

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE
TO CONFIRMATION:

BEING

FAMILIAR LECTURES

ON

THE BAPTISMAL VOW,

THE CRED, THE TEN COMMANDMENTS,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

AND THE LORD'S SUPPER,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS TO EACH.

DESIGNED AS

A Preparation for Young Christians,

PREVIOUS TO THEIR BEING PRESENTED TO THE BISHOP TO BE CONFIRMED.

BY THE

REV. W. T. MYERS, A.M.

CURATE OF ULTHAM.

DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD VISCOUNT BELSFORD

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able
to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
2 Tim. iii. 15.

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TO THE
REV. JOHN KENWARD SHAW BROOKE, A. M.

THE VICAR OF ELTHAM,

THE FOLLOWING HUMBLE ENDEAVOUR

TO PROMOTE THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE

OF

THE YOUNGER PART OF HIS FLOCK,

IS OFFERED,

WITH UNFEIGNED SENTIMENTS

OF

ESTEEM AND REGARD,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ELTHAM VICARAGE,
Nov. 22, 1832.

PREFACE.

OF the incomparable offices of the Protestant Established Church of England and Ireland, perhaps, there is not one, more important to ingraft the principles of the Christian religion in the hearts of her children, nor better calculated, under Divine grace, to further them in a more perfect knowledge and practice of the higher duties of Christianity, than a faithful preparation for the solemnity of *Confirmation*. And, in order to a due observance of this sacred duty, there are *three* parties immediately concerned: the Bishop, the Officiating Minister of each parish, and the young Christian candidates.

There can be no reasonable doubt, from the deep interest with which the Archbishops and Bishops regard this apostolical office, that the essential requisite of a due notice, of at least two months, will be granted to the clergy of their respective dioceses; to admit of such a course of Catechetical, and Scriptural instruction, as is adapted to impress the minds of the young candidates with a lively sense of the *importance* attached by the Church to

this serious duty; at the same time, to leave no possible excuse for the unpardonable haste, in which her pious requisitions have been too often hurried over, if not frequently dispensed with.

Preparatory arrangements being thus presumed; it remains for the minister of each parish to follow the directions, and to comply with the intentions of the diocesan. And as a Confirmation is known to be held, generally, every three years, in the dioceses without the metropolis, and at stated periods therein, advantage may be occasionally taken, by the clergy, during the year preceeding, to call the attention of parents and sponsors, to the duties required of them; and to exhort the young Christians themselves, who will be of the age of *fourteen* or upwards, to prepare for the approaching solemnity, by perfectly learning their Catechism, and reading such books as may be recommended to them by their Minister for that purpose: that when the period arrives, of which he will give timely notice, they may be ready for their examination; and be able to give an undivided attention to the religious instruction which will be afterwards offered them. The heads of families should be also requested to allow their servants to partake of these advantages.

There may be reasonable necessity for avoiding an indiscriminate examination of the several classes of candidates, in the *catechetical* portion of in-

struction: but a difficulty does not exist, during the familiar lectures which the minister is presumed to give to his little flock, subsequently, in explanation of the Baptismal Vow, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Lord's Supper, and which it should be imperative upon all to attend, without exception. And it would be advisable to give every encouragement to the *parents*, also, to benefit by the recital of their *own* obligations, so necessarily connected with those of their children.

A careful perusal of the Baptismal Service, with a view to impress the candidates with a more accurate knowledge of, and an increased respect for, the promises and vows therein made for them, may be judiciously recommended by a minister: and the rehearsal of the Confirmation Service, with the young persons, in the evening before, or on the morning of Confirmation, with a short direction for the right use of it, should be accompanied by an impressive address upon the necessity of preserving a becoming seriousness, and sobriety of conduct, during the whole of the day, as an earnest of a greater strictness and diligence, in the future Christian character. These pastoral exhortations, with a *final* discourse from the pulpit, on an early Sunday after that day, reminding those that have been confirmed, of the engagements they have so solemnly entered into, will complete the useful labours of the officiating

minister; unless we add, the perpetual duty of preparing them for a constant and worthy participation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The young Christian candidates' duties are, in a great measure, implied in those of the minister. They should, however, at the earliest opportunity after public notice has been given of a day of Confirmation, communicate to him their desire of being confirmed, that no time may be lost in preparing them for the occasion. A punctual attendance, at the hours appointed for examination and instruction, is indispensable: and a serious attention to the advice and exhortations of their minister and friend, with general regularity of conduct, are the least return they can make, for his diligent labours in their service.

The advantages of national education, in disseminating the principles of the Christian religion throughout the kingdom, and the zealous exertions of religious societies and individuals, to afford "instruction in righteousness" to all ranks and conditions of men, have, by the Divine blessing, so successfully awakened in the minds, and, I trust, fixed in the hearts of the people an earnest desire to search the Scriptures, that they may "know God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent,"—that it would appear that something more is necessary for children, before they come to the Bishop to be confirmed, than a compliance with the

literal direction of the Rubric; and, that the repetition of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, with the farther instruction in the Church Catechism, though most excellent, as far as it goes, should be accompanied by such practical application to the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, as may correspond with the advanced state of religious education.

The high sanction which has been given to a valuable improvement upon public Catechetical instruction, recently introduced in the metropolis, and the forcible exhortation of the Bishop of this diocese, on the vital importance of diligent attention, in the clergy, to the duties of Confirmation, have encouraged an humble member of that body to follow the steps, as at a distance, of the eminently distinguished, and interesting author of "Horæ Catecheticæ," and "Waldensian Researches."

How faithfully these pastoral duties have been fulfilled, and recommended, in the following pages, it must rest with the reader to determine.

Should it appear presumptuous, in the writer, to attempt to prescribe rules for the regulation of the clergy; he begs they may be considered, as simply expressive of his own humble practice, without the most remote intention to dictate to others. And if arrogance be attributed to him, for seeking to make any addition to the many valuable works, already

before the public, on the same subject; he would entreat the reader to acquit him of any design of aiming at a comparison. His Lectures were written with a sincere desire to promote the spiritual interests of his pupils, his children, and, especially, of the young Christian committed to his pastoral care: and if his humble endeavours have, by the blessing of God, appeared successful to that end, an unfeigned hope, that, through the same blessing, they may become more generally useful, will, he trusts, obtain for him that public indulgence, which he feels he so much needs, and has no pretension whatever to lay claim to.

In preparing the following Lectures for the press, much more matter has necessarily been introduced than was delivered to the young persons for whom they were originally composed. Should they, therefore, be thought useful to assist the labours of the younger clergy, previous to their forming a system of their own, there will be no difficulty in compressing, or dividing them, where it is necessary, into suitable sections; in which form, however, it was not convenient to present them to the public.

This unpretending little volume goes forth into the world with the same fervent prayer that has accompanied its preparation: that the blessing of God may attend it; that the power of Christ may rest upon it; and that the Holy Spirit may abide

with it; that it may be instrumental, through Divine Grace, to promote the glory of God, in exalting the Gospel of his Son, and honouring the law of the Ten Commandments; and in “*feeding his lambs*” in the green pastures, and by the still waters, which he has so beautifully provided for them in his word, and in the Sacraments and services of the Christian Church, which he hath established in this kingdom. And it will be a crown of rejoicing to the author, to be able to address any of his young Christian friends, at a more advanced period of life, in the language and spirit of St. Paul to Timothy, “From a child hast thou known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through *faith* which is in Christ Jesus.”

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ERRATA.

Page	9, line 17, <i>for</i> Frst,	<i>read</i> First.
	152, — 20, fr made be,	— may be.
	179, — <i>ult.</i> — then atvral,	— the natvral.
	181, — 14, — a sa,	— as a.
	341, — 18, — offerc;	— offered.

THE
YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE
TO
Confirmation.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS TO LECTURE I.

My Young Friends !

THERE is perhaps no period of life more important to the formation of the Christian character, than *that* upon which you are entering. *Reason*, the precious gift of God, now begins to exercise itself in distinguishing between good and evil ; and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is directing you to the contemplation of those sacred truths of divine revelation, which have the glory of God for their object, and the salvation of mankind for their end. Religion, which has hitherto been more a subject of passive compliance than of active interest to you, now offers itself as a serious object of *choice* ; and presents to you a source of spiritual grace and mercy in the Gospel of Christ ; upon your embracing

or rejecting which, the eternal happiness or misery of your souls must inevitably depend.

Our holy apostolical Church, ever watchful over the best interests of her children, has, in the wonted exercise of her wisdom and charity, made provision for the spiritual instruction of young Christians, at this interesting and momentous season of their lives: and with fervent prayer for the Divine blessing, has instituted a religious solemnity, highly calculated to impress their young minds with a deep sense of the inestimable value of the Christian covenant; and to establish in their hearts, by the grace of God, those vital principles of repentance, faith, and holiness; a strict obedience to which, was promised for them at the divine Sacrament of Baptism, by which they were first admitted into the Church of Christ. This solemnity is very properly called *Confirmation*; the nature and obligation of which, I shall endeavour, with the blessing of God, to explain to you.

Confirmation, is a most solemn religious duty, engaged in by young Christians when they come to years of discretion; by which they consent to, and confirm with their own hearts and voices, before God, and the Church, the promises and vows which were made for

them by their Godfathers and Godmothers, at their baptism.

Confirmation is administered by the Bishop; who, after the example of the Apostles, laying his hands with impressive solemnity upon those who are to be confirmed, as they kneel before the altar, fervently prays for them and blesses them; and we piously hope, that the faithful prayers of the Bishop and the congregation, united with those of the young Christians themselves, will bring down from Heaven the promise of "the Spirit of truth, who will guide them into all truth;" will sanctify the desire of their heart to dedicate themselves to God; cause them to grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of their Lord and Saviour; and, if they "quench not the Holy Spirit, will finally seal them His, to the day of redemption."

Religious instruction and education, are the best provision a parent can make for a child. The Christian religion, of all others, is by far the best, indeed, the only true means parents can use for the happiness of their children, both here and hereafter: and the earlier these instructions are commenced, the sooner will religious impressions be made upon the hearts of children; that is, the sooner

the good seed is sown, the greater prospect is there of an abundant harvest.

The sacred duty of Christian parents, therefore, is to bring their children and offer them to Christ, as soon after their birth as may be convenient; that the stain of original sin may be washed away in the spiritual waters of baptism, and they may be admitted into a state of grace, through the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost.

Now, if parents continue the duty they have thus begun in infancy, and instruct their tender offspring in the principles of the Christian religion; desirous above all things to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," that they may grow in grace, as they grow in stature; doubtless a blessing will accompany their endeavours: the good seed, watered by the dews of Heaven, will take root, spring up, and bring forth the fruits of a holy and religious life; provided the children themselves, when they come to years of discretion, embrace and hold fast the blessed hope that is set before them in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit, who ever accompanies religious instruction, will instil into the hearts of these young Christians, holy thoughts, good dispositions, and pious affec-

tions; which, growing into habit, and strengthened by practice, will guide their young minds to God, as their chief good; as their first and greatest object of regard, adoration, and love; and teach them to reverence *Him*, as their Creator and Preserver, their Lord and Saviour, their Sanctifier and Comforter.

Thus far, will the duty of parents towards their children be faithfully discharged. Now, the return which the child must in justice make to such parents, is the constant exercise of love, honour, and obedience; for nothing can repay them for the blessing of religious instruction, but the highest sense of gratitude, and one continued expression of dutiful affection towards them. I need not observe, how much greater then is the debt of love, gratitude, and honour, which is due to their heavenly Father, who graciously gives the blessing itself.

No return, however, can be more grateful to parents, nor more acceptable to Almighty God, than that children should *receive benefit*, by a right use of the means of grace and instruction afforded them. And this is a duty which they owe to *themselves*, as well as to their earthly and heavenly Parent.

