glory; and the psalmist calls upon men to open their hearts that the king of glory may come in: so in Rev. iii. 20. "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me." O this is Christ's spiritual kingdom, and here he rules in the hearts of his people, here he rules over their consciences, over their wills, over their affections, over their judgments and understandings, and nobody hath any thing to do here but Christ; it is Christ that rules over

the consciences and judgments of men and therefore he is called the King of saints. It is true, other kings may bear rule over the estates of men; but as for the soul, that only belongs to Christ; and therefore believers are said to be all glorious within. "The King's daughter," which is the Church, in Psal. xlv. 13. The King of glory rules there, and dwells there; you know God dwells in the highest heavens, and in the humble hearts. Christ is not only the king of nations, but King of saints: the one he rules over, the other he rules in.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is his Father's King too, and so his Father calls him; God calls Christ his King, in Psal. ii. 6.; "I will set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Well may he be our King, when he is God's King. But you may say, how is Christ the Father's King? Because he rules for his Father. There is a twofold kingdom of God committed to Jesus Christ: Pray, mark, sirs,

First, A spiritual kingdom, by which he rules in the hearts of his people, and so is King of saints.

Secondly, A providential kingdom, by which he rules the affairs of this world, and so he is King of nations. Now, beloved, the scripture saith, "That the Father hath put all things in Christ's hands," John iii. 35. And the apostle tells us, God hath put all things under his feet. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, and he hath appointed him over his own house. Now, as Christ hath all, so he doth all, and rules all for his Father; and therefore the Father calls him his servant; Isa. xli. 2., "Behold my servant;" and in the other text, "my King," because he

rules for his Father, and doth his Father's will : so that, beloved, in these three respects Christ is a King. Now, I shall lay down some things wherein the Lord Jesus doth infinitely excel all other kings of the earth.

First, Jesus is a King, that, in a spiritual sense, makes all his subjects kings. He hath a crown of glory for every subject. O what a glorious King is this! Now, that Christ makes all his subjects kings, see Rev. v. 10. ; saith the church there, "Who hath made us unto our God kings and priests." Oh, sirs, it is better to be a member of Christ than the head of a nation : Oh, how infinitely happy are all Christ's subjects! they be all kings, all heirs, all favourites, all sons, all true believers are so ; the believer is the only happy man. Alas! where is there such a king to be found, that makes all his subjects kings? There are many kings that undo their subjects; but Christ makes his subjects kings: many kings make their subjects beggars, but Christ makes his subjects kings; many kings put their subjects to death, but Christ died that his subjects might live. They give their subjects titles, but Christ gives all his subjects grace and glory.

Sirs, in a word, this is the greatest nobility, to be the servant of the great God; he is nobly descended who is born from above. Oh! how many lords hath that man who hath not Christ for his Lord? every sin is his lord, and every lust lords it over him. Now where Jesus Christ comes to be king, he makes them kings to his Father, and kings over their lusts. Now, beloved, here is the blessedness and happiness of our King, he makes us all kings, and gives all crowns of glory.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is a most just and righteous King; he reigns in righteousness, he brings peace by righteousness, he makes us righteous, and therefore he is called, "The Lord our righteousness," Jer. xxiii. 6. Now, beloved, other kings often deal unjustly, they bear the sword to execute wrath upon well-doers, and strengthen the hands of evil-doers; justify the wicked, and condemn the godly; and break oaths, and falsify covenants; and many times they oppress their subjects, and wrong their people; and therefore the scripture saith, "When the wicked bear rule, the people mourn," Prov. xxix. 2. When the righteous is in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bear rule, the people mourn. But now, beloved, Jesus Christ, as he is a righteous King, so he rules in righteousness, and thou shalt have nothing but righteous dealing from him: mind this text of scripture, which infinitely speaks out Christ's righteous dealing with poor souls, in Rev. xv. 18. "Just and true are thy ways." Mark who is just and true here.

Why? It is the king of saints, "just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Justice and truth well becometh the King of saints. In Prov. iii. 27. it is said, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;" speaking of wisdom, which is meant of Christ. Oh, what a golden King is here! what a glorious King is here! he is just and true, and all his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Oh! sirs, this is the excellency of Christ, he oppresseth nobody, he wrongs nobody, therefore he is called just and true, he infinitely excels all the kings of the earth in righteousness: he is a

righteous King, and deals for nothing but for righteousness.

Thirdly, Christ is a King that liveth for ever, and reigns for ever : other kings, they are but of yesterday, they be dead and gone. What is become of all those great and mighty kings we read of? why, they be gone like a tale, like a dream. But it is not so with the King of saints, the Lord is King for ever, he reigns for ever : and therefore the apostle calls him King immortal, eternal, as you may see in 1 Tim. i. 17. Christ is there called a King immortal, because he lives for ever. So in Heb. vii. 25. speaking of Christ, who "ever lives," saith he, "to make intercession for us." Now, beloved, here is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, he lives for ever ; other kings be dead, and their subjects may do what they will, but Jesus lives for ever.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is a King that hath a perfect knowledge of all his subjects : Oh, sirs, kings, and princes, and states, do not know all their subjects ; nay, they know very few : alas ! they do not know a quarter of them, the poor subjects are unknown to them, they be not acquainted with all the wrongs, and wants, and miseries, that their poor subjects lie under. We are unknown most of us to our prince ; but now, here is the excellency of Christ, he hath a perfect knowledge of all his subjects, he knows them all by name ; he knows all their thoughts, all their wants, all their ways, all their conditions. Now, I say, this is a great happiness, that we have a king that knows us so well.

Oh, poor souls, Christ knows you all, all your wants, all your conditions, all your necessities whatsoever. The Lord Jesus knows all thy sufferings, and therefore saith Paul, in Phil. iv. 19.

“My God shall supply all your wants.” Oh! it is a sweet scripture, “My God shall supply all your needs.” So say I to you, sirs, your King will supply all your needs: he knows all your needs, he knoweth all your straits, all your fears; ay, and he will supply all your needs. Oh, here is the excellency of this King.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is a King that sits upon his Father's throne; at this very time he sits upon his Father's throne. But, beloved, this is not all: Christ doth not only sit there himself, but he hath promised, that all men who overcome, shall sit down with him upon his throne; you have a full text to this purpose, in Rev. iii. 21. “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit upon my throne.” Mark, sirs, Christ promises all his subjects, that they should sit upon the throne with him! Now, I wonder where there is any king but Christ, who will suffer his subjects to sit upon his throne with him. Alas! this would be treason for a man to desire it. I remember, among other things I have read, of a king, who passing over a water, his crown fell from his head into the water, and one of his poor servants, out of love to him, lept in and fetched it up, and for his more ease put it on his head, that he might get the better out; and for this the poor man had his head cut off. So high, and mighty, and lofty was this prince. Ay, but sirs, the Lord Jesus is not so, he is no such proud King: he did not only uncrown himself to crown us, and wear the crown of thorns, that we might wear the crown of glory, but he consents and gives leave to his subjects to sit upon the throne with him: “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me upon my throne.” Oh, what a glorious King is this! that every

one of his poor subjects shall sit upon the throne with him. So in Rev. xxi. 7. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." A man would think, sirs, this very thing would draw the whole world after Christ. Oh! how should this draw the affections of men to be in love with those great proffers, and privileges, and honours that Christ bestoweth upon his poor followers! He doth not only make them kings, but he grants them to sit upon his throne with him; thou wouldest say it were an honour indeed, Oh! true believer, couldest thou look into heaven, and see Christ sit upon his throne! But this honour hath all his saints; yea, much more, he makes them all kings, and grants to them to sit upon the throne with him.

Sixthly, Jesus Christ is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him; and I am sure that this cannot be said of any king under heaven, but it may be said of the Lord Christ, for he is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him; and this I shall endeavour to shew by this afternoon's exercise; and the next day I shall handle the other part, That all his subjects love him. There is nine or ten particulars wherein the love of Christ to his subjects doth appear, and is wonderfully manifested.

First, His love to his subjects is a primary love. "We love him," saith the apostle, "because he first loved us," 1 John iv. 19. "We love him," and why? "because he first loved us." 1. His love is the cause preceding, our love is the effect following. If he had not fired our hearts with the flames of his love, we should never have bestowed one spark of spiritual love upon Christ: he must draw before we can run;

and therefore saith the church, Cant. i. 4. "Draw me, and we will run after thee." Sirs, we cannot run without drawing: he must draw us before we can run, and when he draweth we run. It was not man's loveliness that engaged God to love and save men: God loveth his enemies even in their sinful state, though not with a love of well-willing to them. Oh! sirs, since God loved us when we were not like him, we should strive to be like him who thus loved us; nothing can engage a saint to love God so much as this, that God loved him so much. A minister once weeping at the table, and being asked the reason of it, answered, Because I love Christ no more. Indeed, friends, this should grieve us that we love so little, who are so much beloved. You have a famous saying of Augustine, He loves not Christ at all, who loves him not above all: this is the first love wherewith God loves his people: it is a primary love.

Secondly, Christ is a King that loves his subjects with a distinguishing love, and a separating love: the general love of Christ is scattered and branched unto all the creatures in the world; but his special love, his exceeding great and rich love, is only settled upon his church. Now, if you ask me what Christ's distinguishing love is, I shall name it, and but name it to you. 1. It is pardoning love. 2. It is redeeming love. 3. Calling love. 4. Justifying love. 5. Adopting love. 6. Sanctifying love. 7. Glorifying love. This, I say, is a particular love: Christ's love is not only sweeter than wine, but better than life: he is most lovely, he is altogether lovely: Christ is nothing but love to those who are his love.

Thirdly, Christ loves his saints with a protect-

ing love, Isa. xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" Can a woman forget her sucking child? Is it possible a woman should be so inhuman, to forget her tender infant, and not have compassion on the child of her womb? Yes, saith the Lord^d they may forget them; yet I will not forget thee. God may as soon cease to be God as cease to be good; he may as soon cease to live as cease to love; no, no, he cannot forget them; did he forget Israel in Egypt, or his church in Babylon, or Daniel in the lions' den: Did he forget the three children in the furnace, or Jeremiah in the dungeon, or Jonas in the whale's belly, or Peter in the prison, did he forget them? The wicked say indeed, The Lord doth forget, in Ezek. ix. 9. The Lord hath forgotten the earth, and he sees it not; but they are much mistaken. There are three or four texts of scripture, which I shall humbly offer to your serious consideration, that do wonderfully speak out God's protecting love to his people. The first is in Rev. vii. 2, 3. You find there an angel hath power given him to hurt the earth and the sea. Now there comes another angel, and cries out, "Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees." Why? what is the reason? In the third verse, "Until we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads."—Do not pour out your judgments upon them, until we have secured the servants of God. Oh! how wonderfully doth the Lord protect his people! So again, in Ezek. ix. Certain men he set to destroy that wicked people, and among the rest, the Lord calls, and bids one set a mark on them that sigh for the abominations of the land, and

for the rest, saith he, destroy them old and young. Oh! sirs, this doth wonderfully set out God's protecting love to his people. So in Isa. iii. 8. The Lord bids the prophet tell them what sad judgments should come upon them, upon the kings and princes, and great men, and soldiers. Now, saith the Lord, Say to the righteous it shall be well with them; none of this shall come near them. Oh! how wonderfully doth this magnify God's protecting love. Isa. xxvi. 20. "Come, my people, enter into your chambers, shut the door, and hide yourselves for a little moment." Why so, O Lord? Why, until the indignation be overpast. Come, saith God, I am resolved to execute my judgments on wicked men; therefore, hide yourselves for a moment. And therefore, I say, let no man's heart fail him; it is but for a moment, and then thy miseries shall end. Beloved, when our miseries are at the greatest, his help is at the nearest. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. When Mordecai is thoroughly humbled, the rude Haman shall be hanged.

But then, *fourthly*, Christ loves his people with a most cordial love; he loves them with all his heart: nay, they are the dearly beloved of his soul, as himself calls them, Jer. xii. 7. "I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies." Christ's love to his people is not a lip-love, from the teeth outwardly; but a real love, from the heart inwardly. Christ loves his people as his Father loves him; and how is that, can you tell? No, all the men on earth, nor angels in heaven, cannot declare the love that the Father bears to Christ; and yet as God loves Christ, so doth Christ love his people. You have a full text for this; they are

Christ's own words: "As the Father loveth me, so love I you." O sirs, how infinitely doth the Father love the Son, and how infinitely doth the Son love his people! Why, he loves them as the Father loves him. Oh Lord, what love is this! That the Saviour should love the sinner: that Christ should love the miserable sinner: and thus it is. Oh! sirs, believers are like letters of gold engraven on the very heart of Christ. O the breadth, the height, the length of the love of Christ, saith the apostle, it passeth knowledge. As if so be he wanted words to set it forth, Eph. iii. 29. "The love of Christ which passeth knowledge."—As if so be there were both want of words, and want in words, to set forth the love of Christ, but certainly it must be very great; for as the Father loves him, so he loves them. Alas! others love the saints, but how do they love them? why, not with a cordial love; they do not love them for their good, but for their goods; it is more for the money in their purses, than for the grace in their hearts: they love the saints as the Samaritans did the Jews; just as men do with their sun-dials, never look on them but when the sun shines: why so? The world never looks upon the saints but in the time of prosperity. When the Jews flourished and were in their glory, O what great friends were the Samaritans to them! But when the poor Jews were under affliction, then they had no worse enemies than they: why, but Christ is not so, he loves thee when thou art poor, as well as when thou art rich; as well when thou art in thy rags, as when thou art in thy robes; when thou art in adversity, as well as when thou art in prosperity. Christ loves his saints as well upon a gallows, as though it

were in a palace ; for whom he loves, he loves unto the end. Heb. xiii. 5. He is faithful, who hath said, " I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee ;" never leave thee in any condition or any place. Oh ! sirs, what a love is this ! And therefore, a rush for what the world can do, or for the world's love ; it is like a Venice glass, soon broken ; it smiles now, and quickly frowns ; it cries Hosanna to-day, and to-morrow, Crucify him ! but Christ's love is from the very heart.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ loves his subjects with a love of benevolence, John iii. 16. " God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and, saith Paul, " He loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. The Father gives the Son, and the Son gives himself, " who loved me, and gave himself for me : " all that Christ did and suffered, it is for me : all that Christ hath is mine. Oh ! soul, Christ's love is thine to pity thee ; Christ's mercy is thine to save thee ; Christ's graces are thine to beautify thee ; and his glory is thine to crown thee : Christ's power is thine to protect thee ; thou seest, he that is sure of God's love to him, is sure of God's power for him : and Christ's wisdom is thine to counsel thee : and his angels are thine to guard thee : and his Spirit is thine to comfort thee : and his word is thine to teach thee. There are four attributes of God which are of great support to Christians. 1. His faithfulness. 2. His mightiness. 3. His goodness. And, 4. His wisdom.

And therefore, sirs, it is your duty to live upon promises, while providence seems to run cross ; Christ's love to you is free love. All that

he hath given you is free: his grace is free, his love is free, his salvation is free, and himself is free. And a dram of grace in the heart, is better than a chain of gold about the neck. Now, beloved, all that Christ hath bestowed upon you, it is free, and therefore it is a love of benevolence.

Sixthly, Christ loves his subjects with a love of compassion, sympathizing with them in all their sorrows and sufferings; truly this is a great comfort indeed: "In all their afflictions," saith the text, "he was afflicted," Isa. lxii. 7. So saith the apostle, Heb. iv. 15. "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" that is, we have an high priest that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; one that doth weep in our tears, and sigh in our sighs, and sorrow in our sorrows, and suffer in our sufferings; and therefore saith Christ, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Oh! what a sweet love is this! a love of compassion and sympathising with us in all our sorrows and sufferings. Christ was first persecuted by Paul in his members, and afterwards he was persecuted in Paul as one of his members. Now, beloved, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of compassion, and therefore let thy sufferings be what they will, Jesus Christ doth only as it were, bear a share with thee.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of delight and complacency, Prov. viii. 17. "I love them that love me." "The King shall greatly delight in thy beauty," Psal. xl. 11, speaking there of Christ; the King shall greatly delight in thy beauty,—with great delight and complacency. And therefore, Christ calls his church his love, his dove, his beloved, his fair one.

Oh, how infinitely doth Christ love his church ! Certainly Christ bears a great love to his church ; and hence it is you read, " Christ walketh among the golden candlesticks, and he feedeth among the lilies, and his delight is with the sons of men." Although poor believers be ravens in the world's eyes, yet they are doves in Christ's eye ; they are very precious in his esteem : though they be the lothing of wicked men's souls, yet they are dearly beloved of God's soul ; he delights in them. The King shall greatly delight in them.

Eighthly, Christ loves his people with an everlasting love, and an undying love : it is a love that never dies, never waxeth cold : Christ's love is like a fountain ever flowing, and never dried up ; whom he loves from eternity, these he loves to eternity, and they are believers. Now, sirs, is not this a great favour to be beloved ? In John xiii. 1. " He loves them even to the end," not a day, a month, or a year, not for a flash and away ; but even unto the end. And in Jer. xxxi. 3. speaking there of his love, it is called an everlasting love : " I have loved thee," saith God, " with an everlasting love." Oh ! sirs, this is a love that shall bed and board with thee, that shall lie down and rise up with thee, that shall go to thy death-bed with thee, to the grave with thee, and to heaven with thee : the saints shall put off the jewel of faith when they die, but not the jewel of love ; for that shall remain with them to eternity. God loves his saints with an everlasting love.

Ninthly, With an universal love ; his love is universal to all his saints. O there is not one saint but Christ infinitely loves ; he loved poor Lazarus as well as rich Abraham, and despised

Joh as well as honourable David! He loves the poorest saints as well as the richest, he loves them all alike: God is no respecter of persons. Oh, where is there such a King now as Christ! They love their nobles, they are their darlings; but Christ loves all his subjects. Christ's love extends to all his saints: his love is like the beams of the sun, which reacheth always east, west, north, and south: so doth Christ's love.

Tenthly, His love is a correcting love. "Whom he loveth he chasteneth. He correcteth every son whom he receiveth."

Eleventhly, Christ's love is a directing love; he hath promised to guide and direct his people in the way wherein they ought to walk. Oh! put all these particulars together, and sure you must needs confess that Jesus Christ loves his subjects infinitely; as it was said of Lazarus, when Christ wept for him, they made this construction of it, O how he loves him. O sirs, how doth Christ love you who are his people! he loves you infinitely, even beyond measure. Now, O sirs, for the Lord's sake, consider of it, and let this draw forth your love to him.

I shall, the next opportunity, come to shew y^e the love of Christ's subjects to him; if the Lord give leave.

CANT. v. 16.—"*He is altogether lovely.*"

THE spouse indeed was sick of love, but Christ exceeded her; for he died for love. Whilst we were sinners, Christ died for us, saith the apostle. He loved us more than his own life; yea, the very life of Christ to him was not too dear for us. Some write of a fowl called a pelican,

and they say, that she feeds her young ones with her own blood. O sirs, Christ is our pelican, that hath nourished and fed us with his own blood. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," saith Christ, John vi. 55. Christ's red blood hath taken away our red guilt; scarlet-red sinners are by grace become milk-white-saints; all our precious mercies coming in swimming to us in precious blood. Christ bled love at every vein, his drops of blood were drops of love; yea, the more bloody, the more lovely: he was most lovely upon the cross, because then he shewed most love to us.

The last day I shewed you the great love which Jesus Christ bears to all his subjects; and the sum of my discourse was this, That Jesus Christ loves his subjects with an everlasting and undenyng love. That which I am now to shew to you is this, That all Christ's subjects love him; and what a kind of love it is.

The saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong: this will appear, if you consider to what the scripture likens and compares the saints' love. Now it is compared to four things:

1. To sickness. 2. To death. 3. To the grave. 4. To fire. To these things is a believer's love compared in scripture. I shall handle them in order.

First, Sickness. This is the first comparison which doth set forth the strength of the believer's love; this is set down in two places of this book of Canticles, chap. ii. 5. "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." And in chap. v. 8. "Tell ye him whom my soul loveth, that I am sick of love." She is overwhelmed, she is overcome, and even ravished with his love and beauty. Oh! I thirst, I faint,

I pant, I long for him. O! sirs, the church is very sick, and ready to swoon; never was Ahab so sick for a vineyard, never was Sisera so desirous for milk, nor Samson for water, nor Rachel for a child, nor Amnon for his sister Tamar, as poor broken-hearted sinners are for Christ. When Christ gets into the heart, he draws all the affections to him. I remember the speech of a gracious woman, 'I have born,' said she, 'nine children, with as much pain as other women, and yet I could with all my heart bear them over again; yea, bear them, and bear them all the days of my life, that I might be sure of a part in Christ.' Oh! how infinitely do believers love Christ! David wonders at his own love, Ps. cxix. 97. "O how love I thy law!" He makes a wonder at it here; with what vehemency he loves God's word. "O how love I thy law!" So the spouse here, she does not only love him, but she is sick of love, ready to die for love. O! sirs, here is a sickness not unto death, but unto life; it is a sickness that still bringeth blessedness and happiness with it, a sickness that shall be cured by him who is the great Physician of souls. This is the first; she compares her love to sickness.

Secondly, The next thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love to Christ, is by death. This you have in Cant. viii. 6 She there tells you, "her love is strong as death." Beloved, you know death is strong; it is the king of terrors, and the terror of kings: it subdues all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, good and bad; the greatest monarchs, kings, and emperors, have been thrown down by death. Where did ever that man dwell that was too strong for death? If strength could

have resisted it, then Samsou had missed it: could greatness have overlooked it, Ncbuchadnezzar had escaped it: could beauty have out-faced it, then Absalom had never met it: could riches have bribed it, Dives had avoided it. But, alas! none of these gallants were hardy enough for death, it trode on the necks of them all: and therefore, O! look upon death also, as a thing you must meet with: look upon yourselves as a thing you must part with. Now, by this you may guess what love is, "it is strong as death:" ay, strong indeed. O how strong is death! Nay, believers' love to Christ is not strong as death, but stronger than death; as some scriptures make it appear. A believer's love to Christ is stronger than death, "I am persuaded," saith Paul, "neither life nor death, principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. viii. 38, 39. Death, though it may kill us, it cannot hurt us; though death may send us to the pit of darkness, yet it cannot send us to the place of torments: though it may take away our lives, yet it cannot take away our loves: bloody tyrants have taken away the martyrs' lives for Christ, but they could never destroy their love to him. One of the primitive christians, when he came to suffer, said, "Oh, I shall die for my Saviour but once, and no more lives to lay down! O, I could die an hundred times for him!" Oh! sirs, love is a thing that out-lives all enemies, all persecutions, all dangers: nay, death itself. In Rev. xii. 11. saith the text, "They loved not their lives unto the death." And so saith Job, "Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee:" as if he had said,

Oh! Lord, though thou take away my posterity, my greatness, my health, my goodness, my children, yea, my life itself, thou shalt never take away my love: though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee, Job xiii. 15. So that love is not only as strong as death, but stronger than death; for love is the conqueror at the last.

Thirdly, Another thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love, and her strong affection to Christ; it is the grave; and this you have in chapter viii. 6. Her "love is cruel as the grave." The grave is the bed of darkness, which is always craving, and never satisfied, but devours all that comes. Christ tells us, in John iv. 14. "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more."—What! thirst no more? No more after the world, and worldly things; but more and more after Christ and heaven. He that drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more. No more after those low poor things, but more and more after Christ. No hungry man did ever with more appetite long for bread, nor a thirsty man long for water, nor a naked man for clothes, nor a covetous man for riches, nor a sick man for health, nor a condemned man for pardon, than souls that are truly gracious do for Christ Jesus. "My soul thirsteth for thee," saith David in Psal. xxxvi. 1. "My soul thirsteth for thee." Why, David, how doth your soul thirst for God? Why, he tells you in Psalm xlii. 1.; "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—Now mark, sirs, the poor hart which is hunted by dogs, his nature is, as it were, all over in a flame, in a burning heat, and then it pants and thirsts, and is ready to die for water. Now, says David, "As

the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Oh, the vehement fire of David's thirst! and therefore he tells you elsewhere, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none I desire on earth in comparison of thee," Psal. lxxiii. 23. Do you not desire your wives, your children, your crown, your kingdom? Yea, these he desired in their places, but these were nothing in comparison of God. I remember the saying of a martyr, to one that asked him if he did not love his wife and children, when they wept by him? Love them! yes, saith he; if all the world were gold, and mine to dispose of, I would give it all to live with them, though it were in a prison; yet, saith he, in comparison of him, I love them not. Oh! sirs, we must tread upon father, and run over mother, to come to Christ. You know Peter, to come to Christ, would go upon the bare water; rather than sail, he went upon the sea to Christ; truly it was a dangerous passage; but Peter bore up excellently well, while his faith bore up; but when his faith sank, then Peter began to sink too. The world is called a sea, in Daniel, and in Revelation; and we must go upon these waters to Christ, and be sure to keep up faith, and then you will hold out; but if faith fail, you shall be sure to sink, O! sirs, the believer's love is unsatisfied like the grave; none but Christ, none but Christ, saith the martyr; and as Augustine saith, O Lord, take away all, only give me thyself!

Fourthly, Love is compared to fire, and it hath a most vehement flame, in Cant. viii. 9. Now, beloved, the saints' love to Christ, is not only compared to fire, for its warming and heating, but for its kindling, and encreasing, and flaming.

“Whilst I was musing,” saith David, “the fire burned,” Psal. xxxix. 3. What fire? Why, the fire in his heart, and not the fire in the hearth. And when the apostles went to preach the gospel, the fire sat upon their tongues, in Acts ii. 3. Now, beloved, as the saints’ love is compared to fire in the scripture, so you shall find afflictions, and persecutions, and dangers, and these cruel things that accompany the poor saints in the world, are called waters and floods in Dan. ix. and Psal. lxxix. and Matt. vii. But two scriptures that are more than ordinary, in Rev. xvii. 15., where they are called waters, “The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sat, they be peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” The Spirit opens it to our hand; and you have another full scripture in Rev. xii. 14., where it is there said of the dragon, That he cast out much water like a flood after the woman. Now, what is this flood here? why, this flood is bloody persecutions and devilish prosecutions. Now, beloved, how long hath the dragon been spewing out her water upon the church? and wherefore is all this water thrown out? it is to quench the fire that I speak of; but can they do it? No, alas! they may spew till their eyes come out of their head, and to no purpose, Cant. viii. 7. “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.” All the bloody persecutions and afflictions cannot quench love: and therefore let wicked men send forth as many floods as they will, it cannot drown the saints’ love. All the water that Saul and his party threw after David did not quench his. No, saith he, “Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, yet will I fear no ill,” Psal. xliii. 4. David

is not afraid to go by death's door. All the waters that Herod and the rulers threw upon the apostles, could never quench their love. Now, beloved, you will find after the apostles were whipt soundly, they went away rejoicing, and rejoicing in this very thing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Jesus Christ. And Heb. x. "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." And saith Paul, in Rom. viii. 35., "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, and the like?" Believe it, sirs, all these are trying things, and yet, saith he, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" No, no, they cannot do it: there is nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ: so that the believer's love is not made of such metal to be quenched by this flood; the saints are all on fire for Christ. And we find that great flood which Nero and Julian poured out upon the primitive christians: What, did it quench fire? I remember one of them said, Had I ten heads they should all suffer for Christ. And another said, If every hair of my head were a man, they should all suffer for Christ. Alas! the poor christians caught their torments like so many crowns: and the scripture tells you, that "many waters cannot quench love." Now, beloved, put these four things together, and it is very clear, that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong; they will hang for him, they will burn for him, do any thing for him, suffer the greatest torments rather than he should lose the least dram of glory. But you will say, why do all God's subjects love him with this love? The reasons are two. *First*, Because he deserves it; *Secondly*, He commands it.

First, Christ deserves our love. Why do we love him? why, he deserves it at our hands were it ten thousand times more than it is. Beloved, it was he that created us; it is he that sanctified us; it is he that redeemed us, and loved us; it was he that changed our natures, and pardons our sin; it was he that made our peace, and pacified his Father's wrath for us, and satisfied his Father's justice for us, and wrought everlasting righteousness for us: it is he that bore our cross, that we might wear his crown. He waded through a sea of sufferings for us, to bring pardon to our souls; and doth not this Christ deserve our love? O infinitely, infinitely! And truly, sirs, the more Christ hath done and suffered for us, the dearer should he be unto us.

Secondly, As Christ deserves our love, so he commands it: Christ commands us to love him above life, above wife, above relations. Christ will have all, or none at all. Jesus Christ must weigh heavier than all relations in the balance of our affections: he commanded to love him above all.

APPLICATION. I now proceed to the application of all to ourselves, which is the third thing in order to be handled, and I shall make three uses of it. *1st*, For consolation. *2dly*, Examination. *3dly*, Exhortation.

First of all, Is it so that Christ loves us with an everlasting and never-dying love? Why, then, here is comfort for you who are his people. I speak only now to such. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," saith God, Isa. xli. 1.; and saith Christ, John xiv. 1. "Let not your hearts be troubled." Christ would not have his poor saints troubled; and saith the

apostle, "rejoice evermore," 1 Thess. v. 17 "Rejoice evermore!"—Alas! how can we rejoice when men vilify us; when men reproach us, and abuse us, and persecute us, how can we rejoice? But do but hark what Christ saith, Matt. v. 11. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake." Mark, Blessedness goeth in the first place, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you." O! sirs, it is a matter of blessedness, and therefore be not cast down. You know what was said of old, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. last verse. O poor soul! this is all the hell that thou shalt have, therefore be of good cheer; here thou hast thy bad things, thy good things are to come; here thou hast thy bitter things, but thy sweet things are to come; here thou hast thy prison, but thy palace is to come; here thou hast thy rags, thy robes are to come; here thou hast thy sorrow, thy joy is to come; here thou hast thy hell, thy heaven is to come; after the cup of affliction, comes the cup of salvation; the sweetness of the crown which shall be enjoyed, will make amends for the bitterness of the cross which was endured. One passing by a place where a cross lay on the ground, he caused it to be reared up, and found much riches and treasure under it. O! sirs, under your greatest trouble lie your greatest treasures, patience for sorrow: the seed of sorrow on earth, shall reap a golden crop of joy in heaven; they that sow holiness in seed-time of their lives, shall reap happiness in harvest of eternity. Oh! sirs, never think to have an end of your sorrow, till there be an end of

your sin. The apostle tells us, "Our light affliction, which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." A dram of reproach to a weight of glory! O what a short moment of pain to an eternity of pleasures! and therefore, saints, be of good cheer. Here is comfort for you: your best days are to come, you are subjects who are beloved entirely, cordially, infinitely, with an undying love.

Use 2. For the use of examination. Is it so that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong? Why then, I beseech you, examine, and try, and search yourselves, how do your pulses beat after Christ? O! that you would examine yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and whither you shall go when you die, and what will become of you to eternity. Oh! sirs, are you sick of love? do you love Christ? for the Lord's sake, sirs, examine and try, and see whether you be sick of love to Christ. It is to be feared, there be but few in the world sick of this disease. Many are sick for honours, that are but rattles to still men's ambitions; many are sick for gold and silver, which is but a little shining dirt; many men are sick for blood, who eat up the Lord's people like bread; God will lay on them the hand of vengeance, who lay on his saints the hand of violence; many are sick with superstition, and the human traditions of men, which, instead of bringing their souls to heaven, will beguile them of heaven; alas! many are sick of their sufferings: who need to fear the cross, who are sure of the crown? but O! how few are there that are sick of love to Christ! how many are there in this congregation that are sick of love to Christ? for the Lord's sake, do not deceive your-

selves; you see the spouse was ready to swoon and faint, and die for Christ.

Secondly, Her love was as strong as death; nay, stronger than death: is your love so? O soul! can thou endure a prison for Christ, burning for Christ, hanging for Christ, forsaking all for Christ; wilt thou venture on the waves for Christ, as Peter did? O sirs, for the Lord's sake, look to yourselves: there are many profess love to Christ in words, but more that deny him in their works: God was never more in men's mouths, and never less in men's lives. Beloved, is your love like the grave, never satisfied? Doest thou cry out more for Christ? O give me Christ, and take the world who will. Is this flame in your souls? For the Lord's sake try yourselves, deal cordially with your poor souls.

Now, beloved, I have given you a taste of true sincere love, and blessed are they who cast their love into the sweet bosom of their Maker.

Use 3. I shall now close all with a word of exhortation. Well, sirs, if I should preach here till the morrow-morning, what can I say more to make you to love Christ? he is most lovely, he is altogether lovely. Therefore, love Christ, love Christ,—all causes of love are in him; there may be particular causes of love in men and angels; but I say all causes of love are in Christ: O sirs, love Christ; for if you do not, there is a dreadful curse pronounced against you: there is no heaven, no happiness, no crown, without Christ; for in him doth all fulness dwell, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, and the Father gives forth all his loving-kindness through Christ. Beloved, is it not better swimming in the water-works of repentance, than burning in the fire-works of ven-

geance? one of them you must; there is no coming to the fair haven of glory, without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance: and there, say what you will, unless you believe in your Saviour, your souls will be miserable for ever; and therefore consider of what I have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. Love Christ more than ever, more than all, and above all, and then you shall be happy for evermore.

"He is altogether lovely."—CANT. v. 16.

BELoved, you know how far we proceeded last Lord's day. I finished the sixth particular, wherein Jesus Christ the King of kings doth surmount and excel all other kings: and it was thus, Jesus Christ loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him; and I shewed you the wonderful love of Christ to his subjects, and his subjects' love to him, in many particulars. I now proceed to other particulars, wherein Christ excels the kings of the earth.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ makes all his subjects, his subjects do not make him. By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, Col. i. 19. By him? by whom? By Jesus Christ, "by him were all things created," "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not," John i. 10. So in the 3d verse, "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made." There was not any thing made without Christ, and all things were made by Christ. Beloved, Jesus Christ he creates his subjects; he makes his subjects; and gives being to his subjects;

in him we live, move, and have our being: he gives us a threefold being; our first being in the state of nature, our second being in the state of grace, and our third being in the state of glory. This is the seventh thing wherein Jesus Christ excels all other kings—he makes his subjects, which none else can do.

Eighthly, Christ is the richest of all kings. O sirs, he is rich in love, he is rich in knowledge, rich in goodness, rich in wisdom, rich in grace, rich in glory. He is as rich as the Father himself: the riches of the Deity are in him; in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9. Mark, sirs, in him there dwells all fulness. Of what? why of the Godhead; and not only so, but he dwells in him bodily. Alas! sirs, what are princes' single crowns, or the pope's triple crown, to Christ's many crowns? Christ hath not one, or two, or three crowns, but many crowns upon his head, Rev. xix. 12. "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns." Christ is richer than any king, nay, richer than all the kings in the world; "for he is heir of all things," in Heb. i. 8. He is the greatest heir in heaven and earth.

The Spanish ambassador coming to see the treasure of St Mark at Venice, which was so much cried up through the world for a famous treasury, he fell a groping of it, to find whether it had any bottom; and being asked the reason of it, said he, "My great master's treasury differs from yours in this; his hath no bottom as yours hath;" alluding to the mines of the Indies. But alas! what is the proud Spaniard's treasure to Christ's, and what are his mines to Christ's mines! what are all the jewels, and diamonds, and crowns, and the sceptres of all the kings of

the earth to Christ's! The whole Turkish empire, saith Luther, is but a crust that God throws to dogs, which is a great part of the world indeed; but it is no more than a bone, a crust that God throws to dogs. O sirs! Christ's riches are so many, they cannot be numbered; they are so precious, they cannot be valued; so great, they cannot be measured. O the infinite riches of our King! Christ is a mine of gold, which we must dig till we find heaven.

Ninthly, Christ excels all other kings in this too; he is a King whose power is absolute over all nations, and people, and kindreds, and tongues. Now, sirs, his will is a law: no man's will in the world is sufficient to be a law, but the will of our King is sufficient.

Tenthly, Jesus Christ is a King who rules over the souls and consciences of men, over the wills and hearts of men; other kings may rule over the estates of men, over the bodies of men, but not over their consciences. Now this is Christ's glory, which he will give to no other: Christ by his power is able to subdue the wills of men, and the hearts of men, though never so stubborn and stout before. All the power of the world cannot do this: if all the kings, and princes, and emperors of the world were put together, they were not able to subdue the heart of one poor man; they may beat his body, afflict his body, torment his body; but as for his heart, I say, all the kings and potentates in the world, nay, all the angels in heaven, cannot subdue the heart of a poor sinner; and this is the glory of Christ, that he can do this. Heart-work is God's work. The great heart-maker must be the great heart-breaker, none can do it but he.

Eleventhly, Christ is a King that hath no need

of any instruments; he makes use of them sometimes, but he needs not any. Alas! sirs, what can the kings of the earth do without instruments? how can they govern their kingdoms without instruments? they must have this instrument here, and the other there, or else farewell crown and kingdom quickly. But Jesus Christ hath no need of any, he can do any thing by his own power. By himself he destroyed Pharaoh and his great host in the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. By himself he overthrew Jericho, that great city, Josh. vi. By himself he smote the great army of a thousand thousand men; the greatest army that ever we read of, 2 Chron. xiv. By himself he overthrew Ammon and Moab, and Mount Seir, who warred against Judah.—This now he did by himself.

See what he hath done by weak means: he smote the kings about Sodom, even by Abraham and his poor family, Gen. xxiii. By weak means he overthrew that mighty army of the Midianites by Gideon's 300, Judges vii. By weak means he destroyed great Goliath, even by David, and great Sisera by a woman. By weak means he destroyed a garrison of the Philistines, even by Jonathan and his armour-bearer, 1 Sam. xiv. 4. Now this he did by weak means, and much more.

See what he did contrary to means; why, contrary to means? Why, contrary to means he delivered the three children from burning, being in the fire, Dan. iii. Contrary to means he delivered Jonas from drowning in the sea. Contrary to means, he delivered Daniel from devouring, being in a den of lions. Contrary to means, he kept the Israelites from being drowned, being in the sea. I say this he did

contrary to means. And I might shew you what he hath done by contrary means, but I pass that: so that you see our King hath no need of instruments, and therefore he wonderfully exceeds all others.

Twelfthly, Christ is a King who will overcome and subdue all our enemies: yea, all our enemies, both spiritual and temporal, he will utterly overthrow. Our enemies are very many and very mighty: high in power, and high in pride, and we very weak. We may well speak in David's words, in 2 Sam. iii. 29. saith he, "I am weak this day, though anointed king." How David? weak to-day, and yet made a king to-day? Yes, saith he, the sons of Zeruah are too hard for me. Why, believers, you are all kings in a spiritual sense, you are kings elected, kings in a disguise; but yet, poor hearts, you are weak, though you are kings elected: the sons of Zeruah are too hard for you. Why, but, sirs, Jesus Christ is a King of kings, a King above all things, and over all kings, and he must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. xv. 25. Mark, "He must reign," he must of necessity, God hath spoken it, till he has put all enemies under his feet, not only some, but all. O! this is good news to saints, excellent news. What king can do this but Christ? what king can put all his enemies under his feet? What earthly king can subdue all his enemies? Alas! they cannot subdue their own; for the most flourishing kings that we read of, have fallen before their enemies for want of strength: Richard III. cried out in his distress, "A kingdom for a horse, a kingdom for a horse; and yet all this could not save his life. Alas, alas! the most flourishing

kings have been so far from subduing their subjects' enemies, that they cannot subdue their own; but Jesus Christ can subdue all his enemies: he hath all power in heaven and in earth given to him, in Matt. xxviii. 18. So that if he speaks the word, all his enemies are overthrown even in a moment.

In the *thirteenth* place, Christ surmounts all other kings in this: he is a King that gives his subjects the richest and the best gifts of any other king whatsoever: in John x. 27, 28. "My sheep," saith he, "hear my voice, and they know me, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life." The wise God, that he may invite and encourage poor sinners to a holiness of life, sets before their eyes the recompense of reward: that if the equity of his precepts do not prevail, the excellency of his promises may: he would fain catch men with a golden bait. Abraham's servant gave jewels of silver, and jewels of gold to Rebekah, that he might win her heart over to Isaac, in Gen. xxiv. 23. O! the jewels, the excellent jewels, that Christ gives to poor souls to win their heart to him; Christ gives us richly all things to enjoy, what can we desire more? I Tim. vi. Alas! the men of the earth give but poorly and penuriously; but Christ gives richly, Christ gives freely. No man in the world gives so freely as Christ: Christ gives frequently; every day, every hour he scattereth jewels to poor souls. The great king of Persia gave two of his courtiers, to the one a golden cup, to the other a kiss, and he that had the cup complained to the king, that his fellow's kiss was better than his golden cup. O! sirs, Christ doth not put off with a cup of gold, but he gives us the kiss; he gives best gifts to his beloved

ones, he gives his best love, his best joy, his best peace, his best mercies. Oh! where is there a king like this King! Alas! earthly kings may give great titles, or a place in the court, and the like: they may give a title to-day, and a halter to-morrow, as in the case of Haman; they may smile to-day, and frown to-morrow; kiss to-day, and kill to-morrow; but Christ doth not so, he gives the best of every thing, the best of his love, his best blood, not the blood of his finger, but the blood of his heart. Oh, sirs, how far doth Christ excel all others in giving his subjects the best gifts! Oh, sirs, what a gift is heaven! what a gift is pardon of sins! I wonder what king can give his people such gifts; and herein the Lord Jesus excels all others.

In the *last* place, Christ makes all his subjects free; there is not one subject that he hath, but is a free man and woman. There are some things that Christ frees from, and some things that he makes us free of: Some things that he frees us from, and what is that? why, that which if we were not freed from, would undo us to all eternity. He frees us from the curse, the cursed curse; if Christ had not freed us from the curse, we had lived cursedly, and died most cursedly, and been damned for ever; but Jesus Christ hath freed us. In Gal. v. 1. "Stand fast," saith St Paul, "in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." And in John iii. 6. "If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed." Again, he frees us from the guilt of sin; our pride would damn us, our covetousness would damn us, our unbelief would damn us, had he not freed us from the guilt of sin; but Christ frees his people from this. Again, he hath freed us from the power of the devil, inso-

much that the devil hath nothing to do with us, in Acts xxvi. And he frees us from the flames of hell, from the pit of hell; Christ hath cut off the entail of hell and damnation, 1 Thess. i. "He hath freed us from the wrath to come," that is, Christ hath freed us from the flames of hell.

Again, Christ hath freed us from the slavery, from the bondage, from the yoke, in Gal. v. 1. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage." We are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," in Eph. ii. 19. And Christ tells us himself, in Matt. xi. 30. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Christ hath delivered us from the slavery, "we are not under the law, but under grace." These things we are free from, and there are other things that we are made free of, and that in heaven, we are all made free men and women of the New Jerusalem, and we trade there, and have as good right there as any other saints: we are fellow-citizens, free men of heaven, not only of heaven, but of all the promises, and all the privileges that the saints enjoy.

Now, is not this a wonderful mercy that our King hath done for us; he hath freed us from all those miseries which would ruin us for ever, and made us free of all the excellent privileges whatsoever, which poor souls can enjoy. Now, O how far doth Christ excel all other kings! The rulers of the earth, they may perhaps lay heavy burdens upon the consciences of men, and bodies of men, and estates of men, but Christ lays no such burden on us; no, Christ hath made us free, and no people so free, because

Christ hath freed us upon the cross. Christ bought it dear enough; it cost him his best blood, his noble blood. I might name more particulars, wherein Christ excels all other kings; but I think these are very sufficient to demonstrate it.

Use 1. I shall close upon this head with a word of application; and so shall finish this second title, KING of kings.

First, Is it so that Christ is a threefold king, as I have shewed you; and is he a king that doth so far surmount all the kings of the earth? O then, however the world goes, here is comfort for saints, that he is such a King. O what a mercy is this! What a comfort is this to the Lord's people, that Christ is King above all kings, and over all kings, and must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet! All his enemies must be brought down and made his footstool. Now this should comfort the people of God, and teach them to wait Christ's leisure, and let him alone. Some earthly kings would do great matters, but they want power; but Christ wants not power; for all power is given him in heaven and in earth. Now, sirs, did you really believe this, that all power is certainly given to Christ, certainly it would be a cordial to revive you in the worst times, and saddest of trials. He who is our Saviour, he who is our head, our brother, our friend, is King of kings. Oh! sirs, this doctrine of Christ's kingly power, is a very sweet doctrine to the members of Christ: and, I beseech you, let these considerations which I have laid before you, bear up your spirits. I have shewed you with what an entire love Christ loves his subjects; he is King of kings, and can do any thing without instru-

ments; he needs none to help him to do his work. He can, if he please, enable the most despicable creatures, as flies, and frogs, and caterpillars, and grasshoppers to do his work: therefore let these considerations take impression upon your souls. If a man should tell you, your brother, or sister, beyond the seas, were advanced to great honours, as Joseph, when he heard that his father was alive, "Go," saith he, "tell my father of all my glory and greatness in Egypt, for he will rejoice at it." Now I have told you a relation of Christ's kingly power; and therefore let this quiet your spirits: "Be still," saith the Lord, "and know that I am God," in Psal. xlvi. 10. It is enough for you to know that I am God, and therefore be still, consider what I am.

Use 2d. By way of exhortation, I have one word to say to the saints, and another to sinners.