This, then, is the duty, my young friends,

to which you are at this time most seriously called. You may now, in a more especial manner, under circumstances the most solemn and impressive, be said to commence your Christian course; when you take upon yourselves that great responsibility, that sacred charge, that important care of your immortal souls, which your Christian friends and instructors, have hitherto most kindly and religiously engaged in for you. Your first duty, then, is to confirm and ratify in your own persons, the holy Christian principles, the solemn vows, the sacred engagements, which were made for you in your baptism. It is now you are called upon willingly, thankfully, and heartily, to make choice of, and embrace the Christian faith; and to undertake the conduct of your future Christian life. Now, you pledge yourselves to search the Scriptures, that you may "know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent:" and in dependence on the Divine assistance, to regulate your lives by the precepts of the Gospel; examining your hearts daily by the word of God, keeping a diligent watch over your thoughts, words, and actions, and being constant in prayer; in a word, keeping alive, both in faith and practice, that anxiety for

the salvation of your souls, which can alone shew a sincere and earnest desire, on your part, to embrace the religion of Christ, and to become his true and faithful disciples.

These are the serious obligations which you undertake at the holy and apostolical office of Confirmation; for which, it is your most bounden duty carefully to prepare yourselves. And for this purpose, I would endeavour, as your minister and friend, to assist you *more particularly* to inquire, what it was your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for each of you, when you were first introduced into the Christian Church, as a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven: "That you may know the certainty of those things wherein you have been instructed."

Without the Divine blessing, however, all my wishes and endeavours to *teach*, and yours to *learn*, will be vain and useless. That blessing must be sought for by diligent prayer. I request you, therefore, to unite with me in fervent supplication to Almighty God, that he will "prevent us" in *this*, and "all our doings, with his most gracious favour, and further us by his continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in

Him, we may glorify his holy name; and, finally, by his mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Let us Pray.

Almighty God! who hast promised to hear the petitions of them that ask in thy dear Son's name, we beseech thee, for His sake, mercifully to direct, sanctify, and confirm our souls by the gracious influences of thy Holy Spirit, in the true Christian *belief* and *obedience* of thy Gospel; that we may be enabled to confirm and keep all our holy resolutions of a pious and goodly life. And grant that we may serve thee, and worship thee so faithfully here upon earth, that we may obtain pardon and peace, present comfort, and everlasting happiness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE I.

THE BAPTISMAL VOW.

My Young Friends!

HAVING satisfied myself, during the examinations which I have just concluded, of your fitness to be admitted to Confirmation, from your general knowledge of “the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments,” and from your further instruction in the Church Catechism, set forth for that purpose; I am anxious to explain to you more fully, the spiritual nature of the duties which you are now about to take upon yourselves, and their vital importance to your eternal interests.

Your baptismal vow, will therefore be the subject of my first instructions to you.

The promise made for you at your baptism, is threefold;—First, TO RENOUNCE THE DEVIL, AND ALL HIS WORKS; THE POMPS AND VANITIES OF THIS WICKED WORLD, AND ALL THE SINFUL LUSTS OF THE FLESH.

Secondly, TO BELIEVE ALL THE ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH; and

Thirdly, To 'KEEP GOD'S 'HOLY WILL AND 'COMMANDMENTS, AND WALK IN THE SAME ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE.

The *first* of these, will engage our attention at the present moment.

Do you inquire, then, my young friends, why should it be so absolutely necessary for Christians to renounce the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*? I answer,—because the *devil* is the great enemy of all mankind, and the *world* and the *flesh* are his ministering servants.

Satan, my young friends, was once an *angel* in heaven, but he rebelled against God, and with other rebellious spirits, was cast down from his first estate.

Listen to the figurative description given of this awful event, in the Revelation of St. John, but more particularly referring to the triumphant state of Christ's Church militant here upon earth.—“And there was war in heaven. Michael, the archangel of God, and his angels, fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and

his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God, day and night: and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman, and was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Need I offer you farther explanation, my young friends, why you should renounce the devil, after the representation of Scripture which I have read to you? Need I say, whence arises that insatiable desire of evil, which causes this restless spirit to "walk about as a roaring lion seeking whom he

may devour?" Cast out from heaven, we learn that he fixed his malignant eyes upon our first parents. Envyng the peace and happiness which they enjoyed in the tranquil abode of Paradise, he turns his thoughts upon *them*, as 'till 'objects of his malice and revenge; gratifying, in the meditated destruction of the creature, his reprobate passions of hatred and rebellion, against the Creator. No sooner had the malicious adversary conceived his wicked purpose, than he hastened to execute it; and, melancholy to relate, succeeded! Let us turn to the third chapter of Genesis, and there learn a painful but most salutary lesson, from the narration of this sad event; a chapter, which, by unfolding to us the circumstances and cause of the *fall of man*, lays the first stone of the Christian faith; in proclaiming, through that fall, the *necessity*, as well as the *promise*, of a Saviour. Listen, then, to the fatal account, and observe how truly it corresponds with the vision of the revelation of St. John, before read to you. "Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, *hath* God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto

the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye *touch* it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know, that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good from evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

Now, there are circumstances connected with this lamentable history of the fall of man, so peculiarly striking, that I cannot, my young friends, pass by them, without making a few observations upon them.

The most remarkable fact that claims our attention, is the *method* which the devil made use of to accomplish his wicked purpose. In order to make the temptation most pleasing and unsuspecting to Eve, he took upon himself the form of a serpent: the most beautiful, at the same time the "most subtile of all the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had

made ;” and under the covering of this flattering yet treacherous disguise, he commences his attack upon the innocent victim, whom he had destined to destruction, with an attempt to create a *doubt* in her mind as to the command of the Creator. “ Yea, *hath* God said; Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Full well did the enemy know, from his own experience, that to *doubt* was to be *lost*; and that if he could work in the woman an “ evil heart of unbelief, to depart,” but for an instant, “ from the living God,” the first and surest step to her overthrow would be laid. He therefore insinuates, the possibility of her being mistaken; and questions the *certainty* of the command. Finding the poison beginning to take effect, and that the fear of punishment, and not the *fear of God*, was the only cause of her rejecting him; the serpent leaves her no time to reflect, but with unblushing boldness, dares even to *deny* the truth of God’s word,—“ Ye shall *not* surely die; for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good from evil!” During this conversation, the devil, we may suppose, was drawing the unsuspecting Eve gradually towards the forbidden tree, and

had probably arrived within reach of its deadly fruit, and availed himself of the advantage of its beautiful and tempting appearance, to give force and weight to his assertions, just as he was concluding his enticing address to her. The tempter thus, alas! prevailed. For "when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the sight, and a tree to be desired to make one wise," the seeds of *pride* and *discontent* having already taken root in her heart; without seeking the counsel of her only friend, her husband; and "rejecting the counsel of God against herself," she reached forth her hand to pluck, and eat the forbidden fruit, and then prevailed upon her husband to become a partner of her guilt.

Thus, through the same wilful sin of rebellion and disobedience, for which the dragon, the old serpent, was cast out of heaven; were our first parents, Adam and Eve, beguiled of their innocence, robbed of the mansions of peace, condemned to the punishment of death, and driven from the presence of the Lord God. And thus, in succeeding ages, did Satan, with cunning craftiness, tempt Sarah, Jacob, Job, and David, to doubt the *faithfulness* of God. Thus did he

take advantage of the *lonely* and *unguarded* situation of Cain, and Judas, to seduce them, like Eve, from the paths of rectitude, and to involve them in the depths of guilt and despair. But let me not omit to observe, in this place, how striking and memorable a contrast is presented to you, my young friends, in the conduct and character of Joseph, of *successful resistance* to the temptations of Satan. And believe me, when I assure you, that if the same holy principle of "*the fear of God,*" dwell in *your* hearts and lives, as did in the patriarch Joseph's; ye likewise, will express your abhorrence of sin, and determination to flee from it, in the same steadfast language and spirit of godliness, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!"

And, in truth, greatly will you stand in need of this "beginning of wisdom," "*the fear of God;*" for such crafty devices will your great adversary also practise towards *you*, my young friends: the same deceitful snares will he lay in your paths. In a thousand disguises will he approach you: transforming himself into an angel of light; flattering you with hopes that can never be realized; and tempting you with

promises which he cannot perform. Even when engaged in the holy exercise of meditation upon your Bible, he will suggest to you doubts and difficulties, and whisper hard thoughts concerning God, and the Saviour. Are you sure that Jesus hath "the words of eternal life," and that he is "the Christ, the Son of the living God?" Hath God commanded you to believe the Gospel?—will be the language that he will address to you.

"If thou be the *Son of God*—" were the words he twice made use of to the *second Adam*, to beguile him of his confidence in his Divine origin, when "Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." And think ye, that he will leave one stone unturned to stagger your faith in the religion of Christ, or cause you to distrust the everlasting word of truth? Deceive not yourselves, by thinking so for one moment. Should he, however, find you, my young friends, as I pray God he may ever find you, "steadfast in the faith;" flatter not yourselves with the presumptuous hope, that he will be intimidated by his failure in *one* assault—by no means, for he will attack you with renewed and unabated violence.

Shall the disciple escape, when his Lord has suffered repeated temptation? Shall the servant fare better than his Master? Happy the disciple who shall be *as* his Lord, and the servant that shall be *as* his Master!

Compare now the temptation of "the Son of God," with that of Eve; and judge for yourselves.

Finding his insidious arguments unavailing with the Son of God, to shake his *trust* and *confidence* in his heavenly Father; the devil brought him, as he did Eve, within view of the object of allurement. He led Christ up to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and, *precisely* in the same manner, appeals to his *pride* and *ambition*, as a last effort to subdue his meek and humble spirit; and with Him, to defeat the salvation of all mankind. "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me," were the deceiver's lying promises to the Messiah. "Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods," were the equally false, and too fatal promises to the woman. Flatter not yourselves then, I repeat, my young friends, that your great adversary, the devil, will cease to seduce *you*, with "the

lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;" or that the shameful defeat that he hath suffered by *Him* "who hath subdued all things under his feet," will in any other way operate upon the designs and spirit of the fiend, than to make those designs still more dangerous, and that spirit doubly malicious and revengeful, against the followers of the Lord. Either he will tempt you when *alone* to approach, like Eve, to the *object* of your sinful affection; and infatuate you with the treacherous hope, with the blind imagination that you can escape the all-seeing eye of the omnipresent God: or he will hurry you on to temptation, by alluring you into the society of men, who, as the Psalmist describes them, "flatter with their tongue, but have no faithfulness in their mouth; but adder's poison is under their lips, and their inward parts are very wickedness;" and of whom, the Saviour declares, that "they are like whited sepulchres, which appear indeed beautiful without, but within, are full of all uncleanness:" "who outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Against these most dangerous pitfalls, I would earnestly caution you, my young

friends ; O ! let me intreat you, as you value your peace of mind here—as you value still more, your everlasting salvation hereafter, to watch over, and lay aside, both your *secret* sins, and those which more openly beset you. Examine yourselves whether there be in you, “an evil heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God ;” and unceasingly implore the Father of mercies, to “create in you a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within you.” Trusting in the power of God, through Christ, “resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” The spirit of Christ’s word, if it dwell in your hearts by faith, “Get thee behind me, Satan, for I will worship the Lord my God, and Him only will I serve,” shall shield you from the fiery darts of the wicked one, and make you more than conquerors, through *Him* that loved you.” Taught by that *word*, shun the very first appearance of temptation : suppress evil thoughts as they arise : avoid evil words—evil companions—evil passions—above all, evil actions : “go out of their way, turn aside, pass by, and put them away from you.” Contemplate *sin* as an accursed thing ; as the *parent* of death ; *itself*, the child of the devil : and “walk as seeing God who is invisible.”