First, To saints. If it be so, that Christ is King of kings, and King above all kings, and over all kings; O then you who are the people of God, you who are near and dear to him, upon whom, and in whom Christ is formed and stamp'd; O that you would give all the glory, and praise, and honour, to Christ, and study to advance his fame. He hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, saith the apostle, to shew forth his praise. Oh, sirs, this should be our great endeavour. O that you who pretend friendship and love to Christ, would endeavour in your places to advance Christ.

Secondly, A word or two to such as are none of the subjects of Christ. Let me exhort you to believe in Christ, embrace him, receive him, to lay hold upon him, to be one with him, or else you will one day cry out as that king did in dis-

ness, "Oh! a kingdom for a horse,"—a kingdom for a Christ.—O! thou wouldst give ten thousand worlds, if thou hadst them to give, for a part in Christ. Alas! sinner, what is the reason that Christ hath no more in thy esteem? Thou wilt part with Christ rather than part with thy swearing, and drunkenness, and filthiness. O this is sad; there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved. He is the Desire of all nations, and we can never be happy without him; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, sirs, as you love your own souls, lay hold on him, that he may be the Saviour of your souls, the joy of your hearts, and your all in all: for the Lord's sake, sirs, consider of it, you that do yet stand out against Christ. O that I could but tempt you to Christ, O that I could prevail with you to love Christ, and to have strong desires after him. Alas! sirs, if you do not believe, and part with all your iniquities, you must part with Christ at last; and what a sad parting will that be to part with God, and Christ, and heaven! When thou wilt come to know what thou hast lost by hugging thy darling corruptions: O what a sad condition will it be! And therefore I beseech you, think of it in time, and believe in your Saviour, that your souls may be saved in the day of Christ.

THE MIGHTY GOD.

"He is altogether lovely."—CANT. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

I finished the second title which is given to Christ in scripture, KING OF KINGS. I now proceed to a third, and that is, MIGHTY GOD. One of Christ's titles is, THE MIGHTY GOD: you have it there in Isa. ix. 9. he is also called *The Mighty God*. Beloved, I have shewed you from the second title, that Christ is a King, a King above all kings, and a King over all kings, and the King of kings, and that his laws are most equal, his subjects most happy; having no other tax laid upon them than love and fear. But now this title holdeth him forth, not only as a great King, but as a great God, before whom all kings and kingdoms are but as little drops, or as small dust, Isa. xl. 15. From this title, The MIGHTY GOD, I shall lay down this proposition, That JESUS CHRIST is true and perfect God.—That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, that is the point I shall insist on.

There are two sorts of people in the world who deny my doctrine,—who deny the deity of Jesus Christ, who say the second Person of the Trinity is not God.

First, The unbelieving Jews. If Christ had come as the Jews dreamed, as a great monarch, treading upon nothing but crowns and sceptres, and the necks of kings, and had all the potentates of the earth to attend his train; I say, had Christ come in this worldly glory, and pomp,

and power, then it may be the Jews would have believed on him; may be then he should have been their God. But now, beloved, because Christ came poorly and meanly, and "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," as the scriptures saith, Phil. ii. 7. He took none of his gallantry, none of his bravery upon him, but "made himself of no reputation; and therefore the Jews slighted him, and disowned him. The Turks mock us at this day with our crucified God. O! say they, you worship a crucified God; and some of the heathens say, they would not believe in a hanged God. O blessed Jesus, thus art thou reproached and despised by the unbelieving world, because thou camest poorly, and died shamefully for our sins. They who despise the death of the Lamb, shall surely feel the wrath of the Lamb; they who turn away their ears from hearing Christ's voice now, Christ will turn away his ears from hearing their cries then.

Secondly, There be others that deny the Deity of Christ; and there are some seditious ones in this nation, who say, that Christ is but a mere man, and that every saint is as much God as Christ; and further, they say, that to equal Christ with God is high blasphemy. They that will not own Christ in his first coming, Christ will not own them at his second coming; they that will not obey the truth of God revealed from heaven unto them, shall suffer the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them. Oh! ye blasphemers, ye say, the Son is not God: the Father saith he is God. Now, who speaks truth, God or you? Let God be true, and every man a liar. That it is so, I shall give you more clear proofs. Express scripture speaks it forth, that

Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. Titus ii. 3 saith the apostle there, "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of the great God." Mark, Christ is here not only called God, but "the great God." Oh! saints, he that came from heaven to make us righteous, will also come from heaven to make us gloripus,—"looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ." Not only so, but Christ is also called Mighty God; nay, not only Mighty God, but again, "God blessed for ever." Christ is God blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5.; not only blessed for ever, but the *true God*, 1 John iv. 20. Jesus Christ is there called the true God, not only the true God, but a God for ever and ever. Heb. i. 8. Mark there, unto the Son he said, "Thy throne is for ever and ever." The Father calls the Son God himself, and therefore well may we. Unto the Son he said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Thus you see the doctrine fully proved, that Jesus Christ is the true and perfect God; but beloved, because the Deity of Christ is so much questioned at this day, and this being one of the serious and chiefest points in divinity, therefore I shall give you some considerations, or demonstrations, or arguments, to fortify you against this great error before named. *1st*, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. He is for time, co-eternal; for nature, co-essential; for dignity, co-equal with his Father.

First, For time, co-eternal, John xvii. 5. "O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." You see here, sirs, Christ was before the world was, Christ was from everlasting, from the beginning, Prov. viii. 23. speaking concerning

Christ, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the earth was." And therefore Christ is called the Everlasting Father, Isa. ix. 6. So in Rev. i. 8. Christ there, speaking of himself, saith, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty." Mark, sirs, Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time; which was, and is, and is to come. Now, beloved, none can be eternal but God: but Christ is eternal, and therefore he is God, and co-eternal with his Father.

Secondly, He is for nature, co-essential: "I and my Father are one," saith Christ, John x. 30. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one." Mark here, they are one, John xiv. 8. When Philip desires to see the Father, "Shew us the Father, and it is enough;" saith Christ, in the 9th and 10th verses, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." How so? "For I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." So that you know Christ is more than mere man: he is one with the Father. Oh! sirs, he is Theanthropos, God-man. If you make the Son mere man, you must make the Father so too.

Thirdly, He is for dignity, co-eval with the Father, Phil. ii. 6. "Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with the Father." Christ thought it no diminution of his Father's glory, to be equal with his Father in glory. And you shall further find that all the honour which belongs to God, the Father hath commanded us to give it to the Son. You have a full text, John v. 23. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Fa-

ther ; for he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father." Therefore it is clear to every eye, that Christ is for dignity, co-equal with the Father ; for the Father hath commanded us to give the same honour to Christ which is due to him ; so that it is no blasphemy at all, certainly, to equal Christ with God ; for in him are the riches of the Deity and the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him, as you may see, Col. ii. 9. This is the first argument. He is for time co-eternal, for nature co-essential, for dignity co-eval with the Father.

Secondly, I shall lay down this argument to prove the Deity of Jesus Christ : consider the work of creation ; surely he that made heaven and earth, must needs be a God ; you will yield to this ? so saith the Lord himself. All the gods that have not made heaven and earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under heaven, Jer. x. 11. ; hut now, beloved, Jesus Christ made the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, and therefore he is God ; see a few scriptures for this, John i. 3. "All things were made by him ;" mark, this is by Christ, "all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made. Col. i. 16. "By him were all things created in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, all things were by him, and for him." So again, John i. 10. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Now, beloved, had Christ been less than God, he could not have made heaven and earth, and therefore he is God of glory, the great God that now sits upon the throne : for he created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein.

Thirdly, That Christ is the true and perfect

God, appears, if you consider the works and miracles which he did in the days of his flesh; here is another unanswerable argument to prove the Godhead of Jesus Christ.—The winds and the seas obey him, the devils came out of the possessed, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the sick were healed. Oh! who could do this but God, as you may see! Matt. xxi. 5. But you may say, the apostles did great miracles, and yet were not gods. Why, it is true they did great miracles; but in whose name did they do them? Was it in their own names, and by their own power? No, beloved, they themselves confess the contrary, Acts iv. 10. They tell you it is not in their own power, but in the name and power of Jesus Christ. So in Acts iv. 18. “we do in the name of Christ;” so that, beloved, this is a strong argument to prove the Deity of Christ; they did great miracles in his name, and by his power his disciples did great miracles. And with this Jesus satisfied the disciples of John, “Go and tell what things ye hear and see, how the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight; go and tell John.” Now, I say, these great things could be done by none but by a great God; and therefore Jesus Christ is not only the Son of man, but the Son of God, even God blessed for ever.

But, *Fourthly*, Consider divine worship is due unto Christ. Now, you know, worship is proper only to God. “Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, said the angel,” Rev. xiv. 7. Worship only is proper to God alone. Now, beloved, all the acts of worship that belong to God the Father, are given to the Son Jesus

Christ; both angels and men are commanded to worship him, as well as we, Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him;" and in Phil. ii. 10. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of all things in heaven and on earth;" mark, sirs, things in heaven, as well as things on earth, must worship Christ; and Christ himself saith, John xiv. 1. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me;" mark, sirs, speaking of those that believe in God, saith he, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now, beloved, we are commanded to pray to Christ, to glorify Christ, to believe in Christ, to honour Christ, and worship Christ; and therefore the saints have prayed, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," as Stephen did. So that you see worship is due to Christ, both from angels and men, and therefore he must needs be God.

Fifthly, There be clear promises of the coming of Christ under the Old Testament. No sooner was man fallen, but Christ was promised, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." All the prophets foretold of the Messiah,—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Daniel, Malachi, and the rest of them, how falsely he should be accused, and how basely he should be used, and this will be enough to condemn the unbelieving Jews, and make them speechless in the great day of accounts. I might give you the sayings of the same prophets, but you may find them yourselves; search the Old Testament, and you shall find them all speak more or less of Jesus Christ. Thus I have clearly proved, by express scripture and undeniable arguments, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. I proceed to the use and application of it to ourselves.

Use 1. The *first* use shall be for information :

if it be so that Jesus is true and perfect God: then, though this be a strange truth to some, yet it is a sound truth; though the mystery be deep, yet the divinity is true, that he who made man became man, suffered by man, and for man. "Without controversy," saith the apostle, "great is the mystery of godliness." What is the mystery? "God manifested in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16. Without controversy, without all doubt, a great mystery, saith the apostle, "God manifested in the flesh."

The schoolmen compare the incarnation of Jesus Christ, to a garment made by three sisters, and one of them wears it: so all the three Persons in the Trinity had a hand in the garment of Christ's flesh, but the second Person he wore it: he was God manifested in the flesh; and this is a great mystery. And truly, sirs, it is a great mystery for happiness to become a curse, Gal. iii.; for him that made the angels, to become lower than the angels, Heb. ii.; for the Creator to become a creature; for him that had the riches of all in himself, to become poor. Oh! this is a great mystery, that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, his glory should be wrapt in the rags of flesh; that the great God should take upon him a piece of earth; that he who hangs the earth upon nothing, should hang upon a cross between two thieves, truly a great mystery; that he who rules the stars should suck the breasts; that he who thunders in the clouds should be cradled in a manger. Oh! a great mystery, that Abraham's Lord should become Abraham's son; that the God of Abraham should take upon him Abraham's seed; what a mystery is this? he was conceived in the bowels of his mother, that

he might be received into the bosom of his Father. "Therefore," saith the apostle, "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." God's Son became man's son, that we poor man's sons might become God's sons.

But, *Secondly*, Is Jesus Christ true and perfect God? My second inferenee is this, That Jesus is a precious God: he is honey in the mouth, beauty in the eye, joy in the heart, and music in the ear. "Let all their money perish with them, who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ," said a great marquis, when he was tempted with money. Oh! sirs, Christ's members are the happiest, Christ's comforts are the sweetest, Christ's reward is the highest, Christ's precepts are the purest, Christ's glory is the greatest, Christ's love is the truest, Christ's riches are the most precious, he is the glory of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of men. In Heb. i. 3. he is there called "the brightness of his Father's glory," he is the rich jewel in the cabinet of glory, he is the sparkling pearl, whosoever hath him cannot be poor, but whosoever wants him cannot be rich.

Thirdly, If Christ be a true and perfect God, then Christ's members are the greatest and happiest; if Christ is God Almighty's only Son, believers are God Almighty's only daughters. You read of God's daughters in Ps. xlv. Christ is the King, believers are the queen; Christ is the Bridegroom, believers are the bride; Christ is the Lamb, believers are his wife, Rev. xxi. 9. What shall I say? the angels in glory are in a very glorious state, and, let me tell you, believers in Christ are higher than angels: they are ser-

wants, we are members; they be the friends of the Bridegroom, we are the bride; they have their personal glory, we have the same glory, for substance, with Jesus Christ, John xvii. 22. "The glory which thou hast given me," saith Christ, "I have given them." Believers be nearer the throne than angels; and this doth wonderfully speak out that we are higher than the angels. In Rev. v. the four beasts are nearer the throne than the angels. O! beloved, how are believers advanced! how high are we become, poor dust and ashes, to be above angels! and this is the greatest happiness, which we get by Christ's assuming our nature for the salvation of our souls. Again, Christ's members be not only the greatest, but the happiest: our renewed condition is as good in Christ as it was bad in Adam. Oh! sirs, we were no more cursed out of Christ, than we were blessed in Christ; Christ is as full of life, as Adam was full of death; Christ is as full of sweetness to us, as Adam was of bitterness to us. Truly, soul, if thou say Christ is thine; I will speak next, and say, Soul, thou hast that which is more worth than a king's ransom; that which is more worth than all that which the devil promised Christ, when he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world. O! the happiness of poor believers! "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," saith Paul, Rom. viii. 1. Therefore they are happy.

But, *Fourthly*, Christ Jesus is true and perfect God. Then we infer from hence, that God's love and good-will to mankind was very great. That Jesus Christ should come from heaven to take our nature, that we might be partakers of the divine nature; Christ took upon him our shame, that we might be partakers of his glory.

One drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours, and yet he died our death, that we might live his life; he suffered our hell, that we might enjoy his heaven. Oh! how infinitely did he love us. He endured the sorest pains, that we might enjoy the sweetest pleasures. The scriptures tell us that he came leaping, he came with such a good-will, he came leaping; as you know when a man goes leaping, you may know that it was with a good-will: he came leaping and skipping, Cant. ii. 8. "He came leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills." Leaping, saith Gregory, how so? Why, saith he, from the throne to the womb, from the womb to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from thence to the throne again; this was his leap. Oh! sirs, oh! sirs, how much did Jesus suffer for poor believers! he was hanged upon the cross on mount Calvary, that he might sit on the throne in mount Zion.

Use 3d. By way of exhortation. 1st. To sinners, to unbelievers, to graceless persons, I have a few words to say. Oh! sirs, oh! sirs, methinks I cannot but do towards you, as Christ did once toward Jerusalem; when he came near the city he wept over it. Truly, sinner, your state is a weeping state; your state is a miserable state; you lie open to all the wrath, all the vengeance, all the curses under heaven. O poor miserable sinners, cannot you pity yourselves? The Lord of heaven pity you! Did Jesus Christ come from heaven to you, sinners, and will not you come out of your sin to come to Christ? Did Christ come from his Father's bosom, and leave his throne, and crown, and all his glory, to come to a poor lost world, and to die and suffer here for poor lost sinners? and what, sinners,

will this make no impression upon you? Let me tell you, sirs, Christ came into the world, for no other end and reason, but only to die for poor sinners. It was the great design of Christ, to save poor sinners. Sirs, if you will not credit me, look into the scripture, and then surely you will believe it, 1 Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying," saith the apostle, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Mark, sirs, he came into the world to save sinners. Christ hung upon the cross, and wept upon the cross, and died upon the cross, to save sinners; it was for poor sinners, all the hardships, all the wants, all the trials and sufferings which he met with; it was for the sake of poor sinners. Christ hath suffered all this woe and misery for thee; and wilt not thou leave thy swearing, and thy drunkenness, and thy wickedness for Christ? O! the sad, sad day that is coming on thee! how canst thou answer this before God Almighty, that Jesus Christ, the King of kings, should come unto the world, and abase himself so much as to be in a mean state, and yet this should nothing affect you? O! who will pity you when you are damned, when you are howling and roaring in hell, that would not pity yourselves? Oh! for the Lord's sake, consider that God should come and take our nature, and that he should take our rags, that we might wear his robes; and what, will you rather remain in your sins and die, than come to Christ for life? O! sinner, for the Lord's sake, put off your beggar's rags, that you may put on his lovely robes. I have read of Alexander the Great, that when he came against a city, he used to set up a candle, and if they yielded before the candle was out, they should have quarters, but if they

stood out, they might expect nothing but hanging, drawing, and quartering. Oh! sirs, Christ sets up a candle to thee, and if thou wilt come in to-day, thou shalt have mercy, or else there will be none. If all the angels and saints in heaven should fall upon their knees, and say, Oh! Lord, spare this poor creature, one dram of mercy for him, it would not be regarded, the Lord will not hear them; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, consider men are sentenced, not only for their sinfulness, but for their slothfulness; men may perish for being servants that are unprofitable, as well as for being sinners that are abominable. Methinks you should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness, as in those promises that assure happiness; if the day of mercy leave you graceless, the day of judgment will find you speechless; though you may resist the judgment that he lays before you, yet you can never resist the judgment that he lays upon you: there is no standing before Christ, but by standing in Christ. Ungodly men fear no wrath, because they feel no wrath; because the sin is unpunished, they think there is no punishment for their sins; because he goeth on to spare them, they go on to provoke him; as he adds to their lives, they add to their lusts; because he is very merciful, they will be very sinful; because he is very good, they will be very bad; because justice winks, men think he is blind; because he doth not reprove them for their sins, therefore they think he doth approve them in their sins. Justice will avenge the quarrel of abused mercy: the longer God forbears, not finding amendment, the sorer he strikes when he comes to judgment. Oh! sinners, though the patience of God be lasting, it is

not everlasting; if, by the warning peace of God, you are not alarmed, you shall be consumed; the longer God is fetching about his hand, the heavier will be the blow when it comes; "I gave her a space to repent of her fornication, but she repented not;" what follows? "behold I will cast her into a bed, and they that commit adultery with her," Rev. ii. 21, 22. The day that begins in mercy may end in judgment. God is silent so long as our sins will let him be quiet; but know, that God hath vials of wrath filled with indignation, for vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: if God's mercy do not draw you to repentance, God's judgments will drive you to destruction; the sea of damnation shall not be sweetened with a drop of compassion. Oh! sinners, either seek out a Saviour to deliver you from the wrath of God, or else find out a shoulder to bear you up under the wrath of God. Oh! that you would consider your ways: hath not God said, that no swearer, no drunkard, no whoremonger, nor adulterer, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven? and such are some of you; God knows it, and your own consciences know it; and yet you flatter yourselves, and speak peace to yourselves, when God speaks not a word of peace to you. Oh! sinners, think of this before the bottomless pit hath shut her mouth upon you: Oh! do no longer forget God and your own salvation, Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!" If you neglect the great salvation, you cannot escape the great damnation.

Secondly, Believers, let me beseech you to stand fast, and to hold fast that which you have already, Rev. ii. 19. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He

hath a crown for runners, but a curse for run-aways. As you look for happiness as long as God hath a being in heaven: so God looketh for holiness as long as you have a being on earth. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them," Gal. vi. 16. To tread in any other path on earth, is but to mistake your way to heaven. Whilst you are on this side of eternity, you must hold the sceptre of grace in your hands, till God set the crown of glory upon your heads: this is the sparkling diamond that is set in the apostle's crown, 2 Tim. iv. 7. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." O believer! it will be your happiness, your glory, your honour, another day, if in this day you be found faithful. O! do not turn your backs upon the truths of God, as too many in our days have done: they have gone from one religion unto all, till at last they have come from all religion unto none. That man's beginning was in hypocrisy, whose end is in apostacy. Indifferency in religion is the next step to apostacy from religion. O! do not make him a stone of stumbling, that God hath made a stone for building. If the golden chain of duty will not hold you, the iron chain of darkness shall bind you; if you abuse your liberty in one world, you shall lose your liberty in another; if you had made as much conscience in your liberty, as you have had liberty for your conscience, it had been well. That soul was never related to Christ that was never devoted to Christ; there is no obtaining the prize of happiness, without running the race of holiness. O! for the Lord's sake, do not you begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh. O! do not put your hand to the plough, and look backward; be not

true to the father of lies, and false to the Father of truth; keep close to the Son of God, to the word of God, to the ordinances of God, to the day of God, to the ministers of God, to the people of God, and you will be safe. Gal. vi. 9. "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not." I shall wind up all with the saying of Ignatius, "They who adhere to them who adhere not to the truth, shall never inherit the kingdom of God."

THE EVERLASTING FATHER.

"He is altogether lovely."—CANT. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Man is the excellency of the creature, the saint is the excellency of the man; grace is the excellency of the saint, glory is the excellency of grace.

I now proceed to the fourth title, and that is, *Everlasting Father*; for this see Isa. ix. 6. Beloved, we have shewed you from the third title, *Mighty God*, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, a mighty God, mighty with God, mighty as God, the great and mighty God; but now this fourth title holdeth him forth to be a Father; not only a Father, but an Everlasting Father—the Everlasting Father.

The proposition which I shall lay down from the title is this, That God in Christ is a believ-

er's Everlasting Father. That I may clear up this point, I shall lay down these truths.

First, That God, in Christ the Everlasting Father, begot himself in us, and us in him; he is both the Author and Finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2., and of all our joy, of all our peace, of all our life, of all our salvation: he is a Father ever begetting and bringing forth himself in us; his light is in us, his love is in us, his nature is in us, his wisdom is in us, his power and strength is in us: of his fulness we have all received grace for grace, John i. 16. We believers that were in time past, we are in time present, in time to come: we that were, we that are, we that shall be hereafter, shall receive his fulness. And therefore he is called, The Everlasting Father. He is the Sun, we are the beams; he is the Fountain, we are the streams; he is the Root, we are the branches: he is the Head, we are the members; he is the Father, we are the children. And hence it is, that believers are called his offspring: "We are the offspring of God," saith the apostle. In creation God hath given us to ourselves, but in redemption he hath given himself to us: it is a greater favour to be converted than created; yea, far better to have no being than not to have a new being; it is only the new creatures that are heirs of the new Jerusalem.

Secondly, God in Christ calleth us his children by his name:—he putteth his name upon them. Do you mark, sirs, "I will write upon them the name of my God," in Rev. iii. 12. The saints are called godly, from God, christians, from Christ, spiritual, from the Spirit, and heavenly, from heaven, because their conversation is there, because their Head is there,

and they be heirs of heaven. So the wicked be called devilish, from the devils, and the cursed, from the curses, and worldlings, from the world, and sinners, from sin. O! the great difference that there is betwixt the names of the saints and the names of the wicked! The ungodly be called dogs, vipers, swine, thorns, and ravening wolves, who lick up, and suck the blood of the innocent; but the saints are called jewels, treasures, kings, doves, lilies, and heirs of the kingdom of glory; and hence it is, that some good men have gloried more in their name *christian*, than in their name emperor; and have thought it a greater honour to be a member of Christ, than to be a king upon a throne; a greater honour to be one of Christ's little ones, than one of the world's great ones. Indeed, sirs, a good heart is better than a great estate; inward holiness is better than outward happiness; a Christ without honour is better than honour without Christ; piety without prosperity is better than prosperity without piety; goodness without greatness is better than greatness without goodness.

Thirdly, God in Christ is a Father who is tender and full of bowels towards his poor children. When we were full of blood, then he was full of bowels. Christ is more tender of his body mystical, than he was of his body natural, he suffered his body natural to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be weary, to hang upon the cross, to bleed upon the cross, to suffer upon the cross, to be pierced and bored with nails upon the cross. O! he went through the furnace to keep us out of the flames. But now mark, sirs, for his body mystical: O how tender is he! He loves them, he pities them, he smiles upon them, he carries them in his bosom, and dandles them on his

knees. O! they are the beauty of his eyes, the joy of his heart: he cannot endure to see them wronged, to see them injured and abused; every blow they get goes to his very heart;—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" You see how tender Christ is of his body mystical. This is our Jonas, who threw himself into the sea of his Father's wrath, to save us from perdition, and he hath opened the gates of heaven, to let us into salvation.

Fourthly, God in Christ is a Father that layeth up for his children: he gives them in possession, but more in reversion; a little in hand, and a great deal in hope. (1.) He gives them something in hand: he layeth out for us; he gives us the air to breathe in, and the earth to tread upon; he gives us the sun, the moon, and the stars, wind, water, and fire: he giveth us the fishes of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air. Poor man liveth by death; our natural life is preserved by the death of the creature, and our spiritual life by the death of our Saviour; so that I may say, we live by death. It is man's duty to serve God, since God hath made all the world to serve him; in 1 Tim. vi. 17., saith the apostle, "Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Mark, he doth not only give us some things, but all things; not only all things, but all things richly to enjoy. (2.) God in Christ is a Father that layeth up for his children, as well as layeth out; in Psalm xxxi. 19., "O! how great is thy goodness that thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!" David wonders at it; "O! how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up!" Mark the words, so in 2 Tim. iv. 8., "Hence is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." What, only

for you Paul? No, not only for me, but for all them that love his appearing. So again, see another scripture for this, 1 Cor. ii. 9. "As it is written," saith the apostle, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Why, sirs, what is this which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive? Why, mark, "the things that God hath prepared for them that fear him." O beloved, God gives his children the best portion, the richest portion, the greatest portion: all things be theirs; life is theirs, death is theirs, things present are theirs, and things to come are theirs, God is theirs, Christ is theirs, the Spirit is theirs, heaven is theirs, and what can they have more? 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. God gives his children in this world a talent of grace, and in the world to come, a talent of glory: they shall wear Christ's crown above, who wear his cross below.

Fifthly, God in Christ doth protect and defend his children from their enemies, and from Satan, from sin, from the world, from the curse, and from the second death, which is hell; in Rev. ii. 11. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death." Mark, a believer may feel the stroke of death, but he shall never feel the sting of death; the first death may bring his body to corruption, but the second death shall never bring his soul to damnation: though he may live a life that is dying, he shall die a death that is living; he that is housed in Christ, shall never be housed in hell. God protects his children from all wrongs and injuries, Ps. lxxxv. 14. "He suffers no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproves kings for their sakes." Pray, mark the

phrase well, sirs; if kings will lay on saints the hands of violence, God will lay on kings the hands of vengeance: he reproveth kings for their sakes: if kings will wrong the poor saints for Christ's sake, Christ will reprove kings for the saints' sake: so saith the word of God. They that be gods before men, be but men before God. If men will throw saints into prison for their piety, God will throw them into hell for their iniquity. Mark what the prophet saith, in Isa. xxx. 31. pray mark the phrase, "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared;" and if so be the prophet should speak so downright, as though hell was chiefly prepared for great men; O sirs, hell is prepared for great men as well as mean! Those on whom God bestows great mercies, if they abound in great vices, God will inflict great punishment. How shall they be able to lift up their heads before Christ, who do lift up their heads against him?—"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts iv. 26. Christ will pass a sentence upon every sentence that is past. He that saith, "Come, ye blessed," will also say, "Go, ye cursed." This is the fifth.

Sixthly, God in Christ is a Father that teacheth his children, and instructs his children: "Thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Isa. liv. 13. All God's children shall be taught of God; God teacheth all his children; and what doth he teach them? Why, among other things, he teacheth his children those six lessons: (1.) He teacheth them to deny themselves. A true believer will lay down his lusts at the command of Christ, and his life for the sake of Christ. (2.) Christ teacheth them contentment. Here

is another divine lesson which Christ teaches his children. A believer will be contented to bear the wrath of man for him, who bore the wrath of God for him. (3.) The vanity of the creature. He teacheth us, that all things below are vanity and vexation of spirit. (4.) The sinfulness of sin. (5.) The deceitfulness of the heart. (6.) The right knowledge of himself.

O christians, have you learned these lessons? Then let all your actions be Christ-like, and walk as you have him for an example. He lived to teach us how to live, and he died to teach us how to die. He that will not follow the example of Christ's life, shall never be saved by the merits of his death. As he is the root on which a saint grows, so he is the rule by which a saint squares: if he be not thy Jacob's staff to guide thee to heaven, he will never be thy Jacob's ladder to mount thee up to heaven. We should be as willing to be ruled by Christ, as we are willing to be saved by Christ. God made one Son like to all, that he might make all his sons like to one. If the life of Christ be not your portion, thou art dead. This is the sixth.

Seventhly, God in Christ is a Father that stamps upon all his children the lovely image of Jesus Christ. As was said of Constantine's children, they resemble their father to the life: so we may say of believers,—they resemble Christ to the life. God will suffer no man to wear the livery of Christ upon him, who hath not the likeness of Christ within him, 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all," saith the apostle, "beholding with an open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." O sirs, what a rare jewel is grace! The Lord of

grace calls it glory. Mark, "from glory to glory;" that is, from one degree of grace to another. Grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant: grace is glory begun, and glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory; glory is the highest degree of grace; grace is the seed, glory is the flower; grace is the ring, glory is the sparkling diamond in the ring; grace is the glorious infant, and glory is the perfect man of grace; grace is the spring, glory is the harvest. The soul of man is the cabinet, the grace of God is the jewel; Christ will throw away the cabinet where he finds not the jewel. He that restored us in the image, will restore us to his image. This is the seventh particular.

Eighthly, God in Christ is a Father that never dies; other fathers be dead and gone; our father Abraham is dead, our father Isaac is dead, our father Jacob is dead, and others be dead and gone. O! but God in Christ is a Father that lives for ever, that loves for ever, that reigns for ever. He is the Father of eternity, in eternity, from eternity, to eternity, Prov. viii. He was always, is always, and shall be always, and he cannot but be always, Rev. i. 8. Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time, Heb. xiii. 8. "Jesus Christ is the same," saith the apostle, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever."—"Of him, and for him, and to him, and by him, are all things," Rom. xi. 6.

Ninthly, God in Christ is a Father that correcteth his children; all whom God loves he chasteneth, though he loves not to chastise. God had one Son without sin, but no son without sorrow: he had one Son without corruption, but no son without correction. Heb. xii. 16. "For

whom the Lord loves he chastiseth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" Rev. iii. 16. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." Afflictions are blessings to us, when we bless God for the afflictions. Christ tells us, "That he that will be his disciple, must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him," Matt. xvi. 24. There is a fourfold self, that must be denied for Jesus Christ, or else you cannot be called his disciple. A sinful self;—a natural self;—a self-righteousness;—and self-gain, or lucre. Sinful self is to be destroyed, and natural self is to be denied; we cannot enjoy ourselves till we deny ourselves; God is as far from beating his children for nothing, as he is from beating his children to nothing.

The APPLICATION. Is it so that God in Christ is a believer's Everlasting Father? O then, what is so sweet a good as Christ! and what is so great an evil as sin! O love Christ more, and hate sin more! Christ bringeth life with him; a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory; but sin bringeth death with it, death of body, death of soul, death here, and death hereafter. O the blood of Christ speaketh better things than the blood of Abel! Abel's blood crieth for vengeance, but Christ's blood crieth for mercy. He is the pearl of great price, for which the rich merchant sold all that he had, and bought it, and found more joy in this pearl, than ever he had with all that he possessed. O therefore, let me beseech you that are his children, to love him and to serve him! he is your Everlasting Father, therefore do his will on earth, as the angels do in heaven: you cannot complain of him for want of mercy: so good hath he been to you, as he hath not been wanting to you in any thing, and

will you be wanting to him in every thing? A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: "If I then be a Father, where is my honour? if a Master, where is my fear?" Mal. i. 6. As a father, so will he be revered for his goodness. O what is that little he desireth of you, to that which he deserveth from you! If honour be not due to him, let it not be bestowed; if it be due to him, let it not be denied; if God do great things for his children, he will not accept of small things from his children. Do but see the outcry that God makes against his own children, Isa. i. 2. "Hear, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth!" What is the matter? "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." The nearer the relation, the greater the obligation. Christ is related to them as a lord to his servants, as a father to his children, as a prince to his subjects, as a head to his members: where the relation is nearest, there the provocation is greatest. It is a more pleasant thing to see rebels become children, then it is to see children become rebels. What mother can endure to see those lips that drew her breasts, suck her blood? O children, you are more known to God than others, and therefore you must more acknowledge him than others; you do not look for so much splendour from the burning of a candle as from the shining of the sun; nor so much moisture from the dropping of the bucket as from the dissolving of a cloud; "To whom much is given, of them much shall be required." God doth not expect much where little is bestowed, nor accept little where much is received. "Hear ye the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, you only have I known above all the families of the earth," Amos

iii. 1, 2. God hath exalted you above all others, and therefore you must do more for God than others. It was a great blemish to Hezekiah, that his returnings were not answerable to his receivings. O believers, let me beseech you to do much, to love much, to give much, to pray much, seeing you have received much!

I shall wind up all with a word of comfort to you, the children of God. Oh! sirs, God in Christ is your Father, your loving Father, your everlasting Father, and you are his children; therefore fear not, it shall go well with you here and hereafter: Luke ii. 32. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "He will withhold no good thing from you," Ps. lxxxiv. 11. He gives grace and glory unto you; grace is the silver link that draws the golden link of glory after it.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

"He is altogether lovely,"—Cant. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Wherever Christ is a priest for redemption, he is a prince for dominion; wherever he is a saviour, there he is a ruler; where he is a fountain of happiness, there he is a fountain of holiness; where he is a redeemer, there he is a refiner; wherever he takes a burden from off the creature's back, there he lays a yoke upon the creature's neck. "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord

is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us," Isa. xxxiii. 22.

I shall now proceed to the fifth title of Jesus Christ, which is *Prince of Peace*; this you have in Isa. ix. 6. It is the happiness of the church of God, that although they cannot give peace, yet they may get peace; though they cannot settle it on earth, yet they may seek it from heaven: peace is the well-being of all other enjoyments; all other mercies suck their livelihood at the breasts of peace: it is the mother of all prosperity; as the life of old Jacob was wrapt up in the life of the lad Benjamin, so is all happiness wrapt up in peace; it is the felicity of the saints on earth, and the glory of the angels in heaven. When the old Hebrews wished any happiness to any one, they only used this expression, *Peace be unto you*.

From this title of Christ, I shall lay down two propositions.

First, That Zion's King is a peaceable King.

Secondly, That the Lord Jesus Christ, the **PRINCE OF PEACE**, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace. These two points lie full in the words; but I shall only speak of the latter, viz. That Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

In the prosecution of it, I shall shew you four things.—1. He is the peace-bringer. 2. The peace-maker. 3. The peace-giver. And, 4. He is the Prince of Peace, or the peaceable prince.

First, Jesus Christ is the Peace-bringer. He brought in everlasting peace by righteousness, and not by a sword, Luke iv. 14., "Peace on earth, and good will towards men." Why was the Bread of Life hungry, but that he might feed the hungry with the bread of life? Why was

Rest itself weary, but to give the weary rest? Why was the Prince of Peace in trouble, but that the troubled might have peace? None but the Image of God could restore us to God's Image; none but the Beloved of God could make us beloved to God; none but the natural Son could make us sons; none but the wisdom of God could make us wise; none but the Prince of Peace could bring the God of peace, and the peace of God to poor sinners; and therefore he is called our peace, Eph. ii. 14. O what is so sweet a good as Christ! and what so great an evil as sin! the former brings us to joy and peace, the latter brings us to woe and misery. That is the first.

Secondly, He is the Peace-maker, as well as the Peace-bringer. He is the Peace-maker between God and men; sin is the great make-bar between God and the soul; sin is the wall of separation between God and us, and the Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us. He paid all the debts, and took up all the controversies, and blotted out the hand-writing, and hath broken down the partition-wall, and made up the great breach between God and man: 2 Cor. v. 19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." Mark, it is in Christ; as likewise elsewhere: "You who were sometimes afar off, he hath made nigh by the blood of Christ." O sinners! Christ is our Peace-maker: the Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us; he reconciles God to men, and men to God; so that though God might be justly displeased with us, yet in his Son he is well pleased with us; he is more pleased with a believer for Christ's sake, than he was displeased with him for sin's sake.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is the Peace-giver

alas! poor sinners, we have no peace with angels, no peace with conscience, nor one with another, till the Prince of Peace give it to us: "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you," saith our Lord unto his disciples, John xiv. 27. O sirs! he gives peace with God, Rom. v. 1. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ giveth peace to us, which the world cannot take from us; worldly trouble cannot overcome heavenly peace.

Fourthly, He is a Prince of Peace, or the peaceable prince; so he is styled, not only Peace, but the Prince of Peace. Indeed, beloved, he is all peace to a believer. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," speaking of Christ, Prov. iii. 18. Mark, *all her paths are peace*. Now, what are these paths? I shall name six to you. 1. The path of repentance. 2. Of faith. 3. Of truth. 4. Of self-denial. 5. Of obedience. 6. Of holiness. (1.) These are several paths of peace, and peaceable paths. O sirs, there is no peace to be found but in the paths of peace! as all his works be great and marvellous, so all his ways are peace and pleasantness. (2.) His gospel is a gospel of peace: it is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace; but a greater mercy to enjoy the peace of the gospel. (3.) His reward is peace, Isa. lvii. 2. "He shall enter into peace." Here the joys of heaven are called peace. The true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth shall be crowned with peace; they shall enter into peace. And thus, beloved, I have briefly, yea, I have fully proved the point—That Jesus Christ is the cause and fountain of a believer's peace.

Uses. Now for the application of the point, I shall reduce it to four heads. 1. For infor-

mation. 2. For examination. 3. For exhortation. 4. For consolation. *First*, By way of information: Here we may see what great need we stand in of Jesus Christ. O christians! Is Jesus Christ the cause and foundation of all our peace? then we have no right or title to peace, but by the Prince of Peace. "We have no peace with God," saith the apostle, "but through our Lord Jesus Christ;" we are reconciled to God in Christ Jesus; and we who were afar off, saith Paul, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. We are only acceptable in the beloved; so that, beloved, it is all in Christ, and through him, that we have our peace. A Christless man is a peaceless man; he hath no peace with God, no peace with angels, no peace with conscience; till we be Christ's friends, we are our own foes. It is true, a wicked man may speak peace to himself, but God speaks not a jot of peace to him; he may speak peace to himself till he falleth into everlasting flames: God is his enemy, the devil is his foe, angels hate him, all creatures cry for vengeance upon him. Isa. lvii. 21. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God:" no, not a word, not a dram of peace to a person who is out of Christ: therefore, O sirs! consider in what need ye stand of the Prince of Peace. It informs us, that to have peace with our God and Maker is the sweetest and best thing in the world. O how infinitely sweet is peace! what is sweeter than peace? Alas! gold is but dust, pleasures are but toys, wit is but a flash, beauty but a blast, honour but a rattle, life but a vapour: O but peace is better than the sweetest, and better than the best of all those! Because he that hath peace with God may come boldly to God. Heb. vi. 16. He that hath peace with

God, hath communion and fellowship with God, 1 John i. 2. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." He that is at peace with God, is a son of God; peace is of all others the most sweet; Oh! it is wine to comfort us, and bread to nourish us, it makes a man live comfortably, and die cheerfully. If Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, be the cause and foundation of all our peace; then, he that wants the Prince of Peace, wants all good things; he is the miserablest man in the world, that is without Christ; he wants reconciliation with God, an interest in Christ; he wants the sealing and comforting of the Spirit; he wants justification, sanctification, and adoption; he wants pardon of sin, and freedom from the dominion of sin; he wants that favour which is better than life, that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, and that faith, a dram of which is more worth than a king's ransom; he wants those riches which perish not, those evidences for heaven that fail not, that love which dies not, that kingdom which shakes not. O beloved! how many things doth that poor soul want, which wanteth Christ! He is "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17. Christ is a pearl, whosoever hath him can never be poor, and whosoever wants him can never be rich. Did but men see all in this pearl of great price, then they would sell all for it. If Jesus Christ be the cause and foundation of our peace; then it is our greatest concernment to get into favour with the Prince of Peace. Many seek the ruler's favour, saith the scriptures, but O see ye the favour of this prince. Poor souls, without him there is no mercy, no peace, no grace, no glory, no heaven, no crown, no eternal

life : for this is eternal life, "to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3.

Use 2. By way of examination and self-denial. The trial of ourselves is the ready way to the knowledge of ourselves. O christians would you see your God? Then cast your eyes upward. Would you see yourselves? Then cast your eyes inward. Contemplation is a glass to see your God in. It is of greater concernment to know the state of our hearts, than to know the estate of the kingdom. And therefore, I beseech you, examine yourselves, that you may know yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and whether you will go when you die, and what will become of you to all eternity. O sirs, bring yourselves to the trial, and try yourselves, and see whether you are in the faith, and the faith in you. Faith is such a grace, that a man cannot be saved without it, and not a man can be damned that hath it. O see whether you be in the narrow way that leadeth to life, or in the broad way that leadeth to death; whether your hearts be chairs for vice to sit in, or thrones for grace to rule on; whether you are one of Christ's spouses, or the devil's harlots; whether you are heirs of heaven or hell; whether ye be Satan's bondmen or God's freemen. Examination is the beaten path to perfection. I Cor. i. 25. "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."—It is seldom that the sparkling diamond of a great estate, is set in the gold ring of a gracious heart. A man may be great with Saul, and graceless; rich with Dives, and miserable; the richest are oftentimes the poorest, and the poorest are oftentimes the richest. O how many thread-bare souls may there

be found under silken coats and purple robes ! They who live most downward, die most upward ; a sight of ourselves in grace, will certainly bring us to a sight of ourselves in glory ; those sins shall never make a hell for us, ~~that~~ have been a hell to us.

Use 3. But it is time for me to turn my speech into an exhortation ; and, O that you would encourage me with your resolution to obey my message this day ! that is, to make your peace with the Prince of Peace, that you may be the true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth, that you may be righteous before God, and holy before men ; that you may gloriously shine in glory : and that you may have peace with God and with angels, and with your own consciences, and with one another. Well, sirs, What say you in answer to the message ? Shall the Prince of Peace be your love and lord, your nearest and dearest, your joy and your delight ? Will you kiss the Son, will you make your peace with the God of Peace, and give up your souls and lives to be ruled by him ? These things I exhort you to do, and God expects them at your hand. But that this exhortation may stay with you, I shall back it with some pressing considerations.

First, Consider God's goodness and good-will towards men ; God has given you rich means, that you may make and secure your peace with God. 1. He hath given you the law and the gospel. 2. He hath generously given time and opportunity. 3. Mercies and afflictions : mercies to draw you, and afflictions to drive you. 4. He hath given you preachers, both inward and outward preachers ; by outward preachers, I mean the ministers of Christ, who beseech you, and

entreat you, for Christ's sake to be reconciled to God, and make your peace with God: by inward preachers, I mean your own conscience, that judgeth you, and checketh you, and reproveth you for your sins and abominations. 5. He hath given you precepts and promises: precepts commanding you to do, and promises assuring you of a glorious reward for your doing. 6. The Spirit and convictions, Gen. vi. 37. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Oh! how long will you stand out against God? What have ye to say against this? How can you answer this, when you and I shall appear before God's judgment-seat? Have you any thing to say against this? Oh! sad will be your end, unless you make your peace with God: and therefore (seeing God has given these things to you, that you may make and secure your peace with him) he that liveth in sin without repentance, shall die in sin without forgiveness. This is the first.

Secondly, God inviteth and woeth you to come and make your peace with him: Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." Beloved, here are three *comes* in this text, to shew the infinite willingness of God to save poor sinners; so in Rev. xxii. 17. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And him that is athirst, let him come: (here are three *comes* again in this text.) And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." What! are there none thirsty among you? Do none thirst for Christ, and grace, and heaven? If you come, sirs, here you may have grace, and mercy, and happiness. Now, for the Lord's

sake, consider wherefore is all this, but that you may make your peace with God? Shall the God of heaven call, and you will not hear? What! will you rather stay in your sins, and die, than go to Christ for life? Oh! sirs, go to the Prince of Peace, for peace, that you may have peace; if you do not lay your sins to your hearts, that you may be humbled for them, God will lay them to your charge that you may be damned for them.

A *third* consideration is this: either you must taste of God's goodness, or of his fury. There is not a man, woman, or child among you, but must partake of the one or the other; your portion will be either joy or sorrow; either desolation or consolation. If you be not trees for bearing, you must be trees for burning; if you are not for fruit, you must be for the flames; if you do not swim in the water-works of repentance, you shall burn in the fire-works of vengeance; if you do not go and make your peace with God, that you may have heaven, you shall go to hell for not making your peace: one of them you must do. Oh! sirs, I have set life and death, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet, before you this day. Will you make your peace with God or no? Will you still go in a way of wickedness, breaking his laws, grieving his Spirit? Will you die a natural death, before you live a spiritual life? I say then, if you live so, and die so, you shall be damned with the damned, and punished with the punishment of hell, and so sent to hell with loads of wrath upon your backs. You shall have your part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. "He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned," saith

our Lord, Mark xvi. 16. O sirs! it is better to repent without perishing, than to perish without repenting; therefore look to it as well as you will. Are you able to deal with God? Alas, alas! all the world is but like a drop of water in comparison of God; and therefore make your peace with him, Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Fourthly, Consider what the damned in hell would give for the offers of mercy that are now offered to you; certainly they would give ten thousand worlds, if they had them, for these opportunities that you enjoy. Should God say to poor wretches that are suffering in hell for their drunkenness upon earth, and their whoring and abominations, as he doth to us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," O how earnestly would they run and catch the word out of God's mouth! O beloved, the devils are too well acquainted with misery, to put by mercy if it were offered to them. But alas! alas! poor damned wretches, there is no dram of mercy for them; no, not so much as a drop of water for them, not one drop of water to cool their flaming tongues. Oh! that you would consider this, and make your peace with God before death comes, which may be the next night, for ought ye know: if ye lose your golden seasons, ye lose your souls. O therefore make your peace with God, that it may not be said of you, as it was once said of Jerusalem, in Luke xix. 52. "O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes." Here was a weeping word, a sad word to Jerusalem. Alas! now it is hid from their eyes;

their golden season is gone; there is no peace to be had; and therefore I beg of you, as though I were condemned, and begging of my life; so I beg of you in the bowels of Christ, and for your soul's sake, make your peace with God.