•And here,• my young friends, I cannot but request your patience, if I still claim your attention a little longer, while I set before you the dreadful *nature* of sin: so dreadful, as to require that the Son of God should leave the bosom of his Father, and his glory in heaven, to atone for it, by the shameful and painful death of the cross: so dreadful, as to destroy both body and soul in hell!—Call to mind its immediate and destructive consequences to our first parents; and learn from thence, the dangers that surround you. No sooner had they eaten the forbidden fruit, but their eyes were *indeed* opened, as their subtile conqueror had foretold: but, opened *only* to see their nakedness; to overwhelm them with shame and confusion of face: with fear, remorse, and wretchedness: but in vain!—for the decree of a God of faithfulness and truth, had gone forth, “Thou shalt surely die!” Let us then trace a little farther, the effects of this disobedience. Hitherto had our first parents considered it, as indeed it was, the supreme happiness of their lives to converse with God: and what happiness *even now*, my young friends, is so great, as to hold communion with God our Saviour? But did this blessed privilege

continue to be a source of joy and peacefulness, to the favoured inhabitants of Paradise? Alas! no—neither that habitation, nor the happiness that dwelt therein, could any longer be theirs: when they heard the voice of the Lord God; now they were afraid, and hid themselves. “And they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? and he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

Do you inquire, then, whence arose this melancholy change, from peace and joy, to trouble and sorrow; from confidence to fear; from perfect happiness to unspeakable misery? I answer the inquiry, by another question. “And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?”

Pause for a moment, and recollect, that before their unhappy fall, they were *innocent*, and *pure*, and *holy*; in thought, word, and

action. Created in the likeness, and after the image of God himself; *that* God was the *only* object of their love and adoration. The great study of their minds, the great occupation of their lives, was to worship, and serve, and please him in all things. Now that their hearts had bowed down, and served ~~the~~ gods besides the *One* living and true God; they were guilty and corrupt, both in body and soul. Sin had polluted the eye, and corrupted the heart: the image of God was obliterated, and the image of Satan appeared in all its deformity. Could, then, such an *impure* thing continue in the abodes of innocence? Impossible! The servants of sin and Satan, were driven, from the presence of the Lord God, and from the garden of Eden, in which was the tree of life; into that troublous world, where their posterity have ever since wandered. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Thus ends the awful account of the fall of man; but not so its disastrous consequences.

Death, with all its baneful train of attendants, *labour*, and *pain*, and *sorrow*, and *disease*; and *misery*, in all its endless varieties, glutted the vengeance of the devil, in the punishment both of the man, and of the woman. But the death of the body, was not, alas! the only punishment that awaited them. A far more awful penalty was in justice due to the wretched *authors* of sin to the human race. Mortality and misery were but the forerunners of the "*second death*;" the death, or punishment of the immortal soul; a death, expressed in Scripture by "*eternal death*;" and which, as I shall hereafter explain it more fully, I shall now briefly describe, as *the everlasting wrath of God* abiding on the wicked. And in order that man might have a never failing evidence before his eyes, of the change which sin had wrought in his soul; the earth was cursed for his sin's sake; and afforded him an emblem, as well as an object of labour. For "unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it

bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field ; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 'till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Do you not observe, that the thorns and thistles spring up of themselves, and encumber as well as pollute the face of the earth ? So spontaneously and naturally do evil affections and inclinations spring up in the heart of men, and deface its beauty and comeliness. Do the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, prey upon each other with natural ferocity ? So also do men exercise towards their fellow men, the equally cruel and savage passions of anger, malice, and revenge ; which prove, how truly *he*, that was once the child and friend of God, is become the child and slave of Satan. Is it further necessary to enumerate the various *titles* that distinguish the *name* and *character* of the devil ? Shall I represent him to you in the most odious lights, in which the Scriptures expose him ? I cannot, my young friends, create in your hearts and minds, too great an abhorrence of this fierce destroyer of your innocence and peace. View him, therefore, as the *prince of dark-*

ness ; as a roaring lion ; Beelzebub, the prince of the devils ; “ a liar and murderer from the beginning ;” “ the great dragon,” serpent, tormentor, accuser ; Satan the tempter ; and finally, the god of this world !!! As prince of darkness, he would blind us ; as a lion, he would devour us ; as the great tempter, he would lead us into sin and wickedness : as a liar, he deceives us : as a murderer, he brought death upon us, and took away life ; as a serpent, he beguileth us ; as Satan, he is our great adversary or enemy ; as the tormentor, being himself tormented, he wishes to involve us in his endless misery ; and, as the god of this world, he tries to subdue us, and hold dominion over us. What abundant reason have you, therefore, my young friends, to renounce, abhor, and hate, so subtle, so cunning, so cruel an enemy ; who would rob you of your everlasting hopes, enslave your bodies, and torment your souls.

But not only must you renounce the devil, but *all his works* also ; and his works are *sin* : for “ he that committed sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” Now the means which he uses to tempt us to sin, we have seen, are “ *the pomps and vanity*

of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." If he can but make us love any thing better than God; if he can but fix our affections upon the things of this world; he will chain us down in the worst of bondage. For instance; knowing from divine authority "how hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven;" he strives to tempt the rich to *trust* in riches: knowing that want and poverty are grievous to be borne; he tries to make the poor man murmur, covet, and steal: knowing that "the friendship of this world is enmity against God," he sets before us all its honours and pleasures, the kingdoms of this world, and the glory thereof; and says to us also, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." *Pride*, he knows, was the fall of man; he tempts us therefore to *vanity* and *self-conceit*; "to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think:" that the *humility* of the Gospel, may be a stumbling-block and foolishness to us. Knowing the passions and evil affections of mankind; that "the hearts of men are inclined to evil continually;" he entices us to yield ourselves as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, and our "members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity

unto iniquity ;” in a word, “ to walk after the flesh, that we may die.”

“ Now the works of the flesh are these : adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ; of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” *These*, nevertheless, are the works, my young friends, to which the devil is ever striving to tempt you. *These* are the lusts of the flesh, which you engage solemnly, by the grace of God, outwardly to renounce, and inwardly to detest. If you yield to the tempter, you are undone ; you cannot hope for heaven and happiness : but I repeat, if you “ resist the devil,” and his works ; “ he will flee from you.” This, however, you cannot do of yourselves. The *power* to do this cometh alone from God ; extended to you through the merits of Christ ; and communicated by the influence of the Holy Ghost. *That power*, my young friends, you must constantly pray for : “ for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God.”

“ Now the fruit of the Spirit is, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ; against these there is no law.” “ And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.” “ For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” “ For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “ Be ye therefore,” saith St. Paul, “ followers of God as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints ; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient ; but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them ; for ye were sometimes darkness,

but now ye are light in the Lord: walk as children of light; (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth,) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them: for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Thus have I endeavoured to set before you, my young friends, the obligations incurred by you in your baptismal vow, "to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." I have also explained to you, chiefly from Scripture, why ye are bound, by every claim of reason and religion, to confirm and ratify this part of your Christian covenant. Judge, therefore, for yourselves, and choose ye this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord he be God, follow Him; but if Satan, then follow Him. May you, by the grace of God, "be guided into all truth," and be inspired to choose "that better part

which shall not be taken away from you." And may you, in the spirit and faith of Joshua, steadfastly resolve, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

In the course of this Lecture, I have dwelt long and seriously upon the doctrine of the Fall of Man, as the *foundation* of all Christianity. I have pointed but to you, also, the *cause* of that fall, in the temptation of the devil, and the entrance of sin into the world, through the disobedience of our first parents: and the *consequences* of that fall, both temporal and eternal, *death* and *misery*: That you may learn, why you are bound to hate, and abhor, and fight against sin, the world, and the devil; and engage to *continue* Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, unto your lives' end.

Let me not, however, leave you comfortless," through the awful and affecting description that I have given you, of the dreadful power, prevalence, and nature of sin, and Satan; and of your own frailty, weakness, and corruption.

Though you be "born in sin, and the children of wrath;" though you be represented in Scripture, by *nature*, lost, and "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and

blind, and naked;" yet be not afraid; but behold, with the eye of faith, the once *distant* ray of *light*, that cheered the dark horizon of the almost benighted world, now beaming forth with brightness, and dispersing the clouds of darkness. Contemplate the mercy and goodness of the Almighty Creator; that suffered not his fallen creatures to be left to utter despair, through the overwhelming weight of sin and misery; but, ere He drove them forth from the abodes of their former innocence and peace, supported their dejected spirits with the inspiring *promise*, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Contemplate, I say, the full accomplishment of this promise, in Christ crucified; and let it cheer your hearts, to believe, that "though in Adam all die, yet in Christ," may we "all be made alive." "Though in this world ye shall have tribulation, yet be of good cheer, for He hath overcome the world." "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Lastly, though "the wages of sin be *death*," the gift of God is *eternal life*, through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be, as is ever due, all honour,

power, praise, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us Pray.

O! Almighty Lord God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, again we would approach thy mercy seat, through our divine Redeemer; humbly imploring thee, to send ~~thy~~ Holy Spirit unto the hearts of these thy children, and awaken in them a true sense of the lost state of their sinful nature; and of their utter inability of themselves to help themselves. Create in them, O Lord, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within them. Take away the heart of stone, the evil heart of unbelief, and give them a heart of flesh, a penitent and believing heart, which thou hast declared thou wilt not despise. Give them grace, that they may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon them the armour of light; that they may put off the old man, which is corrupt through the deceitful lusts, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ; manfully fighting under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and continuing his faithful soldiers and servants, unto their lives' end. We humbly ask all in the name of the one Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ; and

in his words, we conclude our imperfect petitions.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our ~~trespasses~~ trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO

LECTURE II.

IN my first lecture, I endeavoured to explain to you, my young friends, the awakening circumstances of the *fall of man*; in order to represent to you the dreadful and dangerous character of the *wicked one*, and the destructive nature of his service; as well as to impress you, with a true sense of the *real condition*, in which, as the children of Adam, you are left by that awful event.

That condition, you are all aware, was a state of *sin and death*. “By one man’s transgression, *sin* entered into the world, and *death* by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Those, therefore, that are “born in sin, and the children of wrath,” cannot, *as such*, approach unto a Holy! Holy! Holy! God. To them, he is justly a “God of vengeance, a consuming fire;” for he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; “it is an abomination unto him.”

But, my young friends, too true it is, awful as it may appear, that this is precisely *our* state by *nature*; and must, without the grace of God, continue to be so: “for 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.”

We all of us are sinners, every one, both *original* and *wilful* sinners; and “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us;” for there is no man that sinneth not. Jews and Gentiles they are *all* under sin, “there is none righteous, no not one.”

Examine your own selves, my young friends, as in the sight of heaven; and weigh well every thought of the heart, every word of the tongue, every action of your past lives, by the standard of everlasting truth, the word of God; and say, whether you have “a conscience *void* of offence towards God, and towards men.” See you no law in your members warring against the law of your mind, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin which is in your members? If “for every idle word” you must give a strict account, can you endure the heart-searching eye of an

omniscient God? Have you kept so strict a watch before the door of your lips, as never to have offended with your tongue? Has God been unceasingly in all your thoughts? Have the meditations of your heart been always acceptable before him? Have you walked before God with a perfect heart? In a word; are you holy, as Christ is holy; pure, as He is pure; and perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect? If you cannot in the strictest sense, answer in the affirmative; you have not the most distant claim to *exemption* from the universal guilt and penalty of sin. Reflect deeply, I pray you, upon the solemn truth; that "whosoever keepeth the whole law, yet offendeth in *one point*," is guilty of *all*: he has, by that *one failure*, incurred the "*curse of the law*," which requires unsinning obedience, as effectually, as if he had committed a thousand transgressions: he has as much *need* of the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, which has taken away that curse, as the chief of sinners.

If *one* sin then, my young friends, brought death into the world, how many thousand deaths, as it were, have every one of you deserved? Doubtless, if you know any thing of that deceitfulness and desperate wickedness

of your hearts, which the prophet Isaiah describes in the strong language, "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;" you will mourn and lament, while ye confess, that the declaration of Scripture is the very voice of truth, with regard to yourselves. "Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me." "I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me." "In many things we offend all." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Convinced then, as I pray God, ye may every one of you be, of this fundamental doctrine of Christianity; consider, I pray you, how wretched and perilous and miserable is this state; and, under a deep sense of its wretchedness, what reason have we to cry out with the jailor at Philippi, "What must we do to be saved?" or with the Jews, when struck by conscience; when pricked in their hearts, by a conviction of sinfulness,—“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”—One answer is plain: of *ourselves* we can do nothing,—we are lost sinners,—“we must all likewise perish,”—we have no way to escape. The *justice* of God requires that sin should be punished; the punishment due to sin is “*eternal death.*” That dreadful sen-

penance therefore is *due* to us,—“ Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Observe—*not prepared for us*, my young friends, but for the devil, your great adversary, and his angels. Heaven, and eternal life, and happiness; paradise and peace, were prepared for us. But we, as the children of Adam, with *him* have despised, and rejected heaven, and eternal life; and forsaken God, and his covenant; and have chosen, and preferred death, and misery, and hell; and made a covenant with Satan.

“ O ! wretched beings that we are,” may we exclaim, “ who shall deliver us from this body of death ? ” — “ I thank God,” says St. Paul, “ through Jesus Christ.” “ Repent,” saith St. Peter, “ and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” So, then, we “ are not left comfortless,” my young friends; though “ troubled on every side, we are not distressed; though perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.” Blessed be God ! Christ also is *our* salvation. He is the way to escape;

“for God so loved the world,” even the rebellious and apostate world, “that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” “He that believeth on him, therefore, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is already condemned; because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God;” but continues in that awful state, in which *the fall* has left him; and which, his obstinate and *wilful sin*, has rendered doubly sinful.

“Be of good cheer, be not afraid,” then; for “though we have destroyed ourselves, our help is in Christ;” though “in many things we offend all,” “and come far short of the glory of God;” yet, Christ Jesus was without sin: “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” What *we* could not do; He, of his infinite mercy and love, hath done for us. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Fear not" then "little flock," for Jesus Christ has "died for our sins, and risen again for our justification." He has satisfied the justice of an offended God— He has suffered the punishment due to our sins. The vials of God's wrath and indignation, were poured upon his innocent head; "by his stripes we are healed; all we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Thus, when we were sinners, Christ died for us: and we are "reconciled to God, by the death of his Son." "O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge," both of the mercy and loving-kindness "of God;" "how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us

from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Consider this, and be wise, my young friends; pause, and reflect, and be thankful; and at this time determine for yourselves, whether ye will confess, and believe, and love, and obey Christ your Saviour; and so escape from ~~the~~ "the wrath to come;" or remain still in the state of eternal condemnation, into which *sin* has brought you: whether ye will be admitted into the "glorious liberty of the children of God," through faith in the Gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation to all that believe;" or be reserved in the slavery and bondage of sin, in everlasting chains of darkness, as cursed children, to perish in your own corruption. Ye cannot "halt between two opinions;" "he that is not for me is against me," saith the Saviour.

Choose therefore for yourselves, this day, whose children, whose servants ye will be; whether, of God, or Satan; of Christ, or Belial; of grace, or of wrath. O! may a merciful Father direct your choice, and guide you by his Spirit, into "the path that leadeth unto life;" that you may "give all diligence" "to make your calling and election sure;" keeping the one thing needful before your

eyes. May you, by the gift of the Spirit, “embrace and hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which God hath given you in his Son:” May you, from an awakened sense, a hearty conviction of your lost state, come unto Him, “who came to seek and to save that which was lost;” that you may receive out of his fulness, grace to supply all your wants; to conform your souls to his divine image; and to enrich you with the blessings of his salvation. And “as you receive the Lord Jesus Christ, so may you walk with him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the *J'ith.*” But ere I proceed, my young friends, to explain to you the articles of that *Faith*, which is the second subject, I propose to consider, in reference to the obligations of your baptismal vows, let me first remind you of your weakness and unworthiness; and lead you to the throne of grace, “in the spirit of prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving;” that both he that teacheth, and they that be taught, may be blessed together.

Let us Pray.

O! Eternal God, great Fountain of Love, Holy Father of Mercies, shed upon these thy

children, humbly kneeling before thee, such a measure of thy heavenly grace, that they may adore thee their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, with all the powers of their souls. We give thee humble thanks and praise, that thou hast called them to the knowledge of thy grace and faith in Christ; and we beseech thee ~~to~~ increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in them evermore; and mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things so direct and rule their hearts, that they may have grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity. Enable them, O Lord, by the same Spirit, to receive into their hearts the great mystery of godliness, that God was manifest in the flesh; and that in Christ crucified, there is plenteous redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. May the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, guide them into all truth, shed abroad in their hearts the love of God their Redeemer, fill them with all joy and peace in believing, and bring forth in them that fruit unto holiness, which endeth in everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE. II.

THE CREED.

THE second thing, my young friends, which your Godfathers and Godmothers promised in your name, at your baptism, was,

THAT YOU WOULD BELIEVE ALL THE ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

Now those articles are contained in that short summary of faith, which we call the Apostles' Creed, which I shall repeat to you.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, AND IN JESUS CHRIST HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD, WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS

PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED; HE DESCENDED INTO HELL, THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD: HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, AND SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY; FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD..

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST, THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH: THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS: THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS: THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN.

I would here observe to you, that there cannot be a more excellent general commentary upon this Creed, than the sound and scriptural form of Christian doctrines, contained in the Nicene Creed of the Communion service; which, for the sake of comparison, I consider it useful to transcribe for you also.

“I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father, before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things

were made : Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead : Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

The Apostles' Creed opens with the declaration,

" I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH."

Our duty to God, is to " believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all our

hearts, and with all our minds, with all our souls, and with "all our strength;" not only in *word*, but in *deed*: not only with the *lips*, but with the *heart*: "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," *only*, when "with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." Thus, "whosoever cometh unto God, must *believe* that he is." But, with regard to our knowledge of God, "it is impossible for the weak mind of man, fully to understand the eternal nature of God." "Who, by searching, can find out God unto perfection? It is as high as heaven! what canst thou do? deeper than hell! what canst thou know? Such knowledge is too wonderful for us!" Whatever we know of the Almighty has been revealed by himself: with this we must be satisfied. To his revelation, we must submit our finite capacities, our feeble powers of understanding; remembering always, that all the faculties of our souls are the *gift* of God; and, as we owe their existence to Him, so ought we to keep them entirely subservient to his *will*. To *believe* what we cannot understand, upon

the sacred and unerring authority of the word of God, is the strongest exercise of faith of which we are capable. It is an implicit reliance upon him, as the God of all truth; In this sense, may the words of Christ to his doubting disciple be used: "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." Search the Scriptures therefore, my young friends, *daily*, for "they are they that testify of God;" and "receive with *meekness* the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." And I would here earnestly advise you to take the Scriptures as you find them, in their plain and most simple sense; neither turning to the right hand nor to the left; by a neglect of which duty, too many have made shipwreck of their faith; "learning for doctrines the traditions of men." It is not only unnecessary, but dangerous to pry into the deep things which belong unto the invisible and only wise God. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which "are" revealed, belong unto ourselves, and to our children for ever; that we "may" learn and "do all the words of the law." We know that "God is a Spirit," and that we must "worship him in spirit and in truth." We know that he is an *eternal* God, without

beginning, or ending :” that he is most *holý*, *just*, and *true* : that he is “ most gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, keeping mercy for thousands :” that he knows all things, can do all things, is every where present, and not confined to any one place. “ Behold ! the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him !” “ Darkness and light are to him alike.” Do not suppose, my young friends, that you can at any time conceal anything from his all-seeing eye : even your most secret thoughts are not hid from Him “ to whom all hearts be open.” “ He is about your path, and about your bed, and spieth out all your ways.” But it is for your present and everlasting good that he watches over you with his providence. As a father pitieth his children, so doth your heavenly Father look down with compassion and love upon the children of men, to see if any will turn unto him. God is truly and eminently the supreme Father, Creator, Preserver, and Protector of *all* his creatures, but especially of those who *know* him, and *believe* in him, and *call upon* him, and *serve* him. “ Is he not thy Father that hath bought thee ? hath he not made thee, and established thee ? Yes, my young

friends, he *is* our Heavenly Father—for “we have all *one Father*: one God hath created us, and his name shall be called the *everlasting Father!*” “By him all things were made, and without him was not anything made, that was made;” for “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” “Thus, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work.” “O! Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto thee? Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.” “The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine. Thou hast laid the foundations of the round world, and all that therein is.” And now, my young friends, while your minds are impressed with a serious sense of the blessedness of being permitted to call God your Father; let me ask you—Have you ever felt the ardent glow of filial love and affection swelling your hearts with tenderness and gratitude towards your natural parents? Have their unwearied and unremitting watchfulness, care, and anxiety, during your helpless infancy; a watchfulness, care, and anxiety, increasing with your advancing years, ever being contemplated by you as a sacred and delightful claim on yourselves, of unceasing and unwearied duty and

devotedness, during the period of their declining years? Think, then, what measure of gratitude, and love, and devotion; what debt of praise, honour, and thanksgiving, is due to that heavenly Father, “in whom you live, and move, and have your being;” who is *full* of compassion and mercy; and whose love towards us, is as much beyond and above the love of our earthly parents, *great as it is*, as “the heaven is high above the earth.” The tender affection of our natural father and mother, truly, is born with our birth, and ceases only with life: But “the merciful goodness of the Lord, our heavenly Father, endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear him; and his righteousness upon children’s children.” But I fear I have dwelt long upon this interesting article of the Christian Faith; and will make but one more observation, as an introduction to the next.

There is a much more spiritual and evangelical sense, in which we are graciously permitted to contemplate and call Almighty God, our Father, viz. as the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: through whom, and for whose sake, God hath adopted us to be his children: for “we are all the children

of God through faith in Christ Jesus." As believers in Christ, therefore, God is our reconciled Father and friend. As Christians, sincere and faithful followers of Jesus, "we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba! Father! the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "No man cometh unto the Father," saith our blessed Saviour, "but by me." "Without me, ye can do nothing." Blessed then be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "who spared not his own Son," of his unspeakable mercy, "but delivered him up for us all, and with him, also, will freely give us all things." "Seeing, therefore, "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;" let us not for a moment hesitate to confess our faith in **GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH; AND IN JESUS CHRIST HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD, WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY.**

The mention of the name of *Jesus*, by a sincere Christian, must ever be accompanied

by a most lively sense of reverence and humility : for “ at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

What heart, that is influenced in the slightest degree by the power of religion, but will be animated with love and gratitude, when contemplating the *meaning* of this blessed name ! In it, we recognise the *Saviour* ! The heavenly messenger conveyed the divine will, that he should be called *Jesus* : “ for he should *save* his people from their sins.” And if the name of Jesus, or the Saviour, convey to us “ joy and peace in believing ;” so likewise must the name of *Christ*. Under this sacred title, we adore Jesus, as “ the *Anointed* of God,” which is the meaning of the word—“ The Anointed High Priest ! Prophet ! King : King of Zion ! The Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee ! The High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck !” In these blessed characters, and offices, we behold “ the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth :” the Emmanuel, born of a pure Virgin . “ God

manifest in the flesh ; the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person !”