Fifthly, Seriously consider the multitude of sins thou hast been guilty of, even more than the hairs of thy head, or the sand on the sea-shore, or the stars in the heavens, which are innumerable; saith David, "They are more than the hairs of my head," Psal. xl. 12. Alas! one of thy sins were enough to sink thee into hell for ever: what advantage doth Dives reap in hell of all these delicate banquets that he had on earth? Oh! think on that time, wherein ye shall be ashamed of nothing but your wickedness, and glory in nothing but your holiness. Sin, it is like a serpent in the bosom that is stinging; or like a thief in the closet that is stealing; or like poison in the stomach that is poisoning; or like a sword in the bowels that is killing: some are in hell already for the same sins thou livest in, and if thou livest and diest without Christ, thou shalt ere long be with them: therefore, I say, make peace with God.

Sixthly, Consider that there is more bitterness following upon sins ending, than ever there was sweetness flowing from sins acting: you that see nothing but well in its commission, will suffer nothing but woe in its conclusion. It is better here to forego the pleasures of sin, than hereafter to undergo the pain of sin. You that sin for your profits, will never profit by your sins; he that likes the works of sin to do them, will never like the wages of sin to have them. Sin is both shameful and damnable, it shameth men in this world, and damneth them in the other world;

it is like Judas, that at first salutes, but at last betrays us; or like Delilah, to smile in our face, and betray us into our enemies' hands. O sinners! think of this, and part with your sins, that you may meet with your Saviour, and make your peace with him.

Seventhly, Consider the heavy judgment that hangs over your heads. You lie open to all the judgments in this life, and torments in the life to come. Oh! you sinners, the days are hastening upon you, wherein you have misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, pain without ease, punishment without pity, and torment without end, unless repentance do prevent, 2 Cor. i. 7, 8, 9. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all 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." Oh! let the hearing of this prevent the feeling of this, poor sinner.

Eighthly and lastly, If none of the former arguments or considerations prevail with you, to make your peace with the Prince of Peace, yet let this one, I beseech you; and that is, the readiness and willingness of God to give Christ, and Christ to give himself to you. Oh! sinners, is God willing to give his Son, and are you willing to receive his Son? Consider the willingness of God, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him." Mark, sinners, here, "Behold I stand." Who? I that have heaven to give; I that have a crown to give; that have all joys to give; I that

have myself to give, I stand and knock. Do you see this, poor sinners? Who is it that stands at the door of your hearts and knocks? Who? it is the King of saints, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God! and will you not open to him? What! are you unwilling to be saved, to go to heaven, and to be happy for ever? What! are you unwilling to be delivered from Satan, from sin, and from the flames of hell? If you be willing then, make your peace with God, for God is willing to open heaven for you, if you be willing to open your hearts to him; he is willing to save you, if you be but willing to be saved; he is willing to give Christ, if you be willing to receive Christ; and therefore, poor souls, let these considerations provoke you to go for life to the Lord of life, to go for peace to the Prince of Peace, to go for grace to the God of grace. Were men so diligent as to do their best, God is so indulgent, he would forgive the worst.

THE ELECT PRECIOUS.

"He is altogether lovely,"—Cant. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Who can be weary of preaching, or hearing, or reading, or learning Christ? who is so precious and lovely? Mahomet is the Turks' love; Moses is the Jews' love; the Pope is the papists' love; but Christ is a believer's love. I shall now make some entrance upon Christ's sixth

famous and lovely title, *The Elect Precious*; this you have in 1 Pet. ii. 6. From this excellent title, I shall lay down two propositions:

Doctr. I. That Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is God the Father's elect. I pray mark, sirs, there is a threefold elect of God. *First*, The elect Jesus Christ; Isa. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant, my elect," saith the Father, speaking of Christ. *Secondly*, The elect angels; 1 Tim. v. 21. "I charge thee before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." *Thirdly*, The elect saints; and for this see Col. iii. 1. "Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercy." But alas! what are the elect angels, or the elect saints, to the elect precious! It is only the blessed Jesus that is the Elect Precious, and precious to the elect. But I shall not stand on this point, but proceed to the second.

Doctr. II. And this is, That a crucified and glorified Christ, is very precious to all believing saints.

In handling this precious point, I shall shew you five things,—1. That he is precious. 2. That he is most precious. 3. He is all precious. 4. He is always precious. And, 5. Why he is so precious.

First, That he is precious: Jesus Christ is precious three ways; to God, to angels, and to saints. (1.) To God the Father; and this will appear by what God the Father hath said himself of the Son, Isa. xlii. 1. "My elect in whom my soul delighteth." Here you see, christians, what God saith to Christ; the soul of God delights in the Son of God. So again, Matt. iii. 17. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Mark here, not only pleased,

but well pleased. Oh ! how precious is Christ to God the Father. The Lord Jesus, though he was a man of sorrows, yet he was not a man of sin ; he had correction, but not corruption ; he that was a way to others, never went out of the way himself. Jesus Christ must needs be precious to the Father, because he never displeased him in any thing, but pleased him in every thing, John viii. 27. Christ there speaking of himself, " I do always the things that please him," saith our Lord Jesus. O friends, it will be your glory, your crown, your honour, and happiness another day, if in this day you do these things that please God : so did Christ here, " I do always those things that please him." Christ went about doing good ; he must needs please the Father, for he went about doing good ; Acts x. 38. He did not always stay in one place, but he went about doing good. And truly, sirs, if people were not made better by his coming, they might thank themselves, for he went about doing good. As he was never ill employed, he was never unemployed ; as he opened the scriptures to our understanding, so he opened our understanding to the scriptures. That is the first. (2.) He is very precious to the angels as well as to the Father ; the angels were very joyful at the birth of Christ their Lord ; they sang praises to God on high, Luke ii. 13, 14. See with what joy and triumph the angels sang at the birth of Christ : Oh ! how precious is Christ to the elect angels ! the angels adore him, " Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6. The Lord of Hosts is worshipped by an host of angels. " Let all the angels of God worship him." The angels desire to pry into the mysteries of the gospel of

grace ; as you may see, 1 Pet. i. 2. The angels, though they are glorious to all eternity, look upon it as not below them to pry into the mysteries of Christ. Oh ! sirs, the angels are desirous to know those things which we neglect to know. The angels stand before him as waiting-men to serve God, and to serve such as are God's ; when he bids them go, they go ; come, they come ; do this, and they do it : they do all his commands, Ps. ciii. 20. Jesus Christ is the Creator of angels, the Lord of angels, the Prince of angels, the Head of angels, Col. i. 16. The Son of God is very precious to the angels of God. Do you see, sirs, how precious Christ is to the angels of God ? and well he may, for indeed he is a precious jewel in the cabinet of grace. (3.) Jesus Christ is precious to the saints, as well as to his Father and angels, 1 Pet. ii. 7. You have there a full text to this purpose, " Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." Mark here, unto you ; what you ? " To you therefore that believe, he is precious." He is precious indeed to them that believe, and no wonder ; he is a believer's all. Now that which is his all must needs be precious : Christ is his all, he is all that he hath, he is all that he enjoys : Christ is all that is worth ; he is all that they are, they are nothing without him : they have nothing without him : whatever they are worth, it is he that makes them worth it ; it is not worth a man's while to live, unless he live in Christ ; Christ is the gain of a believer, living and dying ; so that whatever is good for a believer, he must say, for this I am beholden to Christ. " All things are yours, and ye are Christ's."

Now, sirs, let me give you a more particular

account of the christian's worth, and inventory of his estate; and all along I shall shew you that Christ is the worth of all that. What is it that makes a believer so precious and excellent? Why, it is such things as these, 1. He is a living man. 2. He is a seeing man. 3. He is a person of honour. 4. He hath a great deal of joys, and hope of more. 5. He is righteous and holy; and, in a word, he is saved at last. These are things that make a christian so excellent a person, and he hath none of these but by Christ, and he hath all this alone by Christ.

1st, This is the excellency of a christian, that he is a living man: there is no man on earth can, in a spiritual sense, be called a living man, but a believer; all men be dead men, but they that believe. You know that it was said of the prodigal, while he lived in his sins, he was dead, This is my son that was dead, and is now alive: when he believed, then he was alive. Now, sirs, as it is in things of nature, life is the most valued thing which we have, skin for skin, and all that a man has, will he give for his life: a man will rather part with his livelihood than with his life, because his life is so dear to him. Now, beloved, if natural life be so desirable a thing, what is a spiritual life, that which in scripture is called the life of God? Now, the believer is the only living man, every other man is spiritually dead; but now, how comes the believer to life? By whom doth he live? Why, it is by Christ Jesus; Gal. ii. 20. "I am crucified with Christ, notwithstanding I live." What, crucified and yet live! Yes, Christ was crucified and yet lives: and so did Paul in resemblance and conformity to Christ; "I live," saith he, "yet not I, but Christ which liveth in me; and

the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God." So that Paul will not call his life his own, but only as he derived it from Christ. Christ liveth in him more than himself liveth.

2dly, The excellency of a believer lies in this, that he is a seeing man. It is the sight which puts the difference between person and person; it is a sad thing to be born blind, or to be blinded after a man is born. Now all men are either born blind, or blinded after they are born, or both. Now, beloved, would you know how precious sight is? Ask a blind man who once could see. We read of a poor man who comes running to Christ, and cries out, "O Lord, that I may receive my sight." Now, sirs, if in nature having the sight of our eyes be a thing that makes us so much more excellent than otherwise we would be without it, O how much value should we put upon this spiritual sight which refers to our souls! we can much better want the eyes of our heads, than the eyes of our understanding. Now, in a spiritual sense, there is no seeing man but a believer; no man saw Christ savingly, but they who saw him believingly; every man but a believer walks in darkness; nay, he is in darkness. The apostle, Eph. v. 8. tells somewhat to this purpose, "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." In the Lord Jesus Christ, a believer doth see. And how he comes to see? it is in the Lord that he sees: he was as dark as others, and as blind as others, till he was in the Lord; and no sooner was he in the Lord, but he was light in the Lord. This is the second.

3dly, The excellency of a believer lies in this,

That he is a very beautiful and honourable person. Beauty and honour are taking, ravishing things of this world. Now, all but believers be deformed persons; there is no beauty nor comeliness why they should be desired. But now the believer is a very lovely beautiful person: he is so in the eyes of God, Ezek. xvi. 13, 14. "And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thy ears;" and so he goes on and saith, "Thou wast exceeding beautiful, and didst prosper into a kingdom." But now, mark how she came by this beauty in the next verse; "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through the comeliness which I put upon thee, saith the Lord God." She was not only beautiful in the eyes of the Lord, but she had her beauty also from the Lord: as they are thus lovely and taking in the eyes of God, so also of good angels and saints too. For as glorious a place as heaven is, the angels think it not below them to wait on the image and pictures of Christ here below; that is, to wait upon believers, and to be the Lord's guardians here upon earth, Heb. i. 14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" But this is not all they do for them, they will not leave them when they die, but take those lovely souls, and transport them to a better country than ever this world was to them; for it is no paradox to say this, that there is no believer goes to heaven, but he goes in the arms of angels, Luke xvi. 22. In the parabolical history of Dives and Lazarus, saith the text, "Lazarus died, (believing Lazarus died,) and his soul was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," that is, to heaven. O what an honour

have believers at their death, that the very angels transport their souls to heaven: and they are also very lovely and honourable in the eyes of all good men! The truth is, there is scarce any man fit company for believers, but believers; and therefore saith the apostle, "be not unequally yoked," believers with unbelievers. Now, good men be much taken with a believer, though he be a stranger to them on all accounts; they are very fond of one another in this world, and had rather suffer together than live with other men. Now, this makes a believer so excellent, that he is thus beautiful and honourable in the eyes of God, and good angels, and good men. Now, all this beauty and honour they have from Christ; see the text before quoted, to you who believe, he is an honour, so the word may be used: it is Christ that makes him honourable in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of good angels and good men: and all the beauty and honour they have, it is through Christ, he is their worth in every capacity.

4thly, That which makes a believer so excellent is, that he hath joy: all other men have no joy, but that which is not worth the having. Alas! the joy of the hypoerite, what is it, but the crackling of thorns under a pot? But now, a believer hath a joy that no man intermeddleth with, nor no man partakes of. But how, where hath he that joy? Why, in and from the Lord: "These things I speak," saith Christ, "that my joy may be in you." They have it from the Lord: they rejoice in the Lord, "We rejoice in Christ Jesus," saith Paul, "and have no confidence in the flesh."

5thly, Have they hope? it is from Christ: and indeed none have hope but they: for without

God, and without Christ, and without hope, are put together, in Eph. ii. 12. But now the believer hath good hopes, and this bears him up many times. Alexander thought this so brave a thing, that when he gave to one man whole countries, and to another vast treasures, and being asked what he would keep for himself, saith he, I will keep hope. For he thought it enough for so brave and great a soul as his, to hope for that which would make him to do whatsoever he was able to do, or any one could think. The hopes of mercy, and joy, and peace, will carry a man through thousands of difficulties. Now the believer hath this hope, but he hath it from Christ, Col. i. 27. "Christ in you the hope of glory."

6thly, Are they wise, are they righteous, are they holy, and none so but they? Every sinner is a fool; and therefore in Scripture is called by the name of a foolish man: he plays the fool all the time he spends out of the fear of God; all sinning-time is a fooling-time. Now the believer is a wise man, and he is a righteous man, and a holy man; but how he comes to be thus now, take an account of it in I Cor. i. 30. Pray mark here now, Christ is the all of a believer; "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." So that you see if a believer be a wise man, he may thank Christ for it; if he be a righteous man, if he be a holy man, he may thank God for it: "For He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

7thly, In a word, they are saved: and indeed this is the compliment, ay, the compliment of all the rest; are they saved? and none are saved

but believers: "For," saith Christ, "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned." The believer is already in the state of salvation, and the unbelieving is in the state of damnation. By nature we are all children of wrath; now faith in Jesus Christ is the means that God hath appointed to free us from being children of wrath. Now he that believes is past this, he shall not be condemned, he shall be saved; and how comes he to be saved? It is by Christ, by believing in Christ. O who is the Saviour but Christ! To be in Christ is heaven below, and to be with Christ is heaven above; but there is no being with Christ above, if we were not in Christ here below. Thus you see, beloved, whatever it is that makes a believer so excellent and precious, it is Christ that makes him worth all: he hath it all from Christ; Christ is his all in all. Now put all this together, and see if there be any great reason that Christ should be precious to believers.

Secondly, As Jesus Christ is precious, so he is *most* precious. O sirs! angels are precious, saints are precious, friends are precious, heaven is precious; but a Christ, a Saviour, is ten thousand times more precious than these. A believer had rather have Christ without heaven, than heaven without Christ: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee," Psal lxxiii. 25. Let a believer search heaven and earth, and yet he will find nothing comparable to God. To be like to him, it is our happiness; and to draw near to him, is our holiness. You will see, beloved, life is precious, freedom is precious, health is precious, peace is precious, food and raiment are precious, gold and silver are precious, king-

diems and crowns are precious ; indeed they are, in their places, but nothing in comparison of Jesus Christ. Mark, sirs, what the apostle saith, Phil. iii. 8. " Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord." I count all things loss ; nay, that is not all, I count them but dung that I may win Christ. What is our life but a warfare ? And what is our life but a thoroughfare ? It is only the best of beings that can bestow the best of blessings ; O how good is a believer's God, that doth not only shorten his pilgrimage for him, but sweetens his pilgrimage to him ? Christ is a believer's all, and therefore he is more precious than all ; he hath all in Christ, and nothing out of Christ : there is no such thing as a believer without him. By faith we have an interest in Christ, we have an interest in God, and by having an interest in God, we have an interest in all things. The believer is the only blessed man, the only happy man, the only rich man, Rev. xxii. 7. " He that overcometh shall inherit all things." O what a glorious inheritance are they born to, that are new born ! All things are theirs, and they shall inherit all things : what can they desire more than all ? All that Christ hath is theirs ; his wisdom is theirs to teach them, his love is theirs to pity them, his spirit is theirs to comfort them, his righteousness is theirs to justify them, his power is theirs to protect them, and his glory is theirs to crown them. O sirs ! Christ cannot but be most precious to a believer, because all his precious comforts come from Christ. The Lord Jesus is fairer than the fairest, sweeter than the sweetest, nearer than the nearest, and dearer than the dearest, and richer than the richest, and better than the best. The

Elect Precious is of all the most precious. (1.) Because he is the greatest gift that God can give, or that we can receive. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" this is more than if he had given us all the world; for God hath but one Son, and can make no more sons; but God can make more worlds at his pleasure. This gift is God himself, and God can give us no greater gift than himself. We may say, as one said to Cæsar, when he gave him a great reward, This is too great a gift for me to receive:—But it is not too much for me to give, said Cæsar. (2.) Because he is the richest gift that ever was given, for Christ is all in all. If he hath given us Christ, he will give us all things else, Rom. viii. 36. He is the one thing needful, that brings all things: yea, he is the gift of God; "If thou knewest the gift of God, (saith our Saviour, John iv. 10.) thou wouldst have asked for it, and begged it of me." Why is Christ called the gift of God? Surely God hath given us more gifts than one. True, but as the sun is more worth than all the stars, so this gift excels them all; according to the proverb, "We bless not God for stars when the sun shines; for when the sun shines, the stars appear not." (3.) Because he is the chiefest gift that God hath to give. Other gifts he gives promiscuously to good and bad; so that as no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing that is before him, Eccl. ix. 1. Judas had the bag; and Dives dined deliciously every day, when Lazarus would have been glad of his crumbs. But God never gives this gift to any but whom he loves with his dearest, special, and eternal love. Suppose some prince would woo a great lady, and had a jewel worth a million, it may be he would scatter pieces

of silver, or some slight tokens of favour unto the servants; but the rich jewel he gives to his spouse; this jewel is Christ. Abraham may give to Ishmael a bottle of milk; but Isaac had the inheritance. (4.) The Lord Jesus is the rarest gift of all others whatsoever: Christ is a gift given to very few, here one, and there another; millions of millions perish for not knowing and trusting in Christ. Oh! what a rare jewel is Christ! Though our souls are more worth than a world, yet a world of souls is not worth Christ; it is he that makes us blessed in life, happy in death, and glorious after death. (5.) The Lord Jesus is the sweetest gift of all others; for if God gives his Christ, then he gives us all other gifts in his love, and they become a blessing sweetened to us. They that have this good will shall want no good; "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing," Psal. xxxiv. 10. Now put all this together, and you will see Christ to be most precious.

Thirdly, He is *altogether* precious. I told you the last day, that Christ is precious; and indeed I told you the truth; for they are not only my sayings, but God's sayings, therefore they are true. He is all precious, there is nothing in Christ but what is precious; he is amiable and desirable: he is fulness and sweetness, and greatness and goodness, light and life, and happiness. Believers enjoy all things in Christ: in all things he is the joy of a believer's life, and the life of a believer's joy. Oh! sirs, Christ is precious; he is very precious, he is most precious, he is always precious, he is altogether precious to the believing soul. (1.) His name is precious; he

is called a precious Stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. Christ is there called a precious Stone. (2.) His blood is precious, in 1 Pet. i. 9. His blood is there called precious Blood; ay, and well it may, for a drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours; and yet he died our death, that we might live his life. (3.) Faith is precious, in 2 Pet. i. 1. Faith is there called precious faith; the least grain of faith is more worth than all the gold in Europe. (4.) His promises are precious, in 2 Pet. i. 4. "Giving to us exceeding great and precious promises." Christ's promises are called great and precious promises. Why great, and why precious? They are great for extent, and precious for their excellencies. (5.) His gifts and graces are precious, Prov. iii. 15. "More precious than rubies;" all things thou canst desire are not to be compared to them. (6.) His members are precious, Isa. xliii. 4. "Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable." Here you see the members of Christ are called precious.—A believer indeed is a raven in the world's eye, but a dove in Christ's eye: the saints, in the world's account, are dung and dirt; but in God's account they are jewels and pearls. Graceless men look upon God's people as castaways, but God will give whole kingdoms for their ransom. Wicked men may call the saints factious; but God calls the saints precious. Indeed, sirs, the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in other ages, were but bunglers to the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in our age: well, there is a time coming, when Christ will laugh at the ungodly, for now laughing at ungodliness. Though holiness be that which a sinner scorns, yet holiness is that which a Saviour crowns; as you expect happiness from God

above, so God expects holiness from you below; therefore be godly as the godly. (7.) The reproaches of Christ are precious; Heb. xi 26. "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." I beseech you mark, it is not here said, that Moses did esteem the person of Christ, or the members of Christ, or the privileges of Christ, or the glory of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Oh! beloved, the worst of his is better than the best in the world; Christ's cross is sweeter than the world's crown; the reproaches of Christ are greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. "Esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Will you give me leave to tell you that which few believe; and this is, that afflictions be good and precious. Few believe this truth, that afflictions are good and precious; and let me tell you, it is a great truth, and this I shall make appear.

Now, beloved, if I can prove that afflictions and reproaches for Christ be good and precious, which is the worst of him, then you will conclude with me, that Christ is all precious. (1.) That must needs be good that comes from the only good; now, afflictions come from God, who is only good: Psal. xxxix. 9. "I was dumb and opened not my mouth," saith David. Why? because thou didst it. "I was silent and did not speak. Why, David? Because thou didst it. (2.) That must needs be good which was suffered by the sweetest good; now, afflictions were endured by Christ, who is the sweetest good: "He was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief," Isa. liii. 3. (3.) That must needs be good, which fits and prepares us for a glorious estate, the eternal good. Now, affliction doth

this: "It was good for me that I was afflicted." Sirs, do you believe King David? Will you believe David a christian? Will you believe David a saint? Will you believe David a man after God's own heart? Why, he tells, It was good for him he was afflicted. But you will say, why was it so good? Look in the 6th verse, and there is the reason; for, saith he, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." A very satisfactory answer; and therefore it was good for me I was afflicted. So again, in 2 Cor. iv. 17. "For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us." What work they? "A far more exceeding weight of glory." Do you know what they work for us? Why, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. O christians! under your greatest troubles lieth your greatest treasures: afflictions are good, but not pleasant; sin is pleasant, but not good; but there is more evil in a drop of corruption, than there is in the sea of afflictions. God by affliction separates the sin he hates so deadly, from the soul he loves so dearly. By the greatest affliction, God teacheth us the greatest instruction: and a believer, when he lies under that hand that doth afflict him, he lies in the heart that doth affect him. Believers are crucified by the world, that they may be crucified to the world. The flesh is an enemy to suffering, because suffering is an enemy to the flesh: it may make a man an early courtier, but it will never make a man an heavenly martyr; they that carry not the yoke of Christ upon their necks, will never carry the cross of Christ upon their backs: but a believer studies more how to adorn the cross, than how to avoid the cross: none so courageous as those that are religious: a believer never falls asleep for Jesus, till he falls

asleep in Jesus: some glory in that which is their shame, and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? It is an honour to be dishonoured for Jesus Christ. Tell me, O believer, is not Christ with his cross, better than the world with its crown? Suppose, christian, the furnace be hot, seven times hotter, it is but to make you seven times better: fiery trials make golden christians; sin hath brought many a believer unto suffering, and suffering hath kept many a believer from sinning: they that here be crossed for well-living, shall hereafter be crowned for well-dying: the losing of our heads makes way for receiving of our crown: God will season our vessels with water of affliction, before he pours in the wine of glory. By this you see, beloved, that the reproaches of Christ are precious. It is better to be preserved in brine, than to rot in honey.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is always precious to believers: he is more precious to them than a thousand worlds: because he is always with them, in all their trials, and in all their troubles, and in all their straits, and in all their afflictions. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," saith the text. O sirs! who would not suffer with such a companion as this? "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee," Isa. xliii. 2. Do you see this, christians? he is with you in the fire, in the water, in the prison, in all places, and at all times: he never leaves you, nor forsakes you, Heb. xiii. 5. He beds and boards with you; he lieth down and riseth up with you: he is called a friend, and indeed

he is our best friend, Cant. v. 16. "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." Jesus Christ is a faithful friend; he is a prudent friend; a careful, or providing friend; a compassionate friend; a constant friend; a loving friend; an everlasting friend. He loves us to the end, and there is no end of his love. He that gave his image to us, loves his image in us. Jesus Christ gave himself to us, and for us, he loves us in himself, and as himself. O what a sweet friend is Christ! God, in giving Christ to us, gave his very heart for us. Now, beloved, how can Jesus Christ be but always precious to a believer, who is thus always with a believer.

Fifthly, and Lastly, Why is Jesus Christ so precious to believers? (1.) Because he is a believer's life; Col. iii. 4. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory."—There is a three-fold life that flows from Christ: a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory. (2.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their light. Alas! alas! till we be in Christ we must be in darkness: it is in his light, that we see light, Eph. v. 14. "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (3.) Christ is precious to believers, because he is their food: "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood drink indeed," John vi. 55. Oh! what choice fare have they to feed on, that have Christ to feed on! O soul! whatsoever thou art, that hast not Christ to feed on, thy bread is but perishing bread. (4.) Christ is precious to believers, because he is their strength: take a man that is out of Christ, he hath no strength to withstand or overcome; "Without me," saith Christ,

“ye can do nothing,” John xv. 5. “When we were without strength, Christ died for us.” To be without Christ, and to be without strength, is all one. (5.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their righteousness and holiness. (6.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their portion: he is the terror of his enemies, and the portion of his people.

I might in a few particulars, anatomize the believer, and begin with his head, and shew you, all that he knows of the things of God he is beholden to Christ for it. Saith Paul, “God who hath shined in our hearts, by the light of the gospel, in the face of Christ.” All the knowledge of God, all gospel light, all the knowledge of spiritual things, we have all from Christ. If we consider the believer in his heart, if we find there a broken heart, a tender heart, a good and honest heart, a new-covenant heart; how comes he by this? Why, he hath it only from him, in whom the new covenant is made, and that is Christ. Consider the believer in his graces, as faith, and love, and patience, and humility, and the rest; he hath all from Christ, John i. 6. “Of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace.” There is not one grace but we have it from Christ. Consider him in his life, he is an honest and just man. Who made him to differ? Why is he not so full of cheating tricks as other men? Why, he hath not so learned Christ: Christ teacheth him to live at a more holy rate than others do: so that if the believer be better than others in this, he may say, thanks be to Christ, for that before I lived as vainly as others did; but now I have not so learned Christ. Consider the believer in his privileges, he is the

son of God, and it is by the Son of God that he is the son of God, John i. 12. "To as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name." So that if he be the son of God, he must thank Christ for it; if he be one of the family royal, one of the chosen generation, he must thank Christ for it; for it is in him, and by him alone that we have all the good which we enjoy. Consider him in his comforts; he hath not one good day, but it is from Christ: hath he comfort in ordinances, in the society of saints and prayer? He must thank Christ for all this. And thus I have given you a brief anatomy of the christian, and shewed you that Christ is all in all; whatever he is worth, he is beholden to Christ for it. Now put all this together, and see what great reason there is that Christ should be precious to believers: and is it any wonder that these souls be enamoured so with him, that they think their lives not worth the living but for him, and in him, and for his sake. O sirs! there is very great reason why believers set so high a value and esteem upon Christ, who is their all in all.

APPLICATION. The *first* use shall be for examination and self-trial. You have heard that Christ is precious, precious to God, to angels, to saints: but now, O soul, is he precious to thy soul? if he be precious to you, then all which is precious to him is precious to you. Oh! that men would but deal truly with their own souls! Many talk of grace, but few taste of grace; every one doth not walk like a christian, that talks like a christian; many *know* what is to be done, but never *do* what is to be done; many wear Christ's livery, and do the devil's drudgery; many have hands as white as wool, and their hearts as black as hell: many think themselves as surely going

to heaven, as if they were already dwelling in heaven; many think it shall go well with them hereafter, because it is so well with them here; many lie down with such hopes in their beds of rest, which they dare not lie down withal in their beds of dust; many appear righteous, who are only righteous in their appearance: but such as deceive others with a false show of holiness, will deceive themselves with a false show of happiness. Remember, christians, that the sheep's coat shall be taken off the wolf's back. If there be nothing done by your souls in heaven, there will be nothing done for your souls on earth; there is no making out our salvation, but by working out our salvation. God binds up none in the bundle of life, but such who are the heirs of life; there is no living a life that is not virtuous, and then dying a death that is righteous. O therefore, examine yourselves. I shall propose four questions to be resolved by your own hearts. 1. What interest have you in him? 2. What influences have you from him? 3. What affections bear you to him? 4. What preparations make you for him? O christians, that you would consider well these weighty things! Tell me, O soul! what did Judas get by his deceitful dealings? Nothing but a halter, in which his body was hanged; and a fire, in which his soul was burned. Though the earth may keep a wicked man living, yet heaven will not take a wicked man dying. I say, therefore, examine yourselves.

Secondly, I shall speak a little by way of exhortation, and conclude. (1.) If Jesus Christ be so precious, O then, open the door of your affections to him, that he may open the door of salvation to you! open to the God of glory that

he may make you glorious. Behold the God of heaven stands at the door of your hearts, and knocks, Rev. iii. 20., "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." He knocks by his word, by his rod, by his Spirit, by his mercies, by his judgments, by his comforts, and all is, that he may come in and sup with you. Now, sinners, will you not open the door of your hearts to Christ, that he may open the door of heaven to you? If you shut out Christ out of your hearts, he will shut you out of heaven; and what will you get by that? O sirs! he hath gold to enrich you, wine to cheer you, bread to nourish you, righteousness to justify you, mercy to save you, happiness to crown you. (2.) Let all that which is precious to God be precious to you; viz.—the Son of God;—the book of God;—the day of God;—the ordinances of God;—the ministers of God;—the people of God. O let these be precious to you! the people of God are very precious to you; a saint is as glorious in his greatest misery, as a sinner is miserable in his greatest glory. The Lord give a blessing to what has been delivered.

 WONDERFUL.

"He is altogether lovely."—CANT. v. 16.

DOCTRINE.—That JESUS CHRIST is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

To be in a state of grace, is to be miserable no more, is to be happy for ever. It is faith that unites Christ and sanctified souls together on earth; and love that unites God and glorified souls together in heaven. O believers! you are those worthies of whom the world is not worthy. Jesus Christ, from one saint, hath more glory given to him, than he receiveth from all the world besides. We owe not only our service to Christ, but we owe also ourselves to him.

I shall now make some entrance upon our Lord Jesus Christ's seventh famous title, which is *Wonderful*. This is one of Jesus Christ's lovely titles, in Isa. ix. 6. "He shall be called Wonderful." The point that we shall lay down and speak to from hence, is this,

Doctr. That a believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour. He is Wonderful in the eyes of all angels and saints for love. The world and devils, for fear, wonder at him. For the opening of this excellent point, take these particulars:—1. Christ is Wonderful in his nature. 2. He is Wonderful in his person. 3. He is Wonderful in his incarnation. 4. He is Wonderful in his saints. 5. He is Wonderful in his offices. 6. He is Wonderful in his miracles that he wrought. 7. He is Wonderful in his humiliation. 8. He is Wonderful in his conquest. 9. He is Wonderful in his ascension. 10. He is Wonderful in his exaltation. 11. He is Wonderful in his working towards his saints. Lastly, He is Wonderful in his coming to judgment.

Some have more time than matter, but I have now more matter than time; therefore I must omit much precious matter, for want of precious time. Beloved, I will handle but one of these particulars, and that is the seventh, viz. That Jesus

Christ is wonderful in humiliation. This is the head we shall now insist upon, and indeed this is one of the greatest wonders of all; that he that was so high should be brought so low; that he that was so rich should become so poor; that the Lord of life should die, and the great God become a babe, and the Eternal Word not able to speak a word; that he that made the law should be under the law; that he that was more excellent than all the angels should become less and lower than the angels. O ye angels! how stand ye amazed at this, that the Lord of heaven and earth should become a Servant to his own servants! Phil. ii. 17. "He took upon him the form of a servant." This must needs be wonderful to all the angels in heaven. But to proceed:

First, Jesus Christ took upon him our nature, Heb. ii. 16. God could stoop no lower than to become man, and man could be advanced no higher than to be united to God. He that before made man a soul after the image of God, now made himself a body after the image of man; for to be like to God is a wonder, but for God to be like man is a greater wonder: but when was it that Jesus Christ took upon him our nature? When it was in innocency, free from all misery and calamity? No; but when it was at the lowest, after the fall, when it was most beggarly, most wretched, most bloody, most accursed, most sinful, most feeble. "When we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly," saith the apostle, Rom. v. 6. Now, my brethren, that Jesus Christ should take upon him our condition, our frailty, our curse, our nature, when it was thus low, thus poor, thus wretched: Oh! this is a wonder of wonders,

and yet thus you see did Jesus Christ. Oh, wonderful abasement! must God take upon him our frailty! Had we so far run upon the score of vengeance, that none could satisfy but God himself? Could he not send his angels or saints, but must he come himself in person? No, no; angels or saints could not do it; but if Christ will save us, he himself must come and die for us.

Secondly, Our Saviour's humility descended very low. (1.) He was born of a poor maid, of no account or reputation. Was there never a great lady or gentlewoman in Jerusalem, for this great Prince of heaven and earth to be born of, but that he must be born of a poor despised virgin? Yea, certainly, there were gentlewomen in store in Jerusalem, but our Lord Jesus Christ regarded not the rich more than the poor. (2.) He was revealed to poor shepherds, not to emperors and kings, not to rulers and great men, not to doctors and learned men, not to Cæsar at Rome. I say, the angels did not go and declare these joyful tidings and good news to Cæsar at Rome, but to poor shepherds in the fields, Luke ii. 8. (3.) He was born in a stable, Luke ii. 12. Not in a fair house or palace, not in a parlour or chamber; no, but in a stable where horses and beasts are fed. (4.) He was wrapt up in clouts, and laid in a manger, they were no clouts of fine linen or silks, no clothes of silver or gold, nor precious robes, but poor and mean like to beggars' rags. Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me what is more wonderful than this. Oh! humility, humility, how great is thy riches that are thus commended to us! thou pleasest men, delighteth angels, and confoundeth devils, and bringest the Creator to a

manger. Oh! sweet Jesus, thou conquerest death by dying!

Thirdly, The third wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, he became poor. That he that was so rich became so poor; that he that was Lord of all, had nothing at all; he that made heaven and earth had no habitation of his own; he that gives crowns of victory, of life, of glory to others, had no crowns himself here, but a crown of thorns: the foxes and the fowls had more than Jesus-Christ, Matt. viii. 20. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head." The foxes had holes to lay their heads in, but Christ hath not a place to lay his head on. As he was born in another man's house, so he was buried in another man's tomb. "You know," saith the apostle, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet he became poor;" 2 Cor. viii. 9. "Yet he became poor," ay, poor indeed, and so poor that he had not a penny. You will say, that a man is very poor that hath not a penny; truly such an one was Christ; he had not a penny to pay tribute till he got it out of a fish, Matt. xvii. 27. And when he was to ride in pomp to Jerusalem, he had no coach, no chariot, no horse or beast of his own; he was fain to ride upon another man's ass, Matt. xxi. 2. Oh! ye blessed saints, admire and wonder at this, is not he the brightness of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of man, the destroyer of death, the King of saints! And that he should become so poor for us! Oh! this is wonderful to angels and men.

Fourthly, The fourth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, that he shed his blood six times

for poor sinners; and this is a great wonder I. The first time was, when he was circumcised at eight days old. O what a blessed Jesus is this! What, ready for the sacrifice already! What, but eight days old, and shed his blood for the salvation of men's poor souls! (2.) The second time was, when he was in his agony when he was in the garden. Matthew tells us, that his soul began to be sorrowful. Sore amazed, (saith Mark,) Mark xiv. To be troubled, (saith John,) John xii. "Now my soul is troubled;" what shall I say? "save me from this hour." Troubled, O Lord! what! Thou that bindest up the proud waves of the sea, turnest the hearts of kings as rivers of waters; thou that laidest the foundations of the earth, and spreadest the heavens as a curtain; thou that guidest the stars and thunderest in the clouds; thou that upholdest all things by the word of thy power; and what! thou troubled! Oh! the horror, the terror, the sorrow that seized upon the soul of Christ! saith Luke, "he began to be in agony," Luke xxii. 44. "He began to be in agony, and he sweat." What! no natural sweat,—but blood,—he was in a bloody sweat all over, he sweat *clots of blood*, as the original hath it. Oh! how did Christ come swimming to us in blood, and have not we a tear to shed for all these streams of his. We did eat the sour grapes, and his teeth were set on edge; we climbed the tree, and stole the forbidden fruit, and he went up the ladder of the cross and died: O how lovely should he be in our eyes!

We should wear his cross in our hearts, and treasure it up as Moses did the manna in the pot. Christ's cross, saith he, is the golden key that lets us into paradise, and the angel with the flaming

sword is turned out. His red blood washed away our sins. But, (3.) He shed his blood for us when his cheeks were nipt and torn: the pulling off the hair, as the prophet speaks, Isa. l. 6. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair." Some are of opinion, that Christ's cheeks were rent to his very chin, and his beard was pulled off: both were very likely to be true: neither of them could be without much blood: for we find that the soldiers did blindfold him, and then smote him on the face, and bade him read who it was that smote; they made sport of it, Luke xii. 64. O how was that face of his lacerated and covered with blood, that was brighter than the sun! He that was fairer than the sons of men; he that is the great glittering and sparkling diamond of the ring of glory; how was he bespotted and besmeared with blood! O ye hard of heart, ye stubborn of heart! (and indeed too stubborn are we all, if judgment and the hammer will not break your hearts, let love and mercy do it,) look unto Christ, and say, Hast thou suffered this for me, and shall I not love thee, O Lord, and serve thee, and obey thee, and honour thee! So say, and so do, and the Lord say, Amen. But then, (4.) Christ shed his blood when the crown of prickling thorns was put upon his head, Matt. xxvii. Some of the fathers say, that he received seventy-three wounds in his head; certainly there could not but much blood come out. Oh! what a sight was this to behold that head of his, that was as the most fine gold, as the spouse expresseth it to be, now covered with thorns, and rent with thorns; that he should wear the prickly crown of sharp thorns, that was fit to wear the crown of glory! (5.) A

fifth time when he shed his blood, was when his hands and feet were nailed to the cross; these beautiful feet of his that came skipping upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and salvation; skipping, saith Gregory, from the throne to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from the cross to the throne again. How were these blessed hands of his nailed and made fast to the cross! O ye blessed spirits, look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneel at the feet of men! O ye angels! how should ye be amazed at this, to see your Lord and master so far deny himself, as to take upon him the form of a servant! "We saw Jesus," saith the apostle, "made a little lower than the angels." To suffer death, the Creator not only became a creature, but inferior to some of the creatures which he had made. O ye blessed saints! why do ye not wonder at this wonder? to see the beauty of heaven, the paradise of angels, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Redeemer of man, thus humble himself, and take upon him man's nature, for the salvation of man's soul. (6.) Christ shed his blood when the spear was thrust into his side, out of which presently gushed water and blood, John xix. 34. Some say, that the soldier that pierced Christ with a spear was a blind man, but our Saviour's blood sprinkling out upon his eyes, restored him to his sight, and he became a convert, a preacher, a martyr. You will say a very strange cure, that the physician should bleed, and his blood should have the virtue, that we should all be saved. Physicians be usually liberal of other men's blood, but sparing of their own; but it is not so with our Physician, instead of the patient's bleeding in the arm, he bled 'n the side: why dost

thou shower down thy blood, and come swimming in thy blood? Is not a drop sufficient? One drop, saith Luther, is more worth than heaven and earth. O love without measure! O wonderful redemption! That God should take upon him man's frailty, that is wonderful indeed! It is enough for a king to pardon a thief, but that the king himself should die for the malefactor, that is beyond expression! Thus did our blessed Lord, our blessed Saviour: he died that we might live: he went and suffered in his agony, that he might "stay us with flagons, and comfort us with apples:" he endured the greatest pain, that we might enjoy the greatest pleasures. O how lovely, how lovely was Christ in his sufferings! "Who would not love thee, thou King of saints?" Christian, consider how much thy dear Lord and Saviour hath suffered and undergone for thee. O precious blood! it redeems us, it cleanseth us, it washeth us, it justifies us, it sanctifieth us, it restoreth us to God, and bringeth us to heaven.

Fifthly, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, He suffered in his soul, Matt. xxvi-38. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," saith Christ. O what a word was this for God to speak! to say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!" For a man to say so is no wonder, but for God to say so, O this is a great wonder indeed! The suffering of his soul was the soul of sufferings: Christ yielded his soul for our souls, his soul in our souls' stead. Many of the faithful servants have suffered much in their bodies, as the martyrs that were racked, and burnt, and sawn asunder: but they had much freedom in their souls, their souls were full of much spiritual joy and comfort. But

now Jesus Christ did not only suffer in his body, but in his soul : and that is it which makes the wonder the greater, that Christ suffered in his soul. He drank the cup of affliction, that we might drink the cup of consolation ; he tasted death for us, that we might taste life through him ; he was forsaken, that we might never be forsaken.

A *sixth* wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, that he should suffer himself to be so much mocked ; he was mocked as Sampson was by the Philistines, when his eyes were put out. And truly this is a great wonder, 1. If we consider who Christ was. 2. If we consider who they were that mocked him. He was God, the God-man ; they were but dust and ashes. They did spit upon him ;—they blindfolded him ;—they crowned him with thorns ;—they put a reed into his hand, instead of a sceptre ;—they clothed him with purple garments ;—they bowed their knees to him in scorn ;—they saluted him with, Hail, king of the Jews ;—they made him carry his own cross, on which he was to be hanged ; as malefactors go with halters about their necks to execution, so they made him carry the cross ;—they reviled him, wagging their heads ;—they crucified him with two thieves, and him in the midst of them, as though he had been the prince of the thieves, the greatest malefactor of them all ;—they insulted over him in his misery. Thus they never left him till his soul left the world : and all this they did in scorn to him, that they might make his death the more painful and shameful. O sirs, this is no small wonder, if we consider how Jesus Christ was mocked.

The *seventh* wonder in the humiliation of Christ was this, he suffered much from his Fa-

ther; here is a wonder, if you talk of wonders. He did not only suffer from Jews and Gentiles, Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and Pilate, wicked men and devils, but he suffers too from the Father; and this is that which makes the wonder the greater, Isa. liii. 10. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Mark, one would have thought, if God would spare any, it should have been his Son, his own Son, his beloved Son, his begotten Son, his bosom Son, and yet God spared him not a jot, Rom. viii. 32. "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Mark here, God did not spare him, but delivered him up for us. If Jesus Christ will come and take our sins upon him, God will not spare him, but let out the fulness of justice, and justice to the full upon him, till he had paid the uttermost farthing of justice. O blessed Jesus, didst thou undergo so much for our sinning, for our offending, for our rebelling? O then, what infinite cause have we to love thee, and obey thee, and honour thee! For the more he hath done and suffered for us, the dearer he ought to be unto us.

Eighthly, The last wonder that I shall mention is this, Christ foresaw all this, and yet he willingly undertook it, to save mankind: he knew before he came from heaven, how his countrymen the Jews would use him, and that one of his family would betray him: John vi. 64. "Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him;" nothing was in the womb of time, that was not first in the womb of Christ; he knew it from the beginning, saith the text. Now, that our Lord Jesus Christ should foreknow all this most wonderful misery that he endured, yet that he should come freely, willingly, and joyful-

ly from heaven, to die and suffer by and for such poor wretches as we are; here is a wonder to angels and men, Heb. x. 9. "Lo, I come," saith Christ, "to do thy will, O God." "Lo, I come," and what was it he was to do? Why, to suffer for poor man, to redeem poor man. Do you see here, sirs, what great love Christ bore to his people. Rather than they should be in hell, and be damned, Jesus Christ would come from heaven and suffer all this for them, though he knew before how he should be used. O this is a great wonder, dear christians! Methinks such a pearl should sparkle in our eyes. We sail to glory, not in the salt seas of our tears, but in the red sea of Christ's blood. Truly it is wonderful to think how much he did for us, and how little we do for him: the greater his sufferings were, the greater were our sins: the greater his pain was, the greater should our love be to him. I shall make of this point an use of information and exhortation.

Use 1. Is it so, that a believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour? Then it informs us of eight things.

First, My first inference is this, That Christ's sufferings, is what he endured from men in his body, and what he suffered from God in his soul; he did not only endure pain in his body, but agony in his soul. O the sea of sufferings, the sea of sorrow, the sea of blood, the sea of tears that our blessed Saviour waded through, to come and bring peace to our souls, salvation to our souls, grace and glory to our souls! He suffered from devils; he suffered in his name, he suffered in his members, he suffered in his body, he suffered in his soul: the cause was our sins, the effect our salvation. If you look through

the chronicle of his life, you will find his whole life full of sorrow and misery: he was persecuted, he was tempted, he was reproached, he was falsely accused, he was apprehended, he was betrayed, he was crucified. What shall we say? Shall we say more? What can be said more? He was full of sorrow: he took his name from sorrow: our Lord Jesus Christ is called a man of sorrows, Isa. liii. 3. "A man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief." Now judge, sirs, whether Christ's life was not full of sorrows; he took his name from sorrow. O sweet Jesus! thy sufferings were great. This is my first inference.

Secondly, Jesus Christ suffered by himself. He was alone in his sufferings; neither angels nor saints bore any part with him in his sufferings. no, he drank the bitter cup alone; he alone purged our sins: Heb. i. 3. "He alone by himself," saith the text, "purged our sins." No, Christ had none to help, to bear his heavy burden with him, he bore it himself alone. But, my beloved, though our Lord Jesus Christ suffered by himself, yet he did not suffer for himself: he suffered for us, he suffered for that which we deserved; Isa. liii. 4, 5. "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Do you see here, christians, how many *ours* are here? Our griefs, our sorrows, our transgressions, our iniquities, our peace; you have here five *ours*. So again, "For our sakes he became poor;" 2 Cor. viii. 9. Mark, "for our sakes." Beloved, he was born for us. "Unto us a child is born;" he was

given for us, "to us a son is given," Isa. ix. 6. "He was made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13; the text tells, he was made a curse, but it was for us; he was delivered up for us, Rom. viii. "Who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." O sirs! all these things were for us,—given for us, made a curse for us, made sin for us, delivered up for us, and is now in heaven interceding for us, Heb. vii. 25. So that, my brethren, all that our Lord Jesus suffered, it was not for himself, but it was for us: our blessed Saviour suffered for us, that we might not suffer. This is the second inference.

Thirdly, My third is, That this is more for Christ to suffer any thing, than for all men and angels to suffer all things. Pray mark, sirs, it all the kings and emperors should have left their thrones, their crowns, their kingdoms, their sceptres, their glory, their honours and princely robes, and have come and took upon them a poor Lazarus' condition, to go on poorly, and fare hardly, and die shamefully, why, all this had not been so much as for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to suffer the least thing he did suffer. Now further, I say, if all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had come and suffered, and died ten thousand deaths, it had not been so much, put all this together, as it was for Christ to suffer any thing: because they are creatures, he is the Creator; they the servants, he the Master; they are subjects, he the Prince; they are mean he is mighty; he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords: "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. Now, I say, it would not have been half such a wonder, if all the angels in heaven, and men on earth had come and suffered, as it was for the

Son of God. Oh! this is a wonder of wonders; his sufferings were wonderful, his humility was wonderful, his patience was wonderful, his love was wonderful: greater love could no man shew; he loved us, so that he died for love. Now, I beseech you, consider this inference, which was this, That it is more for Jesus Christ to suffer any thing, than for all men and angels to suffer all things. And indeed, sirs, let me tell you, I want words to express it, or set it forth; for there is both want of words, and want in words to express this matter.

Fourthly, My fourth inference is this, In what miserable case lay we, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ must endure all this, bear all this, undergo all this, for poor sinners? Certainly the misery of man was very great, that man should need such redemption as this. O what a breach had sin made between God and us, that the Son of God must come from heaven to earth to suffer all this? O sirs! mischievous sin hath undone us; sin hath robbed every one of six jewels, every one of which jewels are more worth than heaven and earth. Would you know what jewels they be that sin hath robbed us of? I will tell you, and then you will say with me, that we were in a very miserable case. 1. It robs us of the image of God. Was not this a precious jewel, think you? I say it robbed us of the image of God, and drew in man the devil's picture: Malice is the devil's eye, oppression is the devil's hand, blasphemy is the devil's tongue, and hypocrisy is the devil's cloven foot. 2. Sin robs us of our sonship, and makes us slaves to the devil, slaves to sin, or slaves to the world, and slaves to ourselves; this is another jewel we have lost. 3. It robs us of our friendship

with God, and makes us enemies to God and enemies to Christ, enemies to our own soul, and enemies to all that is good. 4. It robs us of our communion and fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit, and makes us strangers and aliens. 5. It robs us of our rights and privileges, of heaven, and heavenly things, and makes us children of wrath, and heirs of hell. 6. It robs us of our honour and glory, and makes us vile and miserable; as you may see, Isa. i. 6. "There is no soundness in us; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." Now sirs, put all this together, and then see whether or not we are not miserable, and whether we did not need a Saviour to come and deliver us from this misery into which our souls were plunged. Now here is our happiness, christians, in Christ we have these jewels again that we lost in the old Adam; the glorious image of God, our sonship, our friendship, our fellowship, our privilege, and our glory and honour, we have all again by Jesus Christ. O sirs! man was in a very sad condition, man had brought himself into a sad condition, our condition was a miserable condition.

A *fifth* inference is this, Jesus Christ brought life to us,—a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory, but we brought death to him; he brought glory to us, but we brought shame to him; he brought riches to us, but we brought poverty to him; he brought joy to us, but we brought sorrow to him, sorrow upon sorrow: we put the crown of thorns upon his head, he put the crown of glory upon our heads. We thought the earth too good for him, and would not let him live here, but put him to death, but he thinks not heaven too good for us; we be ashamed to own him before men, but he is not

ashamed to own us before his Father and his holy angels; we condemn him, but he justifies us. O sirs, think of your unkindness to him, and let the considerations of his infinite love and favour to you, draw out your affections after him. That is the fifth.

My sixth inference is this—All believers have exceeding great cause to bless God for Jesus Christ; God the Father gave him to us, who were not his friends, but enemies: to us, who were not sons, but slaves: to us, who were not angels, but men: to us, who loved not God, but hated him. Oh! have we not cause to bless God for Jesus Christ? In John iii. 6. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” O sirs, what a gift is Jesus Christ!

Seventhly, If Jesus Christ be so wonderful, Oh! then, how vile a thing, how base a thing is it for the hearts of men to prefer any thing before Jesus Christ! I beseech you, and beg of you all to mind this inference. Surely, sirs, if Jesus Christ be so wonderful, so precious, so lovely, so rich, so sweet, so rare, it is a most abominable thing, a wicked thing, a vile thing, to prefer any thing before Jesus Christ. Oh! I may speak it with grief of heart, there be too many in the world that set light by him, and make nothing of him, and love him not, and prefer every base lust before him: though there is nothing more cursed than this, there is nothing more common than this, christians, for men to prefer the vilest things before Christ. (1.) The wicked worldling prefers the trash of the world before Jesus Christ, he can leave hearing and praying, reading and fasting, to follow

the world: he prefers gold before God, earth before heaven, gain before glory, his corruptible silver before his Saviour. Oh! thou wicked worldling, thou wretched worldling, can thy riches save thy soul? Let me ask thee, Can thy riches deliver thee from hell? Can thy riches bring thee to heaven, that thou preferrest them before Christ? Oh! the Lord Jesus will come in flames of fire, to take vengeance on such, and then thou wilt know to thy cost, and pain, and torment, that thy riches cannot keep thee out of hell, much less bring thy soul to heaven: then thou wilt see thy folly when it is too late.

(2.) Drunkards, wicked drunkards, prefer their drunkenness before Christ; the drunkard prefers his pots before him, the drunkard wades through a sea of drink to his grave; he can sit a day, or a whole night, in the ale-house, and think it a little time; but an hour in the service of God, O how tedious is that! O thou drunkard, that turnest off thy cups so fast, God Almighty has a cup for thee, but not a cup of sack, or a cup of beer, but a cup of wrath, which thou shalt drink to eternity! which is worse than to drink scalding hot lead down thy throat: he hath so much liquor here, not only drink to quench his thirst, but to drink to excess, till he say and do he knows not what; in hell he shall have little enough, there is never a tavern or ale-house there; no, there is not a drop of water to be got all hell over. O thou wretch! thou shalt live in burning flames, and thy tongue shall cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and if thou wouldest give a thousand worlds for one drop of water, thou shalt not have it. And therefore, I beseech you, if any such there are here, in the name of God hear and fear, and do no more

wickedly. Oh! I would not be in thy condition for ten thousand worlds; and yet I cannot but have bowels of pity towards thee, which constrains me thus to speak, knowing thy condition better than thou dost thyself. Oh! couldest thou but speak with thy fellow-drunkards that are now in hell, what a dreadful story would they tell thee of their burning, and suffering, and pain, and torments; some are in hell already for the same sins you live in; and if you live and die without Christ, you shall be ere long with them. (3.) The swearer, the blasphemous swearer, prefers his oaths before Christ. Many can swear by their Creator and Maker, and speak proudly, and look highly, and walk contemptuously, as if there were no God to punish, no devil to torment. Well, let me tell thee, O thou swearer, that now delightest in cursing, thou shalt be ere long sent with a curse to a cursed place: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting flames!" will Christ say to such persons. (Lastly,) The proud person prefers his pride before Christ; if a fine suit of clothes did lie on the one hand, and Christ on the other, the proud would rather put on the suit of clothes than him. O, I beseech you, sirs, consider what a vile and abominable thing it is, to prefer any thing before Christ. "Consider this," saith the Psalmist, "ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you." O poor wretch! consider of that text. Thou liest open to all the judgments in this life, and to all the torments in the life which is to come, all ye wicked ones that prefer any thing before Christ.

Eighthly, The last inference is this, If Jesus Christ be so wonderful, O then every one that heareth of him should think it is a most read-

ful thing to miss of him. O christians and friends, consider of it! Certainly that man or woman's condition must needs be sad indeed, that lives and dies without Jesus Christ. O poor wretch! the devil looks but for a look from God to come and rend thee to pieces, and draw thy soul to hell. Poor soul, thy soul is in danger every hour of being arrested by death, and carried prisoner to hell. O sirs, I beseech you, do you think and consider with yourselves, what a sad thing it is to miss of Christ. Until a man is in him, he hath nothing, he knows nothing, he enjoys nothing, can do nothing, and is fit for nothing, and is worth nothing, Prov. x. 20.

O, I beseech you, that you would consider seriously, that of all miseries, that is the greatest of miseries to miss of Christ; we are never able to lament the loss of the poor soul that loseth Jesus Christ: all losses be wrapt up in that one loss. And therefore I beseech you all, both good and bad, bethink with yourselves what a sad condition that person is in who misseth of Christ. So much for this use of information.

A BELIEVER'S GOLDEN CHAIN

I come now to the *second use*, and that is a use of exhortation; and here I shall make a Golden Chain of twelve links, for believers to wear about their necks. Hear the best men; read the best books; keep the best company.

1. Hear the best men. O sirs! hear a soul-

enriching minister, a soul-winning minister, and a soul-searching minister, one that declareth the whole counsel of God, and gives the Father his due, the Son his due, the Holy Ghost his due; one that maketh hard things easy, and dark things plain. Many there are, I may speak with grief and to their shame, who, instead of making hard things easy to the people, make easy things hard to the people, plain things dark, speaking in an unknown tongue, which the people understand not; and all to work a vain admiration of them in the ignorant: But how unlike to Christ, and the prophets, and the apostles, these are, I will leave you to judge. This is as if a man would make a scaffold as high as a steeple, when his work is done upon the ground. Ministers are fishermen: Now you know if fishermen should wind their nets together, they would catch nothing; but if they would catch the fish, they must spread their net. The application is easy—A sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue; a heart full of grace is better than a head full of notions; notional knowledge may make a man's head giddy, but it will never make a man's heart holy; that which most tickleth delicate ears, least helpeth diseased spirits: How are we to speak to God and live, much less to speak from God and to the people, that they may live? How holy had they need to be that draw near to a holy God! Ministers are called angels, because we should be as angels in our lives; but if angels fall, they turn devils. O, we should be holy as the holy angels. It is the foolishness of preaching that saves souls, but not foolish preaching! Christ taught them as they were able to hear it, and as they were able to bear it, Mark iv 33. Paul

was excellent at this, "I had rather speak five words in a known tongue, than ten thousand in an unknown tongue." A man may be a great scholar, and yet a great sinner. Judas the traitor, was Judas the preacher: and therefore, sirs, let me beseech you for your poor souls' sake, hear those ministers that come nearest to Christ, the prophets, and the apostles. He is the best preacher that does the most good, and wins the most souls. You may go from men to truth, but not from truth to men: for the best of men are but men at the best.

2. Read the best books, for in them you will find the best things; and compare what is spoken in the books of men, with what is written in the book of God.

3. Keep the best company; be much with them that are much with God: walk with them that walk with God. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3. Forsake all bad company, and join thyself with good company; let them be thy choicest companions, that have made Christ their choicest companion; lay them nearest your hearts, who lie nearest his heart; carry them in your bosom by love, who shall be carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: let Christ's love be your love; with whom shall believers be but with believers? You know what our English proverb is, Birds of a feather will flock together. Acts iv. 14. "Being let go they went to their own company." Indeed none are fit company for a believer, but a believer; to see a saint and a sinner associating one with another, is to see the living and the dead keep house together: carnal men, though they be naturally alive, yet they be spiritually dead. It is better to be with

Lazarus, though in rags, than to be with Dives, though in his robes. "He that walketh with the wise shall be wise," Prov. xiii. 20. O dwell where God dwells, make them your companions on earth, who shall be your companions in heaven. This is the first.

II. Meditate often on the four last things; death, which is most certain; judgment, which is most strict; hell, which is most doleful; heaven, which is most delightful.

1. Meditate upon death, which is most certain: "It is appointed to men-once to die," Heb. ix. 26. Out of the dust was man formed, into the dust shall man be turned. To think of death is a death to some men: but, beloved, meditate upon death; the meditation of death will put sin to death: death to the wicked is the end of all comfort, and the beginning of all misery; but death to the godly is the outlet to sin and sorrow, and an inlet to peace and happiness; the saints' enjoyment shall be incomparable, when the sinners' torments shall be intolerable. When a believer's soul goeth out of his own bosom, it goeth into Abraham's bosom. When a believer dies, he leaves all his bad behind him, and carries his good with him: when a sinner dies, he carries his bad with him, and leaves his good behind him; the one goeth from evil to good, the other from good to evil. When a saint leaves the world, his flesh returns to the dust, and his spirit returns to rest; when a sinner leaves this world, his body goes to worms to be consumed, and his soul goes to flames to be tormented; the one goes to Abraham's bosom, the other to Beelzebub's bosom; the chaff to the fire, and the wheat to the barn. Oh! for the Lord's sake meditate upon death.

When you come into the world, you do but live to die again; when you go out of the world, you do but die to live again. He that lives well, cannot die ill; he that is assured of a life that hath no end, cares not how soon his life is at an end; but he that lives without fear, shall die without hope; he that hath no grace in his life, shall have no true peace in his death: an old sinner is nearer to his second death, than to his second birth; his body is nearer to corruption, than his soul is to salvation. Death levell-eth the highest mountains with the lowest valleys: the robes of princes and the rags of beggars are both laid up together in the wardrobe of the grave. The reason why men so little prepare for death is, because they think so little of death; when they feel sin arresting them, then they fear death approaching. The grave is a bed to rest in, but not a shop to trade in. When the soul at death takes its flight from his loving mate, they shall meet no more till the general assize. When you are putting off your clothes, think of the putting off your tabernacles; be going to your beds, as if you were going to your graves, and close your eyes in one world, as if you would open them in another world; when you are creeping between the sheets, then think of your winding-sheets. Remember, christians, that God can as easily turn you into dust, as he could take you out of the dust: to-day is your living day, to-morrow may be your dying day. The meditation of death will prepare you for death.

2. Meditate upon judgment, which is most strick: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." They who will not come before his mercy-seat shall be forced to come

before his judgment-seat; they who will not hear his word, shall feel his sword; they who are graceless in this day, will be speechless in that day; do you mind me, sirs, at the world's end; such will be at their wits end, to see the earth flaming, the heavens melting, the stars falling, the graves opening, the judgment hastening, the sun and moon mourning, and Christ and his angels coming; he that comes to raise the dead, will also come to judge the dead. O sirs, the great day to great sinners will be a terrible day, when they shall see Christ coming in the clouds, who hath the person of a man, but the power of God, being crowned with dignity, and guarded with angels, and enraged with anger, and enabled with power, to bring all kings and nobles, high and low, rich and poor, to the bar; and there he will judge them, not by the whiteness of their countenances, but by the blackness of their consciences. He that was guarded to the cross with a band of soldiers, shall be guarded to the bench with a guard of angels. You that make no account of his coming, how do you think to give an account at his coming? For the Lord's sake, meditate upon judgment; the meditation of judgment, sirs, may make you judgment-proof: they who now judge themselves in their own private sessions, shall not be judged by Christ at his public assize.

3. Meditate upon hell, which is most doleful. O sirs, heaven is a place where all is joyful, and hell is a place where all is doleful; in the former there is nothing but happiness, and in the latter there is nothing but heaviness, Ps. ix. 17. "The wicked shall be turned into hell." Mark, sirs; the wicked shall be turned into hell. O, dreadful place! where the devil is the jailor, hell is

the prison, damnation is the punishment, eternity is the time, brimstone the fire, and men and spirits the fuel! To endure this will be intolerable, to avoid it will be impossible. This is the day of God's long-suffering, that will be the day of man's long-suffering; there they may suffer, and suffer pain without ease, and torment without end, sorrow without succour, and misery without mercy. For the Lord's sake, meditate upon hell: O, what hells are there in hell! the loss of God, the loss of Christ, the loss of all good; and endless, ceaseless, and remediless torments must be their portion. O that you would but often think of hell; if once thou droppest into hell, after a thousand years you will be as far from coming out as you were at your first entrance in. There is a way to keep a man out of hell, but no way to get a man out of hell. The wheat and the chaff they may both grow together, but they shall not both lie together: in hell there shall not be a saint among those that are terrified; and in heaven there shall not be a sinner among those that are glorified. The sea of damnation shall not be sweetened with a drop of compassion. Will you pity a body that is going to the block, and wilt thou not pity a body that is going to the pit? What a sad visitation is that, where the black horse of death going before, and the red horse of wrath followeth after! O that must needs be sad, when one death comes upon the back of another. A man's condition in this life may be honourable, and yet his state as to another life may be damnable: poor Lazarus goes to heaven, when rich Dives goes to hell. It is better to go to heaven poorly, than it is to go to hell richly. O sirs! let us go to heaven by con-

temptation, that we may never go to hell by condemnation.

4. Meditate on heaven, which is most joyful. Matt. xxv. 34. "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." Heaven is a place where all joy is enjoyed, mirth without sadness, light without darkness, sweetness without bitterness, life without death, rest without labour, plenty without poverty. Oh what joy entereth into a believer, when he enters into the joy of his Master! Who would not work for glory with the greatest diligence, and wait for glory with the greatest patience! O what glories are there in glory! Thrones of glory, crowns of glory, vessels of glory, a weight of glory, a kingdom of glory; here Christ puts his grace upon his spouse, but there he puts his glory upon his spouse; in heaven the crown is made for them, and in heaven the crown shall be worn by them; in this life believers have some good things, but the rest and best are reserved for the life to come. O sirs! meditate upon heaven, for meditation of heaven will make us heavenly: heaven is not only a possession promised, but a possession purchased. When our contemplations and conversation are in heaven, then we enjoy heaven upon earth; to be in Christ is heaven below, and to be with him is heaven above: there cannot be a better thing for us, than for us to be with the best of beings. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. i. 21. Paul was contented to stay a while out of heaven, that he might bring other souls into heaven; his life to them was most useful, but his death to him was most gainful. Let our condition be never so great, it is hell without Christ; and let our condition be never so bad, it is heaven with him. I had rather be in hell with

Christ, than in heaven without him, saith Luther. Indeed hell itself would be heaven if God were in it, and heaven would be hell if God were from it. That which makes heaven so full of joy is, that it is above all fear, and that which makes hell so full of horror is, that it is below all hope. The vessels of grace shall swim in the ocean of glory. Here all the earth is not enough for one man, but there one heaven is enough for all men. A believer shall see with an eye that is purified, what he shall shortly see with an eye that is glorified. We may talk of the greatness of our crowns, but we shall never know the weight of our crowns till they be set on our heads. This is the second.

III. "Set the watch of your lives by the Sun of righteousness," Mal. iv. 2. Live in print, and keep the copy of your lives from blots and blurs, that the characters thereof may be read by all, and bring up the bottom of your lives to the top of your lights. Then only doth the watch of your lives move with uprightness, when it is set by the beams of the Sun of righteousness. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Tit. ii. 11, 12. They who will not submit to grace's teaching, shall never enjoy grace's salvation. O live so that the word which hath brought salvation to your souls, may bring your souls into salvation; that you may be such jewels of grace, as shall be locked up in the cabinet of glory. The Father of lights takes no pleasure in the children of darkness; "Let your light so shine before men," Matt. v. 16. We must shine in grace before we can shine in glory. They who look for a heaven made ready, should live

as if they were in heaven already. There are four things that make a new creature: Light; life; holiness; and, good works. The children of light must put on the armour of light. I cannot but sadly reflect on the inconstancy of rotten professors. An applauded Christ shall have many hosannas, but a condemned Christ shall have many crucifiers; but a true believer can as well go with Christ to the tree where he is to be crucified, as he can go with him to the throne where he is to be glorified. O how unanswerable are the lives of some professors to the light of professors! they know much, but do little; they know the good they are to do, but they do not the things they know: they speak of things above, but they love and follow after things below. A man is not what he saith, but what he doeth; to say what we do, and not to do what we say, is but to undo ourselves by doing. Take heed, sirs, that you do not take yourselves to hell with heavenly words. What is the great prejudice that the world hath against professors, but this, that they who profess against pride more than others, are themselves as proud as others? they profess against covetousness more than others, but are themselves as covetous as others; they often meet together to be better, but they are never the better for their often meeting together. Do but take away their profession, and you take away their religion; they have nothing of the shape but the skin; they are better in their outside than they are in their inside. O sirs, if ungodliness be evil, why do ye so much profess it? and if goodness be good, why do ye so little practise it? Either take Christ in your lives, or cast him out of your lips: either obey his commandments more, else call him Lord no

more; either get oil in your lamps, or cast away your lamps. To be a professor of Deity and a practiser of iniquity, is an abomination unto the Lord. Some would not seem evil, and yet would be so; others would be good, and yet would not seem so; either be what thou seemest, or else be what thou art. There are many that blush to confess their sins, that did never blush to commit their sins. There is nothing done in vain, but what is vainly done. Oh, christians, bring your lights to the light. What darkness can obscure them who have a sun above them? Believers, when their candles are put out, can fetch light from the Sun of righteousness. The nearer you are to such a sun, the clearer will be your light. Oh, christians, you are never the better of your lights, if you are not made better by your lights; he that sins against his light, will at last sin away his light. If thy light do not put sin and the world under thy feet, it will never put a crown of glory upon thy head. This is the third.

IV. Be willing to want what God is not willing to give. As God hath never the less for the mercies he giveth, so he hath never more for the duty he getteth. Man is such a debtor to God, that he can never pay his due to God. We are so far from paying the utmost farthing, that at the utmost we have not a farthing to pay: there is no man but hath received more good than he deserved, and done more evil than he hath suffered: therefore he should be contented though he enjoy but little good, and not discontented though he suffer much evil. "Let us therefore be contented," 1 Tim. vi. 8. A christian is to submit to the will of God's disposing, as well as to the will of God's commanding: that man obtains his will of God, who submits his will to

God: a gracious heart shall never be out of heart, because he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. He that hath said, will not unsay it: therefore take up your contentment in God's appointment. We are not to be troubled for this, that we have no more from God; but we are to be troubled for this, that we do no more for God. A christian though he hath a will of his own, yet it becometh not a christian to do his own will: contentment without the world, is better than the world without contentment. Christian, get a holy heart, and thy estate on earth shall be transeendant; yea, thy estate on earth shall be sufficient: christian, is not God willing to give thee riches? O then be thou willing to want riches. Is not God willing to give thee health? O then be thou willing to want health. Is not God willing to give thee children? O then be thou willing to want children. Is not God willing to give thee thy desire of this thing or that thing? O then be thou willing to want that thing. We many times stand in our light. Never were any saints their own carvers, but before they had done they cut their own fingers: Lot, you know, was put to his own choice, and he chose Sodom; but you know it fell out, it was not long before Sodom was burnt. So Rachel said, "Give me children, else I die:" and she had a child, but it cost her her life. Abraham desired the life of Ishmael, but he had little comfort of him all his days. Therefore, dear christians, submit thy will to God's will; that soul shall have his will of God that desires nothing but what God wills: do but take care of all that which belongs to God, and God will take care of all that which belongs to you. It is nothing but reason that God should

fall out with them in the course of his providence, that fall off from him in the course of their obedience. Wicked men make the world their treasure, and God makes the world their torment: when they want estates, they are troubled for them; and when they have estates, they are troubled with them. Murmuring persons think every thing too much that is done by them, and every thing too little that is done for them: God is as far from pleasing them with his mercy, as they are from pleasing him with their duty. It is unthankfulness that is the cause of the earth's unfruitfulness. Did a man believe that the Lord would not fail his body, how carefully would he look after his soul! It is only the christian man that is the contented man: he doth not quarrel with God for mercies denied, but blesseth God for mercies bestowed. The higher a christian is raised above the things of the earth, the more is he ravished with the joys of heaven. That is the fourth.

V. Crucify your sins, that have crucified your Saviour. "They that are Christ's," saith St. Paul, "have crucified the flesh with the lusts thereof." Did the rocks rent when Christ died for our sins, and shall not our hearts rent that have lived in our sins? O the nails that pierced his hands, should now pierce our hearts! they should wound themselves with their sorrows, who have wounded him with their sins; that they have grieved his Spirit, it should grieve their spirit. O that ever I should be so bad a child to him, that hath been so good a father to me! Our sins have been our greatest terror, and our Saviour hath been our choicest helper. Oh! put sin to death, that was the cause of Christ's death. If one should kill our father,

would we hug him and embrace him as our friend, let him eat at our table, and not rather hate and detest the very sight of him? if a snake should sting thy dearly beloved spouse to death, wouldst thou preserve it alive, warm it at the fire, hug it in thy bosom, and not rather stab him with a thousand wounds? And were not our sins the cause and instrument of Christ's death? Were not they the whips that scourged him, the nails, the cords, the spear, the thorns that wounded him, and fetched the heart-blood from him? and can we love our sins, that killed our Saviour? Can a spouse love her husband, and her heart embrace an adulterer? We complain of the sins of Judas, and of the Jews, and seem to hate them, and spit at their mention, and can we love our Judas' sins, that set them all on work, and put Christ to death? and yet how many are there that had rather have sinful self satisfied, than to have sinful self crucified! Oh, sin is that mark at which all the arrows of vengeance are shot! Were it not for sin, death had never had a beginning, and were it not for death, sin would never have had an ending. Man began to be sorrowful, when he began to be sinful. The wind of our lusts blowed out the candle of our lives. If man had nothing to do with sin, sin would have nothing to do with man. Oh! did sin bring sorrow into the world? O then let sorrow carry sin out of the world! Of all evils, sin is the great evil, Rom. vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death." Oh, it is worse than punishment, banishment, and imprisonment: sin killeth both body and soul, it throws the body into cold earth rotting and the soul into the hot hell burning. Oh for the Lord's sake, think on this, and weep for

this betimes : let the cry of your prayers, out-cry the cry of your sins. Nothing can quench the fire that sin hath kindled, but the water which repentance hath caused. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from our sins," 1 John i. 11. A saint is not free from sin, that is his burden : a saint is not free to sin, that is his joying ; sin is in his soul, that is his lamentation : his soul is not in sin, that is his consolation. If you will not sin in your grief, then grieve for your sins. This is the fifth.

VI. Do you bless God most who are most blessed : God is good to all ; but to "Israel he is truly good, even to such as are of a clean heart," Psal. lxxiii. 1. They can never speak enough of God, who have tasted the goodness of God : it is but reason that they should bless most, who are most blest. They who hold the largest farms must pay the greatest rents : differing mercies calleth for differing duties. It is very meet that he should be magnified by us, that makes us meet to be glorified with him. O christians ! if he hath called you out of your marvellous darkness into his marvellous light, you ought to shew forth his marvellous praise, 1 Pet. ii. 9. "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Men should not glory in what they have received, but they should give glory for what they have received ; the glory of God must be the golden butts at which all the arrows of duty are shot : grace in our hearts is like stars in heaven, that shineth not by their own splendour, but by the borrowed

beams from the Sun of Righteousness. "Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," Col. i. 12. As the best of means should make us fruitful, so the best of mercies should make us thankful. Shall a saint find God a master that is bountiful, and shall God find a saint a servant that is undutiful? If he gives us any enjoyment it is but for his own entertainment. He shall never want mercy, that doth not play the wanton with mercy. To bless God for mercies, is the way to increase them; to bless God for miseries, is the way to remove them; no good lives so long as that which is thankfully improved; no evil dies so soon, as that which is patiently endured. O christians! give all your glory unto him, who hath given all his glory unto you; and do as these glorified ones do in glory. "The four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive all glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 10, 11. All you have is derived from God, let all you have be turned to God: the more God's hand is enlarged in the blessing of us, the more our hearts should be enlarged in the blessing of God. O believers! he hath frowned upon others, but he hath smiled upon you; he hath passed by others' doors, and knocked at your doors; he hath made you light, when others are dark; he hath made you live, when others are dead; he hath made you heirs of glory, when others are the children of wrath; he hath made you sons, when

others are slaves ; he hath made you higher than the angels, when others are no better than devils : this hath he done, and more, for you who are believers. Now, have you not great cause to bless God ? Whilst man is a-blessing of God for his mercies, God is a-blessing of man with his mercies. Can you find me out that good that is not given you, or that evil that is not forgiven you ? God deserves more from every christian, than he demands from every christian : where the Sun of mercy shines the hottest, there the fruits of grace should grow fairest. That is the sixth.

VII. Fear not the fear of men. Wicked men must not be feared, though they be ever so mighty, nor followed, though ever so many : " Fear not them that can kill the body," saith our blessed Saviour, " and can do no more," Matt. x. 28. If a righteous cause bringeth us into suffering, a righteous God will bring us out of suffering : if we suffer for well-doing, we do well in suffering. Shall we cease to be professors, because others will not cease to be persecutors ? " if ye suffer for well-doing," saith the scripture, " ye are happy." What ! are ye members of Christ, and yet afraid to be members for him ? What ! are the children of God afraid of the children of the devil ? Are the children of light afraid of the children of darkness ? Are the children of heaven afraid of the children of wrath ? What though you be weak ? your King is strong. What though you be lambs among wolves ? your Captain is the lion of the tribe of Judah. What though you have no power ? Christ hath all power given him both in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. The fear of persecution is more than persecution ; he that loseth

a base life for Christ, shall find a better life in Christ; persecution, though it brings death in one hand, it brings life in the other; though it kills the body, it crowns the soul; it sends the body to the dust, and the spirit to rest. The worst they can do against you, is the best they can do for you; the worst they can do is but to send you out of earth, and the best they can do for you is to send you up to heaven; they take a life from you which you cannot keep, and bestow a life upon you which you cannot lose. If they be blessed who die in the Lord, O how blessed are they that die for him! Do wicked men glory in that which is their shame, and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? It is an honour to be dishonoured for Christ. What is a short happiness, attended with everlasting misery, to a short misery attended with everlasting happiness? O how clear will the Sun of righteousness shine, when these dark clouds are blown over? What if they threaten you with present death, doth not God threaten you with everlasting death? If you be not ruled by him, whose threatening should you fear? Is man more terrible than God? Is death more dreadful than hell? God hath said, "Fear not man: who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the sons of men that shall be made as the grass?" Isa. li. 12. Do you see, christians, God would not have you to be afraid of men: he that is afraid of man is afraid of grass; "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness," Isa. xli. 10. Let but professors do their best,

and let the world do their worst. That is the seventh.

VIII. Cleave thou closest to that truth which is the choicest. (1.) Be thou hearing and doing both, but for doing more: he that doth most shall receive most: christians, the more glory you bring to God, the more glory you shall have from God. O how abundant shall they be in the work of the Lord, that know their labour is not vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58. (2.) Be for knowledge and practice both, but for practice more. Alas! what is it to be a christian no farther than a few good words will go? I tell you, sirs, good words without good works, will never turn to a good account; holy sayings without holy doings will never conduct your souls to a holy place. (3.) Be for gifts and graces both, but for graces more. A heart sanctified is better than a tongue silvered. Grace brings Christ and thy soul together, and unites them together. Without grace there may be a knowledge that is seeming, but without grace there can be no knowledge that is saving. (4.) Be for credit and conscience both, but for conscience more. Where there is a pure conscience, there will be a pure conversation. As no flattery can heal a bad conscience, so no cruelty can hurt a good conscience. (5.) Be good in good times, and in bad too, but in bad more. To be good at all times is a christian's duty, but to be good in bad times is a christian's glory. You cannot tread in the steps of our Saviour, but you will taste of the cup of our Saviour. "Any man," saith the apostle, "that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution." (6.) Be for body and soul both, but for soul more. O how careful are men for their bodies, but how

careless for their souls? They are true to the part which is without, but false to that part within. So they may have but something of the world in their hands, they care not though they have nothing of heaven in their hearts. O christians, our work below is then the best done, when our work above is first done. The greatest happiness of the creature is, not to have the creature for one's happiness. (7.) Be for peace and truth, but for truth more. Oh! christians, love the truth in truth; love the truth of God in truth; justify the truth, and the truth will justify you. Till you can love the naked truth, you will never love to go naked for the truth. Remember that, I pray, christians. (8.) Be for life and Christ both, but for Christ more. Christ is sweeter than wine, better than life: he that came from above is above all: he that hath the key of heaven, can only open the door of heaven. (9.) Be for works and faith too, but for faith more. Faith is a grace that is the most needful, and grace that is the most faithful: a faith that worketh not is a faith that saveth not; nothing will get up to heaven, christians, but that which came down from heaven. (10.) Be for public duties and private too, but for private more. Be much in private duties; if you fall short in any, fall short in public duties, and be most in private: you that have filled the book of God with your sins, shall fill the bottle of God with your tears. (11.) Be for form and power both, but for power more; I say but for power more. Christians, alas! what is form without the power? They give God the cup and knee, and give up themselves to all manner of abominable wickedness. O christians, I say be for power, be sure you look to that, that ye be

for the power of godliness more than the form of godliness. (12.) Seek to please men and God both, but rather God: to be in favour with them who are out of favour with God, to be well spoken of by them who are evil spoken of by God, is rather a reproach than an honour. If there be no fellowship between Christ and you in holiness, there will be no society between him and you in happiness. This is the eighth.

IX. Acquaint yourselves with yourselves. The trial of yourselves is the ready road to the knowledge of yourselves. No man begins to be good till he sees himself to be bad; till you see how foul your faces are, you will never pay tribute to Christ for washing them: he can never truly relish the sweetness of God's mercies, who never tasted the bitterness of his own misery. The bottom of our disease lieth here, that we search not our disease to the bottom. He that trusteth in his heart is a fool, and yet such fools are we that trust our hearts. The conversation may be civilized, when the affections are not sanctified. A man may be acquainted with the grace of truth, who never knew the truth of grace. Therefore examine yourselves, and prove yourselves, 1 Cor. xiii. 5. "whether ye be in the faith or no;" or whether the faith be in you or no; whether your hearts be the cabinet of such a jewel; for want of this many are like travellers skilled in other countries, but ignorant of their own. Many have their evidences of grace to seek, where they should have their evidences of grace to show. O beloved, I beseech you with beseeching, be more in searching of your own hearts; it is of a greater concernment to know the state of your hearts, than to know the state of all your estates. A man may profess like a

saint, pray like a saint, speak like a saint, look like a saint, and yet not be a saint. You cannot always tell what o'clock it is in a man's breast by the dial of his countenance; the humblest look is sometimes linked to the proudest heart. Believers, for the Lord's sake, consider well of these three things. 1. What you were in the state of nature. 2. What you are in the state of grace. 3. What you shall be in the state of glory. Oh! methinks you should think of this, what you were, are, and what you shall be. Conversion be- ginneth in consideration. Grace, as it makes our comforts sweeter, so it makes our crown greater. Beloved, for God's sake, for your souls' sake, acquaint yourselves with yourselves; the readiest way to know whether or not you are in Christ, is to know whether or not Christ be in you; for the fruit is more visible than the root. The tree of righteousness is known by the fruits of righteousness: Matt. vii. 20. "The tree is known by its fruit," said our Lord Jesus Christ; if you would know the heart of your sins, you must then know the sin of your heart. Will you remember that, christians? "For out of the heart," saith our Lord, "proceed evil thoughts, murder, adultery, and fornication, and blasphemy," Matt. xv. 19. Many have passed the rocks of gross sins, that have been east away upon the sands of self-righteousness; if you be found in your righteousness, you will be lost in your righteousness; he that hath no better righteousness than what is of his own providing, shall meet with no bigger happiness than what is of his own deserving. That is the ninth.

X. Do good in the world, with the goods of the world. It is better spending your time in doing good, than in getting goods; for the goods

we get we must leave, but the good we do will never leave us, Rev. xiv. 13. "They shall rest from their labour, and their works follow them." The ambitious man shall leave all his greatness behind him, when the religious man shall carry all his good with him. Dives' charity was very cold, and he found the flames of hell very hot. There is not a drop of water for such Diveses in hell, that have not a crumb of bread for such Lazaruses on earth: Dives denied Lazarus a crumb of bread, and therefore Lazarus must not bring him a drop of water: he that will shew no mercy, shall have no mercy shewed him. Let charity be your shop to trade in, and eternity shall be your bed to rest in: be a father to all in charity, and a servant to all in humility: do much good and make but little noise. Every grace that is more exercised shall be more glorified: the more good ye do for God, the more good ye shall receive from God; as the poor cannot live without your mercy on earth, so without God's mercy you shall not live in heaven. He that gives to the poor saints for Christ's sake, shall be rewarded by Christ for the saints' sake, Matt. xxv. 36—40. "I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed? Or when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee?" And the King shall answer and say unto them, "Verily, I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The more ye disburse for Christ on earth, the

greater sums of glory you shall receive from Christ in heaven. The crop that is sown in mercy, shall be reaped in glory. As we must lay all out in the cause of God, so we must lay down all for the cause of God. That which is cast into Christ's treasure by the way, is not cast away: mercy is so good a servant, that it will never let its master die a beggar; though it make your pockets lighter, yet it will make your crowns greater. O, that God should give the rich so much! and, O, that the rich should give the poor so little! Some say that the barrenest ground is nearest the richest mines; it is too true in a spiritual sense. How many rich men, though their estates be like a fruitful paradise, yet their hearts are like a barren wilderness? They have much of the earth in their hands, but nothing of heaven in their hearts: they are rich in goods, but not in goodness. I wonder that such worldlings do not tremble at these sayings: Matt. xxv. 41—46. "Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was 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. Then shall they answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, and in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. O that men should be so much taken up with their

riches, who must ere long be taken from their riches! As you brought none of your coin into the world with you, so you shall carry none of it out of the world with you: in the world you find it, and in the world you shall leave it, to whom you know not, it may be to them you would not. Did but some rich men know before their death, how their gold and silver should be spent after their death, they would wish it back again at the mines from whence it came. O ye rich men, I say unto you, do good in the world with the goods of the world: it is greater honour to give like a prince, than live like a prince: it is better to have a heart, and not wherewith, than to have wherewith, and not have a heart. "Give, and it shall be given thee;" your charity should seek the poor, before the poor should seek your charity; he that sheweth mercy when it may be best spared, shall receive mercy when it shall be most needed. That is the tenth.

XI. Improve that time which will be yours but for a time; time ere long shall be to you time no longer, Rev. x. 6. Opportunities are for eternity, but opportunities are not to eternity. Christians, remember, that that race is short in which you run, but the prize is great for which you run. As you have not a lease of your lives, so you have not a brace of lives. Had we not need to take heed how we shoot, that have but a single arrow to direct to the mark? No time is ours but what is present, and that is as soon past as present: nature's womb often proves nature's tomb. Oh! consider how much of your time is gone, and yet how little of your work is done. Shall your rest steal away one half of your time, and your lust the other? Oh! what enemies are they to themselves, that of

all their days allow themselves not one? Your work is great and your time is short; you have a God to honour, a Christ to be believed in, and a soul to save; you have a race to run, a crown to win, a hell to escape, and a heaven to make sure: you have many strong corruptions to weaken, and many weak graces to strengthen: you have many temptations to withstand, and many afflictions to bear: you have many mercies to improve, and many duties to perform: therefore endeavour to improve your time. All the time God allows us, is little enough to perform the task which he allots us: therefore, dear christians, redeem the time, Eph. v. 16. "Redeem the time, because the days are evil." If much of your time be past, let no more of your time be waste: how much the longer our time hath been, the shorter our time shall be. O that every step our souls take, might be towards heaven: and that you would make sure of God to-day, because next day you are not sure of yourselves! For the Lord's sake, improve your time; for your soul's sake redeem the time. The lawyer will not lose his term, the waterman will not lose his tide, the tradesman will not lose his exchange time, the husbandman will not lose his season, and will you lose your precious season? If you lose your season, you lose your soul. Know that there is but one heaven, and miss of that, where will you take up your lodging but in hell? There is no fitting up under ground, for those that have lost their time above ground; the great hinderance of well-living, is the expectation of long living: many think of not living any better, till they think of not living any longer. O, how just is it that they should miss of heaven at the last! Now is

the time of grace to accept of you, and now is the time for you to accept of grace. To-day, to-day, to-day, saith God, thrice in one chapter, Heb. iv. 8. To-day, in the 7th verse; to-day, in the 13th verse; to-day, in the 15th verse. Oh! but sinners say, To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow. Alas! sirs, one to-day, is better than two to-morrows: this day is thy living day, to-morrow may be thy dying day; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, put it not off. Now if ever, now for ever, now or never, up and be doing, lest you be for ever undone. This is the eleventh.

XII. Learn humility from Christ's humility: "Learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls," Matt. xi. 9. Humility makes a man like an angel, and for want of it angels were made devils; proud sinners be fit companions for none but proud devils: the most lovely professor is the most lowly professor. A believer is like a vessel in the sea, the more it fills the more it sinks: none live so humble on earth as those that live highest in heaven: do but see how one of the best of saints looks upon himself as one of the least of saints, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints," said the great Paul, Eph. iii. 8. The most holy men be always the most lowly men: where humility is the corner-stone, there piety is the top-stone. It is good to have true thoughts of ourselves. The cloth of humility should always be worn on the back of christianity. God Almighty hath two houses in which he dwells, his city house and his country house; his city house is the heaven of heavens, and his country house is the humble and lowly heart, Isa. lvii. 15. "I dwell in the high and

holy place," that is, in heaven, God's city house ; and with him "that is of a contrite and humble spirit," that is his country house ; humility is a Bethel for God's dwelling-place, pride is a Babel of the devil's building. If you do not keep pride out of your soul, and your soul out of pride, pride will keep your soul out of heaven. I will not say a poor man is never proud, but I will say a proud man is never good. God resisteth the proud, James iv. 16. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." The face of prosperity shineth brightest through the mask of humility : of all garments humility best becomes christians, and best adorns their profession. God will not endure that any man should think well of himself but himself. A christian should look with one eye upon grace, to keep him thankful, and with the other eye upon himself, to keep him mournful. When you begin to grow proud of your glittering feathers, look down upon your black feet, Rev. iv. 10. "The four and twenty elders fell down before the throne, and cast down their crowns before him that sat on the throne." The only way of keeping our crowns on our heads, is the casting them down at his feet. Alas ! sirs, what are ye proud of ? Are ye proud of your riches, of your honours, of your relations, or beauty, or strength, or life ? Alas ! alas ! these are poor low things to glory in : when men glory in their pride, God stains the pride of their glory. O, go to the graves of those that are gone before you, and there see, are not their bones scattered, their eyes wasted, their flesh consumed, their mouth corrupted ? Where now be these ruddy lips, lovely cheeks, fluent tongue, sparkling eyes, comely nose, are they not all gone as a dream ?

and where will you be ere long? And will you be proud of these things? An humble heart knoweth no fountain but God's grace, and an upright man knoweth no end but God's glory. That is the twelfth.