Let us, then, with the angelic host, who watched over, and proclaimed his birth ; *behold* and *adore* him : praising God, and saying, “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men !” For in no respect, my young friends, are we left without witness “ of the *truth* as it is in Christ Jesus ;” since the same divine messenger, which addressed the prophetic language to Mary, “ Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus : he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest : for the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.” The same heavenly messenger proclaimed to the shepherds abiding in the fields with their flocks, the *accomplishment* of the divine purpose ; in the animated declaration, “ Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you *is born* this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

Obeſying, therefore, the command of Chriſt, "Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me;" Being aſſured by the word of God himſelf, that "HE WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST, AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY:" we proceed upon the ſame divine authority to believe, that "HE SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED."

And O, let me intreat you, my young friends, to conſider *what* your bleſſed Saviour ſuffered; and to remember, for *whom* he ſuffered, and for whom he died!

And firſt conſider, *what* he ſuffered. He took upon him our nature, with all its infirmities; "being in all things like unto his brethren; as it behoved him, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining unto God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the world." "He took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in likeness of men," even though "he was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and *one* together with the Father;" "the brightness of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon." From his birth in a *ſtable*, to his death upon the *cross*, he paſſed through one con-

tinued series of trial and suffering, as I shall now endeavour briefly to describe by an imperfect sketch of the life and death of Christ.

The predicted "rod from the stem," and the "branch from the roots of Jesse, came forth and grew up as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground." "He had no form nor comeliness, and there was no beauty that we should desire him;" for, as I said before, he was born in a *stable*. Though descended from the house, and of the lineage of David; in such humble circumstances were Joseph and Mary; that the blessed Virgin "brought forth her first-born Son, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." And so remarkable was the country of Galilee for its barrenness, that it was a proverbial expression, afterwards applied to Christ, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" In this mean and lowly condition, it was ordained that the Messiah should come into the world. Thus did "God manifest in the flesh," debase and empty himself, in order to take upon him our nature. From the earliest infancy the character of "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," began to discover itself. Immediately on his birth, his career of danger

and sorrow commenced, with a cruel and unrelenting attempt upon his innocent life, by the order of Herod. From this troublous period of peril to himself, and of anxiety and wandering to his mother and Joseph; till the divinely-named Jesus arrived at the age of thirty years, all that we learn of the holy Child, is the deeply interesting scene which took place with the pious and devout servants of God, Simeon and Anna, at the time of his presentation in the temple; and the astonishing display of that "spirit of wisdom," with which he "waxed strong, and was filled;" and of the grace of God which was upon him," exhibited at the age of twelve years, when he was found also in the temple at Jerusalem, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions;" or as he explained his situation to his amazed parents, engaged "about his Father's business." If I add, that after this he went down with his mother and Joseph to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; "and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." So silently and secretly did he grow up to manhood, "as a tender plant," unknown, and unheard of. At length, "the voice of one crying in

the wilderness," prepared the way of the Lord. And the meek and innocent Lamb of God came forth from his retirement, to receive testimony of his divine mission, as well as divine nature. Do you here inquire, my young friends, if the entrance of the Messiah upon his public ministry, was attended by circumstances of pomp and splendour, corresponding with the anticipations of his prophetic kingly character? One solitary attendant, John the Baptist, I answer, proclaimed his advent, not as an earthly prince and king, but—"Behold the Lamb of God! that taketh away the sins of the world." Soon, however, a proclamation awaited him, as far above and beyond all earthly distinctions, as heaven is high above the earth. At the waters of Baptism, the sacrament ordained to anoint him *most holy*, and to consecrate him to the high office of Prince and Saviour, Prince of Peace! and the Lord our Righteousness! again behold the Lamb of God, fervent in prayer; see the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove; and listen to the voice of God proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him!"

No sooner was his divine relation to the eternal Godhead promulgated, no sooner was

his *divinity* established by the word and Spirit of everlasting truth, than his *humanity* was subjected, by the same Spirit, to a scene of privation and trial, both of body and mind, which we cannot contemplate, in reference to ourselves, without fear and trembling. The "Man of Sorrows" is again discovered to us, forlorn and hungered, in the desert; for now was Jesus led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. I have already described to you, in a former Lecture, both the extremity of that trial, and the glorious and triumphant termination; the mortal wound that was given to the serpent's head; the deadening check that was given to its power. Poor fishermen were selected by him as the appropriate companions of his humble and peaceful mission, and with them he began a *public* life of suffering, corresponding from the beginning, with the distresses of his infancy; except that there was no longer an interval of rest from his incessant labours; no relaxation from "the work which his Father gave him to do." And now was he "despised and rejected of men." When "he came unto his own, his own received him not;" and though "he did many miracles" among men, and "did all

things well ;” made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk ; though he cleansed the leper, cast out devils, fed multitudes upon a few loaves ; controlled the winds and waves, and healed all manner of diseases with a word ; though, finally, he even raised the dead to life again ; yet, amazing to relate, “ they believed him not ;” they would not obey his Gospel ; they would not receive his good tidings of great joy to all nations. “ Israel would not know, his people would not consider.”—All his merciful efforts for their salvation were rejected with the scornful reproach, “ Is this not the carpenter’s son !”—“ Thou hast a devil !”—“ He hath spoken blasphemy !”—“ We know that this man is a sinner.”—“ As for this fellow, we know not whence he is.” Labour and toil, hunger and thirst, fatigue and weariness, oppressed and afflicted his body : disappointment, vexation, and the contradiction of sinners, wounded his spirit. Often, so unprovided and destitute was his condition, amidst all these bodily and mental privations, that he thus described his forlorn situation : “ The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.” In

every scene, at every view, weary with endless labours of love, or grieved for the hardness of their hearts, we lose not sight of "the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief." And as the period of his ministry drew to a close, and the appointed time of its awful consummation advanced nearer, more grievous, and far heavier was the burden of calamity he was ordained to endure, ere he was "cut off out of the land of the living;" before he was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter,"—before he was "stricken for the transgression of the people." Behold him weeping over the devoted city of Jerusalem, with anguish of heart, at the destruction that awaited it; and exclaiming in the language of hope disappointed, "O! Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Again, amid the hosannas of the people, on his triumphal entry into the holy city; see the Son of David, "meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Yet even now is his humble spirit troubled, because

they had converted his Father's house, the house of prayer, into "a den of thieves."

But, my young friends, short, though perfect, as to the fulfilment of prophecy, was his triumph—for it was the beginning of woes of a deeper die; the forerunner of the hour and power of darkness. But ere that hour arrived, the Saviour of the world, "with desire, desired to eat the passover" with his disciples; and to institute the holy Sacrament of his body and blood, under the title of the Lord's Supper, in remembrance of his sufferings and death; as a last legacy of his love and tender affection for them; as a means of grace, by which *they*, and after them, Christians of every age, might "shew forth the Lord's death until his coming again." Alas! during this sacred and affecting communion with his disciples, misery and sorrow invaded his peaceful breast. Even now, the traitor Judas was meditating his accursed plan for betraying his Master. He that knew the secrets of all hearts, foresaw his treachery, and it pierced his bosom with anguish; "he was troubled in spirit."

But, supper ended, when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives. And here, my young friends, let

me bring you closer to view the sufferings of your Saviour; that your hearts may likewise be brought nigh to him, in faith and love. Come with me, and visit the garden of Gethsemane. There listen to Jesus offering up "prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save him from death." Witness the agony of his spirit, when he exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!" Conceive the dreadful nature of his mental and bodily sufferings, when he thrice prayed to his Father; "Father! if it be possible, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." As on another occasion, "Father! save me from this hour." And during the earnestness of his prayer, and the acuteness of his agony, "he sweated, as it were, great drops of blood." One awful and awakening scene remains, to which it is my painful yet edifying duty to lead you. But first, you will remember, that our blessed Lord had foretold to his disciples, that they should all be offended because of him. So, truly, notwithstanding their positive declaration, that they would die with him rather than desert him, it came to pass. One, the son of perdition, betrayed him; another

self-confident disciple, repeatedly denied him; and “*all* forsook him and fled.”

To the Jews and Heathen, his most inveterate enemies, he was now, but with his own consent only, delivered by the traitor Judas. In the palace of the high priest, he was brought up for judgment. The chief priests and elders stood and vehemently accused him; false witnesses rose up against him; Herod, with his men of war, set him at nought; Pilate condemned him, though innocent; while the people, with one accord, cried, “Away with him, away with him! crucify him! crucify him!”—the same people who so lately exclaimed, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”—Then did they revile and insult, and mock and spit on him, and scourge and buffet him. But “when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” “He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.”

At length the malice of his enemies completed the measure of their guilt. He was

led forth to be crucified. "Behold the Man!—the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief," crowned with thorns, and bearing his cross. Draw nearer, and with tearful eye behold your Redeemer nailed to the accursed tree: See his blessed hands and feet pierced with the nails, and his holy side with the spear, and his precious blood flowing from the wound: and listen to the cry that expressed the anguish of his soul, in his forlorn, deserted, friendless, Fatherless state—"My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

There is but one pang more, and "it is finished."—"He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Such was Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and such were his sufferings, as predicted by the prophet Isaiah seven hundred years before his Advent. Yet so *accurately* and *minutely* foretold, that if you will read the fifty-third chapter with attention, and compare its contents with the facts recorded in the Gospels, they will rather seem to have been written to describe the circumstances, after they had taken place, than so many centuries before. But here we behold the finger of God: "For *prophecy* came not in old

time by the will of man : but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Thus did your blessed Saviour *suffer*, my young Christian friends! "And if hunger and thirst, if revilings and contempt, if sorrows and agonies, if stripes and buffetings, if condemnation and crucifixion be sufferings; Jesus suffered. If the infirmities of our nature, if the weight of our sins, if the malice of man, if the machinations of Satan, if the hand of God, could make him suffer, our Saviour suffered." • And, therefore, "those things which God before had shewn by the mouth of his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath fulfilled." "He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God."

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But Jesus Christ had even greater love than this; for he suffered and died for his *enemies*, his *persecutors*, his *murderers*: and, dying, prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Such, I repeat, was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. But *for whom* do we learn that he suffered—for whom did he die? Truly, for

our sakes, and for our salvation. “ For in that he hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that be tempted.” To save our lost and perishing souls, he voluntarily consented to leave the bosom of his Father, and his glory in heaven. “ Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” I intreat you, therefore, my young friends, never cease to remember, that *your* sins and crimes, as part of the universal transgression for which he died, were the prospective cause of your Saviour’s sufferings. O! let it pierce your hearts, and check you in the career of sin, to reflect, that every sin you commit added a pang to your Saviour’s agony. See, then, that ye crucify him not afresh, and put him to open shame by your iniquities. O! consider what a fearful thing it is, to “ tread under foot the Son of God; and to count the blood of the covenant, wherewith ye are sanctified, an unholy thing; and to do despite unto the Spirit of grace!” Since Christ died for your sins, shew your gratitude and love, by dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness; following the example

of his great humility and patience here, that you may be partakers of his resurrection hereafter.

The testimony of the Roman soldiers, the enemies of Christianity, affords undeniable evidence of the *death* of our crucified Redeemer. The Scriptures inform us, that when, as usual, the soldiers came and brake the legs of the two malefactors who were crucified with him, they found that he was already dead, and the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." The same Scriptures testify, with regard to his *burial*, that Joseph of Arimathea begged the body of Jesus from Pilate, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of a rock; and thus, "he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."

With respect to our Lord's DESCENT INTO HELL, I would observe, that the place expressed by this word, is the place where the souls of the departed are received, till the resurrection at the last day; and by no means can be understood to represent that place of torment, "prepared for the devil and his angels."

The RESURRECTION of our Lord, is equally

established by the unerring testimony of Holy Writ, which describes the visible appearance of our blessed Saviour to the disciples, on various occasions, as St. Paul beareth witness: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was *buried*, and that he *rose again the third day* according to the Scripture: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James, then of all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time; for I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of Christ."