XIII. Be upright christians. The gospel doth not only require that we should be excellent christians, but that we should be diligent christians. The more glorious dispensations you live under, the more gracious conversations you should have. Spiritual actions will make you look fresh in the eyes of spiritual christians. The more you have of God in you, the more you shall have of good with you. The clearer the lamp of grace burns upon earth, the clearer the sun of glory shall shine in heaven: We live by dying to ourselves, and die by living in ourselves. Christians should be burning lamps as well as shining lamps. Should we walk in darkness, whose Father is light? Shall the tongue be found lying continually to fellow-men, that was found praying so earnestly to God? or those be found gazing on sinful objects, that were found reading of sacred oracles? Shall such as have received Christ's press-money, fight under Satan's colours? Beloved, either let your works be according to your profession, or else let your profession be according to your works. Never put on thy fair suit of profession, to do thy foul work of corruption: never put on Christ's livery, and do Satan's drudgery. "Let every one that names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. vii. 21, 22. O, that men's tongues should be larger than their hearts! In words they profess him, but in works

they deny him. Many set a crown of glory on the head of Christ by a good profession, but place a crown of thorns on the head of Christ by an evil conversation. "They feared the Lord, but served their own gods," 2 Kings xvii. 13. Alas! beloved, what good will your profession do you, if you do not make good your profession? It is better never to shine, than not to be gold; either take oil in your lamps, or throw away your lamps: the almost christian shall be but almost saved. Therefore, my brethren, let me beseech you, be altogether christians, be right, upright christians, be sincere christians, be as godly as the godly holy David tells, Psalm xv. 2, 3, 4. Who is the upright man? Who is the right upright man? "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart, he shall dwell in the tabernacle;" and so he goes on. If you would keep yourselves unspotted from the world, you must keep yourselves unspotted in the world. O be not vain in a vain world! The loose walkings of christians are the reproaches of christians. Were Abraham now on earth, who is in heaven, how would the father of the faithful blush to see their actions, that style themselves his offspring? O, there be some men who think themselves too good to go to hell, and God thinks them too bad to go to heaven. Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, Gen. vi. 9.; he was not a sinner among those that were saints: but he was a saint among those that were sinners; he walked with God, when others walked in iniquity; he was a just man like unto God, that there was never another man like unto him. The primitive christians were the best of christians; they knew little, but did much; we know

much, but do little. O sirs! if the service of God be bad, why do you set forth in it? Be altogether christians, or else be not christians. It is good to profess, but it is better to practise; yea, of the two, practice without profession, is better than profession without practice. We must not be offended at the professors of religion, because they are not religious that make a profession. Though there be many professors that are not believers, yet they are no believers but are professors: christians, when you make a good profession, be sure to make your profession good. This is the thirteenth.

XIV. Let it be thy art in duty, to give God thy heart in duty. "My son, give me thy heart," Prov. xxiii. 26. You see God calls for the heart; the heart is that field from which God expects the most plentiful crop of glory: God bears a greater respect to your hearts than he doth to your works: God looks most when men look least: if the heart be for God, then all is for God; our affections, our wills, our desires, our time, our strength, our tears, our alms, our prayers, our estates, our bodies, our souls; for the heart is the fort-royal that commands all the rest: the eye, the ear, the hand, the tongue, the head, the foot; the heart commands all these. Now, if God hath the heart, he hath all: if he hath not the heart, he hath none: the heart of obedience is the obedience of the heart; as the body is at the command of the soul that rules it, so should the soul be at the command of God who gave it. 1 Cor. vi. 20. "Ye are bought with a price," saith the apostle, "therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits." He that is all in all for us, would have that which is all in all in us. The heart is the pre-

ence-chamber, where the King of Glory takes up his lodging: that which is most worthy in us, should be given to him who is most worthy of us. The body is but the cabinet, the soul is the jewel; the body is but the shell, the soul is the kernel. The soul is the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of angels, and the envy of devils. The devil knows if there be any good treasure, it is in our hearts; and he would fain have the key of this cabinet, that he might rob us of our jewel—the devil would fain have the key of our hearts. As we commit our estate into the hands of men, so we should commit ourselves into the hands of God. But alas! man hath no mind to give what God hath a mind to have. "This people draw near to me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me," Matt. xv. 8. Alas! too often have we our hearts to seek, when we come to seek God: you may keep your duty to yourselves, if you do not give your heart to him: a duty that is heartless is a duty that is fruitless: you can never give God the heart of your service, if you do not give him the heart in your service. The heart should be the first that comes into duty, and the last that goes out of duty: good words without the heart, are but flattery, and good works without the heart, are but hypocrisy. Beloved, for your poor soul's sake, let words and works go together, your tongue and hearts go together, your lips and lives go together, your prayer and practice go together; if your duties do not eat out the heart of your sins, your sins will eat out the heart of your duties. A dram of matter is better than a flood of words: a heart without words is better than words without a heart: a little

done with the heart is better than a great deal done without the heart. Nothing takes with the heart of God, but what is done with the heart of man. He that regards the heart without any thing, regards not any thing without the heart. That is the fourteenth.

XV. Be diligent in the means, but make not an idol of the means. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10. It is our present business to make sure our future blessedness. When estates, and honours, and life, and friends, and pleasures cannot be made sure, let this be made sure; for you see, by daily experience, they cannot be made sure, 2 Tim. vi. 19. "Lay up for yourselves a good foundation." See what the apostle saith, "Lay up for yourselves a good foundation." And why? That you may lay hold on eternal life. There is no landing on the shore of felicity, without sailing in the bark of fidelity: Phil. ii. 12. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." Till you attain to firm salvation, you will never be free from great temptation: Luke xiii. 24. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Who would not strive for glory with the greatest diligence, and wait for glory? "Pray without ceasing," 1 Thess. v. 17. Pray continually, though you be not continually at praying; our daily bread calls for daily prayers; every day, begin and end the day with God; let prayer be your first work and your last work every day. O christian, lock up thy heart with prayer, and give God the key. Are you called by the name of Christ, and will you not call upon the name of Christ? Take away spiritual breathings, and you take away spiritual livings. We may pray always, and yet not be always at

prayer: christians can never want a praying time, if they do not want a praying frame. None can pray aright but those that are new creatures; but all ought to pray, because they are creatures. A spiritual man may pray carnally, but a carnal man cannot pray spiritually. Prayer fetched an angel out of heaven to fetch Peter out of prison; he prayed heartily, and speeds happily. The gift of prayer may have praise from men, but it is the grace of prayer that hath power with God. Prayer, never did man rightly make it, but God did quickly grant it. No christian hath so little of Christ, but he hath matter of praising; and no christian hath so much of Christ, but he hath matter of praying. Deny not God faith in prayer, and God will not deny a faithful prayer. But then, in the *second* place, as you must be diligent in the means, so make not an idol of means: take up all duties in point of performanee, and lay them down in point of dependence. What is hearing without Christ, but like a cabinet without a jewel; or receiving without Christ, is like an empty glass without a cordial: duty can never have too much of our diligence, nor too little of our confidence. A believer doth not good works to live, but he lives to do good works. It is a bad thing for us to be something in ourselves, and nothing in Christ; to undertake all our duties, and yet to overlook all our duties; the righteousness of Christ is to be magnified, but the righteousness of christians is not to be mentioned: "When we have done all, then say we are unprofitable servants," Luke xvii. 10. We owe the life of our souls to the death of our Saviour. Duties are not destroyed by Christ, but they must be denied for Christ. We have as much

need of the Spirit to bring up our graces, as we have need of the Spirit to bring forth our graces. The clock of our hearts will stand still, unless he oil the wheels. Rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Good works are so indigent, as none can be saved by them, and yet they are so excellent, as none can be saved without them. Duties, if Christ breathe not in them, a christian grows not under them. We must live in obedience: many live more upon their customs, than they do upon Christ; more upon the prayers they make to God, than upon the God to whom they make their prayers. Duties are but dry pipes in themselves, though never so curiously cut out, till Christ fill them.

XVI. Take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial. Though all gold glitters, yet all that glitters is not gold; all is not truth which goeth for truth, 1 John v. 1. "Try the spirits, believe not every spirit." Mark, sirs, you must not believe every spirit; but try the spirits, whether they be of God or no: 1 Thess. v. 21. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Prove all things, that is, try all things by the scripture. Many hold fast before they try, but we must try before we hold fast. Alas! there are many in the world that are like infants that swallow all down; all that the nurse puts into the poor babe's mouth, it swallows down: truly it is so with many men and women, whatever men say, down it goes; they will not take so much pains as to try the sayings of men by the sayings of God. O, say they, these men we hear be honest men, able and learned men; but would you not tell money after them? Would you not weigh gold after them? I suppose you would: and will you take

doctrines upon trust without trial? Who will buy a jewel in a case, but a fool? Remember, christians, that the whore's cup is gold without, but poison within, Rev. xvii. 4. "She hath a golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness." The cup is of gold, but the poison is the rankest poison; methinks this cup is much cup'd about. The learned men be grown so wise, that they have almost made the world fools, 2 Pet. ii. 1. As there were false prophets among the people, so there must be false teachers also among you. And O, that there were not too many false teachers in those days. To counterfeit the coin of heaven, is treason against the King of heaven: and if this treason deserved hanging, I know who would be hanged next. I have often thought upon Chrysostom's saying, preaching before a company of ministers: "I profess," said he, "I do not know whether any clergymen be saved or no." You will say this is a strange saying of a minister to a company of ministers. Their calling is so weighty, their temptations so many, and their lives so bad: they speak like angels of light, but they act like angels of darkness. O how desirous are men to draw the fairest gloves upon the foulest hands! Men are better known by what they do, than by what they speak; for they say and do not. Therefore, beloved, believe not their flattering words, nor fair speeches, whereby they deceive the hearts of the poor ignorant people: Rev. xvii. 8. Mark the apostle, "By good words and fair speeches," said he, "they deceive the heart of the simple." God may reject those as copper, whom men do adore as silver. It is ill dressing ourselves for another world by the looking-glass of this world. The scriptures do

not only present to us what God will do for man, but also what man must do for God. What is the reason that there are so many scribbling professors in the world, but because they write after such imperfect copies? The generality of persons, they will rather walk in the way they must go, than in the way that they best go. Great men's vices are more imitated than poor men's graces; but know, they who follow after others in sinning, are like to follow after others in suffering: we must not walk in the way that hath been gone, but in the way that must be gone. "Be followers of me," saith Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 1. "as I am of Christ." Where he follows Christ, we must follow him; but if Paul forsake Christ, we must forsake Paul. If we will not have the world to be our leaders, we shall be sure to have them to be our troublers; if they cannot seduce us into an evil way, they will oppose us in a good one; if they cannot scorch us with their fire, they will black us with their smoke; speaking evil of you, because you run not the same way of excess of riot; because you will not do evil with them, therefore they will say evil of you. But sirs, whatever ye do, follow those that follow Christ. O, that they should speak so much of God to others, and act so little for God themselves. Now, beloved, I beseech you, that you take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial: try their ways, try their doctrines, try their sayings, try their worship, by the word of truth; and if it be according to truth, and agreeable to truth, and bottomed on truth, then believe it, then receive it; if not, reject it, and tread it down as dirt under your feet, let it be who it will that brings it: nay, if an angel from heaven come and preach any other doctrine than

what you have received, let him be accursed;" and therefore, once more let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial. It is a vain thing to say this day, when there is nothing but darkness in the sky. That is the sixteenth.

XVII. Take these reproofs best which you need most. Be not angry with them who tell you the truth, nor with the truth that is told you, Gal. iv. 16. "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" He can be no true friend to thee that is a friend to thy sins; and thou canst be no friend to thyself if thou art an enemy to him that tells thee of thy sins. Wilt thou like him the worse that would have thee to do better? Psal. cxxxi. 5. "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil." You see here that the good man is not angry with reproof, but takes it as a kindness, "it shall be a kindness, and as an excellent oil." But the serpent, the more he is stirred, the more he gathers up his poison to spit at you. If Amos declare the word of the Lord, the land is not able to bear all his words, Amos vii. 10. If John the Baptist endeavour to take away the life of Herod's sins, Herod will take away the life of John the Baptist, Matt. xiv. 10. John was beheaded. If the prophet go about to impugn the king's sins, he himself shall be imprisoned, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. "The king was wroth with the prophet, and he put him into prison." Jerusalem will stone the prophets till she hath not left one stone upon another. Oh! that men should be so cruel to those that intend their good! Wicked men cannot endure reproof. You give the physician leave to tell you of any

disease that is in your bodies; you give your lawyer leave to shew you any flaw that is in your estates; you give your horse-keepers leave to tell you the surfeit of your horses; and what! must we only flatter you, and dissemble with you, and cry, Peace, peace, till your souls drop into hell? Oh! we cannot, we will not, we must not. "Speak all these words that I have commanded thee, be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before their faces." Jer. i. 17. Speak to their faces, lest I destroy thee before their faces. This is the sense of the words, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded," 1 Tim. vi. 17. Great men as well as poor must be admonished, though they be greater than the ministers in the world, yet they are not greater than he that sent the ministers into the world. But, my brethren, there is a great deal of discretion to be used in reproving; many check passion but with passion, and anger with anger; and this is to lay one devil and raise another; reproof should not be with passion, but with compassion; not with jeering, but with grieving; not with laughing, but with weeping; "I have told you often, and now I tell you weeping," Phil. iii. 18. The apostle could not make mention of them with dry eyes; his eyes were wet because their eyes were dry. It is the part of a good man to reprove, though his reproof be not taken in good part; it is better to lose the smiles of men than to lose the souls of men. The magistrates look to your peace, the lawyers look to your estate, the physicians look to your bodies, the ministers to your souls. Ministers must draw the sword of reproof against the sons of men, and strike at them, and thrust at them—"Have no

fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph. v. 11. Rather reprove them: we must not suffer wicked men to walk in the devil's ways without reproof, we must reprove you wisely, sincerely, sharply; and when ye mend your lives, we shall mend our language. That is the seventeenth.

XVIII. Labour more for the inward purity, than for the outward felicity. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life," John vi. 27. That man that is a labouring bee for earthly prosperity, will be but an idle drone for heavenly felicity. Gold in your bags will make you greater, but it is grace in your heart that will make you better. He is a rich man that lives upon his wealth, but he is a righteous man that lives upon his faith. A heavenly conversation is better than an earthly possession: it is a great mercy to have a portion in the world, but to have the world for a portion is a great misery. Our affections were made for things that are above us, and not for the things that are without us. Col. iii. 1, 2. "If ye are risen with Christ." Pray mark, what then? "Seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. The things of this life have not the promise of godliness, but godliness hath the promise of the things of this life. Inward piety is the best friend to outward felicity, though outward felicity be many times the worst enemy to inward piety: the ways of iniquity are the ways of beggary. Do you make heaven your throne to serve it, and God will make the earth your footstool to serve you: inward piety is the ready road to outward plenty; 1 Tim. iv. 8.

“Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” O what an excellent jewel is godliness! and who would not part with all for godliness? Who would not account all other things but dung and dirt to gain godliness? But, alas! some men are so in love with their golden bags, that they will ride post to hell if they be paid well for their pains: they look upon gain as the highest godliness, and not upon godliness as the highest gain: they mind the world that is come so much, as if it would never have an ending; and the world to come so little, as if it would never have a beginning. Any good will serve the turn of those who know not the chief good: the things of this world are all the happiness of the men of this world; Job xxi. 15. “What is the Almighty that we should serve him? or what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?” O, what wretched worldlings we are here! O, what pains do men take to cover the flesh from nakedness, when their spirits are not clothed with the robes of righteousness! They are diligent about what is temporal, but negligent about what is spiritual; they are careful about dying vanities, but slothful about durable excellencies; they feast their bodies, but starve their souls; they lay up treasures on earth, but none in heaven. O! why do you spend your money? I say, Why, O beloved, why do you spend your money for that which is not bread? and why do ye labour for that which satisfieth not? Read the text, Isa. lv. 2. Riches have made good men worse, but they never made any bad man better: usually the poorest on earth are the richest in heaven. If riches would free from hell, O then how few rich men would be damned. He that knocks at the creature's

Love will find but an empty house kept there. O beloved, what is darkness to light—what is gold to grace—what is earth to heaven—that you thus neglect the great things, the weighty things, the only things, and busy yourselves about toys and trifles, when you have a crown to look after, a heaven to look after, a kingdom to look after? I beseech you, beloved, labour more for inward holiness, than for outward happiness: more for the seed of grace, than for the bag of gold; more for inward piety, than for outward piety; more for an heavenly conversation, than for an earthly possession: the earth is for a saint's passage, but heaven is for a saint's portion. Oh, believer, whilst thou livest, thou wilt find godliness gainful, and when thou diest, thou wilt find godliness needful. That is the eighteenth.

XIX. Live in love, and live in truth. 1 John iii. 18. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth." That love is love in deed and in truth. Let your love, christians, be sincere, and not selfish. Gal. v. 14. "Love thy neighbour as thyself." How dost thou love thyself? How dearly dost thou love thyself? Why, so you must love your neighbour; "Love thy neighbour as thyself." He that is not wanting in this duty, is wanting in no duty. It is called an old commandment, and a new commandment: 1 John ii. 7, 8. Love is there called, "an old commandment, and a new." It is as old as the law of Moses, and yet as new as the gospel of Jesus Christ. A carnal man may love his friend, but a christian man that loves his enemy. He loved us when we were enemies, commands to love our enemies. Matt. v. 44. "Love ur enemies," said our Lord, "bless them that

curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." A christian should wish well to them who wish ill to him. O believers, let me beseech you, let me beg of you for your precious souls' sake, to live in love, and to live in truth. Ye are fellow-labourers, fellow-members, fellow-citizens, fellow-travellers, fellow-sufferers, fellow-heirs, fellow-servants; and will you not love one another? Remember, christians, he that would not be his brother's keeper, would be his brother's butcher, Gen. iv. 8. We have all the same Father, God; the same head, Christ; the same guide, the Spirit; the same attendants, the angels; the same grace, faith; the same title, son; the same clothing, Christ's righteousness; the same glory, heaven. And shall not we be dear to one another? He that loves himself, will not hate his brother; for whilst thou art out of charity with thy brother, God is out of charity with thee; and thou lovest more for want of God's love, than thy brother loses for want of thy love, Heb. xiii. 1. "Let brotherly love continue." Dost thou love the person of Christ, and hate the picture of Christ? O sirs, remember the God of love hath commanded us to love one another. Beloved, it is a sad thing, and truly so sad, that it may make our very hearts bleed within us, to think of the Lamb's little party, Rev. xiv. 1, 2. who are in strength the weakest, in riches the poorest, in number the fewest; and shall they be in love the coldest, in judgment the most divided? Is not this sad now, that the little ones of Jesus Christ, that the lambs of Jesus Christ, should love one another no better? O christians, either lay your malice aside, or else God will lay you aside, as he hath done to

too many of us at this day, to our great sorrow; while you are with God, he is with you; and if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you. Never man was forsaken of God, till God was forsaken of man; he sticks close to us while we stick close to him, but if we forsake him, he will forsake us. He that will be angry and sin not, must not be angry but with sin. Therefore, dear christians, let me beseech you to love one another. O that I could but speak out how much I desire the love of one another! O, it will be a happy day, when all the people of God are knit together in love, in union, and affections! O sirs, if God had desired or commanded some great thing of us, some burthensome thing of us, it might have been excused; but alas! it is no more but to love our brethren; and shall we deny this? But you may say, How should we believers love one another? I answer, (1.) You should highly esteem one another, as pearls in comparison of other men; so doth God. God calls his people his jewels, his treasures, his glory, his portion; when he calls wicked men dogs, vipers, swine, briars, and thorns. You should be very high in one another's affections. (2.) You should delight in the company of one another, in the society of one another. God delights in the society of saints, so should you. (3.) You should be ready to help one another, and to do good for one another, and communicate one to another. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive." (4.) Admonish one another, exhort one another, provoke one another to love, and to do good works. (5.) Sympathize one with

another; fellow-members should be fellow-feelers: so did Moses, and Jeremiah, and old Eli his heart was broken before his neck was broken. Dear christians, let me beseech you, let me beg of you to love one another: he calls us to love, who is love itself. This is the nineteenth.

XX. Set out for God at your beginning, and hold out with God until your ending. As there are none too old for eternity, so there are none too young for mortality. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1. We are born to serve God; and better we had never been born than not serve him. Man is beholden to God for what he hath, but God is not beholden to man for what he doth: it is a greater glory to us that we serve God, than it is to God that we serve him; it is not he that is made happy by us, but we are made happy by him: he needs not such servants as we are on earth, but we need such a Master as he is in heaven: he will be everlastingly blessed without us, but we will be everlastingly cursed without him. "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen," Rom. xi. 36. It is sad, my beloved, it is sad, that we should live so long in the world, and do so little good; or that we should live so little in the world, and do so much evil. O, you must not think to dance with the devil all day, and sup with Christ at night, to go from Delilah's lap to Abraham's bosom. If salvation were easy to come by, it would be slightly set by. There is no obtaining of what is promised, but by fulfilling what is commanded. Neglect not the race of holiness: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which none shall see God," Heb. xii. 14. Beloved, there are many

young people in the world, who are very wicked in the world; they walk in darkness, and do the works of darkness; they are young in years, but old in sin; they are very vain in a vain world; they sin with delight, and make sin their delight. I beseech you look in Eccl. xi. 9. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee, and walk in the ways of thine own heart." O this is brave indeed, if it would always last; but after the flash of lightning, comes the clap of thunder; mark what follows, "But know for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." Do you but see here, sirs. O, were it not for this *but*, how brave were it for wicked men! But for all these things God will bring thee into judgment: for all thy wantonness, and for all thy pride, and for all thy profaneness and prodigality, thou shalt be brought to judgment: after all your present receiving, you must be brought to your future reckoning. O therefore, let nothing be done in this world, which cannot be answered in another world. Let me beseech you who are young men and young women, to remember your Creator in the days of your youth; to serve God, to love God, to honour God, to obey God in your youthful days. The flower of life is Christ's setting, and shall it be of the devil's plucking? Will you hang the most sparkling jewel of your youth in the devil's ears? O, it is hard casting off the devil's yokes, when we have worn them so long about our necks: O young people, if you be sick of the *will not*, old age will die of the *cannot*; if God's to-day be too soon for thy repentance, thy to-morrow will be too late for thy acceptance. You can never come too soon to God, nor stay too long with God: he shall be happy in the end, who is holy

to the end, "Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. O hold on and hold out to the end: he that draws back from profession, shall be kept back from salvation: he that departs in the faith shall be saved; but he that departs from the faith shall be damned: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him," Heb. x. 38. "Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; seeing ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58. So I say to you all, young and old people, "Be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." If he gives that grace that is not due to us, shall we deny that glory that is due to him? If he make our natures gracious, we should make his name glorious. Oh! be still with God, as was David, Psalm cxxxix. 18. "When I awake, I am still with thee." David was least alone when he was most alone: there cannot be a better thing for us, than for us to be with God. This is the last.

A CABINET OF JEWELS;

OR,

A GLIMPSE OF SION'S GLORY.

I. Loathe sin, and leave sin. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13. "If we confess our sins,

he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John i. 9. There must be a falling out with our sins, before there be a falling off from our sins; there must be a loathing of sin in our affections. O, is it not a thousand times better to part with sin, though never so sweet, than to part with God, and Christ, and heaven? One of them you must do. One sin will damn a soul out of Christ, but no sin can damn a soul in Christ; sin is the evil of evils: it is worse than the devil; for it was that that made the devil to be a devil. Oh! the love of sin, and the lack of grace, will ruin and destroy our souls for ever. It is better not to be, than to be a sinner; better to be no people, than not to be the Lord's people. Oh! therefore kill sin, that sin may not kill you. Mourn for sin, and flee from sin. Do not commit new sins, but repent for old sins, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. "Ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities." Oh, poor soul! hast thou not served the flesh and the devil long enough? Yea, hast thou not had enough of sin? Is it so good to thee, or is it profitable for thee? Oh, what a place will ye be shortly in of joy or torment! Oh, what a sight will ye shortly see in heaven or hell! Oh, what thoughts will shortly fill your hearts with unspeakable delight or horror! What work will you be employed in, to praise the Lord with saints and angels, or to cry out in unquenchable fire with devils? Oh! therefore die unto sin, confess it, mourn for it, and be ashamed of it; hate and loathe it, and flee from it as from a serpent; and though your sins are more than ye can number, yet they are not more than God can pardon.

II. Put off the old man, and put on the new

man. "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him," Col. iii. 9, 10. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. iv. 24. "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," Gal. vi. 15. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby," 1 Peter ii. 2. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. A new understanding, a new will, new desires, new love, new delights, new thoughts, new words, new company, and a new conversation. He is not what he was before. Oh! dear friends, be new creatures, that you may be glorious creatures. We can call nothing in heaven ours, till Christ be ours; without regeneration there is no salvation: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," John iii. 3. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." You have heard much of God, Christ, and heaven, with your ears, but this will not bring you to heaven, unless you have much of God, Christ, and heaven in your hearts: you must be able to say, I was once a slave, but now a son; once I was dead, but now I am alive; once I was darkness, but now I am light in the Lord; once I was a child of wrath, an heir of hell, but now I am an heir of heaven; once I was under the spirit of bondage, but now I am under the spirit of adop-

tion. A true believer lives in the Lord, 1 Thes. i. 1.; on the Lord, Rom. i. 17. Luke xx. 8.; from the Lord, John vi. 57.; to the Lord, Rom. xiv. 8.; with the Lord, 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

III. Make your peace with the Prince of Peace, Isa. ix. 6. Psalm. ii. 12. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." O do not lift up your hands against the Son! but kiss the Son. Let his will be your rule; his Spirit your guide; his precepts your practices; his decrees your delights; his chosen ones your choicest companions. Submit to his gospel and government. O sirs! make your peace with God. There is a fourfold peace. *First*, There is a peace external; that is, peace with men. *Secondly*, There is a peace supernal; that is, peace with God. *Thirdly*, There is a peace internal; that is, a peace with conscience. *Fourthly*, There is a peace eternal; and that is peace in heaven, Psalm xxxvii. 37. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." If you have peace with God, the world and the devil cannot hurt you. "And upon the glory shall be a defence," Isa. iv. 5. Believers have God for their guide and gain: he that meddles with the saints of God, assaults God himself. Zech. ii. 8. "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." He that lifts up his hand against them, lifts up his hand against God: though they have many enemies, yet they have one friend that hath more strength than all their enemies. A ragged saint is dearer to God, than a glittering emperor that wants grace. O make your peace with the Prince of Peace! that in this life you

may have the assurance of eternal life, and that eternal death may not be your portion in the other life.

IV. Make religion your main business, and not a bye-business. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall," 2 Pet. i. 10. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33. O, why is the glory of this world so much regarded! but because the glory of heaven is so little minded. O what is an earthly kingdom, in comparison of the heavenly kingdom! The angels themselves, though they are glorious spirits, yet they are ministering spirits. Do not most men of the world make light of God, and of Christ, and the Spirit, and heaven, and their precious souls? "And he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come. Again he sent forth other servants, saying, tell them that are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner; my oxen, and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready, come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise," Matt. xxii. 3, 4, 5. Wretched worldlings make religion a bye-business; they will hear, read, and pray, when they have nothing else to do. O that such men did but know what everlasting glory and everlasting torments are! would they then do as they do? O that they did but know the worth of their souls, and the want of a Saviour; the shortness of their time, and the greatness of their work,

would they then neglect God and their own souls as they do? O friends! let me beseech you to whom I write, to make religion your main business, hearing, reading, praying, believing, and doing, your main business. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you: for him hath God the Father sealed," John vi. 27.

V. Do nothing in this world but what you can answer for in another world. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel," Rom. ii. 16. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," Acts xvii. 31. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," Eccl. xii. 14. O for the Lord's sake, my dear brethren, let nothing be done by you in this world, but what may be answered for in another world. Many men do that in this world which they cannot answer for in another world: now they condemn God, blaspheme God, rebel against God, go a-whoring from God, and persecute the beloved of God. Instead of protecting the saints, imprison the saints, and are more for crushing them than comforting them; instead of visiting them, vilify them; and instead of affecting them, afflict them, "and eat them up as they eat bread," Psal. xiv. 4., and will not suffer them to worship the true God, in spirit and in truth,

but mock them, Heb. xi. 36. ; threaten them, Acts iv. 29. ; accuse them, Acts xxiv. 5. ; slander them, Matt. v. 11. ; curse them, Matt. v. 44. ; beat them, Acts v. 40. ; imprison them, Acts iv. 3. ; plunder them, Heb. x. 34. ; banish them, Heb. xi. and murder them, Rom. viii. 36. All this the poor innocent suffer, whilst swearing, cursing, whoring, robbing, blasphemy, drunkenness, and gluttony, and all manner of debauchery, yes, murder itself, walks unpunished on the streets, and only he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. What wonder then, if such as those shall one day hide themselves in dens and holes, and "cry to the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb?" Rev. vi. 15, 16. O what will persecutors do, when Jesus Christ will appear in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not his gospel?" 2 Thess. i. 8. Will not they be dumb and speechless, and have never a word to say for themselves; as that man that had not on the wedding garment? Matt. xxii. 12. But, O beloved, "Let that grace that hath appeared unto all men, teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Tit. ii. 12. Following the Lamb, resisting Satan, shunning sin, and separating from the world.

VI. Make the word of God your rule, and the Spirit of God your guide. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. viii. 20. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth

into a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts," 2 Pet. i. 19. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 16. "Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come," John xvi. 13. The scripture is a rule before us to shew us where we must go; the Spirit is a word behind us, to enable us to go according to the direction of the word; the word of God is a compass, by which we must direct our course; the Spirit is the great pilot that steers us in this course; we have no eyes to see the word, till the Spirit enlighten them; we have no ears to hear the word, till the Spirit open them; we have no hearts to obey the word, till the Spirit bow and incline them. By the word of God we know the mind of the Spirit; and by the efficacy of the Spirit we feel the efficacy of the word: the word of God shews us the way; and the Spirit of God leads us in that way which the word points out. The Spirit of God is able to expound the word of God, and to make it plain to our understanding. The Holy Ghost is the church's interpreter: he gives the scriptures, and he can reveal unto us the sense and meaning of the scriptures: the word is God's counsellor, to discover the path in which we are to walk; the Spirit is the counsel of God, that teacheth us to walk in that path; the word is a crystal glass, which shews us our duty: if God had not put his Spirit into our hearts, as well as his word into our mouths, we should never have

arrived at the fair haven of peace. Augustine calls the scriptures, 'The Epistle of God to the creatures, by which we understand the very heart of God. God Almighty hath, in the sacred scriptures, as it were, unbowelled himself, unfolded all his counsel to the creatures, as far as is necessary to be known for their direction and guidance to everlasting life. There be many that walk by false rules: some by opinions: some by customs: some by providence: some by conscience: some by their own reason: some by men's examples: some by their lusts. But, O, my dear friends, let me beseech you to walk by none of these false rules, but keep close to the word and Spirit of God.

VII. Be faithful and fruitful. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as ye know your labour is not in vain," 1 Cor. xv. 58. "Every tree that beareth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Christians must be fruitful, and not slothful: see that ye bring forth good fruit, and much fruit. *First*, Sincerity, which is not a single grace, but the soul of graces. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts," Ps. li. 6. *Secondly*, Humility is a grace most prevailing with God, for the obtaining of all graces. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls," Matt. xi. 29. *Thirdly*, Prudence, the patient christian is the best for waiting, but the prudent christian is the best for working. "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," Matt. x. 16. We must have innocency with our wisdom, else our wisdom is but craftiness; and we must have wis-

dom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weakness. We must have the harmlessness of doves, that we may not wrong others; and must have the prudence of the serpent, that others may not abuse and circumvene us; not to wrong the truth by silence, here is the innocency of doves: not to betray ourselves by rashness, here is the wisdom of the serpent. *Fourthly*, Patience, "here is the patience of the saints," Rev. xiii. 10. and xiv. 12. The way to bring the world under us, is to be patient under its frowns. *Fifthly*, Self-denial, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," Matt. xvi. 24. Be faithful in your promises, and in your purposes: be faithful to the ways of God, and cause of God. Oh! do not begin with the Lamb, and end with the beast: "But be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. Keep your lights burning, and lamps shining, your loins girded, your consciences awakened, your garments unstained, and your spiritual armour constantly on, and closely girt.

VIII. Have a care of reporting and believing the world's report of the people of God. Those that have a good conscience, have not always a good name. The people of God in this life are called by the wicked, The troublers of Israel, seditious, rebellious, and what not; an old device of that old serpent to pursue the troubles of Israel upon Elijah, the chariot of Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 12. Jeremiah for speaking against their sins and wickedness, and denouncing God's judgments against them, is judged worthy of death, Jer. xxvi. 8, 9. So Jer. xxxviii. 4. the wicked nobles petition the king

to murder him, under pretence that he sought not the good of the people, but their hurt. So Amos, for speaking against the abominations of the king's court, is charged with treason against the king's person; Amos vii. 10, 13. So Paul and Silas, for preaching up the kingly power of Jesus Christ, are accused by the envious Jews, and rude multitude, as turning the world upside down, and breaking the decrees of Cæsar; yea, Christ himself had this laid to his charge. Mark what the Jews say of him, "And they began to accuse him, saying, We have found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King," Luke xxiii. 2. Matt. xvii. 24. And for this have the servants of God in all ages been accused and persecuted, killed and stoned. Matt. xxiii. 37. Acts vii. 52. Now, if they did so to the green tree, no wonder if they do it to the dry: if the Lord and Master was called an enemy to Cæsar, no wonder if those of his household be called so. Our integrity will not secure us from infamy: the choicest of professors have had the black marks in the world's calendar. It is usual for those who live in treason and rebellion against the King of heaven, to slander his servants with treason and rebellion against the kings of the earth. But, my dear brethren, take heed of this; for as the death of the saints is precious, so the names of the saints are precious in God's account. The world will father a hundred lies upon the Lord's people: "Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake," Matt. v. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 14. Wicked men hate them most that God loves most: but God will roll away the reproaches of his people:

he will cause their innocency and righteousness to break forth as the sun at noon-day, and their names shall be in everlasting remembrance. Yea, at that great day, God will clear their innocency before men and angels, and all the world.

IX. Keep in with God; now men are out with you. "But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works," Ps. lxxiii. 28. "He that dwelleth under the shadow of the Most High, no plague shall come nigh him.—He shall give his angels charge over thee," Ps. xci. 10, 11. "Though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine: though the labour of the olive should fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and the herd from the stall, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will triumph in the God of my salvation," Hab. iii. 17, 18. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous runneth into it, and are safe." James iv. 8. "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." This is a great comfort to the people of God, though they be as lilies among thorns, and as sheep among wolves, that they have a God to go to. "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast," Isa. xxvi. 20. Let the world frown, and friends forsake you, God can sweeten all your enjoyments: keep in God's ways, and you will be sure of God's protection: do you keep God's precepts, and God will keep your persons; do what God commands, and avoid what God forbids, and then you need not fear what man can do unto you. If you would

have God to take care of you, you must cast your care upon God; wait on him, and walk with him, obey his precepts, and believe his promises. O beloved! let wicked men fall out with us, and hate us, and reproach us, as much as they will, they cannot hurt us, if we keep in with God: therefore, my beloved, above all things get communion with God; and keep communion with God; communion with God will yield you two heavens, a heaven upon earth, and a heaven after death. All saints shall enjoy a heaven when they leave the earth; some saints enjoy a heaven while they are on the earth. He enjoys nothing that wants communion with God.

X. Live above the love of life, and the fear of death. "For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it," Matt. xvi. 25. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciples," Luke xiv. 26. He that loves Christ more than his life, will be sure to save and keep both; he that goes out of God's way to avoid dangers, shall certainly meet with danger. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. My dear friends, let us live above sufferings and fears, though we cannot live without sufferings. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. He that loveth Christ above life, will let life go rather than Christ. Consider, my beloved, Christ, and the cloud of witnesses, and martyrs that are gone before, and passed over through all these floods, and safely arrived to

shore, are now in heaven with God, and Christ, and holy angels, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore," Ps. xvi. 11. Oh! the joy that they enjoy! Oh! the rivers of consolation that flow from God! "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters, and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 15—17. Who are they that shall have all this honour, and glory, and joy, and blessedness in heaven? For this, see verse 14. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The sweetness of the crown which believers shall receive, will make them amends for the bitterness of the cross which they have carried.

XI. Desire better hearts more than better times. "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Jer. iv. 14. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," Matt. xv. 19. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" Jer. xvii. 9. O beloved, instead of reforming, we are complaining of wicked men; and of the wickedness of their cruelty, more than of our

apostacy ; of their injuries against us, more than our injuries against God. We pore too much upon second causes, or complain of instruments, not of ourselves. We have been a long time in sinning, and we had need be a long time in repenting ; the times had not been so bad, had we not been so bad ; the times would soon be better, if we were but better. Alas ! beloved, we have sinned such sins as unrighteous men could not sin ; against the clearest light, and dearest love : the better God hath been to us, the worse we have been to him ; he hath loaded us with his mercies, and we have wearied him with our sins. Oh ! let us blame ourselves more, and the times less, let us turn unto the Lord, that he may turn unto us in love and mercy : let our hearts go out to him, that his heart may come unto us. O ! beg and cry for better hearts, that you may serve God better ; for broken hearts, for sincere hearts, for it is that God looks at, and calls for. Prov. xxiii. 26. " My son, give me thy heart." Our hearts are always out of tune to serve God, but never out of tune to serve sin : for if we had never so good times, and not good hearts, it would rather hurt us than bless us.

XII. Grow downward in humility, and inward in sincerity. " Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," Eph. iii. 8. " Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased ; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted," Matt. xxiii. 12. " Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering," Col. iii. 12. " Be clothed with humility : for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to

the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time," 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. Bring up your will to God, that he may bring down his will to you: be low in your own eyes, and keep a low esteem of yourselves; abhor pride, and flee from it: be inwardly sincere, as well as outwardly humble: do not look heaven-ward by your profession, and hell-ward by your conversation. "He that lives in sin, is dead in sin," Eph. ii. 1. "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Eph. vi. 24. Let your hearts be upright with God, and walk as those that have God for their portion: knowing there are many eyes upon you, the eye of God, the eye of Christ, the eye of angels, the eye of saints, the eye of the world, and the devil's eye upon you too, therefore walk wisely and sincerely; be like the king's daughter, all glorious within, Ps. xlv. 13. "She is all glorious within," though within is not all her glory, "her clothing is wrought of gold." Do you think yourselves good, because others think so? Alas! the best men's confidence of us are poor evidences of heaven: the best testimony is that within us, and above us. See therefore that ye grow in grace, and delight in holiness, bring forth much fruit, and live still as before the living God. Take heed of hypocrisy and apostasy; make it your daily business to walk with God: be much in the exercise of humility; humility will exceedingly adorn your profession. Do not place religion in a few good words, when the substance is neglected; but live as ye would die; live to-day as if ye were to die to-morrow.

XIII. Do good to those that be good. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and

what doth the Lord require of thee, but to love mercy, and to do justly, and walk humbly with thy God?" Mic. vi. 8. "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," 1 Tim. vi. 18. "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," Heb. xiii. 16. "Pure religion and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions," James i. 27. Forget not to contribute to the necessities of the poor saints; think, that God hath given you your estates for such a time as this. Oh! beloved, what an opportunity have you now to do good, if Satan do not hinder you? Are there not many of Christ's ministers now in want, and members in want? some in prison, and some out of prison? "Remember these that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them that suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body," Heb. xiii. 3. There be many men that have a great deal of this world's wealth, and riches, and goods in their hands, and in their houses, but have no grace in their hearts; and therefore they do not good with the goods of this world: they live so unfaithful, that their lives are scarce worth a prayer, and their deaths scarce worth a tear. Many may as well go to hell for not doing good, as for doing evil. He that bears not good fruit, is as well fuel for hell as he that bears bad. You may not be outwardly bad, and yet not inwardly good: you may be as far from grace as from vice: men are not so much sent to hell for doing evil, as for not doing good: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink," Matt. xxv. 42. The rich glutton was in hell's

torments, not for persecuting Lazarus. Meroz was cursed by an angel, not because they fought against the Lord, but because they came not to help the Lord against the mighty, *Judg. v. 23*. It is one of the greatest mercies in the world, for God to give a man a heart to do good with that he hath given him. O! beloved, be always doing good, and hating evil; look not only where you may get good, but where you may do good; labour to be helpful to the souls of others, and supply the wants of others.

XIV. Choose chastisement before defilement. "Moses, when he was come to years, 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," *Heb. xi. 24, 25*. "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods; knowing in yourselves, that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance," *Heb. x. 34*. So the three children chose burning in the fiery furnace, before bowing to the golden image. *Dan. iii. 16—18*. "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace: and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king: but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." So Daniel chose suffering before sinning. And it is said of those in *Heb. xi. 35*. "They accepted not of deliverance, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Oh! beloved, there is more evil in the least sin against Christ, than in the greatest suffering for Christ.

1. Our sufferings for Christ are but light, 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2. But short—for a moment. 3. Christ stands by us in our sufferings. 4. Our sufferings are ordered by the Father. 5. Our sufferings shall not hurt our souls. 6. God gives us the best of comforts in the worst of times: we have most of consolation from God, when we have most of tribulation from men: as our sufferings do abound, so our consolations do abound: when the burden is heaviest upon the back, then the peace of conscience is sweetest and greatest within. Therefore, my dear brethren, keep yourselves out of the puddle of this world, and from the evil of this world, and if you must sin or suffer, choose suffering before sinning.

XV. Think not the worse of godliness because it is frowned upon; nor the better of ungodliness because it is smiled upon. "For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ," Phil. iii. 8. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: but rather reprove them," Eph. v. 11. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 23. O friends, think not the worse of holiness because it is reproached, and scorned, and persecuted by wicked men and devils; nor the better of wickedness, because wicked men love it, and follow it, and say, "It is vain to serve God; and what pro-

fit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" Mal. iii. 14. But there is a time coming, when ungodly men would be glad of some of that holiness that they now despise; but they shall be as far from obtaining it, as they are now from desiring it. Let us therefore love holiness and hate wickedness; "for without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. Holiness is the only way to happiness. We must not dress ourselves for another world by the looking-glass of this world. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil," Exod. xxiii. 2. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction; whose god is their belly, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things," Phil. iii. 18, 19. The children of God must be harmless in their actings, and blameless in their walkings.

XVI. Prize the word of God by the worth of it, that you may never come to prize the word of God by the want of it. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth," Ps. cxix. 103. "It is sweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb," Ps. xix. 10. "O, how do I love thy law!" Ps. cxix. 97. "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver," ver. 72. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby," 1 Pet. ii. 2. "Let the word of God dwell richly in you;" not only with you, but in you, Col. iii. 16. Oh! let us, with Job, esteem the word of God above our necessary food, Job xxiii. 12; and with

David, above our gold and silver. The delight of a saint in God's word, overtops all his creature delight: wicked men can delight in the creatures of God, but not in the word of God: they can delight in the gift of God, but not in the God of gifts. Oh! let us love the word, let us prize the word: it is the sun of the christian world, as the sun is the light of the natural world; and without it the world is but a chaos, and a dungeon full of darkness; so is the word of God the light of the spiritual world, without which a christian is in eternal night. Take away the scriptures, and there will be no certain rule to direct men what is to be done, or what is to be believed. All false ways are here discovered, all sins are here forbidden, all holiness is here commanded: here you may see every action and motion of our lives, as a step to life, or a step to death; and as a step heaven-ward. O therefore, prize and obey the word. 1. It is a plain word. 2. It is an uniform word. 3. It is a sure word. 4. It is a powerful word. It is the savour of life unto life, unto them that believe. O beloved! let us read the word, and abide in the word: "If ye continue in the word, then are ye my disciples," John viii. 31. The less now you hear, the more do you read, the little book of the Revelation, and Daniel especially.

XVII. Have a care of the whore of Babylon's golden cup, and sweet wine. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and preciousstones, and pearls; having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her abominations," Rev. xvii. 4. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth waters as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood,"

Rev. xii. 15. Let me beseech you to have a care of this, and keep yourselves from this: be like the virgin spouse of Christ, who followeth him wheresoever he goeth. My dear friends, keep yourselves from four things:—(1.) From false teachers. The devil hath his ministers as well as Christ. "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. vii. 15. Yea, they are greedy dogs, they can never have enough; and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter," Isa. lvi. 11. Oh! false teachers do not feed the flock, but fleece the flock; they do not convert, but pervert; they do not season, but poison; they do not edify for salvation, but edify for damnation: instead of curing souls, they kill souls; so they have but the people's goods, they care not though the devil have their souls; they are neither rightly called, nor rightly qualified, nor rightly ordained: "Their course is evil, and therefore it is not right," Jer. xiii. 10. They are dogs and wolves combining together to massacre the flock of Christ. O therefore, keep yourselves from Babylon's merchants, that make merchandise of the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13. Oh! the sins of teachers are the teachers of sin. (2.) From false doctrine. "But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you; who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction," 2 Pet. ii. 1. "Be not carried away with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not

profited them that have been occupied therein," Heb. xiii. 9. I beseech you also in the Lord, my brethren, that you do not carnally comply with, nor superstitiously conform to, the inventions of men: but "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free," Gal. v. 1.

(3.) From false worship. "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 wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into 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. xiv. 9, 10. "Ye worship ye know not what. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 22, 24. As there be some in the world that worship a false god, so there be others that worship the true God with false worship. "They that worship the beast worship the devil," Rev. xiii. Oh! meddle not with false worship, with vain worship, and will-worship: worship God as he teacheth us to worship him. Our work is to depend on Christ's work; our outward working is to depend on God's inward working.

(4.) From false opinions; from error and sedition. Let your hearts be upright, your judgments sound, and your lives holy. Love the truth, and obey the truth, and hold fast the truth. Now, beloved, let me beseech you for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, and for your soul's sake, keep yourselves from false teachers, from false doctrine, from false worship, from false opinions. If you will be tasting and supping at Babylon's cup, you must resolve to receive more or less of Babylon's plagues.

XVIII. Be one with every one that is one with Christ.—“ Endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all, and through all,” Eph. iv. 3—6. “ Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments,” 1 John v. 1, 2. “ He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” 1 John iv. 20. O consider what a dishonour it is to the gospel, that those that profess themselves sons of the same God, members of the same Christ, temples of the same Spirit, heirs of the same glory, should be jarring one with another: it is strange and unnatural, that they who are saints in profession, should be devils in practice one to another; that God’s diamonds should cut one another! For wolves to devour the lambs is no wonder, but for lambs to devour one another, is a wonder, and monstrous. Oh! that christians, instead of loving one another, should hate one another! O, how unlike are we to that God whom we profess to be our God! He is full of love, full of goodness, and full of mercy and patience. O, but christians cannot bear and forbear one with another. Oh! do not wicked men warm themselves at the sparks of our divisions, and say, it is as we would have it? Oh! beloved, hath not God made his wrath to smoke against us, for the divisions and heart-burnings that hath been amongst us! O, that you would lay this to heart, and throw away discord and divisions, and heart-

burnings, and labour for a oneness in love and affection, with every one that is one with Christ. O labour for a healing spirit. You cannot love God if you do not love the people of God. "If any man saith he loveth God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. Let brotherly love continue," Heb. xiii. 1. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," Mal. iii. 16. Christ's doves flock together. There be many that cannot love a man unless he be of their opinions, or a member of their church, though he be a member of Christ. Every man hath a good opinion of his own opinion; but alas! beloved, it is not this opinion, nor that opinion, nor this way, nor that way, will bring a man to heaven, without faith in Christ: and he that hath faith in Christ hath a right to all the ordinances of Christ, and promises of Christ, and privileges of Christ. Therefore let me beseech you, to love every man that is a godly man, let him be of what way and form he will. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul," Acts iv. 32.

XIX. Love Christ with a love stronger than life, who loved us with a love stronger than death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again," John x. 17, 18. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. Christ's love to us was stronger than death. He died for love; he laid down his life to save our lives: he loves us as the Father loves him, John xv. 9. "As the Father hath

loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." O the scripture hath exceeding high expressions of his affection to us! Now, beloved, he died for us, and suffered for us, and set his heart upon us to love us, and to delight in us; how ought we then to love him again! "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," Matt. xxvii. 37. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee," Psalm lxxiii. 25. "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious," 1 Pet. ii. 7. O let your hearts be full of love and affection to Christ! love will breed courage, and cast out slavish fear before God, and carnal fear before men. God can keep us from the torments of men, but men cannot keep us from the torments of God. Whilst we stand by God, God hath promised to stand by us: therefore be not afraid of any authority that stands in opposition to the authority of Christ: none can promise better than Christ can, none can threaten us worse than Christ can. Can any one threaten us with worse than Christ can? Can any one promise us a better thing than heaven? Can any one threaten us with worse than hell? Heaven is promised to them that love him, and hell is to be the portion of those that hate him. O my dear brethren, let us love him with a love stronger than death! So did Paul and the rest of the apostles. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Rom. viii. 35. "Love is stronger than death, many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it," Cant. viii. 6, 7.

XX. Be every day as serious in your prepar-

ations for death, as if it were your last day. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come," John xiv. 14. "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," Luke xii. 20. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," James iv. 14. "Behold thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee. Verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity," Psal. xxxix. 5. As no saint knows when that time and hour shall be, so no wicked man knows when it shall be. To live without fear of death, is to die living. To labour not to die, is to labour in vain. Men are afraid to die in such and such sins, but not afraid to live in such and such sins. O the hell of horrors and terrors that attends those souls that have their greatest work to do when they come to die! Therefore, as ye would be happy at death, and everlastingly blessed after death, prepare and set yourselves for death. Did Christ die for us, that we might live with him; and shall not we desire to die, and be with him? A believer's dying day is his crowning day. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labour, and their works do follow them," Rev. xiv. 13. I beseech you my brethren, every day spend some time in preparation for, and meditation of death, judgment, hell, heaven, and eternity. Eternity is a sum that can never be numbered, a line that can never be measured; eternity is a condition of everlasting sorrow, or everlasting joy. O think on this, and prepare for this every day, before the night of death comes. And thus, my beloved, I have

given you these twenty precious directions for your souls. I shall leave this book with you as a legacy of my dearest love. My desire in all this is your happiness here, and your blessedness hereafter. My earnest and humble desire of you is, that you would mind this book and my former treatises; not only read them, but form your lives by them. — O do your duty; live in your duty, and love your duty, that you may be made meet to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; which is, and shall be, the earnest and constant prayer of one that esteems it a most glorious privilege to be of the number of those who “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”

FOLLOW THE LAMB.

Rev. xiv. 4.—*These are they which follow the LAMB whithersoever he goeth.*

THE title of this book tells us, it is the Revelation of John; and John tells us, chap. i. 1. “It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ: CHRIST’S Revelation to John, and John’s Revelation to us. The command of this book is set forth in chap. i. 19. “Write these things that are, and the things that shall be hereafter.” And in these two parts this book is divided.

First, A revelation of the things that are referred to the seven churches of Asia.

Secondly, A revelation of the general state of

the church to come, and from John's time unto the second coming of the Lord. The words of this book are the true sayings of the true God: "They are therefore true and faithful," chap. xxii. 6. The matter of this book so much concerns the good of the church, that Jesus Christ commanded every one that hath an ear to hear, to hearken what the Spirit of God saith to the church; and to shew how earnest Christ Jesus is, to have all his members and servants acquainted with the things revealed in this book; this charge he repeats eight times over, as this book shews, chap. ii. 11, 17, 29. and chap. viii. 6, 22. and xiii. 9. A blessing is pronounced upon the reader, hearer, and doer of these things written in this book, chap. xiii. O what can be said more, or more effectually to stir us up to hear and read, than blessedness? "And blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book," chap. xxii. 7. But how shall we keep them except we read them? The excellency of this book is such, as neither man nor angel, none in heaven, nor earth, or under the earth, was found worthy so much as to look into it, till Jesus Christ went and took it out of his Father's hand to open it to us, chap. v. 4. The blessed St. John could not but weep for fear, lest this book should have been kept close from him and the church; so earnest was he to know these things which we neglect to know, chap. v. 4. This book is a most precious jewel which Christ hath bestowed upon his church in the latter days; and it is our great duty to look into it, and read it, and study it, open it, and expound it, that all the people may be acquainted with it; especially in these times. For now in this age is, and shall be, the very heat of the war, and brunt of the battle he-

twixt God and Belial, betwixt Christ and Antichrist, betwixt the Lamb's followers, and the beast's followers. Now this book layeth all open, and plainly tells us what shall be the issue and success in the day of battle, which side shall have the victory, and which side shall go down, chap. xvii. 19. And certainly the sons of Belial shall not prevail; the date of their being is almost out, and their time draweth on apace, wherein both he and their beast shall be laid in the dust. This book sheweth us the rising of the beast, the declining of the beast, and the ruin of the beast, chap. xviii. Our Lord Jesus hath shewed us in this book, the sorrow, and sufferings, and afflictions, and tribulations, which the church was to meet with in the latter times, chap. xi. 7. and chap. xii. 14, 15. and chap. iii. 7. And her deadly and her cruel enemies, the whore of Babylon, the mother of harlots, the beast, the false prophets, and the great red dragon, which maketh war against her, and casteth out floods after her, chap. xii. 16. This book sheweth us likewise the true state of the true church upon earth, and what she is, where she is, how she is, and what she shall be hereafter: and that, before the slaying, under the slaying, and after the slaying.

First, Before the slaying time, the true church is in the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared for her of God, "that they should feed her a thousand two hundred and threescore days," chap. xxii. 2. Before the slaying of the witnesses, the true worshippers of God are in a low condition, in heaviness and sadness, in sackcloth and ashes, in a mourning and suffering state, being scattered and dispersed here and there, as Israel was of old. But though this be the cou-

dition of the poor woman in the wilderness, yet she is not without comfort, she may take comfort in three things. 1. That God prepared a place for her. 2. That God nourisheth her, and locked her up in his chamber of providence. 3. That God numbered her days of suffering. The tribulation of the saints in the Old Testament is reckoned up still by years; as the bondage of Egypt four hundred and thirty years, and the captivity of Babylon seventy years, but under the New Testament, by days, "Ye shall have tribulation ten days," chap. ii. 10. "And the two witnesses shall lie dead three days and an half," chap. xi. 9. So the woman was to be in the wilderness a thousand two hundred and three-score days. The church is compared to a woman for four reasons: (1.) As a woman is weak and feeble, so is the church, and can do nothing without Christ, John xv. 5. (2.) As a woman is useful and fruitful, so is the church, John xv. 2. (3.) As a woman is fair and beautiful, so is the church, Ezek. xvi. 13. (4.) As a woman is full of love and affection, so is the church, Cant. ii. 5.

Second, Under the slaying times, the worshippers of God, and witnesses of Jesus Christ, lay dead on the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, chap. xi. 18. That is, in antichrist's kingdom and dominions. "The woman which thou sawest, is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth," chap. xvii. She is called Sodom, for her filthiness and wickedness; and Egypt, for her cruelty and oppression, chap. xvii. 18. The true servants of God and members of Jesus Christ, that bear witness for him against the evils of the beast, and against the evils of the world, are here

called two witnesses. 1. Because of the fewness of them. 2. Because two is a number sufficient to bear witness, John viii. 17. 3. Because anti-christ's beasts are called two: chap. xiii. 4. They are called witnesses for five reasons. (1.) Because their work is to bear witness for Christ and his truth, against the world, the flesh, and the devil. A true believer is to bear a threefold testimony to, and for Christ: a word-testimony, a life-testimony, and a blood testimony, Heb. xii. John v. 33. (2.) Christ's members are called witnesses, because they stand up for Christ to maintain his name, his honour, his cause, his truth, his worship, his glory, in the world, Dan. iii. 16—18. and chap. vi. "And ye killed the Prince of Life whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses," Acts v. 15. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole," Acts iv. 10. (3.) The Lamb's followers are called witnesses, because they keep the testimony of Jesus Christ: Rev. xii. 16. and vi. 9. A testimony of all the offices, works, and kingdoms of Jesus Christ, as King of saints and King of nations. (4.) God's chosen and precious ones are called witnesses, because they do appear boldly and openly for his truth; they own it, they love it, they publish it, they hold it fast, and suffer for it; who, through the teaching of the Spirit in the word, and by the power of the same Spirit, are found in the practice of Christ's appointment: they cannot deny the truth which is a testimony of it, Acts xxiv. 14. (5.) The true worshippers of God are called witnesses, because they do bear witness against

the beast, and all the whole mystery of iniquity; against the whore of Babylon, who hath committed fornication with the kings of the earth, and made herself drunk with the blood of the saints, Rev. xvii. 6. Christ's faithful witnesses bear an eminent testimony against all the abominations, and filthiness, and wickedness; against the Pope, his government, his clergy, his doctrine, his worship, his religion, and his abominable proceedings, Rev. xix. 7. (6.) Christ's redeemed ones are called witnesses, because in dying they bear witness for him: for to die for the truth is a living standing testimony to the truth. He who for Christ's sake loves not his life unto the death, dies a most glorious witness of Christ, chap. xii. 11. "And they loved not their lives unto the death; and the beast that came out of the bottomless pit made war against them, and overcame them, and killed them," chap. xi. 7. Antichrist riseth in a double beast, in his civil power, and in his ecclesiastical power. In his civil power he makes up one beast with the ten kings, chap. xix. 12. And this is the beast that riseth out of the sea, "which had seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet was like unto the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority," chap. xiii. 2. In the ecclesiastical power he makes up another beast, the clergy; and this is that beast that rose up out of the earth: he hath "two horns like a lamb, and he spake like a dragon," ver. 11. Now these two monstrous beasts, antichrist's magistrates and ministers, slay the faithful witnesses of Jesus

Christ, and rejoice over their dead bones, and make merry, and send gifts one to another, chap. xi. 10. Oh! how do graceless, faithless, and Christless men rejoice at the afflictions and calamities of God's people, saying, Where is now your God, and Christ your King? Psal. xiii. 10. As touching the nature of the witnesses' death, we are not to conceive thereof, as though the same were to be a corporeal killing or slaying, but a civil killing or slaying; not so much their bodies as their testimonies, depriving and stripping them of their liberty, worship, ordinances, religion, and the free exercise of their gifts; suffering not a servant of Jesus Christ to bear a testimony against the abominations of the beast, nor against her national wickedness; but make laws against them, and lie in wait for them, stopping their mouths, and imprisoning their bodies, beating and hunting them up and down, afflicting and tormenting them, and taking possession of their possessions, killing and slaying them all the day long, and accounting them as sheep for the slaughter, Rom. viii. 36. This is to be broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, Psal. xlv. 19. This is to be killed all the day long; and upon this account the witnesses are said to be slain. "And after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that saw them," chap. xi. 14. And they had a spirit of boldness and courage, zeal and undauntedness, and resolution to appear for Christ and his cause, against antichrist and the whole brood. "Therefore rejoice all ye saints, and be glad all ye upright in heart; though the witnesses be dead, they will not be always dead, but rise again."

Third, After the slaying time, the church is with the Lamb on Mount Sion; chap. xiv. 1. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written on their forehead;" which notes a fixed state. "Those which trust on the Lord shall be as mount Sion, which cannot be moved," Ps. cxxv. 1. Before the slaying time, the church is very low; but under the slaying time lower: but after the slaying time the church is very high; she is rejoicing and shining, and triumphing on mount Sion. "And they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and elders, and no man could learn that song, but the hundred forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." The true church having gotten the glorious presence of the Lamb, and the Lamb in the midst of her; and having gotten the victory over the beast, they rejoice mightily. "And I heard a voice of harpers harping with their harps." But this was not till after the resurrection of the witnesses; and when the witnesses are risen, the church is exceeding joyful.

This chapter out of which my text is taken, containeth six principal things.

1st, A lovely description of Jesus Christ, and he is described by the similitude of a Lamb, "Lo, a Lamb stood upon mount Sion," ver. 4. and, "behold the Lamb of God," John i. 29. He is called a Lamb in a double respect: In respect of his innocency, 1 Pet. i. 19; in respect of his meekness and patience, Acts viii. 12.

2dly, A lively description of the church, the Lamb's wife, and that from ver. 1. to ver. 5.

3dly, A glorious description of the church's

ministers. As the church is in this book called heaven, so her ministers are called angels. "And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel," ver. 6. "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen," ver. 8. "And the third angel followed him, saying with a loud voice," &c. ver. 9.

4thly, Here is set down the doctrine which these angels preach and publish. The first angel published the free grace of God in Jesus Christ openly, against all the inventions of men, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him: and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters," ver. 7. Namely, that man should once fear God and worship him, and give all glory to him; none to creatures, none to images, none to anti-christ: he that worshippeth the beast, worshippeth the beast and the devil, chap. xiii. The second angel proclaimeth utter ruin to Babylon, and the destruction thereof over the world: saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city; because she hath made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, ver. 8. The third angel doth seriously and solemnly give warning to all those who shall adhere to the beast, shewing the danger and misery of it. "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 wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out, without mixture, into 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," ver. 9, 10.

5thly, A sweet word of heavenly consolation

to the saints and people of God: "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them," ver. 13.

Sixthly, The judgment and vengeance which shall be executed upon the false church; the Spirit doth set it forth by a double similitude, the one by reaping, and the other by gathering; and that from verse 16. to the end. God will, as it were, rain hell out of heaven upon Babylon: he hath fire and brimstone for his spiritual Sodom, judgment without mercy, and fury without compassion.

I shall now come to the words of my text, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." This text is one of the golden characters of the hundred forty and four thousand, which stood with the Lamb upon Mount Sion. In these words are three things. 1. The subject, *These*. 2. The act, *Follow*. 3. The object, *The Lamb whithersoever he goeth*.

I shall gather this from the words, That it is the sweet temper and frame of a soul truly gracious, to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." In the handling of this point I shall shew you five things: *first*, What it is to follow the Lamb; *secondly*, Why they follow the Lamb; *thirdly*, The excellency of following the Lamb; *fourthly*, The misery of them that follow not the Lamb; *fifthly*, How the Lamb's followers may be known from the heast's followers.

First, To follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, is to follow him in four things:

1. In his commandments: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," John xiv. 14, 15. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I com-

mand you," chap. xv. 4. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life," Rev. xxii. 14. Oh, beloved, we cannot follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, unless we follow him in his commandments: "Then shall I not be ashamed," saith David, "when I have respect unto all thy commandments," Ps. cxix. 6. Christians should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness, as in those promises that assure happiness.

2. In his teaching: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:" John x. 27. "A stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of a stranger," verse 5.

3. In his providences: through all afflictions, all straits, all discouragements and sorrows whatsoever, though it be the way of blood, we must forsake all to follow a crucified Christ, a condemned Christ, in bloody paths of sufferings, if he call us to it: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," Ps. xxiii. 4. "For," saith Paul, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." We must be willing to venture the loss of all for him; liberty, estates, relations, and life itself: "We have forsaken all and followed thee," Matt. xxix. 27.

4. In his example: "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you," John xiii. 15. "That because Christ hath suffered for us, leaving an example that we should follow his steps," 1 Pet. ii. 21. So that to follow Christ's steps is to take him for an ex-

ample; we must walk in the same spirit, the same steps, and in the same obedience: we must not follow wicked men's example, who walk in the broad way that leads to death, "and are of their father the devil, and his works they do," John viii. 44. But we must follow our head Christ, who went up and down doing good, Acts x. 8. Now this is to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth;" in his commands, in his teaching, in his providences, in his examples.

To "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," is to follow him truly, without hypocrisy; and constantly, without apostacy. (1.) Truly, without hypocrisy; many follow the Lamb, as beggars follow a man, only for an alms; they prize the ways of religion above the works of religion: "Ye seek me not because of the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled," John vi. 26. Oh, beloved, God abhors an hypocrite more than a Sodomite; and hell is provided on purpose for hypocrites, Matt. xxiv. 51. My beloved, following the Lamb fully, is to have the heart fixed and resolved for God: "My soul follows hard after thee," saith David, Ps. lxxiii. 8. "And as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God," Ps. xlii. 1. And the faculties of his soul are working after God: "My soul, and all that is within me praise the Lord," saith holy David. (2.) Constantly, without apostacy. A true believer after he begins to follow the Lamb, he never leaves following him, but followeth him whithersoever he goeth:—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. viii. 25. "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 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 our Lord," ver. 28, 29. Oh! beloved, he doth not follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, that follows the Lamb earnestly for a while, but afterwards forsaketh him, when the storm ariseth: "Yet hath he no root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended," Matt. xiii. 21. Nor he that follows the Lamb in some things, and the beast in other things; "They feared the Lord and served other gods, after the manner of the nations." Nor he that followeth the Lord in a dull heavy manner, and lukewarm temper; "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert either cold or hot," Rev. iii. 15. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and hewed them out cisterns, brokens cisterns, that can hold no water," Jer. ii. 12, 13. Oh! this is not following the Lamb; they that follow the Lord fully, abide in the Lord, and cleave to the Lord, and continue constantly in God's ways, unto the end of their days. "The righteous shall hold on his way," Job xvii. 9. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord," Hos. vi. 3. The righteous man holds on his way, he follows the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: Speedily; truly; undividedly; zealously; humbly; cheerfully; diligently; constantly; faithfully; tran-

scendently. Now this is to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Secondly, Now I shall shew you why believers follow the Lamb.

1st, Because they are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb: "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed by corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot," 2 Pet. i. 18, 19. He paid a price for our redemption, that so he might discharge the debt of our sins. "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seal thereof for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," Rev. v. 9. There are three things called precious in the scripture. Faith is called precious, 2 Pet. i. 2. The promises are called precious, ver. 4. The blood of Christ is called precious, 1 Pet. i. 9.

Oh! his blood hath redeemed us from six enemies: From the world, Gal. iv. Rev. xxi. From the curse, Gal. iii. 13. From sin, Rom. vi. 18—22. From the devil, Heb. ii. 18. Acts xxvi. 17, 18. From the sting^s of death, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. From hell, 1 Thess. i. 10. Rev. ii. 12.

Oh! his blood is precious blood, his blood hath slain our enemies; he hath purchased by his blood reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, communion with the Holy Ghost: "Ye that were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ," Eph. ii. 13—16.

2d, They follow the Lamb, because they are washed in the blood of the Lamb: "He hath

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5. "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. xvii. 4. "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin," I John i. 7. Christ's blood washeth away our bloody sins; "I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live," Ezek. x. 6. For as we were united with Christ, our sins are upon him, and his righteousness upon us. It is Christ that gives us life, and puts excellent ornaments upon us, to cover our nakedness, and decketh us with jewels, and gems of gold, so we become beautiful in his sight, Isa. lx. 10. "That he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that it should be holy without blemish," Eph. v. 27.

3d, Believers follow the Lamb, because they are risen with the Lamb: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," Col. iii. 1. "Therefore we are buried with him in baptism, unto death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life," Rom. vi. 4. Every man, besides a believer, is a dead man in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1. Therefore they are exhorted to rise from the dead, Eph. v. 4. They must rise from evil to do good, from earthly mindedness to heavenly mindedness; but now, by faith, believers are risen from darkness to light: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord: walk as children of light," Eph. v. 8. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," Isa. lx. 1.

When the Lord shineth forth upon his people in glorious discoveries of himself, he calls them away from their former condition: when the Lord discovered himself in a gospel dispensation, his people were no longer to sit under dark clouds of legal ceremonies, but to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

44, They follow the Lamb, because they are enlightened by the Lamb: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 8. Divine and heavenly knowledge brings men near to God, it gives a man the clearest and fullest sight of God; and the nearer any man comes to God, the clearer vision we have of God, and the more communion with God. The reason why others do not follow the Lamb, is because they see not the worth and want of the Lamb; "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts," Eph. iv. 18. Where there is a veil cast before the eyes of knowledge, there is a bar set before the hands of practice. An ignorant person neither knows what he is doing, nor does he know whither he is going: he doth nothing but undo himself by doing. Carnal men see no preciousness nor loveliness in Christ: "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?" Cant.

v. 9. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that asketh, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water," John iv. 10. Christ goes undesired to the world, because he goes undiscerned by the world: "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. iv. 14. But now believers being enlightened by the Spirit of God, and by the word of God, they see themselves what they were before faith, and what they are by faith, and what they shall be at the end of faith: they see Christ to be all precious in his ordinances, precious in his discoveries, precious in his graces, precious in his gifts, precious in his promises, precious in his members, precious in his ministers, and precious in himself. 1 Pet. ii. 8. Therefore believers cannot but love him, and follow him.

5th, They follow the Lamb, because they love the Lamb: "Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Eph. vi. 25. They love him with a superlative love: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," Psalm lxii. 25. The spouse of Christ looks upon what she is, as not great enough for his remembrance and what she doth, as not good enough for his acceptance: "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me. my mother's children were angry with me, they made me the keeper of their vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept," Cant. i. 6. The church is never more fair than when she judgeth herself to be the most deformed; never more happy, than when she reckons herself most

miserable ; never more holy, than when she accounts herself most polluted ; she is never richer, than when she seeth herself to be poorest of all. The soul that loves much, is a soul that works much : the commands of the gospel are not grievous to him, but precious to him. " Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest," Cant. i. 7. A soul that loves Christ, hath his eyes upon Christ, and his desire is after Christ : " The desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night : yea, with my spirit will I seek thee early." True believers love Christ more than they love themselves : " They loved not their lives unto the death," Rev. xii. 11. Christ is dearer to them than their lives ; they slighted, contemned, yea, despised their very lives, when they stood in competition with Christ and his glory, and chose rather to suffer the greatest misery than he should lose the least dram of his honour. The love of Christ hath made the saints and witnesses yield all the members of their bodies to the cruel and merciless instrument of bloody persecutors ; their backs to be whipped, their eyes to be bored, their tongues to be cut out of their mouths, Heb. xi. 36. Oh, how strongly did these love ! The measure of loving Christ, is to love him without measure : " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Tribulation shall not, persecution shall not, famine and nakedness shall not, peril and sword shall not, 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 our Lord," Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39.

6th, They follow the Lamb, because they are married to the Lamb. Jer. iii. 25. "I am married unto you." Rev. xxi. 9. "I will shew you the bride, the Lamb's wife." Cant. ii. 16. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Here I will shew you two things:—How Christ comes to be ours; and, How we come to be Christ's. (1.) Christ comes to be ours, by free donation and gift of the Father: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, John. iii. 16. (2.) Christ freely gave himself unto us, so that Christ is ours by his consent. He hath, as it were, passed over himself unto us. "Christ loved me, and gave himself for me," saith the apostle, Gal. ii. 20. (3.) Christ hath passed himself over into his church by marriage, and therefore she is called "his queen, his spouse, his bride, and his wife," Ps. xlv. 9. Although we had nothing to bring to him, but poverty, shame, sorrow, and misery, yet he took us, and loved us, and married us. (4.) Christ is ours, by communicating his own Spirit to us. The saints are Christ's four ways. (1.) By the donation of the Father; "God hath made him both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 26. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church," Eph. i. 20. "And now," saith Christ, "behold I and the children whom thou gavest me; thine they were, and thou gavest them me," John xii. 6. God the Father gave us to God the Son, that he might redeem us; and God the Son did give us to God the Father, that he might sanctify us, and keep us from the evil of the world, ver. 17 (2.) We are Christ's by his choice: "I have

chosen you out of the world ;” and the saints are said to be chosen in Christ, Eph. i. 4. And they are called a chosen generation, 1 Pet. ii. And chosen and faithful, Rev. xvii. 14. (3.) The saints are Christ’s by purchase ; we were in our enemies’ hands, and under their power, and could not free ourselves from the bondage of the law, sin, Satan, death, and hell ; therefore, saith the apostle, “ We are bought with a price,” 1 Cor. vi. 20. For in respect of God’s justice, we are bought by Christ. (4.) We are Christ’s by combination and covenant : “ I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine,” Ezek. xvi. 8. That is, I did make a solemn covenant of stipulation with thee, that I would take thee to be my people. So that it is no wonder believers follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; they are married to him, he is their head and husband.

7th, They follow the Lamb, because they have the Spirit of the Lamb : “ We have not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God, and we have the mind of Jesus Christ,” 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 16. “ And we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. Now, if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” The Spirit that the Lord Jesus gives to believers, is a sealing Spirit, a lively Spirit, an enlightening Spirit, a leading Spirit ; it leads from all evil to all good : and all the Lamb’s followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb ; and therefore, they pray in the Spirit, and with the Spirit, and by the Spirit, and for more of the Spirit : they that have this Spirit need not a book to pray by. Now, all true

believers have the Spirit of the Lamb; therefore they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

8th, Believers follow the Lamb, because all their privileges come from the Lamb; they are all "kings and priests," Rev. i. 6. and v. 10. "and sons and heirs." 1 John iii. 1. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Rom. viii. 17. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Though believers have not a crown of life, yet they are heirs to a crown of life: God puts the greatest honour upon his own people, Prov. xii. 26. All the honour that other men have is not worth the having: that which makes a man great in the eyes of the world, makes a man nothing in the eyes of God: men are never the better of their greatness, if they are not the better by their greatness. But now, believers' greatness and honours come by Christ; the faithful and true Witness, the First begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. "He hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. v. 10. All the light, and life, and hope, and joy, and peace, and beauty, and honour, and riches believers have, they have it all by Christ, and from Christ: He gave them rich grace, and rich glory, and all things richly to enjoy, 1 Tim. vi. 17. Take a man that is out of Christ, and he hath none of all this. Eph. ii. 12. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, yea, he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17. O! this is the condition of every graceless, faithless, and Christless per-

son. But now, a believer, though he be never so poor in the world's eye, he is rich in God's eye: "For all things are his, and he shall inherit all things," 1 Cor. iii. 22. Rev. xxi. 7. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." But how comes it to pass that a believer hath so much, and all others so little? He hath it all from Christ: "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. Therefore believers do glory in Christ, because they have all their glory by and from Christ, 1 Cor. i. 31. He hath enough to glory in, that hath Christ to glory in. Now, believers cannot but cleave to him, and follow him, because all their good things come by him.

9th, They follow the Lamb, because their names are written in the Lamb's book; Rev. xiii. 8. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whosoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," Rev. xxi. 27. "All the rest of the worshippers of the beast, and all unbelievers, shall be cast into the lake of fire which burns and flames for ever," Rev. xix. 10. There be a great many that follow the beast, worship the beast, receive the mark of the beast, and admire the beast, chap. xiii. 16. But what are they? are they many that have their names written in the Lamb's book of life? No, no; for this see Rev. xvii. 8. "The beast which thou sawest, was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and shall go into perdition; and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose

names are not written in the book of life." So that you see what that cursed crew are that follow Babylon, they are such whose names are not written in the book of life. But they that have their Father's name written in their forehead, and their names written in the Lamb's book, they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful, Rev. xvii. 14.

10th, and lastly, Precious ones follow the Lamb, because they shall be for ever with the Lamb: "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort ye one another with these words," 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18. "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in the temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 15—17. How troublesome soever a saint's beginning is, his end is joyful. When believers change earth for heaven, they do not lose their happiness, but complete their happiness. John xvii. 24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou gavest me, 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." Not only with me for ever, but with my saints, with my angels, and with my Father, and with all that are with me. To be with God and Christ for

ever, implieth these seven things:—The presence of God;—the happy union with God;—the blessed vision of God;—the glorious communion with God;—the fruition of God;—the rest that the saints shall have in God;—the enjoyment of themselves in God. Oh! how unspeakable is the glory of heaven! Oh! how infinitely glorious is the Lamb! Now, true believers follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, because they shall be for ever with the Lamb, in fulness of glory, and endless felicity, Rom. viii. 17. Thus have I shewed you why believers follow the Lamb.

Third, Now I shall shew you the excellence of following the Lamb. The *first* excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, have the presence of the Lamb with them. The hundred forty and four thousand that stood upon mount Sion, had the Lamb with them, Ps. xlv. 5. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God shall help her, and that right early; the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge," ver. 8. God is in the midst of his church, not only to behold her, but uphold her; though the church's enemies may be waves to toss her, yet they shall never be rocks to split her; because God is in the midst of her. This is that which comforted and strengthened David: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me," Ps. xxii. 4. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee," Isa. xliii. 2. Oh! they that follow the Lamb, shall stand for the Lamb, have the presence of the

Lamb, his glorious presence, his gracious presence, his comforting presence, his protecting presence, his quickening sanctifying presence.

The *second* excellency is, That they that follow the Lamb, shall know the mind of the Lamb : " It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. And blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear," Matt. xiii. 11, 16. " Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth ; but I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you," John xvii. 6—8. Jesus Christ that lies in the bosom of the Father, he unbosoms the heart of his Father to believers : they know his secrets, his mind, his counsel, and his will, and none knoweth it but them. " I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes," Matt. xi. 25. But they that walk with God, know much of the mind of God, and the mysteries of the gospel.

The *third* excellency of following the Lamb is, They that follow the Lamb may come boldly to the Lamb : " Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 16. A soul that hath an interest in Christ, may come boldly to Christ, and speak boldly to him, and to his Father for any mercy he needeth : he may go to the throne of grace for grace ; and open his heart to God, as one friend to another. Oh ! what liberty have believers ! Oh ! what a privilege have they, that they may go to God with a holy boldness ! The

wicked proud ones of the earth are so high, that the poor saints cannot come boldly and freely unto them; but they may come boldly and freely unto the Lord their God. Matt. xi. 28. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The *fourth* excellency is, That they that follow the Lamb, shall have all their wants supplied by the Lamb: Phil. iv. 19. "But my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." They that follow the Lamb shall want no good thing: "O fear the Lord ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Ps. xxx. 9, 10. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," Ps. xxiii. 1. "Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart;" thou shalt have whatsoever thou desirest to have. He that hath the chiefest good shall want no good. "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; and he that cometh unto me shall never hunger," John vi. 35. Oh! who would not follow and believe in the Lamb! O happy are all that love the Lamb.

The *fifth* excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, shall share with the Lamb, (1.) In his divine nature: "Whereby are given unto us, exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," 2 Pet. i. 4. That is, "of those divine qualities whereby we are made like unto God, in wisdom, righteousness, and true holiness," John iv. 24. (2.) In his conquest, the poor saints share with Christ in all

his noble and honourable conquests, 1 Cor. xv. 55. Over all the world, death, and hell, and over sufferings: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us," Rom. viii. 37. (3.) They share with Christ in his graces: "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. As a child receives member for member, as the paper from the press receives letter for letter, as the wax from the seal receives print for print, as the glass from the image receives face for face, so do believers receive from Christ grace for grace, that is, for every grace that is in the Lamb, there is the same grace in us in some measure. (4.) Believers share with Christ in his glorious titles: he is called a Son, so are they; a King, so are they; a Priest, so are they; an heir, so are they; Rom. viii. 17. Rev. v. 16. and i. 5, 6. (5.) They share with Christ in his glory: "I go to prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also," John xiv. 3. "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one," John xvii. 23. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life," John x. 27, 28. The saints shall have the same glory which Christ himself hath: the saints in heaven are not only glorified with Christ (which is the greatest exaltation) but they do enjoy the very same glory which Christ himself doth, the same for kind, though not for degree. The head and members are glorified together with the same kind of glory. God hath not one heaven for his Son, and another for his saints; but one and the same for both. Believers shall be as truly glorious as Christ is,

eternally glorious as he is. "Our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body: and we shall be glorified together with him, and appear with him in glory," Rom. viii. Col. iii. Oh! here is the excellency of following the Lamb; they that follow him shall share with him.

The *sixth* excellency of following the Lamb is, They that follow the Lamb shall be protected by the Lamb. He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," Ps. cv. 14, 15. which are his saints. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? And if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled," 1 Pet. iii. 13, 14. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God; yea, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness," Isa. xli. 40. "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," Isa. xlix. 15. Who can harm a man if God be with him and for him? He that hath the love of God, needs not care for the anger of man. A true believer hath the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of good angels, and the love of good men, and the love of all whose love is worth the having. God protects men in his way, but none out of his way: when men appear for God, God appears for men: he is good to them in affliction, and he doth good to them by affliction.

The *seventh* excellency is this, They that fol-

low the Lamb, shall not feel the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. ii. 11. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death," 1 Thess. i. 10. "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 1. O how sad is the condition of those who live and die without Christ! They are sent to hell, Psalm. ix. 17. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forsake God." "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 9. They shall feel and suffer the wrath of the Lamb, because they despised the truth of the Lamb, "Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind: when distress and anguish come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me," Prov. i. 24—29. Do you hear this, sinners, and die in your sins; Be sure hell will shew you no mercy. Now, the believer will feel and suffer none of this, he is in a happy state and condition.

The *eighth* excellency is, They that follow the Lamb shall reign with the Lamb; and this is another excellency of following the Lamb. True believers do reign now over the creatures, over the pomp and pride of the world, over all spirits,

over sin, over the consciences of wicked men, and over sufferings; but besides all this, they shall reign with Christ, and over those that now reign over them, Rev. v. 10. "And we shall reign on the earth," chap. xx. 4. "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." And as the wicked tread down the saints under their feet now, so shall the saints then tread down the wicked under their feet, Mal. iv. 3. The Lord hath promised that the meek shall inherit the earth. Do not the Scriptures say, "That in the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be lifted up above the hills, and shall be established in the top of the mountains?" Isa. ii. 2. And that the kingdoms of the world must become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ? Rev. xi. 15. And he that loves to see the face of the church beautiful, will ere long wipe away the bloody tears. It is not long before you will triumph and say, "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come," Cant. ii. 11, 12.

The *ninth* excellency is, They that follow the Lamb shall sit on the throne with the Lamb, Rev. iii. 21. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon his throne. Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matt. xix. 28. Oh! what an honour is this, what a glory is this, to sit upon the throne with Christ! Is it not honour and glory enough for us to be in heaven with God, and Christ, and angels, but we must sit upon a throne there? O what an honour is this! and yet this honour shall all the Lamb's followers have.

The *tenth* excellency of following the Lamb is, They that follow the Lamb shall judge the world with the Lamb. If you consult the sacred records, you will find that both God and Christ, and the saints are said to judge the world. The ordination is God's, the execution is Christ's, the approbation is the saint's. When the apostle would stop the sinful suits among the Corinthian brethren, that did not want men of eminency to put a period unto controversies, he saith, "Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" 1 Cor. vi. 2. Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied, saying, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all," Jude, ver. 14, 15. "When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matt. xix. 28. Now the world judges the saints, but then the saints shall judge the world; now they judge and condemn Christ and his members, but then they shall be judged and condemned by Christ and his members. For as the world cannot endure God himself, so neither can they endure God in the saints; and the more God dwells in the saints, the more the world afflicts the saints: but they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, shall then sit upon those that now sit upon them. Thus I have shewed you the excellencies of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, The misery of those that follow not the Lamb, but the beast: O their misery is great in this life, but it will be greater in the other.

The *first* misery of them that follow the beast

is, They that follow him, shall share with him in all his plagues: "And the third angel followed them, saying, with a loud voice, 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 wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Lamb," Rev. xiv. 9, 10. O the plagues, the terrible plagues that shall fall upon the beast! "Death, mourning, and famine, and fire," chap. xviii. 8. The judgment shall come upon all parties, and upon all degrees and conditions of men that join with the beast: all those that do partake of his sins, shall share of his plagues. There is "A vial poured out upon the earth;" that is, upon the common people, chap. xvi. 2. "Another vial upon the sea," that is, the jurisdiction of Rome, ver. 3. "Another vial upon the rivers," that is their ministers, ver. 4. "Another vial is poured out upon the sun," that is, princes and magistrates, ver. 8. "Another vial upon the seat," that is, Rome itself the throne of the beast, ver. 10. So that all that worship the beast, and receive his mark, and belong to him, whether they be high or low, rich or poor, if they do not come off from him, they shall share with him in all his plagues. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues," Rev. xviii. 4.

The *second* misery of them that follow the beast is, They shall cry to the rocks, and to the mountains of the earth: "And the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every

free-man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. xv. 16, 17. The wicked, though here clothed in silk and velvet, shall wish for the mountains to cover them, which would be but a poor shelter; for the mountains melt at the presence of the Lord, and the rocks rent asunder when he is angry. They that made others flee away from them, as innocent lambs from devouring wolves, shall be afraid of the wrath of the Lamb, that sitteth on the throne. Oh! how will these great men dare to appear before his tribunal, that have stained the sword of authority with the blood of innocency: by turning its back against the vicious, and whetting its edge against the righteous: many an unjust judge that now sits confidently upon the bench, shall then stand trembling at the bar. Oh! how will they be able to lift up their heads before Christ, who have lifted up their hands against Christ. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts iv. 26. Rev. xvii. 14. Instead of helping the Lord against the mighty, they help the mighty against the Lord, Ps. ii. 2. Oh! how many great men are there that make no other use of their greatness but to be great in wickedness, great swearers, great drunkards, great sabbath-breakers, great persecutors, great adulterers, great atheists, who, instead of denying or forsaking the devil and all his works, follow the devil and all his works: who sin with content, and are not content with their sins. "The

princes are rebellious and companions of thieves," Isa. i. 2. But the great God against whom the sin is committed, is greater than the greatest, "Before whom all nations of the world are but as a drop of a bucket, and as the smallest dust of the balance," Isa. xl. 15. "Who will not fear thee, O King of nations? Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great, and thy power is great," Jer. x. 6, 7. He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke, before whom the devils fear and tremble. Therefore, woe, woe, be to them that forsake him, and follow the beast: they shall cry, and call for help, but there will be none to help them.

The *third* misery of those that follow the beast is, They shall be cast into a lake of fire with the beast. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophets that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image, these both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone," Rev. xix. 20. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 6, 8, 9. "O what a dreadful thing it is to lie under the wrath of God, to lie in burning flames, and for ever to be banished from the presence of God, and his holy angels! This will be the portion of the beast's followers. O will they not wish they had never been born, and that they might be turned into stocks and stones? But,

alas! their wishes will do them no good: Christ will say to them, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. O ye rulers and great ones of the earth! it will be no dishonour to your honours to lay your honour at his feet; in whose presence "the angels veil their faces, and before whose throne the elders cast their crowns," Isa. vi. 2. Rev. iv. 10. O! it is better with patience to suffer with Sion and the church's party a while, than join with the Romish party, and be ruined with them at the end. Rev. xiv. 12. "Here is the patience of the saints." Ye shall suffer a while, and be trodden down by them, and you may stay for a full accomplishment of his promise for your deliverance; but I will surely come, and I will recompense all your patience. And therefore be not discouraged, and faint in your minds; let not your hearts turn back into Egypt, and hanker after Rome, those remnants of Baal, which God will surely destroy.

Fifthly, I will shew you now how the Lamb's followers may be known by the beast's followers. (1.) You may know them by their number, they are in number the fewest: "Many are called, but few are chosen," Matt. xx. 19. "Though all Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved," Rom. ix. 27. And Christ calls his flock, a little flock, Luke xii. 32. And truly, beloved, they are but a few that follow the Lamb, and believe in him. The heathen follow the devil, the Turks follow Mahomet, the Jews follow Moses, the papists follow the Pope, and loose protestants and carnal professors they follow the world, the flesh, and the devil; and the false teachers, false doctrine and false worship; and all the world wonders at the beast, Rev. xiii.

"The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," chap. xvii. 15. Believers, though their nature is the sweetest, yet their number is the smallest. In heaven are the best, but in hell are the most. O dear christians, there are but few upright christians; there are many thorns, but few lilies; many almost, but few altogether, christians. (2.) By their characters ye may know them. You have nine lovely characters of them in this 14th chapter: 1. They stand with the Lamb upon mount Sion. 2. They have their Father's name written in their foreheads. 3. They sing a new song, which none can learn but only the hundred forty and four thousand. 4. They are such as are redeemed from the earth. 5. They are virgin saints, not defiled with women. 6. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. 7. They are redeemed from among men. 8. They bring their first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. 9. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God. Oh! how holy, how heavenly, how gracious, how glorious, how lovely and spiritual are these! They live in the Lord, on the Lord, to the Lord, and with the Lord: "They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Pet. ii. 6. (3.) By their spirits: they have another spirit, Numb. iv. 24. All the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb, Rom. viii. 9, 16. And by the Spirit they are led and taught; a spirit of holiness, a spirit of meekness, a spirit of love, a free spirit, and a true, humble, and faithful spirit, to and for the Lord. Now, as the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb, so the beast's followers are in

the spirit of the beast, which is no other than the spirit of the devil. Eph. ii. 2. "According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," a spirit of lording and domineering, a spirit of cunning and craftiness, a spirit of deceit, a spirit of superstition, a spirit of persecution and cruelty; and in this spirit are all the followers of the beast. Now, by this you may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers. (4.) By their name: they have another name, a new name. Rev. ii. 12. God gives his people honourable titles, though the beast gives them reproachful titles; God calls them the dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. xxi. 7.; and the apple of his eye, Zech. ii. 8.; and his jewel, Mal. iii. 17.; his glory, his portion, his bride, his friends and children. But the beast calls them seditious, heretics, deceivers, and deluders, and blasphemers, and fools, and madmen, as if they were not worthy to have a being among men. But though they be ravens in the world's eye, yet they are doves in God's eye; yea, they are such worthies of whom the world are not worthy, Heb. xi. 38. Now, dear christians, by this you may know the Lamb's followers from others, by the nicknames the world giveth them, and by the glorious names that God giveth them. (5.) By their graces they may be known: such as are the Lamb's followers are full of faith, full of love, full of grace and goodness. They are very fruitful, and bring forth much fruit, John xv. 5. They are called heaven, because of their heavenliness, Rom. viii. 1. and holy, because of their holiness; spiritual, because of their spiritualness; and faithful, because of their faithfulness. There is much of God to be seen in them, in their

words, works, duties, and conversations, Phil. iii. 20. "For our conversation is in heaven." They seek heavenly things, and walk by an heavenly rule; they eye heavenly objects, and are led by an heavenly spirit; they submit to a heavenly government, and imitate heavenly ones. There is much of heaven in them, and much of them in heaven; "When I awake, I am still with thee," saith David. But now the beast's followers they are full too: but it is with blood, swearing, cursing, stealing, lying, blasphemy, rebellion, and all manner of abomination and filthiness, Hos. iv. 2. Rom. iii. Rev. iii. 3. Now, beloved, by this you may know Christ's precious ones from the beast's filthy ones. (6.) The Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's, by the keeping of the commandments of God, and faith of Jesus Christ. Rev. xiv. 12. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. So Rev. xii. 12. "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and made war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, having the testimony of Jesus Christ." True believers cleave to the Lord, and follow him fully: "But my servant Caleb hath followed me fully," Numb. iv. 24. And Enoch walked with God. Gen. v. 34. And Noah walked with God, Gen. vi. 9. "Let us walk in the spirit," Rom. v. 25. And they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; they hear his voice, they profess his worship, and obey his doctrine; they abhor antichrist, they follow not the beast, nor receive his mark: but keep the beautiful garments of gospel innocency, and will not touch beastly Babylon (7.) By their company: the Lamb's followers keep com-

pany together, "Being let go, they went to their own company," Acts iv. 23. So they are said to stand upon a sea of glass together, "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God," Rev. xv. 2. So they that are with the Lamb upon mount Sion, are together, keep together, and follow the Lamb together. Christ's faithful witnesses do not bear with antichrist's hearers, nor worship with them that worship the beast, for they are come out of Babylon, chap. xviii. 4. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sin, that ye receive not of her plagues. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, saith the Lord," 2 Cor. vi. 17. The children of God will not keep company with the children of wrath, for they cannot agree: "for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. Therefore believers, keep together walk together, and worship God together. "And they that believed, were of one heart, and of one soul, and continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," Acts iv. 34.; and ii. 42. By this the Lamb's followers are known, to wit, by their company.