To this testimony of St. Paul, we may add the inspired words of St. Peter. "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains

of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

The mention of the particular period of our Saviour's continuing in the grave, or the circumstance that he should rise the *third day*, is fully proved by the evidence of Scripture. He who said, in the language of prophecy, "Destroy this temple, and in *three days* I will raise it up;" fulfilled the prediction, and arose the third day. "As Jonas was three days and ~~three~~ nights," that is, according to ancient calculation, *part* of three days and three nights, "in the whale's belly;" so was the Son of Man, part of "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." For, "upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the sepulchre, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus: and behold, two men stood by them in shining garments, and said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake unto you while he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the *third day* rise again."— See also, *Luke xxiv.* 46.

Now "if the Spirit of him that raised up

Jesus from the dead, dwell in *you*," my young friends, "he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," "and make them like unto his glorious body." And herein is the exceeding value of Christ's resurrection to us; as it is an earnest, a full assurance of hope to the righteous, of a resurrection to eternal life. "For if in this life only we have hope in Christ, then are we," Christians, "of all men most miserable." "Blessed," therefore, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

The ASCENSION of our blessed Lord into heaven, is thus recorded by St. Luke: "And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them: and it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

“And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” St. Mark writes, that “He was received up into heaven, and SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.” “Go to my brethren,” said the Saviour to the pious women who were at the sepulchre on the morning of his resurrection, “go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and your God.”

It were unnecessary to multiply texts from Scripture beyond those I have selected, to confirm the truth of our Lord's ascension. I shall only explain to you, in the conclusion of this article of the creed; the importance of this doctrine to ourselves. And I cannot, I feel confident, address to you any words of explanation, either so instructive, or so agreeable to you, as those of our Lord himself: “But now I go my way to him that sent me;” “but because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth ; it is expedient that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." "In my Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you ; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also." "I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father but by me."

Since, then, the full and final accomplishment of the infinite love of God the Father, towards mankind, through the mediation of God the Son, could alone be effected by the *sanctification* of God the Holy Ghost ; which sanctification could *only* be communicated to the souls of men, for the ends of salvation, either by the *extraordinary* descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, and first Christians, for the *special* purposes of their Gospel mission ; or by the *ordinary* operation of divine grace, by which we live, and move,

and have our *spiritual* being; and since *that* holy inspiration could alone be available, through the *ascension* of Christ to the throne of his Father's glory; what abundant cause have we, my young friends, to rejoice, rather than be sorrowful, that he is exalted at the right hand of God, and has received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed forth upon Christians of every age; that "he has ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men:" that "God hath exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins;" that "he hath not left us comfortless," but, as the "Sun of righteousness has *arisen* with healing in his wings."

Consider then, my young friends, the immense importance of Christ's *ascension* into glory; while I endeavour to explain to you, from the Scriptures, the efficacy, power, and perfection, of his divine office, as Mediator and High Priest at "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven." For which purpose I will briefly compare the office and character of the high priest under the law, and the imperfection of his offerings and sacrifices, by reason of a sinful nature and

temporary priesthood; with the all-perfect righteousness and atonement of the "High Priest *for ever*, after the order of Melchisedec."

"Every high priest" "under the law of Moses, we are informed by St. Paul, " was ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he might offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, and have compassion on the ignorant" and sinful; "for that he himself was compassed with infirmity;" and by reason thereof he was bound, in the ministration of his office, "as for the people, so also for *himself*, to offer for sins." When, therefore, he entered *once* every year alone, into the holy of holies, it was not without *blood*, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; for "without blood there is no remission" of sins. But "never could those sacrifices which were offered, year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect"—"could never take away sins;" "for then would they" "have *ceased* to be offered, because that the worshippers *once* purged, should have no more conscience of sins."

The great High Priest, the Son, who is consecrated for evermore by the word of an

everlasting oath; the Mediator of the new covenant; the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"—was such an High Priest as became the fallen and sinful sons of Adam; "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Yet, "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are," except that he was "*without sin.*" "For it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Nevertheless, "he needed not daily, as the high priests of the tabernacle, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's;" "nor yet that he should offer himself *often*, as the high priest entered into the holy place, every year," with the blood of bulls and of goats; for then must he *often* have suffered, since the foundation of the world. But now, *once*, in the end of the world, hath He appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself" upon the cross; "for by *one* offering hath he perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This

Man, after he had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God ; where he exercises the exalted dignity of an unchangeable priesthood, “ after the power of an endless life ;” “ and is able to save to the uttermost, all who come to God through *Him*, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” “ And being made perfect, he is become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.”

Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, “ not made with hands ;” “ neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by *his own blood*, entered in *once* into the holy place,” “ the holiest of all,” having obtained eternal redemption for us. “ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh : how much more shall the *blood of Christ*, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself, without spot, to God ; purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.”

If God so loved the world, sinful and rebellious as it was, that he sent his only-begotten Son to save it from perishing ; how supremely must he magnify his attribute of

Love, towards his Son; who has finished the work he gave him to do, and accomplished his will in the redemption of mankind: “finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, and” been “anointed most Holy!” “If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him,” and for his sake, “freely give us all things?” Can the Son of his glory plead in vain? Can ineffable goodness ask, and not receive? Can immaculate holiness seek, and not find? Is it possible, that He, “to whom all power is given both in heaven and earth;” who hath overcome the world, and the prince of this world; who hath passed victorious through the dark valley of the shadow of death; risen triumphant from the grave, and ascended into his kingdom of glory—should ever cease to claim the heathen as his promised inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for his rightful possession? It is *not* possible. He who “died for our sins, and rose again for our justification,” will conciliate the love of his heavenly Father towards his adopted children; that they all may be *one* with Him, and with the Father, even as he and the Father are one. And by his pre-

vailing intercession will obtain that pardon of sin, which he hath purchased with his own precious blood. He that is our "Advocate with the Father," and the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world," shall plead the merits of his sufferings and death; clothe our imperfect repentance, weak faith, and unworthy obedience, with his all-perfect righteousness; and present us blameless before the throne of God. He that hath taught, and commanded us to pray, in his name; to "ask and receive, that our joy may be full;" shall send down the Holy Ghost into our hearts; breathe into our souls the gift of grace; make us "willing in the day of his power;" and "fill us with all joy and peace in believing." Then shall the prayer of faith be heard; and when we supplicate God's mercy, "by the mystery of Christ's holy Incarnation, by his holy Nativity and Circumcision, by his Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation; by his Agony and Bloody Sweat, by his Cross and Passion by his precious Death and Burial; by his glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost;" the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, will not deny us the request of our lips; but will send down an answer of peace; will receive us, as recon-

ciled children, into his favour, and love, for his dear Son's sake ; send forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, to watch over us for good ; to “ perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle ” us in the faith ; that being washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God ; “ kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ; we may walk worthy our high calling as Christians, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith, with power : that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in Him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ ; ” “ who has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father ; ” and prepared for us mansions in his Father's house ; “ having appointed unto us a kingdom, as his Father hath appointed unto Him, ” that we may “ sit with him on thrones, ” and “ reign with Him in glory for ever and ever. ”

Such are the efficacy, power, and perfection of Christ's divine office as Mediator, and High Priest, at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high. Such the saving importance of his *ascension* into glory ; grace,

mercy, love and peace ; wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : “ even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe.”

If *ye* then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God : “ Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth ;” “ for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ;” and “ when Christ, who is our life, shall ” a second time “ appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

That our blessed Lord shall come from heaven, TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD ; both the dead, and those who shall be found alive ; is also abundantly testified by the word of God. “ We must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.” And, “ when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him ; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory ; and before him shall be gathered all nations ; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats : and he shall set the

sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left; then shall the King say to those on his right hand—Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. Then shall he also say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed! into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

The mysterious change by which the natural, shall be transformed into the spiritual man; by which those who have borne the image of the earthy, shall also bear the image of the heavenly, is thus impressively described by the Apostle St. Paul, in regard both to the *quick* and the *dead*: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all *sleep*, but we shall all be *changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”—And the same Apostle more literally describes the transition of the *quick* or *living*, at the last day, in the following beautiful address to the Thessalonians. “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,

concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the *dead* in Christ shall rise first: 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 ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

"Watch, therefore," my young friends, "and pray that ye enter not into temptation:" "that you may be ready with your loins girt, and your lamps burning, as those that are waiting for the coming of their Lord. For ye know not at what day, or at what hour the Son of Man cometh." Ye know not, but that this very night your souls may be required of you; and summoned to appear in a moment, at the awful tribunal of God's judg-

ment-seat; to give a strict account of every thought, word, and action; and to receive sentence according to your works. For God shall "render to every man according to his deeds: to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, *eternal life* : but to them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, to every one that doeth evil: but glory, honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good."

The third Person in the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, in whom we profess to believe, in the next most important article of the creed; is the HOLY GHOST; or Holy Spirit of God: sometimes called also in Scripture, "the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth:" distinct from the Father; and the Son; proceeding, and coming forth from them; and GOD together with them. It was this divine person of the Godhead, that descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, soon after the ascension of our Lord into heaven; by whose powerful inspiration, the knowledge of the grace of the Gospel has been revealed to all the Christian world: and by whose spiritual operation, the great work of salvation

has been *sanctified*. For, as “Christ through the Eternal Spirit offered himself to God ; so by the same Spirit, both he offer himself to us, to abide with us for ever.” For he saith, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.”

Perfectly holy in himself, the Spirit of God is the Sanctifier, or worker of holiness in us. And when we consider, my young friends, how fast we are chained down, as it were, to the earth, by a sinful nature ; and how seldom we attempt to look up to heaven : how sensual our passions ! how corrupt our affections ! our understandings, how darkened ! our hearts, how deceitful ! our will and inclinations, how prone to evil continually ! and how faint and feeble are our dispositions to know, to love and to serve God, “and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent :” and when we reflect, that such are the fatal consequences of the *Fall*, that it cannot possibly be otherwise ; unless we be “renewed in the spirit of our minds :” unless we be regenerated, and born again, “of water and of the Spirit,” at our entrance by Baptism into the kingdom of Christ ; and, “of the same Spirit,”

as often, during our Christian course, as “we depart from grace given, and fall into sin; and by the grace of God arise” in godly penitence, “to newness of life.” When we thus consider the strength of sinful depravity, and the weakness of human nature; the power of temptation, and the infirmity of the flesh; and contemplate the change that must take place, before the children of Adam can become the sons of God: before the inheritors of a sinful and corrupt nature, can become “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ:” O, let the sense of our great *need* of a Divine power, to produce this saving change; guide us to the Holy Spirit, as the sole author, and finisher of this work of grace in the soul. It is the Holy Spirit that opens to our view the springs of living waters, that flow unto everlasting life: that scatters the clouds of darkness from our minds, and gives us a right understanding in all things. It is He, that takes the mysterious things of Christ, and reveals them clearly to our souls; makes us partakers of the spiritual nature, and fills us with joy and peace in believing: that “creates a clean heart and renews a right spirit within us.” It is He that sanctifies our dispositions, and directs our wills; guides us

in the paths of holiness ; conducts us safely through the trials and temptations of life ; supplies us with every gift and grace ; and inclines us to “ all virtue and godliness of living.” It is He that leads us to that rectitude of soul, to that conformity with God, to that love of Christ, and that happiness in his service, which may be called, the life of heaven here, and will be made perfect in a future state ; to that “ path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Need I observe to you, then, my young friends, that the Holy Spirit should be the object of your daily, your constant prayer ? Need I remind you, that we have the gracious assurance of Christ himself, that God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask in his name ? But unless we duly value the gift, and see our need of it ; unless we seriously reflect, how indispensably necessary it is for our salvation : we shall never ask, so as to receive ; never seek so as to find ; never knock, so as to have the door of grace opened to us. To this end, let us frequently meditate upon the Holy Ghost : for when this Divine Spirit shall become the daily desire of our souls ; then shall we possess more light in our understandings, and more grace in our hearts :

then shall we be led forward from one glorious truth to another; from strength to strength: growing in grace; increasing in faith; filled with hope; and abounding in charity. But without the Holy Ghost we can do nothing: not even think a good thought; much less do a good action; least of all can we believe aright: for "no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost: and by Him only, God worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." Now "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:" but, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"It is thus the peculiar office of the Third Person of the Trinity, to bring us unto Christ, and to induce us to accept the pardon of sin, which is freely offered to all. And hence we see that none can come to Christ, without being drawn by the gracious influence of the Spirit."