(8.) By their language they are known. True believers speak the language of Canaan; their language is scripture language; you may know

them by their speech, as Peter was known by his speech: "Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee," Matt. xxvi. 73. Their words are holy and heavenly; they speak of God, and to God, and for God, and he heareth them, Mal. iii. 10. But the beast's followers speak wickedly, proudly, daringly, and blasphemously, chap. xiii. 4. "And he opened his mouth blaspheming God, his Son his name his saints, and they that dwell in heaven," ver. 6. Men are known who, and what they are, and to whom they belong, by their language: if they are of God, and in God, they cannot but speak much of God. (9.) The Lamb's followers are known by this: they are more afflicted with the church's heaviness, than they are affected with their own happiness. The king said, "Why is thy countenance sad? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart, seeing thou art not sick. Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres lieth waste, and the gates thereof consumed with fire?" Neh. ii. 2, 3. Now, can Sion's sons be rejoicing, when their mother is mourning? Though they were the Jews' desolation, yet they were Jeremiah's lamentation: How can such rejoice in her standing, that do not mourn for her falling? When the church's adversaries make long furrows upon her back, we should cast in the seed of tears. "Remember them that are in bonds, as being bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves likewise in the body," Heb. xiii. 3. Sympathising with others, makes an estate that is joyful more happy, and an estate that is less doleful, hearty. "The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart,"

Isa. lvii. 1. We may draw up the charge against many now, Amos vi. 4. "They lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the midst of the stall." Ver. 6. "That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment. But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Oh ! that there were not too many such now-a-days, that eat the fat and drink the sweet, and are not troubled for Sion's troubles : instead of sympathising with them in their misery, they are censuring them for their misery. But the true servants of God are tender and broken-hearted ; they weep and mourn, and wring their hands for Sion's sins, for Sion's breaches, for Sion's calamities, for Sion's grievances. And thus they do, and will do, till they set Sion on mount Sion to be with the Lamb.

(10.) The Lamb's followers are known by their love to Christ, and sufferings for Christ ; they choose the worst of sorrows, before they will commit the least of sins. "For thy sake we are killed all the day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter," Ps. xliv. Rom. viii. 36. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," Matt. x. 22. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake," Matt. v. 11. Love can walk on the water without drowning, and lie on the fire without burning. How shall we land at the haven of rest, if we are not tossed upon the sea of trouble ? A believer should live above the love of life, and the fear of death. Though we cannot live without afflictions, yet let us live above afflictions ; none are so welcome to that spiritual Canaan, as

those that swim to it through the red sea of their own blood: in suffering, the offence is done to us; in sinning, the offence is done to God: in suffering we lose the favour of men; in sinning we lose the favour of God: therefore Daniel chose the den of lions, rather than he would forsake the cause of the Lamb," Dan. vi. 6. And the three children chose rather to suffer sadly, than to sin foully, Dan. iii.; and "Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. xi. 25. It is better to be a martyr than a monarch; it is better to be a prisoner for Jesus Christ, than to be a prince without Christ, or against Christ. O how precious, how glorious, how lovely and how sweet is Jesus Christ to believers! O they love him entirely, uprightly, they love his glorious person and the beauty of his holiness, and his name, his honour, his cause, and his members: they will suffer for him, and die for him, because he suffered and died for them, Rev. xxi. 11. "And they loved not their lives unto the death." Now, by all this men may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers, viz. by their sorrows and sufferings for Christ, for truth, for righteousness, and for conscience sake, Heb. x. 34. "And they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods," Heb. xi. 35.

(11.) The Lamb's followers are known by this, they seek the public good of others, above the private good of themselves. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh," Rom. ix. 2, 3. "And now, O Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee,"

John xvii. 1. He prayed for glory, more for the Father's sake that bestowed it, than for his own sake that received it. A true Christian doth not desire grace only for this end, that God may glorify him, but he desires grace for this end, that he may glorify God: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for our sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. Oh! that the Lord Jesus should not only in pity save us, but in love die for us. And David, after he had served his own generation, by the will of God, fell asleep, Acts xiii. 36. His generation did not serve him, but he served his generation; not the generation that was before him, for they were dead before he was living. not the generation that was behind him, for they were living after he was dead; but his own generation; and not by his own will, but by the will of God. Old Eli mourned more for the loss of his religion, than for the loss of his relations, 1 Sam. iv. 18. So Moses, Exod. xx. 10. "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume thee: and I will make of thee a great nation." He was no self-seeker, but a life preserver. Grace doth not only make a man carry it like a man to God, but carry it like a God to man: reason makes a man a man, but grace makes a man a christian. Every gracious spirit is public, though every public spirit is not gracious. As we are not born by ourselves, so we are not born for ourselves; but the beast's followers and Babylon's merchants are for themselves, and seek themselves. "Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough; and they are shepherds which cannot understand:

they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter," Isa. lvi. 11. "They teach things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake," Tit. i. 11. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees; for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." Matt. xxiii. 14. These make not gain stoop to godliness, but godliness stoop to gain.

Lastly, The Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's followers by this, they are more for the power than form, the heart than art, for matter than method, for substance than show; "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such turn aside," 2 Tim. iii. 5. As they who have the power of godliness cannot deny the form; so they who have the form of godliness should not deny the power. Alas! what is hearing without doing, and praying without practising, and teaching without reforming? God loves to see the plants of righteousness: he beareth greater respect to our hearts, than he doth to our works. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God," Rom. xii. 1. The formalist, he is all outward actions, and for nothing of inward sincerity: he is for a body without a soul, and a show without a substance; but it is not a show of outward piety that will excuse inward hypocrisy: "For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. ii. 28, 29. "I know the blasphemy of

them who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan," Rev. ii. 6. They are better in their outsides than they are in their insides: but believers are better in their insides than they are in their outsides: "The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold," Ps. xlv. 13. The one bows but his knee at the name of Jesus, the other bows his heart at the truth of Jesus: the one only signs with the cross, the other carries the cross. O, what would not hypocritical men do for heaven, if they might have heaven for their so doing? But they that sail in this rotten bottom, will surely sink in the ocean. "Who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts? To what purpose is your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, nor of lambs, nor of he-goats." It was not the clay and spittle that cured the blind man, but Christ anointing his eyes. It was not the troubling of the waters in the pool of Bethesda that made them whole, but the coming down of the angel. Alas! the dish without the meat will not feed us. Men may spread the net of duty, but it is God must take the draught of mercy. Now, by this, beloved, you may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers.

And thus have I briefly and clearly shewed you these five things:—What following the Lamb is,—Why gracious souls follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,—The excellency of following the Lamb,—The misery of following the beast,—How the Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's followers.

I shall make some use of this,

First, For self-examination and trial: O friends, for the Lord's sake, and for your souls' sake, examine yourselves, try yourselves by this, that you may know whose you are, and to whom you do belong: "Know ye not to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. vi. 16. Oh! whom do ye follow? If men, verily you have your reward: if sin, you shall have your sins' wages, which is eternal death; wo and misery in this life, and hell and destruction in the other life: but if God, then you shall have eternal life. Therefore be not deceived, mistake not yourselves; God is not mocked: "For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap." O beloved, examine yourselves, and try yourselves, what it is you mind, what it is you seek, what it is you do. Do you follow the Lamb in his commandments, in his teaching, in his appointments, and in his examples, and through suffering and reproaches? Have you forsaken all, and followed him? Matt. xix. 29. Have you taken up his cross and denied yourselves? Matt. xvi. 24. Have you learned of him to be meek and lowly? Matt. xi. 29. Have you visited and clothed his members? Matt. xxv. 35. Have you kissed the Son, and made your peace with him? O beloved, are ye new creatures? Are you in Christ? Are you in faith? "Know ye not if Christ be not in you, ye are reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

The *second* use is exhortation.

First, O beloved, let me beseech you for your precious and immortal soul's sake, to come out of Babylon from the beast's image, and from his worship, and from his mark, that you may not

be defiled. Oh! come away to Jesus Christ: "Arise, my love, and come away," Cant. ii. 10. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28. O sinners, he calls you to come to him: will you not go? We must forsake sin, and embrace virtue; put off the old man, and put on the new man; we must have repentance and mortification, a dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness; from the love of earthly things, to the desire of heavenly things. Our bodies and our souls must come away unto Christ: our souls, because they are the spouse of Christ: our bodies, because they are the temples of the Holy Ghost. We must come away from the enticements of the flesh, and the allurements of the world, and suggestions of the devil, and from the whore of Babylon, and from all the inventions and traditions of men, Rev. xviii. 4. That we may walk with God, before God, after God, and in the name of God, and in the spirit of God: and that we may live in Christ, as Christ lives in the Father. Oh, what more happy than to live for ever; and so to live for ever as Christ himself liveth! Surely this is a blessed and glorious life. This a believer's life.

Secondly, Labour more and more to be like those that follow the Lamb fully. They are very holy and pure, they are called virgins, (1.) For their chastity: "that I present you as chaste virgins unto Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 2. These love Christ with a chaste, but not with an adulterous love. (2.) For their purity: they are virgin saints, they are not defiled with the whore of Babylon, but have kept themselves from her idolatry and superstition, and from her sin and

wickedness: and in their mouth was found no guile.

Believers are styled and titled heaven: Christ's members are glorious members. They are called heaven for two reasons: because there is much of heaven in them; and because there is much of them in heaven. (1.) There is much of heaven in believers, much of God, much of Christ, and much of the Spirit: "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. The glory of God, the knowledge of God, the presence of God, the love of God, the holiness of God, the joys of God, these are the things that make heaven to be heaven. Now there is much of those in believers, therefore they are called heaven. We are taken into communion with angels; and our communion with angels, in a great measure, doth consist in bearing part with them in praising God; it is the action of heaven; believers are holy ones, and they have glorious titles: The Lord's portion, Deut. xxxii. 9.; his pleasant portion, Jer. xii. 10.; his inheritance, Isa. xix. 25.; the dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. xii. 7.; God's treasure, and peculiar treasure, Exod. xix. 5.; his glory, Isa. xlvi. 13.; the house of God's glory, Exod. ix. 7.; a crown of glory, Isa. lxiii. 3.; a royal diadem, in the same place; the glory of God, Jer. iii. 17.; golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 12.; kings, Rev. v. 10.—And in my text, heaven. There is as much difference between the church of God and other men, as there is betwixt gold and dirt, as betwixt diamonds and bubbles, in the Lord's esteem; they are to God above all people, "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," Prov. xii. 26. O! how precious, how happy, how blessed, and glorious are

believers! They are called heaven. (2.) Believers are called heaven, because there is much of heaven in them.

Their thoughts are in heaven, Psal. cxix. 78.; their desires are in heaven, Psal. lxxiii. 25.; their affections are in heaven, Col. iii. 12.; their hopes are in heaven, Tit. ii. 13.; their conversations are in heaven, Phil. iii. 20.; their hearts are in heaven, Matt. vi. 21.; their alms are in heaven, Luke x. 20. O, there is much of believers in heaven; their souls are in heaven, when their bodies are walking upon the earth; they live in heaven, whilst they are on the earth, Eph. ii. 6. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." The saints are set in heavenly places, in heavenly dignities, heavenly privileges, heavenly prerogatives. The saints of the high God are set on high places. The true church is that spouse that is fair and beautiful, Cant. ii. 14. Oh! the church of Christ is lovely and glorious, glorious in her head; glorious in her titles; glorious in her gifts and graces; glorious in her offices; glorious in her privileges; glorious in her members. O the church of Christ is a holy church, and a glorious church. "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy without blemish," Eph. v. 27. "They are not defiled with women, they are virgins, and in their mouth was found no guile. Now, he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." I shall exhort you that are members of this heavenly church, (1.) To seek heavenly things before and above all things else; let your hearts be filled with knowledge and heavenly riches. (2.) Delight in heavenly things; let it be your

heaven upon earth, to serve the God of heaven. (3.) Act by heavenly principles. (4.) Have a holy dependence upon God, for direction, for protection, for assistance, for a blessing. (5.) Eye heavenly objects: God, Christ, and the Spirit. (6.) Imitate heavenly ones; follow them that follow Christ. (7.) Walk by a heavenly rule; walk according to the law of heaven. (8.) Live much in heaven. Your Father is in heaven, your Head is in heaven, your Husband is in heaven, your King is in heaven, your treasure is in heaven, your crown is in heaven, your wages are in heaven. And where should you be but in heaven? "Knowing in yourselves, that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance," Heb. x. 34. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1. O these are blessed and holy ones. "And they that were with him are called the chosen, and faithful," Rev. xvii. 14. O labour to be like those in purity and piety, in holiness and humbleness, in meekness and patience, in faithfulness and uprightness, in spiritualness and in all godliness.

Thirdly, Follow the Lamb out of Babylon. "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Rev. vi. 10. "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel

came out of the temple, which was in heaven, he having also a sharp sickle," Rev. xiv. 15—17. The whore of Babylon shall be destroyed with a double destruction. Her walls shall fall down, her wall of power, her wall of polity, her wall of superstition, her wall of maintenance. And that for these reasons :

1st, Because she hath a corrupt religion, and that both in doctrine and worship. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she hath made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication," Rev. xiv. 8. and xviii. 3.

2d, Because she hath poisoned the kings of the earth. The whore of Babylon hath been the great corrupter of kings. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophets; for they are spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty," Rev. xvi. 13, 14. and xvii. 2.

3d, For her cruelty.* "In her was found the blood of the prophets, and all the saints that were slain upon the earth," Rev. xviii. 24. "And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration," chap. xvii. 6.

4th, Because her ruin and destruction is published and proclaimed over the world; "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils," chap. xviii. 2. and xiv. 8.

5th, This is the great design that Christ hath

in the latter days of the world, to destroy anti-christ: "The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, chap. xvii. 14. "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he was clothed in a vesture dipt in blood, and his name was called the Word of God; and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations," chap. xix. 12, 13, 15.

6th, Because he hath greatly insulted and triumphed over the Lord's people in their miseries and calamities: "And they that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts to one another," Rev. xi. 10.

7th, Because of all the church's enemies that ever were, this is the cruelest enemy; the fourth beast is worse than any of the former beasts. "And behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth, and it was divers from all the beasts that were before it," Dan vii. 7. Rev. xviii. 14.

8th, It is the expectation of all the saints, that Babylon is to be destroyed, and thrown like a millstone into the sea, chap. xviii. 21. Now, that God hath raised this expectation in the hearts of his people, he will not frustrate their expectation, he will fulfil their petition.

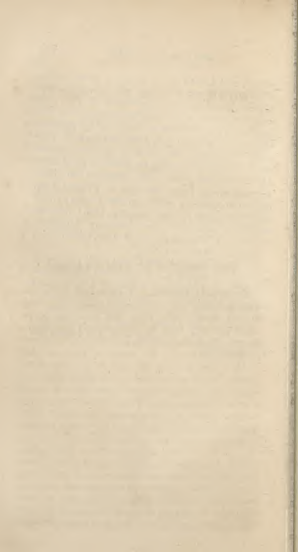
9th, God hath promised to destroy the scarlet whore, because she hath destroyed his saints, and she is to be rewarded as she hath rewarded others, chap. xv. 5. and xviii. 8.

10th, The whore of Babylon shall be destroyed, because she trusted in the arm of flesh, and gloried in her strength and riches. "How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her. For she hath said in her heart, I sit a queen, I am no

widow, and I shall see no sorrow; therefore her plagues shall come," chap. xviii. 7, 8. Now, beloved, consider this, and think of this, and keep yourselves from Babylon, that ye do not partake of her sins, lest ye receive of her plagues. O poor sinners! if you have any love to your souls, if you have any mind to be saved, follow the Lamb, that you may be saved by the Lamb. He leads poor souls from Jarkness to light. From death to life; from vice to virtue; from poverty to plenty; from sorrow to joy; from misery to glory; from Satan to God; from an earthly kingdom to an heavenly kingdom. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," Matt. xxv. 24.

O, the kingdom which Christ leads poor souls to, is a rich kingdom,—a peaceable kingdom,—a righteous kingdom,—a blessed kingdom,—a glorious kingdom,—a satisfying kingdom,—an universal kingdom,—an everlasting kingdom.

O, follow the Lamb, follow the Lamb, that you may be ever glorified with the Lamb, and by the Lamb.



CHRIST'S VOICE TO LONDON;

OR,

A CALL TO SINNERS.

BEING

THE SUBSTANCE OF SEVERAL SERMONS,
PREACHED IN THE CITY DURING
THE SAD VISITATION.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,—I have had little encouragement from the world to appear any more in this nature, who have had so many books taken and kept from me, without any just cause, though there was nothing in them but what was profitable matter for the church of God; yet for all this, they are kept from me still. But, kind reader, this is not all which I have suffered; as soon as my books came forth, several men made a prize of them, by printing them over divers times without my knowledge, with many gross mistakes and abuses, which was not a little trouble to me, to see the author and the buyer both abused. Kind reader, I hope these sermons will find as good acceptance with thee as the former: I confess this encouraged me, when I considered how my former treatises were received and embraced by the Lord's people in all parts of this kingdom, as appears by many thousands of them which have been printed and sold; and though

I have met with many discouragements from them without, and some also which are within, who have bent their tongues like a bow, for lies, as if I had done that which was never in my thoughts, nor in my heart, much less in practice; and though they had as little cause to report it of me, as of any man, yet how confidently did some report, and others believe, those abominable lies, as if I had lost my first love, and was returning again to Egypt? O! what is it that prejudice and malice will not do! But why should I be troubled at this, seeing it was so with the holy apostle, who went through evil report as well as good? But in this I rejoice, that the Lord hath made me any way instrumental in doing good, and in that he has kept me close to himself, and this is my crown and rejoicing. Now, that the only wise God may keep thee and me by his power through faith unto salvation, that we may glorify him here, and reign with him hereafter, is the desire and prayer of him who desires the good of thy soul.

WILLIAM DYER

CHRIST'S VOICE TO LONDON.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me,"
Rev. iii. 20.

THE Holy Scriptures are the mysteries of God, Christ is the mystery of the scriptures, grace is the mystery of Christ, 1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus is our life, and the way to life, 1 Cor. ii. 7. To know him savingly, believably, and experimentally, is life eternal, John xvii. 3. "I am the way," saith Christ, John xiv. 6.; the old and good way, Jer. vi. 16.; the new and living way, Heb. x. 20.; the strait and narrow way, Matt. vii. 24. And because poor sinners are by nature the children of wrath, and all gone out of the way, "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," Eph. iv. 18. "and become wretched and miserable, poor and and naked," like to the Laodiceans, spoken of in this chap. ver. 19.; therefore the Lord Jesus, who is full of love, full of grace, and full of pity to poor lost sinners, doth graciously invite them to come to him, that he may "enrich them with gold, and clothe them with white raiment, and anoint their eyes with eye-salve, that they may see," ver. 18. And farther, to shew his

willingness and readiness to save souls, he tells us in the text, "That he stands at the door and knocks, that if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me."

In these words you have three general parts. 1. God's gracious offer to man, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. 2. Man's duty in relation to God's gracious offer, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door." 3. God's gracious promise in relation to man's duty, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

These words being thus opened, there flow from them four points of doctrine.

Doct. I. There is a marvellous willingness in the heart of God and Christ, to save and receive poor lost sinners.

Doct. II. That the hearts of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.

Doct. III. That it is the duty and great concernment of all men whatsoever, to hear God's voice, and to open the door.

Doct. IV. That whoever will but hear Christ's voice, "and open the door, he will come in to them, and sup with them, and they with him."

Neither time nor strength, beloved, will give me leave to handle all these doctrines apart; therefore I shall insist but upon one of them, which is the second, 'That the hearts of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.' In the prosecution of this point, I shall do two things. 1. Open it, that you may see it. 2. Prove it, that you may believe it.

First, In the opening of it, there are three things to be explained:—The bars. The voice. The doors.

1. I will shew you what the bars are, that bolt the doors of sinners' hearts against Christ. Beloved, they are six:—The bar of ignorance;—the bar of unbelief;—the bar of self-conceit- edness;—the bar of earthly mindedness;—the bar of prejudice;—the bar of hardness of heart. These, my beloved, are the cursed bars which bar God and Christ, and the Holy Spirit out of the heart.

I shall begin *first*, with the bar of ignorance, and in that I shall shew you these three things;—What ignorance is, What sinners are ignorant of, The mischievousness of this sin of ignorance.

First, What ignorance is. Ignorance is the want of knowledge, or darkness of the understanding; for, said the apostle Paul, Eph. iv. 18. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Here you may see what ignorance is; the apostle calls it darkness and blindness: so likewise in 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 4. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." So that ignorance is darkness of mind, blindness of heart, the want of knowledge and spiritual understanding in the soul. *2dly*, What are sinners ignorant of? They are ignorant of God, they are ignorant of Christ, they are ignorant of the Spirit, they are ignorant of the word, they are ignorant of their own misery, they are ignorant of the necessity of a change, of being born again, of being new creatures, of being converted, and

turned from darkness to light, from death to life, and from the power of Satan to the living God: such things as these, I say, they are ignorant of: and this is that which keeps poor souls from going to Christ. O beloved, we have many of those amongst us who are ignorant. It was said of the priests, the sons of Eli, that they were sons of Belial, and knew not the Lord, 1 Sam. xviii. So in the prophecies of Jeremias, chap. ii. 8., it is said, "The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not." So the Pharisees were blind leaders of the blind, Matt. xv. 14. Would to God there were no such among our priests this day. May not that charge be drawn up against us now, as it was against Israel, Hosea iv. 1—6. "Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood: therefore the land mourneth, and my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou be no more a priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children: they eat up the sins of my people, and set their hearts on their iniquity; and they are like people, like priest." Thus men err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God, Matt. xxii. 29.

3dly, The mischievousness of this sin of ignorance. (1.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from knowing God. (2.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from pleasing God. (3.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from coming to God. (4.) Ignorance hinders men from having a property in God. (5.) Ignorance is

that which hardens the heart against God. O cursed and mischievous ignorance! What sin is like unto this? This is that which darkens, which hardens, which binds, and bars the doors of sinners' hearts against Christ. "O, that thou hadst known," saith our dear Lord, "the things that belong to thy peace," Luke xix. 42. But because they are "a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour," Isa. xxvii. 11. Thus, my beloved, I have shewed you what a wretched and miserable state such are in, that are thus ignorant.

The *second* bar is unbelief, which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart. This is that which makes men, (1.) That they give no credit to the report of the gospel. (2.) Neither do they yield that lovely and loyal subjection to Christ, as their Lord, where unbelief is. (3.) Where unbelief is, it keeps off the heart from confidently believing on Christ, for that which is to be had in him, and so keeps out the love of our souls: it is that which clips the wings of his mercy, Heb. iii. ult. It is that which holds the hand of his power, Matt. xiii. 58. "And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." It is that which lets the soul into perdition, John viii. 28. Rev. xxi. 8. "The unbelieving shall have their portion in the lake of fire, which is the second death." Unbelief is that which hardeneth the heart, and causeth it to depart from God. Heb. iii. 12, 13. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened." O

beloved, unbelief also is that which gives God the lie! "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son," 1 John v. 10. They believe not his promise, fear not his threatenings, nor hearken to the voice of his word: though he sets life and death before them, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet, yet they go on in the imagination of their hearts, to add sin to sin, putting the evil day far away; but draw iniquity with the cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope. O beloved! this is the state and condition of unbelievers, this is one of the bars that bolts Christ out of the heart; as all believers are in a state of salvation, so all unbelievers are in a state of damnation; "For he that believeth not, is condemned already," John iii. 18.

The *third* bar is self-conceitedness. *1st*, A self-conceited man is one who supposes himself to be what he is not. Gal. vi. 3. "If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." *2dly*, A self-conceited man is one that glorieth in his works, and despiseth others, Luke xviii. 11, 14. "And he spake this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. But the publican, whom he despised, went away rather justified: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased." *3dly*, A self-conceited man is the farthest from heaven of any man: "Verily, I say unto you, that that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you," saith our

Saviour to the self-conceited pharisee, Matt. xxi. 3. *4thly*, A self-conceited man is one that liveth the most secure in a state of sin and misery, "And it shall come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst," Deut. xxix. 19. *5thly*, A self-conceited man is the hardest to be wrought upon, and convinced of the state and condition that he is in of any man: because he thinks himself righteous and holy enough, and good and sound enough. Thus it was with the Scribes and Pharisees, who had such high thoughts of themselves, that they thought themselves to be the most holy persons in the world: Mark what Christ saith to them, John xi. 12. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." So also it is said, John vi. 28. "Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?" Note, these were very hard to be convinced and brought to own the truth. *6thly*, A self-conceited man is one that thinks that God is made up of nothing but mercy, and therefore lives in his sins, and pleaseth himself with this, that God is merciful; he lieth still in the ditch of sin, and crieth, God help, but never endeavoureth to come out: but though the Lord waiteth to be gracious, yet the Lord is of a good judgment, Isa. xxx. 10. O, this is a sad and miserable condition of a self-conceited man, this is that which keeps him from closing with Christ; this is that cursed bar that bolts the door of sinners' hearts against Christ.

The *fourth* bar is earthly mindedness. *1st*,

An earthly minded man is one that minds the things of this world more than he doth Jesus Christ; this was the case of the young man in the gospel, who came to Christ, and asked him, saying, "What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus bids him keep the commandments; he said unto him, "All these have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?" Jesus saith unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." But he being an earthly minded man would not embrace the counsel of Christ, but went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions, Matt. xix. 20—22.

2dly, An earthly minded man is one that will leave the works of God, to embrace this present world: this was Paul's complaint of Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10. "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." So also in Phil. ii. 21. he saith, "That all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." *3dly*, An earthly minded man is one that will preach false doctrine, for the love of money, and filthy lucre's sake, 1 Tim. vi. 10. "For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith." Tit. i. 10, 11. "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, which teach things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." 2 Pet. ii. 15. "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." O beloved! I could wish that this were not too much practised in this our day: but, alas! what shall I say? such is the earthly mindedness of many of the priests, that I may say of them as the blessed apostle

Paul of some in his day, Phil. iii. 19. "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." *4thly*, An earthly minded man is one that trusteth in his riches, and not in God: Prov. xi. 28. "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall." Psa. xlix. 6, 7. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. Therefore, if riches do increase, set not thine heart upon them," Psal. lxxii. 10. The blessed apostle Paul doth charge them that are rich in this world, "That they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth all things richly to enjoy," 1 Tim. vi. 17. Thus you may see, my beloved, that whosoever trusteth in uncertain riches more than in God, is an earthly minded man: it is that which bars men out of the kingdom of heaven: it is the word of Christ to his disciples, Mark x. 24, 25. "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." O beloved, it is a snare in idolatry, Col. iii. 5. and covetousness, which is idolatry; it is the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10. "For the love of money is the root of all evil." This earthly-mindedness, or covetousness, is another great sin which keeps souls from going to Christ for life and salvation: "And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. An other said, I have bought three yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have

me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come, Luke xiv 18—20.

The *fifth* bar is prejudice, which bars Christ out of the heart. Wicked and sinful men have a great prejudice against Christ; that is, against these three things of Christ. 1st, They have a prejudice against his doctrine or worship. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, this is a hard saying, who can bear it? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him, John vi. 60, 66. "And they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?" Matt. xx. 10. Sinners have a great prejudice against the doctrine and worship of Christ; they think it too pure, too spiritual, and too powerful for them to hear. 2dly, They have a great prejudice against the ministers or ambassadors of Christ; they say of them as Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him, for he never prophesied good of me," 1 Kings xxii. 8. So in 1 Kings xviii. 17. Ahab said unto Elijah, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" So Jeremiah complains of this, saying, "I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me, because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily," Jer. xx. 7, 8. So in Acts xxiv. 5. it is so of Paul, "For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews, throughout all the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;" and this is according to the word of our blessed Lord, Matt. x. 22. "And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake." 3dly, Sinners have a great prejudice against the members of Christ, and that for four reasons: (1.) Because

they are poor, Luke xxii. 23. 1 Cor. i. 26—30. Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that are poor? (2.) Because they are but few; Luke xi. 32. Matt. vii. 13. Deut. vii. 7. "For ye were the fewest of all people." Rev. iii. 4. "Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments." (3.) Because they are unlearned in the account of men; this is said of Christ, John vii. 17. "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned!" Also of Peter and John it is said, Acts iv. 13. "And when they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed," John vii. 47—49. (4.) Because they will not conform to men's inventions, so 2 Chron. xi. 13—16. "and the priests, and the Levites, that were in all Israel, resorted to Rehoboam, out of all their coasts: for they left their suburbs, and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem; for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office before the Lord. And after them out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers." See Dan. iii. 18. "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image that thou hast set up." Also in Matt. xv. 2. "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But Jesus said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by

your tradition?" See also Acts v. 28, 29. "Did not I strictly command you, that you should not teach in this name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men." See Col. ii. 21, 22. "Touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men." O, my dear brethren, this cursed prejudice is that which keeps sinners from receiving of the truth in the love of it, and a bar which bolts Christ out of the heart.

The *sixth* bar is hardness of heart, which bolts the heart of sinners against Christ: and they are hardened, *1st*, Against God, Job ix. 4. "Who hath hardened himself against God, and hath prospered?" *2dly*, Their hearts are hardened against his mercy, that it doth not draw them: Rom. ii. 4, 5. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardened and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." *3dly*, Their hearts are hardened against his judgments, that they do not tremble at them; as it is said, Exod. viii. 32. "And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go." As it is also said, Jer. v. 22. "Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? And will ye not tremble at my presence?" *4thly*, Their hearts are hardened against his word, that it doth not reform them: Prov. xxix. 1. "He that being often reprov'd, and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly

be destroyed, and that without remedy. Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee," Ps. l. 17. See in Jer. xlv. 16, 17. "As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatsoever cometh out of our own mouth." *5thly*, Their hearts are hardened against the Spirit of God, that it doth not melt them: Gen. vi. 3. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." As Stephen said to the Jews, Acts vii. 51. "Ye still-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." *6thly*, Their hearts are hardened against all the means of grace, or gracious invitations from the people of God: "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped the ear, and made the heart like an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of Hosts sent to them by his Spirit in the former prophets," Zech. vii. 11, 12. "They are like the deaf adder, that stoppeth his ear, which will not hearken unto the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely," Ps. lviii. 4, 5. O, dear friends! this is another bar which bolts Christ out of the hearts of poor sinners. Thus beloved, I have shewed you what the bars are that bolts the door of our hearts against Christ, that we do not hear his voice and open the door.

Secondly, The second thing which is here to be explained, is, what this voice is which sinners are to hear? It is the voice of Christ, he is speaking to poor sinners, to open the door of their hearts, that he may come in and sup with them. There are two sorts of voices by which Christ

speareth to the soul ; inward voices and outward voices.

1st, Inward voices. (1.) The voice of conscience. The Lord Jesus speaks to sinners by their consciences. It is said of the Jews, John viii. 2. They were convicted by their own consciences : so Paul saith, Rom. ix. 1. " My conscience heareth me witness." And of the Gentiles, Paul saith, Rom. ii. 15. That they did by nature the things contained in the law, their conscience also bearing them witness : and as Paul saith, 2 Cor. i. 12. " Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." O friends ! God preacheth to you many times by your consciences, which speaketh to you secretly and powerfully, condemning and reproving you for iniquities. O therefore, hear the voice of conscience, for it is the voice of Christ : hear, I say, and hearken to it, and let Christ in, that he may sup with you. (2.) Christ speaks to us by the voice of his Spirit, as he did to the old world, Gen. vi. 3. " My Spirit shall not always strive with man." And as he did to the Jews, Acts vii. 51. " Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye." So in John xvi. 8. Christ tells us, that the Spirit should convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. O, the ever blessed God speaks to the world by his blessed Spirit, striving with them, convincing of them, and reproving of them for their iniquities, that their souls may believe in him, and live with him to all eternity.

2dly, There are outward voices by which Christ speaks to sinners. (1.) By the voice of his word, which is the preaching of the gospel ; that is, the word of reconciliation. O sinner ! when thou hearest the word read, thou hearest

the voice of Christ: Col. i. 5. "Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;" as Christ saith, John v. 39. "Search the scriptures, for they are they which testify of me." The voice of the scriptures is the voice of Christ; and as Christ speaks to us by them here, so he will judge us by them hereafter: Rom. ii. 16. "God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, according to my gospel:" John xii. 48. Where Christ saith, "The word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (2.) Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his rod, by afflictions, and tribulations, and judgments. Micah vi. 9. "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." (3.) Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his servants, as in Isa. l. 10. "Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant?" So in 2 Cor. v. 20. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." So in Matt. xviii. "He that heareth you, heareth me." O sinner! Christ speaks to you by the voice of his servants, by his ministers and members, who beseech you, and entreat you to be reconciled, that you may have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Having thus briefly shewed you what the voices are,

I shall in the *third* place, come to shew you what the door is that Christ stands and knocks at, which sinners are to open and let him in.

The *first* door which sinners should open unto Christ, is the door of their thoughts: I say, we must open the door of our thoughts to him,

that God may be in our thoughts, and Christ in our thoughts, and the Spirit of life and power in our thoughts, and eternity in our thoughts, heaven and judgment in our thoughts: "Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart," 1 Chron. xxix. 18. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" Ps. cxxxix. 17. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul," Ps. lxxix. 29. O, this is the first door of our hearts which believers open to their beloved Lord.

The *second* is the door of consideration which sinners should open to Christ: "O, that they were wise, and understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Deut. xxxii. 29. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider," Isa. i. 3. "The tabret, and pipe, and harp, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands," Isa. v. 12. But now, those that have opened this door to Christ, they consider their way, "The upright considereth his ways," Prov. xxi. 29. "And the wondrous works of God," Job xxxvii. 14. And what great things God hath done for him," 1 Sam. xii. 24. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways," Hag. i. 5. And this is the second door of the heart.

The *third* door is the door of affection which sinners should open to Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul," Deut. vi. 5. "If any man receive not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha," 1 Cor. xvi. 22. "Grace

be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity," Eph. vi. 24. "Set your affections on things above, and not on things beneath," Col. iii. 2. This door of love and affection must be opened to Christ, that he may come into your hearts, and be your nearest and dearest, your joy and delight, that you may have reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, and communion with the Holy Ghost. And this is the third door of the heart.

The *fourth* is the door of desire, which must be opened to Christ, or else he cannot come into our hearts, and sup with us. O sinners! you must desire and thirst after Christ vehemently, and say, as the church doth in the last of the Canticles, "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices:" So in Rev. xxii. 20. "Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly." So with the Psalmist, Ps. lxxiii. 25. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth to be desired besides thee." And with the church, Isa. xxvi. 9. "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early; for the desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." So with Paul, "I desire to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. This is the fourth door of the heart which you must open to Christ, without which there is no supping with him, nor he with you.

The *fifth* is the door of estimation, which sinners must open to Christ; that is, to prize him, and to value him as more precious than all other things besides: So do believers, 1 Pet. ii. 7. "Unto you therefore which believe, he is

precious:" And, with Paul, "Do count all things but dung and dirt to gain him:" And, also with Moses, "to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," Heb. xi. 26. O! these blessed souls that have opened this door to Christ, he is to them all lovely, the chief among ten thousands, yea, he is better than rubies, "and all things that thou canst desire are not to be compared unto him," Prov. iii. 15. So it must be with you, poor souls, you must look upon Christ as most lovely, most precious, most desirable, and most glorious: thus he is to the Father, to the holy angels, and to the saints. And this is the fifth door of the heart.

The *sixth* is the door of a good conversation, which sinners as well as saints must open to Christ; "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 20. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Tit. ii. 11, 12. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness," 2 Pet. iii. 11. Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ. Ps. l. 23. "And to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God." This is the sixth door of the heart, to wit, a good conversation; this also must be opened to Christ, that he may come in, and sup with us, and we with him, that our souls may have fellowship and communion with him.

And thus I have briefly shewed you, beloved,

what the doors are that must be opened to Christ. Now, having done with the explanation, I come to the application of the point; and as I have opened it unto you, that you might see it, and proved it unto you, that you might believe it; I shall now apply it, that you may receive it. Is it so, beloved, that the hearts of sinners are thus barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus?

USE I. By way of information. This may be of use to inform us of the sad and miserable condition of all unconverted persons: "They are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; they are without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world," Eph. ii. 12. O sinners, this is your condition, who are graceless and Christless persons. And though this be sad, yet this is not all; for your hearts are barred and bolted against the Lord of life and glory. O thou that hearest or readest this, how canst thou but tremble to think that thy heart should be thus barred and bolted against Jesus Christ, with ignorance, with unbelief, self-conceitedness, earthly-mindedness, prejudice, and hardness of heart? And yet all this while open to sin, to Satan, and the world, which are cruel enemies to the soul. That I may hasten you out of this condition, if it be the will of God, as the angel did Lot out of Sodom, Gen. xix.; I shall turn my discourse into an exhortation.

USE II. And first of all, Let me exhort you whose hearts are thus barred and bolted against Jesus Christ, to hear his voice, and open the door.

First, To hear his voice. O sinners, Christ

speaks to you by your consciences, by his Spirit, by his word, by his rod, and by his servants. O you men and women of this city, God hath spoken to you by all these voices, but you have turned the deaf ear to Christ; "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it," Mic. vi. 9. O London, London! God speaks to thee by his judgments, and because thou wouldst not hear the voice of his word, he hath made thee to feel the stroke of his rod. O great city! how hath the plague broke in upon thee, because of thy abominations! "Thus they provoked him with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them," Ps. cvi. 29. O you of this city, how is the wrath of God kindled against you, that such multitudes of thousands are fallen within thy borders, by the noisome pestilence, God's immediate sword! London! how are thy streets thinned, thy widows increased, and thy burying-places filled, thy inhabitants fled, thy trade decayed! Oh! therefore lay to heart, you that are yet alive, all these things, and turn from your wicked ways, that the cry of your prayers may outery the cry of your sins, and be like the city of Nineveh, who believed God, and gave credit to Jonah's word, who humbled themselves, and fasted, and cried mightily unto the Lord, Jonah iii. 5. O let not the heathen outstrip christians! Did Nineveh repent and turn from their wicked ways, and shall not London? May be you may think, my brethren, that all is well now, and that God is friends with you, because the sickness decreaseth and abateth; I say, blessed be God for it: but be not deceived, God is not mocked; to whomsoever God bestows

great mercies, if they abound in great wickedness, he will inflict great punishments upon them. Alas! beloved, do your sins increase, and doth that abate? Is there a turning from sin, and a turning to God? Is there a reformation and amendment of life among you? If this be so, then you may hope that God hath done afflicting of you: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wickedness, then will I forgive their sins, and heal their land," 2 Chron. vii. 14. But if you remain still as profane as before, as superstitious as before, as carnal as before, as lukewarm as before, as hard-hearted and as cruel as before, as proud and vain as before; I say, if it be thus with you, God hath not yet done with London, but hath other judgments to pour out upon you, though he cause this to cease. Do but see how God dealt with the Jews in this case, Amos iv. 6—13. "I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your palaces; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have also withholden the rain from you, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have smitten you with blasting and mildew; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have sent among you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt, your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as fire-brands plucked out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore

thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Therefore, my dear brethren, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, and for your souls' sake, hear his voice, that you may be prosperous on earth, and glorious in heaven.

Second, Let me exhort you, and O that I could prevail with you, to persuade you of this city to three things: (1.) That you would thoroughly turn from your evil ways, and amend your doings, that God may repent him of the evil, which otherwise he may bring upon you. O see what the Lord saith, Jer. xxvi. 3. "If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them, because of their doings." See ver. 13. "Therefore now, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath purposed against you." Also mark what the Lord speaketh by the prophet, Jer. vii. 3. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place," ver. 5. "If you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings." O beloved, the Lord our God is willing to heal, willing to hear, and willing to forgive. Great cities are places which are usually guilty of great sins, great provocations, and great abominations; and for this cause God hath destroyed and overthrown many cities, as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xix. 24. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven." Also Admah and Zeboim, Hos. xi. 8. "How shall I make thee as Admah, and set thee as Zeboim?" So Jeru-

saalem and other cities were destroyed by God for their sins and wickedness, 2 Chron. xxxv. 19. Jer. liii. 13, 14. Now, see what the apostle Peter saith to this, 2 Pet. ii. 6. "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly." O London! repent, that it may not be so with thee. O ye people, rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord, who is willing to receive you, that so his judgments may be diverted, your former mercies restored, and his blessing poured down upon you. (2.) That you would dearly love, and highly prize the precious saints of the Most High God which are among you. These are they of whom the world is not worthy, Heb. xi. 38. God prizes them as his jewels and treasures, Mal. iii. 17. Exod. xix. 5. God calls them the dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. xii. 7. "They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Pet. ii. 9. Oh! therefore "he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes," Ps. cv. 14. O beloved, nations, and cities, and kings are blessed for their sakes: see Gen. xii. 2, 3. "And thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee." O London! in this thou art happy; yea, more happy than any one city upon the face of the earth, that I know or have heard of, because thou hast within thy borders, more righteous, more saints, more true believers, who are still sighing and mourning for thy sins, praying for thy peace, and seeking and desiring thy eternal good. (3.) And *lastly*, Let me exhort you to open the door, and let Christ in, into

your thoughts, into your minds, into your affections, into your desires, into your estimations, and into your conversations. O beloved, keep Christ out no longer, but let him into your hearts and souls, that he may make you rich, rich in faith, rich in knowledge, rich in assurances, rich in privileges, rich in experience, and rich in good works. O therefore, let not sin be let in, and Christ shut out. O let Jesus Christ into your hearts; for if you shut the door against Christ, he will shut against you, The door of mercy; the door of acceptance; the door of salvation.

First, The door of mercy will be shut against you. Such whom Christ calls to, and they will not hear, they shall call, but Christ will not hear, Prov. i. 24. "Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded." Ver. 28. "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Mine eye shall not spare, neither shall I have pity, and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them," Ezek. viii. 18. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring evil upon them which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them," Jer. xi. 11. "Because they have behaved themselves ill in their doings," Mic. iii. 4. Thus, my beloved, you see how the door of God's mercy will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ.

Secondly, The door of acceptance will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ: "Thus saith the Lord unto his people, Thus have they loved to wander, there-

fore the Lord doth not accept them. When they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt-offerings and oblations, I will not accept them." Jer. xiv. 10, 12. "To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me," Jer. vi. 20. "I hate, I despise your feast-days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies: and though you offer me offerings, I will not accept them," Amos v. 21, 22. O beloved, those that will not accept of Christ, shall not be accepted in Christ, "Who hath made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. i. 6.

Thirdly, The door of salvation will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ: "He that made you will not save you, and he that formed you will shew you no favour." But as ye have refused to open the door of your hearts to your Saviour, so will he refuse to own you as his people, and to open the door of salvation for you: See the words of our blessed Lord himself, Luke xiii. 25, 26, 28. "When once the master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are: Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

THE GREAT DAY OF GOD'S WRATH

Rev. vi. 17.—*For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?*

EVERY man's thoughts run now like Nebuchadnezzar's, with a desire to know what shall come to pass hereafter, or what things time will bring forth, Dan. ii. 29. There is nothing in the womb of time, but what was first in the womb of God. Now, this book of the Revelation shews us these three things: 1. The state and condition of the true church of God upon earth, under the power and reign of antichrist. 2. The rise, the reign, and the rage of antichrist in the world. 3. The quiet, blessed, and glorious state and condition of the true church here below, after the ruin and downfall of antichrist, 2 Thess ii. 8. "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming;" this is declared in heaven, and declared on earth.

This chapter out of which my text is taken, shews us seven things: (1.) You may see what God's dreadful judgments are, by which he cuts off and destroys the inhabitants of the earth, for their sin and wickedness; they are likened and compared to horses, as you may see from ver. 5—8. Here you have a red horse, the sword; a black horse, the famine; a pale horse, the pestilence, or plague, which leads to death. Horses

are creatures which run to and fro, and so do God's judgments from house to house, from street to street, from city to city, from town to town, and from one place to another: "And the Lord said, Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity," Ezek. ix. 5. So Jer. v. 1, 2, 4. Horses are creatures which are very swift in their motion, they run many miles in a little time; and therefore men ride them post: God's judgments are also very swift, they do much execution in a little time: "So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed; and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba, seventy thousand men," 2 Sam. xxi. 15. 2 Chron. xxx. 21. You may also see a proof of this, by what God hath done to London, when there fell of the people above a thousand in one day. (2.) You may see here where all the holy martyrs and witnesses of Jesus Christ are, "who have been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus, they are under the altar," ver. 9. that is, under the glorious protection of Christ in heaven: "They are before the throne of God, serving him day and night; and the Lamb leads them to the living fountain, and God wipes away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 15, 17. (3.) You may see also the cause for which these blessed saints were slain; it was "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," chap. vi. 9. (4.) Here you may see that all the saints' precious blood, which hath been spilt from time to time by the whore of Babylon, crieth aloud, day and night, to God for vengeance upon Babylon, chap. vi. 10. (5.) You have here the answer of God in relation to the saints'

cry: "And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled," chap. vi. 11. (6.) You may see here what dreadful and terrible things followed upon the opening the sixth seal, ver. 12—14. "And lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, and the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." These are the visible judgments of God which are come upon the antichristian crew. And, *lastly*, This chapter shews us what will be the state and condition of those men at that day, who are found enemies to God and his people, ver. 15, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains;" ver 16. "And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Now this brings me to the words of my text, which shews us the reason of this outcry: "For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The words of my text contain two things: A reason and a question. The former part is the ground or reason of this outcry here made by the kings and great men of the earth, together with every bond man and every free man: "For the great day of his wrath is come." The latter

part is a question proposed about standing at that day: "And who shall be able to stand?"

The point of doctrine which I shall lay down from these words, is this:

Doctr. That the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath.

In handling of this point, I shall shew you four things. 1. There are some days greater than others. 2. The nature and property of this great day. And, 3. Who they are that will not be able to stand in the day of God's wrath. 4. The use and application.

First, I shall shew you, beloved, that there are some great days spoken of in the Scripture; Jer. xxx. 7. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's troubles, but he shall be saved out of it."

The second great day you have in Hosca i. 11. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel."

The third great day you have in Joel ii. 31. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

The fourth great day you have in Mal. iv. 5. "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

The fifth great day is this in my text, "For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The sixth great day you have in Rev. xvi. 14. "For they are the spirits of devils working mi-

raeles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

The seventh and last great day you have in the Epistle of Jude, ver. 6. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

Thus, beloved, you see that there are some days greater than others, which the scripture calls great days, because of the greatness of the work which God doth, and will do, in those days.

Second, I shall now shew you the nature and property of this great day in my text, which is called, "The great day of God's wrath." O my brethren! this will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and put far from them the evil day, which is now hastening upon them.

And first of all, this day will be a day of astonishment to the wicked and ungodly, as it is said, Deut. xxviii. 28. "The Lord shall smite them with madness and blindness, and astonishment of heart." O, it will be with the wicked, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii. 24, 25. who was astonished to behold the works and wonders of God, which the Lord wrought for the deliverance of those that put their trust in him; "Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? they answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have

no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." O sinners! do but see here how this proud Nebuchadnezzar was astonished at the beholding of this sight: here are three things that did astonish this great king.

First, To see the fire, whose nature is to burn and consume, to have no power to seize upon the bodies of these men. Fire is one of the cruelest creatures: it is a merciless creature, and therefore the torments of hell are set forth by fire, Matt. xxv. 41. "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The second thing which did astonish Nebuchadnezzar, was, to see the servants of the Lord walking in the fiery furnace: "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the flame." These were cast in bound, but now they are loose; now, that the fire should have power on their bonds, and not on their bodies, O, this caused astonishment in Nebuchadnezzar.

The third thing that did astonish him, was, to see their number not decreased but increased: "Did not we cast in three men bound into the fire! and lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire: and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God." Now this did astonish this great king: now, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar here, so will it be with the wicked in this great day. O, you that speak now proudly, look highly, and walk contemptuously, it will astonish you to see God's judgments poured out upon you, and his wrath wax hot against you, till there be no remedy. O, do but see that text, Jer. li. 38. "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonish-

ment, and an hissing without an inhabitant." Thus it will be with the ungodly at that day.

2. It will be a day of terror to those that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of Christ: the terror of God will be upon such, as it was upon those cities, Gen. xxxv. 5. O, ye graceless persons that now fear not God, nor tremble at his word, he will make you then tremble, as he did Belshazzar, when he beheld the handwriting, Dan. v. 6. "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." O, ye drunkards and swearers, you that despise reproof, and hate instruction, and set at nought all God's counsel; know this, that the day of God's wrath will be a day of terror to you, which will make your hearts to sink within you, your countenance to change, your joints to be loosed, and your ears to tingle, when the terrors of the Almighty God set themselves in array against you. Therefore, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. v. 11. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

3. This day of God's wrath will be a day of distress to the wicked: "When your fear shall come as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you," Prov. i. 27. So see that in Zeph. i. 15, 17, 18. "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung: neither their silver nor

their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." O, the distress that ungodly men will be in, in that day, which will make them cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The God of heaven will bring distress upon all sorts of men, which shall be found ungodly, and their honour shall not deliver them, nor their gold deliver them, nor their silver deliver them, nor the greatness of their multitudes deliver them, but distress will come upon them, as it did upon Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. "And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me neither by prophets nor by dreams." See Luke xxi. 23. "And there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people." Can you hear this, and not tremble at it, O ye that are profane?

4. This day of God's wrath will be a day of great contempt to the ungodly: "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring unto contempt all the honourable of the earth," Isa. xxiii. 9. O the enemies of the Lord, and such as oppose his truth, will be then hissed at. O do but see that place, Jer. li. 37. "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." The Lord will pour contempt upon all sorts of men, which have sided with the whore of Babylon, and drunk of her cup: they will not know whither to go, nor where to hide their heads, but every one will hiss at them, and have them in derision, saying, these are they who said, "It

is in vain to serve the Lord, and what profit is there in keeping of his ordinances, and in walking mournfully before the Lord of hosts? Who counted saints sots, and godliness to be madness, therefore will they be contemptible before the Lord, angels, and good men. O think of this, you that speak proudly and blasphemously against God, and his people; know assuredly, that God will speak to you in his wrath, and vex you in his sore displeasure. "He that sitteth in heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have you in derision," Ps. ii. 4.

5. This day of God's wrath will be a day of great destruction: "Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens? That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath," Job. xxi. 29, 30. "In this day the Lord will destroy both evil persons and evil things, men and their idols, men and their inventions: every plant which is not of God's planting, shall be plucked up; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish in that day; a man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they have made, each one for himself to worship, to the moles, and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth," Isa. ii. 17—21. All false ways, false worship, and false doctrines, shall fall in that day, this will be a reaping day, God will empty the earth, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, chap. xxiv. 1—3. "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad

the inhabitants thereof: and it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with the master; as with the maid, so with the mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him: the land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word." So Joel iii. 13, 14. "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." So in Rev. xiv. 15. the angels are appointed to reap down the earth. O let every one that hears or reads these sayings, let them hear and fear, and tremble at them: for this will be a day of great destruction to the wicked and ungodly.

6. This will be a great day of wrath, as it is said in the words of my text, "For the great day of his wrath is come." But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire. O beloved! this is not the day of man's wrath. Men have had their day of reigning and raging, and lording over God's people, but that is over and gone, and now God's day is come, and this is the day of his wrath, and woe to the earth, and woe to the sea, and woe to the whore of Babylon, for the hour of her judgment is come. O beloved: God's wrath will be very terrible to the wicked: (1.) It will tear them in pieces like a lion: "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I will tear, and go away: I will take away, and none shall rescue him," Hosea v. 14. So Job

xvi. 9. "The Lord teareth me in his wrath." So Psal. l. 22. "Now consider this, all ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." (2.) It consumes like fire: "For behold the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall leave them neither root nor branch," Mal. iv. 1. "Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath," Ezek. xxi. 31. (3.) It swallows up like a dragon, "He hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon," Jer li. 34. "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them," Ps. xxi. 9. O! the wrath of the Almighty is that which tears like a lion, consumes like a fire, and swallows up like a dragon: and therefore it is called in the scripture, fierce wrath, 2 Kings xxiii. 26. Ps. lxxviii. 49. "He casts upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble." So in Rev. xvi. 19. it is said, "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Thus, beloved, I have shewed you the nature and property of this great day, spoken of in my text:—A day of astonishment. A day of terror. A day of distress. A day of contempt. A day of destruction. A day of wrath.

I shall now come, in the *third* place, to shew

you, who they are that will not be able to stand in this great day.

1st, Such as are profane will not be able to stand in this great day, but "say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us," Luke xxiii. 30. "Because they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore I will east thee, as profane, out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire," Ezek. xxviii. 16. So Rom. ii. 9. "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil." O ye profane! ye that now wallow in your sins, as the sow in the mire, and eat up sin, as they eat bread, and drink up iniquity like water; O! let me tell you, you will not be able to stand in the day of wrath, nor in the day of judgment; but destruction will be your end, and everlasting misery your portion. O! that such would but consider these two places of scripture, Phil. iii. 18. "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." So also that in 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10 "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. Though these men may now carry it out with a high hand, as if they had made a covenant with death, and with hell they were at an agreement; but your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the over-

flowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it, Isa. xxviii. 15, 18.

2dly, Such as are ignorant will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and 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. i. 7—9. O! you that are ignorant and blind, do you hear this? You are some of those who will not be able to stand in this great day, but say to the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Beloved, I told you in the morning, that ignorance is one of those cursed sins that bar and bolt Christ out of the heart: it is that which shuts them out from having mercy and favour with the Lord: see Isa. xxvii. 11. "For it is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will shew them no favour."

3dly, Such as have sided with antichrist against Christ, will not be able to stand in this great day; such as have drunk of the whore's cup of fornication, shall drink of the cup of God's indignation, which is poured out without mixture: "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 wine of the wrath of God, which is poured without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the pre-

sence of the Lamb," Rev. xiv. 9, 10. O beloved! all those who have been partakers with her in sinning, shall be partakers with her in suffering; therefore, come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," Rev. xviii. 4. All that cursed brood of Rome, with all the anti-christian crew, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, but will be consumed like fuel, and devoured as stubble fully dry: see Nah. i. 9, 10. "What do you imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time. For while they be folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." So that all those who have assisted antichrist against Christ, against his government, against his gospel, against his Spirit, against his worship, against his ministers, against his members, and against his glorious cause; I say, they will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, but "cry to the rocks and the mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," Rev. vi. 16.

4thly, Such as have a form of godliness, and deny the power thereof, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away," 2 Tim. iii. 5. All idle and slothful professors, who have nothing of God, nor nothing of Christ, nor nothing of the Spirit, nor nothing of the power of the word in them, having only a notional or formal profession. Such, I say, will not be able to stand in this great day: see Rom. ii. 17, 19, 20.

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law." But mark what God saith to such, ver. 23. "Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God?" ver. 24. "For the name of God is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles, through you." O! are there not many among us who profess God in words, but deny him in works; who have a name to live, and are dead; who have a form, but not the power; who have all without, and nothing within? Like those in Matt. vii. 22. there spoken of by Christ; "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ver. 23. And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Stilly, Such as are idle shepherds, and blind guides, will not be able to stand in that great day of God's wrath, but will "cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the wrath of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the face of the Lamb." For this see a few scriptures among many, what the Lord speaketh against the idle shepherds, and blind guides, who feed themselves, and not the flock of Christ, see Ezek. xxxiv. 2—4. "Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves: should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened,

neither have ye healed them which were sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost: but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them." ver. 9, 10. "Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more: for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness; saith the Lord. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets, Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall; for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land," Jer. xxiii. 11, 15. See also Hosea iv. 1—11. Mark also what our Lord Jesus Christ saith, Matt. xxiii. 14. of idle shepherds and blind guides, "Wo unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." Thus you see, beloved, that the scriptures with open mouth, do speak forth the desolations and calamities which will befall idle shepherds and blind guides in that day; and if they cannot stand when his wrath is kindled but a little, O! what will they do when wrath shall come upon them to the utmost, even the fierceness of his wrath? Then will they not be able to stand.

6thly, Such as are hypocrites will not be able to stand in this day of God's wrath, but being,

if it were possible, to hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth: "And the people shall be as the burning of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off, what I have done, and ye that are near acknowledge my might. The sinners of Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning?" See Job viii. 13. "So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish." Ver. 14. "Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spider's web." Ver. 15. "He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." O thou hypocrite, whoever thou art! notwithstanding thou hast got the talking part of religion, and makest a shew of godliness, yet all this while thou art a dissembler in thy heart; see Jer. xlii. 20, 21, 22. "For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God, and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it. And now I have this day declared it to you, but ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now therefore, know certainly, that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go and to sojourn." Do you hear this, you that are hypocrites, that God hates such, and will punish them with great punishments? He will cut them asunder, and give them their portion with the reprobates, and cast-aways, in everlasting burning, Matt. xxiv. 51.

Thirdly, and Lastly, All such as love not the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity, will not be able to stand in this day of God's wrath; whether they be Turks or Jews, Papists, or Protestants, bond or free, all is one, for they will not be able to stand if they love not the Lord Jesus Christ: see 1 Cor. xvi. 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." O beloved! all those who shall be found unbelievers, unconverted, and unregenerate in this day of God's wrath, be they kings, or great men, or rich men, or chief captains, or mighty men, or free men, they shall cry to the mountains and rocks, saying, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come." Thus, beloved, I have shewed you briefly, in seven particulars, who they are that will not be able to stand in the day of God's wrath. 1. The profane. 2. The ignorant. 3. They that side with antichrist against Christ. 4. The formal professor. 5. The idle shepherds and blind guides. 6. The hypocrites. 7. and lastly, They that love not the Lord Jesus Christ.

Object. But, beloved, it may be you will say, if none of these be able to stand, who then will?

Answer. I answer, all those who shall be found having on their wedding garments, and in the Spirit of the Lamb, will be able to stand in this day, and they are these:—(1.) They that overcome, Rev. ii. 10. ; iii. 21. ; xii. 11; and xxi. 11.—(2.) They that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. xii. 17. ; vi. 9.—(3.) They that stand

with the Lamb, Rev. xiv. 1, 14.—(4.) They that have their Father's name written in their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1.—(5.) They that sing a new song, chap. xiv. 3.—(6.) They that are redeemed from the earth, ver. 3.—(7.) They that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, ver. 4.—(8.) They that are not defiled with the pollutions of the whore of Babylon, and in their mouths is found no guile, ver. 5. Now, beloved, these are they that will be able to stand in that great day of God's wrath, when others will not be able but call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them. I shall now proceed, in the fourth place, to the use and application of the point.

USE 1. And first of all, by way of information. If it be so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath? Then this may inform us of three things: 1. That as men have had their day, so God will have his day. Men have had their day of sinning, God will have his day of punishing. Men have had their day of treasuring up wrath, God will have his day of pouring out of his wrath. Men have had their day of defiling, God will have his day of refining. Men have had their day of fornication, God will have his day of indignation: "For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, so it shall be done unto thee, thy reward shall return upon thine own head," Obad. 15. 2. That though God beareth with sinners in the day of his patience, yet he will not bear with them in the day of his wrath. "Go through the city, and smite it; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity," Ezek. ix. 5. O beloved!

in the day of God's patience he beareth with you, and waiteth to be gracious. O, how many hundred years hath God borne with the whore of Babylon, notwithstanding of her great provocations and wickedness? But now in the day of his wrath, the Lord will not spare her, but pour out his wrath and indignation upon her to the utmost: "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her, Rev. xviii. 8. O see that terrible word! Isa xlii. 13, 14. "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace, I have been still, and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman, I will destroy and devour at once." Do you see this, sinners, how God is resolved to proceed against you in the day of his wrath, though he bear with you in the day of his patience? 3. This day of God's wrath will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, as appears by what hath been said. O sinners, it will be a day of astonishment, a day of terror, a day of distress, a day of contempt, a day of destruction, a day of wrath. O, it will be "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness," Joel ii. 2. "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord." The mighty man shall cry there bitterly: that day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of thick darkness," Zeph. i. 14, 15. O, who is able to express the terror of the

Almighty in the day of his wrath? O, that every soul that hears me this day, would lay it to heart, and consider with themselves, that they may be able to stand in this day of God's wrath. And so much for this use of information.

USE II. By way of examination and self-trial: O friends, how much doth it concern you and me to examine our standing, that we may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, which is coming so fast upon us. O you see, how that his wrath is but a little kindled, and yet how hard a matter it is for men to stand, and to abide it! Thousands have been sent to their graves by it, and many hundreds have left their habitations because of it, and are fled out of the city into several parts of this kingdom for refuge. O what a sad and doleful place hath this city been for several weeks past! The greatest trade which hath been here amongst us, was to bury the dead, and attend the sick. O now, my brethren, if this little be so much, what will it be when the great day of his wrath is come? Who will then be able to stand? O therefore, examine yourselves, and try yourselves,—examine your faith, whether it be true; your knowledge, whether it be sanctified; your hope, whether it be purified; your love, whether it be sincere; your evidences, whether they be sound; your hearts, whether they be gracious; your desires, whether they be holy; your ends, whether they be right, and your conversations, whether they be heavenly, that you may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, in the day of death, and in the day of judgment, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

USE III. By way of exhortation. And I shall be brief, lest I should intrude too much upon your patience; but I hope you will not think

the time long; for it may be the last sermon that I may preach, or you may hear. Well, beloved, it is so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath! Give me leave therefore to exhort you to these three things.

First, You that are sinners, to repent of your sins: "For he that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13, 14. "He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Happy is the man that feareth always; but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief." O sinners! you have grievously sinned against God: you have deserved as many hells as you have committed sins; you have sinned against his mercies; you have abused his patience; you have resisted his Spirit; you have disobeyed his gospel; you have made light of his ministers, and have hated his members. O sinners! all this have you done, and yet the Lord hath spared you; and though you have sinned at so high a rate, yet God doth give you space to repent. O let his goodness lead you to repentance, that you die not in your sins. O therefore, for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, be prevailed withal: why will ye die, seeing God will have you live? Why will ye damn yourselves? Why will ye go to hell, seeing God would have you go to heaven.

O do but see what the Lord saith, Isa. i. 18. "Come, sinners," saith the Lord, "and let me and thee reason together, though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be white like wool." Verily, if you have not hearts of stone, methinks these words should melt you, to see the love, the

pity, the mercy, and willingness of God to do your souls good.

Secondly, Let me exhort you to get an interest in the Lord Jesus, that you may be able to stand in the day of his wrath: O sinners! there will be no standing before Christ without an interest in Christ. O sinners! go to Christ, his promises are open to you, his arms are open to embrace you, his Spirit is ready to assist you, and his people to own you, and his angels are ready to attend you, and heaven itself is ready to receive you. O sinners! if you will but come to Christ, you shall be reconciled to the Father, justified by the Son, you shall be sanctified by the Spirit, you shall be delivered from wrath, you shall be made the children of God, you shall have your names enrolled in the book of love. And, finally, you shall be received into everlasting glory at the end of your days. O therefore, let this prevail with you to go to Christ, for light, for life, for grace, for strength, and for comfort and peace, that "of his fulness you may receive grace for grace," John i. 16.

Thirdly and lastly, Let me now exhort you, who are dead to sin, separated from the world, espoused to Christ, reconciled to the Father, to "walk worthy of God, who hath called you to his kingdom and glory," 1 Thess. ii. 12. O ye precious saints, let me exhort you to keep your lamps burning, your loins girded, your lives holy, and your hearts upright, your judgments sound, your consciences pure, and your garments unspotted; and be not troubled at God's dealings and dispensations, though he take away from you those that are precious to you: for as he sends the wicked to hell, that they may dishonour him no more, so he takes away the

righteous to heaven, that they may glorify him more. There seems to be four reasons why God sweeps away the righteous with the wicked by the pestilence. 1. Because they have finished their work. 2. From the evil time. 3. For the humbling the rest that remain behind. 4. For the hardening of the wicked. Therefore, ye precious saints, ye ought to be quiet, and to submit to the will of God, and to say as David, "I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it," Ps. xxxix. 9. Now, I beseech you, both saints and sinners, to consider of these things; and the God of heaven give you understanding in all things which concern his glory, and your eternal good.

WATCH AND PRAY.

Mark xiv. 38.—*Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.*

As Christ is the church's friend, so Satan is the church's enemy.—Her greatest enemy, her cruellest enemy, her worst enemy, her continual enemy. He that makes war against the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. xii. 17. The devil envieth our happiness, and seeketh our ruin; 1. By tempting of us, 1 Cor. xv. 2. By perse-

cuting of us, 1 Thess. ii. 15. 3. By accusing of us, Rev. xii. 10. 4. By hindering of us, 1 Thess. ii. 18. 5. By beguiling of us, 2 Cor. xi. 3. O beloved! the devil is the great troubler of saints, the great deceiver of nations, the great devourer of souls, the great enemy of mankind, "who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. But now, here is the church's happiness, that Christ is her friend, Cant. iv. 15. Her greatest friend, her dearest friend, her loving friend, her best friend, her constant friend, her sympathising friend, her mighty friend. By his blood she overcomes the devil, by his grace she resists the devil, by his might she treads him under her feet; and by faith in his word she quenches all the fiery darts of the devil. O, though Satan hate us, Christ loves us; though Satan condemn us, Christ justifies us; though Satan accuse us, Christ clears us; though Satan tempt us, Christ strengthens us; though Satan seek to destroy us, Christ preserves us; though Satan buffet us, Christ assists us—by his spirit; by his promises; by his graces; by his presence; by his word; by his intercession; by his power; by his ministers; by his example; by his prayer. O, the Lord Jesus hath a great love for us, and care of us; and therefore he counsels us in the words of my text, "to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation." These are the words of the Lord Jesus unto his disciples; they having been slumbering and sleeping, when Christ had commanded them to watch. They contain, A supposition of their entering into temptation, upon which Christ grounds a mandatory exhortation, shewing them the way how to avoid it, in these words, "Watch and pray," &c.

Hence we may raise these these two points of doctrine.

DOCT. I. That a child of God is attended with temptations.

DOCT. II. That the only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is to watch and pray.

For the first of these, we may observe this method, 1. Of the tempter. 2. Of the temptation. 3. Of the manner of their working, with reasons why they have so much power.

I. Of the tempter. We have four several tempters in scripture :

First, God tempting man, that is, trying and proving him, as in Deut. viii. 2. Thus God tempted Abraham, Gen. xii. 1. which is interpreted, Heb. xi. 17. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac," &c. This tempting is not evil, nor for our hurt; but God tempts upon these accounts, 1. For the trial of his people's fear, as in that of Abraham, Gen. xii. 12. "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thine only son from me." 2. God tempts for the trial of their faith, he proves them in some things that are near and dear to them, perhaps deprives them of some special necessary mercy, to see whether they can trust him, and believe in the want of it, whether they can live by faith upon the God of mercies, when the mercies are gone, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith," Heb. x. 38. Rom. i. 17. And it is said of Abraham, "When he was tried, he offered up Isaac," Heb. xi. 17. Again, 3. The Lord tempts for the proof of their obedience; and thus the Lord speaks to Abraham after that trial, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Why? "Because thou hast obeyed my voice."

In all this, the Lord seeth what is in our hearts, as he said to Israel of old, Deut viii. 2. We may find man tempting God too, that is, provoking God to jealousy and wrath, this did the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah, Deut. vi. 16. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God." Exod. xvii. 2. "Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?" But first of all, we tempt God when we doubt of his power; as when we are in any strait or difficulty, we mistrust the power of God to deliver us, or bestow any mercy upon us which we stand in need of: as that lord did on whose hand the king leaned, who said, "If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? when God had promised in time of a famine, that "on the morrow there should be plenty," 2 Kings vii. 2.

Secondly, We tempt God, when we doubt of his mercy, for God is mercy in the abstract, and it is a part of his glorious stile; therefore he cannot endure to lose so great a part of his honour, but is provoked by it.

Thirdly, When we call his faithfulness in question, what greater disparagement, or more disgraceful thing can there be to man, than to be wrongfully accused for falsifying his word? Then how much greater provocation is it to the great God to be impeached for the breach of promise, and counted unfaithful, who cannot lie? Heb. vi. 18.

Lastly, When we murmur at the hand of God, at any of his judgments; this Israel did at Meribah, Exod. xvii. 2, 3. And this doth exceedingly inflame and excite the wrath of God; we cannot dispose of ourselves, and yet we are angry at the providence of an all-wise God: we sin, and are not troubled that God corrects us

for sin. In the next place, our lusts are tempters, as James i. 14. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own heart's lust, and enticed;" our lusts strive against us to be sinfully satisfied, and the flesh wars with the spirit, the heart sometimes alluring; and this comes to pass, 1. By presenting some sinful object: it is good not to nourish such conceptions, but strangle them in their first appearance, else sinful thoughts grow upon us. 2. By presenting some desirableness in the object: but be quick sighted; sin, however it seems fair upon some colourable pretext, is indeed, upon good deliberation, not at all to be desired, but sometimes it comes clothed in such a glorious garb, as if it meant no harm; that you must be fain to flee to God by prayer against this temptation. 3. There is a persuasion to consent to the sin; but be not easily persuaded to offend your Father. O! how will our lusts gain upon us if we do not resist! Strive with all your might; the greater your allurements to sin are, the greater the sin is. I appeal to saints' experience.

In the *fourth* and *last* place, We have the devil tempting man: he is called the tempter, Matt. iv. 1, 3. Mark i. 13. And indeed this is the grand tempter that makes use of our lusts, as a subservient organ or instrument, for his temptations against the soul; and indeed, were it not for our lusts, it would be in vain for Satan to tempt; as we see in Christ, there was nothing for Satan to take hold of, Christ being without sinful lusts, but Satan must come by word of mouth to tempt him, Matt. iv. 13. But here it may be inquired, How shall I know when Satan raiseth temptation? (1.) I answer, When it comes strongly and forcibly upon the soul, as it were

with a double power, even overflowing the soul almost at the first encounter. There is double strength in the stroke. (2.) When it is of long continuance, as that was which Paul besought the Lord thrice for, 2 Cor. xii. 8. Satan stirs up the heart afresh, and the lust of the heart; when the fire is ready to die and go out, he blows it up again, adds life and strength to the temptation, which else could not last long. The lusts, they are the combustible matter, and Satan he inflames and sets them on fire. (3.) The temptation, when though it may be weak at the first, yet at length, by degrees, it grows stronger and stronger: Satan begins to reason with and persuade the soul by plausible arguments. (4.) We may perceive the working of the serpent, the devil, when the temptation is full of wiles and subtile delusions, Eph. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Rev. ii. 24. The more intricate and full of subtilty the temptation is, the more cause there is to suspect. Satan is very busy for ensnaring the soul. (5.) The more it is direct opposition to God in his commands, or the like, we may be the more sure that it is of Satan's framing; for the heart and its lusts seek for satisfaction, and then are still, (if Satan join not) though God be not so directly opposite; but the devil strikes always at God in his temptations: or if not always, yet most frequently.

Thus much for the tempter: Now for the temptation itself. There are several sorts of temptations; but to reduce them all to those three heads, they do concern and strike at.

1st Of all, God: This being Satan's great aim to oppose God, as two enemies always in direct opposition one to another: and thus he tempts either first as to the being of God, calling in

question the very truth of the essence of the great God, causing the soul to doubt whether there be a God or no; like Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord?" &c. Exod. v. 2.

2dly, Some temptations touch upon the nature of God, as to the nature of his being, the mystery of the three distinct persons, as to their offices and operations in the individual Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; and yet all but one God, blessed for ever. Again, as to those inseparable divine attributes of God, his independency, purity, immutability, greatness, and eternity, his goodness, grace, mercy, love, patience, and justice. I say, something doubting of these things is our temptation: yea, and could Satan prevail, we should flatly deny his being, nature, properties, and all. Look sternly on, and resist strongly such temptations as these, which do immediately and presumptuously intrench upon God's sovereign and just prerogative. And, if I mistake not, a great device of Satan's in stratagem is, to persuade the creature, from all dependence upon a Creator, that so, being left to itself, and standing upon its own strength, he may more easily destroy it. For what is the creature, without the Creator's power? Again, some temptations touch our spiritual being; such as an evil heart of unbelief, mistrusting the grace of God, despairing of the goodness of our condition. Satan would raze the very foundation of spiritual existence, adoption, justification, and hopes of salvation: it is his great design to shake the very ground-work of this building, and to persuade that all is false. But this temptation is fruitless, when we build aright upon a right foundation, by faith, accompanied with repentance from dead works, upon

Christ Jesus, as the alone author and meritorious cause of our justification, and eternal glorification.

Sally, Satan by his fiery darts strikes at our well-being, to disturb our peace, by the omission of some duty, or commission of some sin: when he finds he cannot prevail to destroy our well-being, our joy and comfort. But know, though these temptations may trouble us, yet they shall never destroy us.

Now, for the manner of these temptations, how they work. (1.) When all fall under want, strait, change of providence, or the like, then is a time for temptation to work; as when Christ had fasted, and was an hungered, then comes the tempter, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," Matt. iv. 3. (2.) When we are first turning from sin to God, then we are sure to meet with a tempter, Satan will be busy. (3.) When we are troubled, dejected, disconsolated, either as to the outward or inward estate, then beware of Satan's temptations, he will be furthering our disquietments. (4.) When we are arrived to some good hopes through grace, to some confidence in the mercy of God the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, then also shall we find the battering assaults of Satan, to shake our confidence: but be sure always that the ground of your confidence be good, established upon the everlasting rock, Jesus Christ: for, if I mistake not my observation, there are two great rocks which Satan strives to split a soul upon, presumption and despair. Sometimes endeavouring to cause souls to flatter up themselves, and think grace is theirs, Christ is theirs, and all is theirs, when it is nothing so; but by this he might carry them blind to hell,

hood-winking their souls so, that they never come to see thoroughly that they are in a bad condition, but think always their condition is good. The other rock is despair; Satan striving, if he cannot blind them as he doth the other presumptuous souls, yet to make them go sorrowing all their days, thinking they shall never obtain that mercy, which others think they always had. (5.) Satan suits his temptations to our dispositions; he hath various objects for divers spirits, for the proud haughty soul, for the lustful heart, for the covetous worldling, for the prodigal son, for the rash giddy brain, for the sluggish drone, for the melancholy person, for the light cheerful spirit: especially these two, either sinking the one in the terrible ways of black and dreadful thoughts, or tossing and lifting up the other with the wind of foolish fancy. Oh! what black apprehensions shall the one have of itself and God, and what light and slight thoughts the other of their present state and of eternity. (6.) Satan aims to lull the soul asleep in carnal security; and to this end presents great sins as small, and little sins (if any there be) as none at all. But sometimes he will add by temptations, as it were, a multiplying glass to the soul, so that then every sin looks with a ghostly countenance, is thought to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, an unpardonable sin.

Having thus shewn how, and upon what occasion Satan works: I shall take occasion to enquire why they have so much power, as many times to prevail. 1st, Because of the tempter's power, he is perhaps too strong for the soul. 2^d, Because of the tempter's policy, if he cannot prevail by open force, the soul being well and strongly grounded, then he invades with subtle

devices and secret stratagems, so that the soul cannot escape by strength only ; and therefore, wanting wisdom to invade his cunningly framed arguments, is baffled by him and overthrown.

3d, The enticing nature of the tempter's baits : as to instance in one case. Oh ! how many poor sincere souls, yet guilty of too much curiosity, have been entangled by curiously glorious, and gloriously curious tenets, which were no better than the devilish temptations of that hellish tempter ? How many, (which is yet strange to think, though there is reason to fear it) nay, after their seeming comfortable, really comfortless, wandering, walking in through ways of truth, have cause to set down their steps, marking for every step a sin, and for every sin letting fall a tear of blood. 4th, Temptations often prevail by reason of the strength of corruption, which the tempter works upon : where there is no corruption, there would be few or no temptations ; I am sure they should not prevail. 5th, and lastly, The tempter's prevalency proceeds from the weakness and low estate of the inward man : sin is never at a higher flood, than when grace is at a low ebb. It is a hard matter (believe experience) to keep the soul from sinking at such a time. Nothing more easy than to thrust a man under water, when the depth of the water is more than the height of the man.

Object. But now to make sure the doctrinal part, I shall lay down some reasons why the people of God are thus attended with temptations, for it is a natural objection against this point, Why will the Lord, who is so merciful to his people, suffer them to be thus used and buffeted by temptations ?

Ans. I answer in general on God's behalf, that he is never the less tender, as will appear in particular, thus:—(1.) Because one end seems to be this, that they might know themselves the better, and see what they are naturally; were it not for temptation, we should not come to know our own corruption. We see by this, what lust is more prevalent in us, according to that in Heb. xii. 1. "The sin that doth so easily beset us;" and what Satan makes most use of against us. We learn by this our own weakness to resist, without assisting grace. (2.) Again, it is for a saint's exercise; this tempted condition of God's artillery, is his school of arms, wherein God brings up his children, trains them and instructs them how to clasp on their helmet of salvation, to put on the breast-plate of righteousness, to hold out the shield of faith, to brandish the sword of the Spirit; in a word, how to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, even our whole armour of righteousness. (3.) That we might know our enemies, that we may be the more watchful over Satan, sin, and the world. (4.) That we might long to be at home with our Father, that we might be weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts of this present world. (5.) The Lord doth it to bear down our pride, and keep us humble: we should else be too much lifted up through our continual spiritual prosperity; and thus it was with Paul, 2 Cor. x. 7, 8.

This doctrine may afford us this useful application by way of,—information; reprehension; examination; consolation; exhortation.

First, Information. It may inform us, 1. Of the devil's enmity, who is so much the saint's foe, as that he will not let him be quiet. This

old serpent that first deceived Adam, and deprived him of paradise; yea, and ever since he hath been, and still is very busy to dispossess the saints, if possible, of their spiritual paradise. 2. We may learn hence the remaining seeds of corruption that are in the best of saints; without which (as I noted before) the devil would always tempt in vain. 3. We may perceive what is the saint's state here below: it hath indeed many fair pleasant prospects to the christian's eye, (I mean the eye of faith) but the way is a tempted, troublesome, dangerous way, Acts xiv. 12. 4. It may teach us the wisdom of God, and his great care of the saints, who makes use of Satan's enmity, and our corruptions, to do us good withal.

Secondly, Reprehension, and thus it reproves those who think it an easy matter, a thing of nothing, to be a christian. It reproves such who censure poor tempted afflicted ones; 1. Under their temptations, though not overcome; 2. When fallen; and oh how rash, uncharitable, and unchristian-like are they! It is an occasion of rebuke to those who think it strange that either themselves or others should be tempted.

Thirdly, Examination. This in these particulars:—To examine who is the tempter: To examine the temptation: To examine the frame our hearts are under, whether we carry it lightly and indifferently, or are grieved and troubled for them.

Fourthly, Consolation. From these arguments, 1st, A tempted condition is frequent among the saints; yea, and so useful, that I may confidently question whether he were ever truly a saint, that is not tempted? And for this assertion there is a cloud of witnesses in scripture,

one in 1 Cor. x. 13. 2d, God hath promised assistance to tempted ones, 2 Cor. xii. 9. "My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. God is able to help, as thou canst be weak, when thou art tempted. 3d, Christ was tempted, that he might know how to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 18. read from ver. 9. 4th, It is a blessing, or a blessed thing to endure temptations, James i. 12. and v. 11. 5th, The saints' temptations are needful for them, 1 Pet. i. 6. Thou canst not be without them. 6th, They are but the trial of faith, 1 Pet. i. 7. James i. 3, 4. And should we be grieved that our faith is proved? The goldsmith rather useth than avoideth the fire for the trying of his gold; neither is the gold diminished, but rather its worth more fully known when the dross is gone. This is the trial that doth try the faith of every child of God. 7th, God hath promised the burden shall not be too great for us to bear, 1 Cor. x. 13. This is ground of comfort, to know we shall not be overmatched by the temptation. 8th, A great comfort is, that God thinks upon us at such a time: we are sure of this because of the temptations, and also the support we have under them. 9th, Many times it goes before some signal providence; and we may take it as a great sign, that God is about to do some great thing for us, or we must be employed in some great work for him: thus he did with Israel, proved them forty years, before he gave them to possess the land. 10th, Be not disconsolate; strong and long enduring temptations, when meeting with resistance, are a strong argument of a strong faith, and especially of the growth and increase of faith. But to be brief, 11th, Consider, the saints' condition here is not their

best state: there is heaven to come yet, where there is no tempter. 12th, We have not been so much, nor so often tempted, as we ourselves have tempted God. 13th, The devil's temptations, though they be evils, yet are not the saints' evils, unless they are overcome by them. 14th, It is a great sign of God's love, so of Satan's hatred, and so consequently a token that thou art none of his, but God's, else he would never rage thus. The devil makes no such ado with wicked ones. 15th, As our temptations now abound, so shall our joy in time, much more abound.

Many arguments for consolation I might make use of, and much more enlargement upon these: all which, for brevity's sake, I here omit.

Fifthly, For exhortation. 1. Beware how you tempt the devil to tempt you; how you give occasion by indulging any sin or lust. 2. When you are tempted, be not cowardly, but courageous; do not flee, but resist, James iv. 7. 3. Beware of pride, when delivered out of temptation, this may make us fall into a dangerous relapse.

Having finished this point, I proceed to shew, in the next observation, how we may avoid the evil of temptation, that is, to "Watch and pray."

In the handling of this doctrine, we may consider these four things. 1. What it is to watch. 2. What it is to pray. 3. The proof of the point. 4. How watching and praying may conduce to our escape from the evil of temptation.

Concerning the duty of watching, observe, 1. What watching implies. 2. How we may do to watch.

First, Watching implies, (1.) A continual waking like the spouse, Cant. v. 2. (2.) A diligent hearkening; thus the watchmen, Isa. xxi. 7. (3.) A constant readiness: Peter exhorts under a metaphorical expression, 1 Pet. i. 15. "Gird your loins," that is, be ready; it is taken from the Jews' long garments which they used to gird about them, that they might run with less interruption.

Secondly, How we may do to watch: I shall but name the particulars. (1.) Let the heart be continually fixed upon God. Oh! how will this cool our affections to the world, and kindle the fire of love to God! (2.) Let the eye be much upon self: this will keep us low in spirit: "And blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3. (3.) Beware of drowsiness; we should take it off by prayer. (4.) Be well resolved in spirit; mind that of the prophet, 1 Kings xviii. 21. (5.) Be sure all be well within: be sure thy foundation be Christ: let there be no sin unrepented of, that will breed sorrow: harbour no enemy, no lust in thy soul, Prov. xx. 9. (6.) Trust not thine (no not thine own) heart, but regulate it by the word of God: "For the heart is deceitful," Jer. xvii. 6. And he is a "fool that trusts in his heart," chap. xxviii. 26. (7.) Keep therefore "a narrow eye to the heart," Prov. iv. 23. (8.) Call thine heart often "to a strict account," Psalm iv. 4. Examine diligently, What have I done? What do I know? What am I about to do? (9.) And if there be any thing out of order, tarry not, but repair it suddenly. Lay sin upon Christ, and then mourn over it. (10.) Let nothing be suggested, and presently entertained, but first brought to trial:

see if it be the will of God, if it be for his glory; if it be not for his glory, it is not his will. (11.) Besure to keep conscience clear; a little filth there, stops all the channel. It is dangerous to know of one sin, and not to confess it; much more dangerous to know thy sin, and wink at it. (12.) For this end keep an open ear to conscience, let it speak. (13.) Let the mouth be stopped to sin, and the hands tied up from wickedness. David prays that "a watch may be set on the door of his lips:" and certainly it is very needful. (14.) Let the whole armour of God be on, Eph. vi. 10—18.

Thus much concerning watching; now concerning prayer. Consider, 1. What prayer is. 2. The several kinds of prayer. 3. The manner how we are to pray.

1st, Prayer is the outward enlargement of the soul's inward breathings: it is a work of God's Spirit, and so flows out of the spirit and heart of a man, Zech. xii. 10. Rom. vii. 26, 27. Jude ver. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 19. Ps. lxii. 8. and xlii. 4. Prayer is a talking of the heart and soul with God, and of such a heart as is prepared by God, Jer. xxix. 13. Ps. xxvii. 1, 10, 17.

2d, The kinds of prayer. And thus it is either mental, in the heart only, Exod. xiv. 15. 1 Sam. i. 13.; or else vocal, uttered by the voice, Ps. lxxvii. 1. Again, there is secret prayer, when we pray alone: thus Daniel did when he setteth open his windows, Dan. vi. 10, 11. Or, more public, when we pray with others in the family, congregation, &c. And here let some preparatives to prayer be added: *First*, Pray that you may pray: lift up your eyes and your heart to God, when about to pray: thus did David, Ps. cxli. 1, 2. *Secondly*, Me-

ditate, (1.) On God's sufficiency, and especially his promises, Ps. l. 15. Matt. vii. 7. This will make you confident in prayer. (2.) On thine own want and vileness, that thou mayest be fervent, so did Ezra, chap. ix. 6, 7. (3.) On the great majesty of God, to beget humility, and lowliness of spirit, Eccl. v. 2. Gen. xxxii. 9, 10. (4.) On the relation thou standest in to God, by Christ, as the Father.

3dly, Now, how are we to pray? (1.) We must pray what we understand, and understand what we pray, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. (2.) We must pray in the Holy Spirit, be directed by it, Jude ver. 20. Rom. viii. 28. (3.) In the name and mediation of Christ; that is, relying upon the merits of his, not our righteousness, John xiv. 13, 14. John xvi. 23. (4.) With faith, believingly, that God will give us what is good for us, James i. 6, 7. (5.) With humility and acknowledgement of our own unworthiness, Ps. x. 17. (6.) With an heart willing to be cleansed by the blood of Christ, James iv. 6. from every pollution, Heb. x. 12. Ps. lxxvi. 18. (7.) With love to the saints, Matt. vi. 14, 15. (8.) With zeal and fervency, James v. 16. (9.) Do not give off, but wrestle with God for a blessing, with unwearied constancy, Luke xviii. 1—9. Matt. xv. (10.) Pray for heavenly things first and most; seek earthly things in the second place: the one absolutely, the other conditionally, Matt. vi. 33. (11.) Pray for things agreeable to the will of God, 1 John v. 14. (12.) Take heed ye love not long prayers, and think to be heard because they are long, Matt. vi. 7.

Now I come to the proof of this point, that the only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is to watch and pray. This is clearly stated in the

text, so that it scarce needs more confirmation; only take that of Paul when buffeted with temptation, "For this," saith he, "I besought the Lord thrice," 2 Cor. xii. 8. There is great need of watching and prayer. (1.) Before we fall into temptation. (2.) When we are under temptation.

How watching and prayer conduceth to the anticipating the assaults of Satan, frustrating temptation.

First of all, For watching. (1.) It sets us in a readiness for an assault; when we are expecting, we shall not be taken unprovided. (2.) It adds resolution to stand out against Satan; we know how suddenness strikes us into a fear, when expectation and deliberation increaseth courage. (3.) It is a countermine to all Satan's stratagems. It will deceive the deceiver, to find us watching with spiritual diligence, when he would have us sleeping in carnal security. (4.) Watching secures us from much evil that might be added, in case we were drawn to that temptation; for security is no better than a temptation, especially at such a time.

Secondly, For prayer: this conduceth to avoid the evil of temptation; because it fetcheth help from God, in whom is all our strength: for it is God's promise, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Ps. l. 15. It is a great comfort under temptation to have a God to go to, especially one that is able and willing to help. This may instruct us, then, there is great need of watching. It is certainly an universal necessary duty for all saints, at whatever time, to watch: so saith Christ our Saviour, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch," Mark xiii. 37. The

great end of this duty is the coming of the Lord Jesus; "Watch," saith Christ, "for ye know not at what hour your Lord doth come," Matt. xxiv. 42, 44. There are three considerations may move us to watch: (1.) Let us consider whom we offend and dishonour by our neglect in watching,—no less than God. And would we, rather than want a nap of security, displease our God? Is God no more to us than so? Let us seriously weigh, how great an offence, how great a dishonour to God, unwatchfulness is, and this will engage us to watch. (2.) Let us consider whom we gratify and advantage by our neglects, no less an enemy than Satan, the enemy of our souls: and shall we pleasure our grand adversary? Oh, no; then let us watch. (3.) Whom we displease, it is ourselves. And will we that our souls should be losers? If not, let us be much, yea, always upon our watch.

But, secondly, It may inform us of the necessity of praying at all times: "Pray without ceasing," 1 Thess. v. 17. So David would pray and cry aloud, "At evening, at morning, and at noon," Ps. lv. 17. And Daniel would pray thrice a-day, Dan. vi. 16. It is the duty of all and every saint, in all conditions. In spiritual things: 1. Pray for grace, that God would give and increase it either in thyself or others. 2. Pray against sin, against the guilt of sin, against the power of sin. 3. Pray against Satan's temptations. (1.) Against the occasion of the temptation, that (if it be possible) thou may shun the very appearance of it.

(2.) That the strength of corruption within, and the power of temptation without, may not be so prevalent, as to lead thee captive to evil.

(3.) Pray that the entrance into temptation

may be no disadvantage to thy grace, and that the escape from it may be no impeachment to, but rather for the advancement of, God's glory. Pray for nothing but what thou standest in need of. Unnecessary things are not to be the subject of our petitions: and therefore our Saviour bids us pray for our daily bread. And so that good man Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," Prov. xxx. 7—9. Even in these things, pray with submission to the will of God. If watching and prayer be the means to escape the evil of temptation; then the strength of a saint is not sufficient. No, we must go to God for deliverance. If we do not watch and pray, all other means are irregular at least, if not sin.

Thus much for information: Now for exhortation.

1. Watch and pray continually, but especially at a time of temptation. 2. Be serious in watching and prayer; some do it between hot and cold, or by fits, or in much lightness of spirit. But, said the apostle, "Be sober, and watch unto prayer." Sobriety and seriousness becomes those that call upon God.







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