Thus have we learnt, That there is but one living and true God. And in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all mankind: And hence we learn also, in the words of our excellent Catechism, "first, to believe in God the

Father, who hath made us, and all the world : secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed us and all mankind,; and thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us and all the elect people of God."

I now proceed to explain to you, my young friends, that the HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, in which we believe, is the Church of Christ, throughout the whole world. In the spirit of that Church we have no doubt but that all true believers will be saved. From the inspiration of that Church, we "perceive, that God is no respecter of persons," but that "in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." "For as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The Gospel of Christ, "is the power of God unto salvation, to all that believe." That blessed Saviour hath commanded it to be preached to all nations and languages under heaven. It is the "glad tidings of great joy to all people." And we cherish the blessed hope, upon the authority of God's word, that the day shall arise, when "the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in ;" when "the whole earth shall be filled with

the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ;” and “ all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” In this sense and meaning, we “ BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.” Careful, however, to the utmost, to deny that dangerous doctrine—“ That every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature.” For holy Scripture doth set out unto us *only* “ the name of Jesus Christ, whereby we must be saved.” In a similar view we consider “ THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS ;” viz. That all faithful Christians do in common partake of the benefits and privileges of the Gospel ; of which privileges, communion with Almighty God, through Christ, in “ the spirit of ” sanctified “ prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving,” is the highest. “ For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” For that blessed and sanctifying *communion*, I trust, my young friends, you are now preparing yourselves in an especial manner, and under circumstances most solemn and impressive. Hitherto ye have been careful, I hope, to maintain in your daily devotions, a constant watchfulness unto prayer. But now,

you will be admitted to a far higher, and more valuable privilege and honour, in joining the communion of *saints*, in the "Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," at the Lord's Table; where you will be welcome guests at the heavenly banquet which he hath provided for you; and be permitted to celebrate the remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain "remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven." But as I shall make this Sacrament the subject of a separate Lecture, I shall not dwell upon it any longer at present, but proceed to explain to you, what we believe will be the happy consequence of a faithful obedience to *this*, and every spiritual command of Christ, viz.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

That our blessed Redeemer "hath power in heaven and on earth to forgive sins," is a truth as certain, as that "He is exalted by the right hand of God, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" as sure, as the word of a God of faithfulness can make it. Forgiveness of sins, or in other words, pardon and deliverance from the guilt and punishment of sin, is a gift of grace and mercy, on

the part of Almighty God, richly bestowed, and freely offered to us lost and perishing creatures; not, as you may perhaps vainly imagine, for any merit or desert of ours; far from it; but for the all-perfect merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, who is our blessed Advocate with the Father, and the “propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

Our part of the gracious and merciful covenant, is, to *believe* the Gospel, and to *repent* of our sins; to be so truly sorry for our past sins, as to amend and reform our lives; to “die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness.” And here, as well as in all other calls to duty, we must implore the assistance of God’s Holy Spirit, to give us “that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of;” “that penitent and contrite heart,” which He hath declared he will not despise. For thus only can we hope to obtain that repentance towards God, which springs from faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and which alone can lead to remission of sins.

Let me intreat you, then, my young friends, to “look up to Jesus,” as the author and giver of this precious *gift* of “forgiveness o.

sins ;” a *gift*, which He hath purchased with his own blood ; and which he will *freely* bestow upon all who will seek it with an humble heart, and a living faith ; a *gift*, at all times rich and valuable, but at *one* great day, unspeakably precious ! I mean, at the “ Resurrection of the body ;”—that awful day, “ when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth ; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Then, indeed, will the forgiveness of sins be unutterably precious to the righteous ; and the loss of it, indescribable anguish to the wicked. • For it will be a surety to the righteous, that they have been “ sealed to the day of salvation ;” that they are numbered among the chosen disciples of Christ, to whom he is, “ wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

And of the *certainty* of the RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, we cannot have a more perfect assurance, than in the resurrection of *Christ*, “ the *first-fruits* of them that slept.” For, as I before observed, and cannot too often repeat for your consolation, “ God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise

up *us* by his own power." "And if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

In this light, my young friends, contemplate your Redeemer, as "the Resurrection and the Life;" and let it be deeply engraven on your hearts, as a truth of inexpressible value, that, "Whosoever believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Him, shall never die;" which words, while they reveal the principle of spiritual life in Christ, to those who are "dead in trespasses and sins;" proclaim Him also the resurrection both of the *quick* and the *dead* at the last day. The belief in a *future state*, and of "the blessed hope of EVERLASTING LIFE, which God hath given us in his Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ," are necessary to support us in this mortal state of probation and trial. Without that blessed faith, the spirit of a man could not bear its infirmities; "for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, then are we, of all men, most miserable!" But possessing, as we do, this glorious assurance of a resurrection to life everlasting, we are sustained

and reconciled in our present earthly pilgrimage, by the happy persuasion, that "there is a rest prepared for the children of God;" that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment," compared with eternity, "shall work out for us," by patience and faith, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The faithful follower of Christ is convinced, by the Spirit of the Word of God, and the power of divine grace upon his heart, that "the Lord is his Shepherd, and he shall lack nothing." That in his journey through life, that watchful Shepherd shall feed him in the green pastures; shall lead him forth beside the still waters of comfort; shall convert his soul, and bring him forth in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake; yea, though he walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, "He will not leave him nor forsake him:" therefore will he fear no evil: since Christ is with him, His rod and his staff shall succour him; so that "goodness and mercy shall follow him all the days of his life, and he shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

To the *righteous*, the prospect of eternity is "full of joy and peace in believing;" for

“the fruit of righteousness is peace, and its effect, quietness and assurance for ever.” To the righteous, the one prevailing object, the one thing needful, is, that, “whether they live, they may live unto the Lord; or whether they die, they may die unto the Lord, that both living and dying, they may be the Lord’s.” Lamenting with bitterness of spirit the *cause*, the sinful cause, which corrupted their mortal bodies, and obliterated the image and likeness of God from their immortal souls; and deploring, with humility and repentance, the share they have added by actual transgression, to the general, the universal depravity; yet have they a “hope full of immortality;” a full assurance, that, by the grace of God, their sins will be forgiven, and their pardon sealed; that they shall “die the death of the righteous, and their latter end be like his:” that He, in whom they have believed, will raise up their mortal bodies, free from the impurities and defilements of this human nature, and make them like unto his glorious body; shall cause this “mortal to put on immortality,” and “this corruptible to put on incorruption;” “according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to himself.”

Then shall the righteous shine as the sun before God. Clothed in the bright robe of their Saviour's all-perfect righteousness, with Him they shall dwell in eternal habitations prepared for them; evermore praising and glorifying God, and singing the heavenly song of the redeemed: "Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever!"

To *unbelievers* alone, "who will not retain God in their knowledge," is the certainty of a resurrection to a life everlasting, alarming and dreadful. To them, the prospect of *eternity*, is justly, a "fearful looking forward to judgment." To them, everlasting life is everlasting misery!—To be shut out *for ever*, "from the glory of the presence of the Lord," and from the "light of His countenance;" is indeed, a most awakening consideration. But when we reflect upon the final retribution, the endless punishment, that awaits those who have rejected the mercy, and despised the grace of God; who, by their hardness, and impenitency of heart, have treasured up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God; indignation and wrath, tribulation

and anguish ; “ pain above patience ! sorrow without ease ! amazement without comfort ! despair without hope ! and torment without end ! ” — when we reflect upon these affecting truths ; we may well confess, that “ it is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the living God . ” No language, however, can describe the unremitting misery of the wicked, so forcibly as the word of God itself ; and, as it is written of the blessedness of the righteous, that “ eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man ” to conceive, “ the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ; ” so, equally, may it be said of the punishment of the unbeliever. Still, the awful denunciation of Scripture is, “ The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God ! ” And the figures and similitudes, which are used to express, to human understanding, the extremity of eternal misery, are, “ the worm that dieth not ; ” and “ the fire which is not quenched . ” That outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ; ” the “ lake of fire, burning with brimstone, ” where the wicked “ shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever . ”

O, my young friends, spare me the neces-

sity of a farther selection of these tremendous, and terrific passages! Wonder not that God, who hath loved man so amazingly, should punish him so eternally! The wicked fall into the portion of the cursed, because they despise and hate, what God most loves, His dearly beloved Son. “How could *they* escape, who neglect so great salvation,” “who despised the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance.” Let these awful warnings, these “things which belong unto your everlasting peace,” sink deep into your hearts; “before they are hid from your eyes;” before it be too late. “For it will be vain to knock, when the door shall be shut; and too late to cry for mercy; when it is the time of justice. Then shall they call upon me, saith the Lord, but I will not hear; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: and that because they hated knowledge, and received not the fear of the Lord, but abhorred my counsel, and despised my correction. O terrible voice of most just judgment, which shall be pronounced upon them; when it shall be said unto them, “Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and

his angels." Therefore, my young friends, "take we heed betime, while the day of salvation lasteth; for the night cometh when no man can work. But let us, while we have the light, believe in the light, and walk as children of the light, that we be not cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Let us not abuse the goodness of God, who calleth us mercifully to amendment, and of his endless pity promiseth us forgiveness of that which is past, if with a perfect and true heart we turn unto Him. For though our sins be red as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow: and though they be like purple, yet they shall be made white as wool. Turn ye, saith the Lord, from all your wickedness, and your sin shall not be your destruction. Cast away from you all your ungodliness that ye have done: make you new hearts, and a new spirit. Wherefore will ye die, O house of Israel, seeing that I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God? Turn ye, then, and ye shall live. Although we have sinned, yet have we an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins. For he was wounded for our offences, and smitten

for our wickedness." Let us, therefore, my young friends, turn unto Him, who is the merciful receiver of all true penitent sinners : assuring ourselves that he is ready to receive us, and most willing to pardon us, if we come unto him with faithful repentance ; if we submit ourselves unto him, and from henceforth walk in his ways ; if we take his easy yoke, and light burden upon us, to follow him in lowliness, patience, and charity ; and be ordered by the governance of his Holy Spirit ; seeking always his glory, and serving him duly in our vocation with thanksgiving. This if we do, Christ will deliver us from the curse of the law, and from the extreme malediction that shall light upon them that be set on his left hand ; and he will set us on his right hand, and give us the gracious benediction of his Father, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world." Which blessing that you may all attain to, my young christian friends, God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, the ever blessed and eternal Trinity, Three Persons and One God, be as is ever

due, all glory, honour, power, praise, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us Pray.

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast given thine only Son, to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that these, thy servants, being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be directed by thy Holy Spirit, to adore thy tender love towards mankind, in sending thy beloved Son to suffer death upon the cross; and to follow the example of his great humility and patience. And as they are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son; so, by continual mortifying their corrupt affections, they may be buried with them; and through the grave, the gate of death, pass to a joyful resurrection; that when, at the last day, He shall come again, in his glorious Majesty; to judge both the quick and the dead, they may rise to the life everlasting, with Him, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us

this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO

LECTURE III.

My Young Friends!

THE happiness of the children of Israel, at the commencement of their abode in the land of Egypt, and the circumstances attending their bondage therein afterwards; their departure thence, and journey into the wilderness; the delivery of the law to them upon Mount Sinai; and their protracted wanderings, occasioned by disobedience and rebellion against their Almighty Ruler, until their final admission into the land of promise; in so many respects correspond with the course of duties upon which you are now entering, and furnish us with so many lessons of wisdom and experience, that I cannot but feel the usefulness of drawing the comparison, in order to a due application of these subjects to your spiritual instruction.

You will remember, that Almighty God, in his merciful providence, having raised up the favoured patriarch, Joseph, who was sold

as a bond-servant, to be chief officer of Pharaoh's household, and prime minister of his kingdom; in a wonderful manner planted his aged and chosen servant *Israel*, in the land of Egypt. From that time, the descendants of Jacob, who were called *Israelites*, or the children of *Israel*, after their *father*, became more particularly distinguished as that *chosen people* of God, that *promised seed* of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; in whom "all the families of the earth should be blessed;" and whose posterity should be as the stars in the firmament, or the sand upon the sea-shore for multitude. Here, in the land of Goshen, they found favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; who, seeing that all things prospered in the hands of Joseph, whom he had placed over all that he had, for his fidelity and wisdom; and justly believing, from the many miraculous evidences of the Divine power and mercy, that God was with him; commanded Joseph to give them the best of the land of Egypt to dwell in, and to nourish his father and his brethren with bread, according to their families. And *Israel* dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly.

But when Pharaoh, the just and pious king of Egypt, was dead, and Israel was laid with his fathers, and Joseph and all his brethren, and all that generation were also departed this life, “then a new king arose over Egypt, which knew not Joseph, nor believed in the God of Israel. When he saw that the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, so that the land was filled with them; he said unto his people,—Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.” Therefore, they set task-masters over them, and afflicted them with their burdens, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, and rigorous service.

O! what a change was this, from the peacefulness and freedom of their former condition; from the enjoyment of all the comforts and blessings, the happiness and prosperity, which the favour and goodness of their late king had bestowed upon them;

to the galling yoke of slavery, made more and more intolerable, by the tyrannous and oppressive hand of their present ruler!

Your young minds have probably anticipated the observation I am about to make,—that exactly similar in a spiritual, as well as temporal sense, was the unhappy change that took place in the condition of our first parents, Adam and Eve; when, from the possession of all things richly to enjoy; from an uninterrupted state of tranquillity and happiness in Paradise; above all, from the constant presence, grace, and favour of the Lord God; they were driven into a bondage far more grievous and painful, far more dreadful and distressing, than the bondage of Egypt; even into the oppressive and destructive bondage of *sin*; under the most cruel and unrelenting of tyrants; who, having seduced them from their allegiance to their former merciful, and beneficent King, against whom he had himself rebelled; succeeded by subtlety to the government over them; and leading them away captive, held them in the chains of a *slavery*, not only abounding in labour and sorrow, but a slavery unto death; not only subduing the body, but also the soul; not only the head, but the heart. I need not

mention the name of that tyrant: his character will discover him to you.

It were unnecessary to detail to you, my young friends, the numberless and unnatural means employed by the hard-hearted and impious Pharaoh, to depress and weaken the people of God: but in vain—for the more he oppressed them, the more they multiplied and grew. Such was the Almighty power of God, the King of kings! and Lord of lords! who looked down with compassionate pity upon his suffering people; whose cry came unto him, by reason of their task-masters; who also heard their groaning, and remembered His covenant with Abraham, and his seed for ever. Nor need I enumerate the mighty works which were wrought, and the judgments which were sent of the Lord God of Israel, upon Pharaoh, and the Egyptians, by the hand of his servant Moses; whom He raised in a providential manner, even from the midst of Pharaoh's palace, in order to bring his people from the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. These scripture histories, I hope, are well known to you all; and I shall only remark, that, while they may represent to us the crafty and

malicious stratagems of Satan, to counteract the all-merciful and gracious counsels of God; they reveal to us, likewise, the awful consequences that will inevitably await those, who harden their hearts against the commands of God.

Suffice it to say, that "with a mighty hand and out-stretched arm," did the Lord God lead forth the children of Israel out of Egypt. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them by the way; and by night, in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and by night: and it was a cloud and darkness to Pharaoh, and the Egyptians who pursued after them, but light to the people of God." "And the Lord made a way" for Israel, "through the Red Sea, so that they walked through the midst thereof upon dry-ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left." But the waters returned, and overthrew the hosts of the Egyptians.

So, likewise, my young friends, hath God provided us a new and living way, by which we may escape from the bondage of sin. He hath raised up unto us a "Prophet like unto Moses, yea, more than a prophet!" He

hath given us "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of his people Israel." The blessed Gospel of Christ, is that marvellous light; to the unbeliever, clouds and darkness, a rock of offence, and a stumbling-block; but "to them which believe, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

But the merciful providence of God did not cease with their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. He did not lead them forth, as their impious thoughts more than once suspected, to perish in the wilderness; but he miraculously sustained them with food from heaven, and caused the stream to flow from the stony rock. Moreover, my young friends, "I would not have you ignorant, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea: and did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink," that we do: "for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." "He is the Rock of our salvation, whence freely issue rivers of living waters" flowing to our everlasting comfort.

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the

wilderness. Now these things were our examples: to the intent that we should not lust after evil things; as they also lusted; neither be idolaters, as some of them were: neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell, in one day, three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now these things, I repeat, "are written for our admonition," that we may learn from the dealings of the Almighty with the Israelites, to frame our conduct aright; to trust in his mercy, and to submit with pious resignation to his all-wise and just dispensations: knowing that "all things work together for good, to them that love" and fear God.

Think not, my young friends, that in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of life, our heavenly Guide will leave us without a shelter, or refuge from the storms and dangers that we may meet with. As the brazen serpent was lifted up by Moses, as an object of faith; by which, all who looked upon it with confidence in the power of God, were healed of the poisonous effects of the fiery

serpent's bite; so likewise, have *we* a remedy to heal the deadly and venomous poison of the old serpent, who frequents our path, and disturbs our journey: Christ Jesus is that blessed remedy; for he was lifted up upon the accursed tree; and all who look up to Him, as "the Author and Finisher of their faith," all who believe in Him, "shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

But in order to take away every shadow of excuse from the murmuring and rebellious children of Israel; that they might have the *will* of their God and King distinctly made known to them; He graciously condescended to deliver to them his divine Commandments: proclaimed to them *first*, by the mouth of the Lord God: and afterwards, *twice* written upon two tables of stone, with his own Almighty hand. And that he might shew forth before them the majesty of his glory; he commanded that the congregation of the children of Israel should be present at the promulgation of the law. And to impress them with awful reverence and fear for the Divine power and presence; he appeared unto them in thunders and lightnings, on the top of the burning

mountain. “ For it came to pass, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp, to meet the Lord God. And the mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended, as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And the Lord came down upon the mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and Moses went up. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord, to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them. And all the people saw the thunders and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses: Speak *thou* with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that his fear

may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off: and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness, where God was." And God spake unto them all the words of his Commandments; the words of the covenant between God and his chosen people: by which covenant, whosoever should faithfully keep and do all the words of the Law; that soul should live, and the blessing of the Lord should rest upon him. But whosoever should break the commandments of the Lord, he should die.

Is it possible, my young friends, to conceive that the minds of men could be more seriously affected, than those of the children of Israel at the delivery of the law? Could a pledge and promise be given, or any sacred engagement be entered into, under circumstances more solemn and inspiring, than the occasion just presented to us? Could it be imagined, in the most remote degree, that any violation of this awful covenant should take place? Contemplate, then, my young friends, and seriously apply to *yourselves*, the awakening testimony which I shall now set before you; of the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the depravity of our nature; its lamentable proneness to sin—its fearful alienation from

God. Amazing to relate! Whilst the voice of the Lord God was, as it were, yet sounding in their ears; and when Moses, their mediator, was receiving from the hands of the Almighty, the testimony of the covenant of life and death, written upon two tables of stone; the malice of Satan again estranged the hearts of the Israelites, and disturbed their holy communion with the divine lawgiver: for, yielding to his *favourite* temptation to idolatry, they made a *molten calf*, to worship it. Basest ingratitude!—deepest corruption!—to “worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is God blessed for ever.” One moment resolving —“We will worship the Lord our God, and Him only will we serve:” the next, exclaiming—“*These are thy gods, O Israel!*”

- The same moral law of the Ten Commandments, has been providentially delivered down to us, by the great and eternal Jehovah. Not, indeed, amidst the awful grandeur, and the dreadful glory of Mount Sinai; but clothed in the merciful beams of gospel light. Not delivered by Moses, the mediator of the law; but graciously committed to us by our great High Priest; by Him, who came not “to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the prophets;”

that blessed and holy Mediator between God and man ; who hath not filled us with emotions of fear and trembling, nor charged us to stand *afar off* ; but hath reconciled us to “ his Father and our Father, to his God and our God ; ” and has, of his infinite mercy and goodness, commanded us to *come near* unto him, and graciously taught us, by perfect love, to cast out fear ; who “ hath not given us the spirit of *fear* ; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind.” — “ Having, therefore, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated to us,” “ let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” But before you draw near, my young friends, to receive these holy commandments, from the hands of the ever-availing Intercessor and Mediator of a better covenant, the covenant of grace ; in order to strengthen your hearts, and confirm your minds, in the holy resolutions you have formed, to take upon yourselves the solemn promises and vows, which were made for you at the sacrament of baptism ; sanctify and consecrate yourselves, by the solemnity of

prayer for divine grace, that you may indeed find, “that the law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul;” that “the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple;” that “the statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart; and the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes.”

Let us Pray.

Sanctify, O Lord God, these thy servants with thy Holy Spirit, and prepare their minds, and incline their hearts, to observe and keep thy holy laws; that, in running the way of thy commandments, they may obtain thy promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure. Teach these thy children of adoption and grace, to love and adore thee, the only true God, with all their heart, and mind, and strength; and to love their neighbour as themselves: that, through thy blessing, they may have a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards men; and be devoutly given to serve thee in faith and good works, to the glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed

be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE III.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

My young friends!

THE third thing which your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you at your Baptism, was: That you should KEEP GOD'S HOLY WILL AND COMMANDMENTS, AND WALK IN THE SAME ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE.

Now, in directing your attention to the knowledge of the will of God; I would observe, that Almighty God, in mercy to the fallen sons of men, has given them his *promises* to cheer and comfort them, in their journey through life; and his *Commandments* to guide them. The *Commandments*, therefore, are the laws of God, graciously

provided for the temporal and spiritual wants of mankind; and designed for their temporal and spiritual good. On this account, as well as from the sanction given to them, by our Saviour Jesus Christ; *we*, as well as the children of Israel of old, are bound most religiously to observe them. "If thou wilt enter into life," saith our blessed Lord, "keep the commandments."

This will be a good opportunity of explaining to you, my young friends, the distinction between the *Ceremonial*, and the *Moral* character of the Mosaic law. The ceremonies and rites which were required of God's ancient people, by the law of Moses, called from thence, the *Ceremonial Law*, being only a shadow of good things to come; being only types and figures of our crucified Redeemer's "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world;" were *abolished* by the coming of the promised Messiah. But the Law of the Ten Commandments, the *Moral Law*, given us for the regulation of our duty to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves; can never pass away. "Because we ought ever to bear in mind, that we are by *nature* under a far worse bondage than that of

the children of Israel; namely, a bondage to sin and death; from which God hath been pleased to deliver us, **By** Jesus Christ;” as we have already shewn. Surely then we must acknowledge, if we have a just sense of our deliverance upon our hearts and consciences, that the same most merciful and gracious Lord God, “is to be loved, honoured, and adored by us, for the much greater deliverance which he has vouchsafed to give us:” as he was loved, honoured, and adored by the Israelites, for his deliverance of them from their bondage in the land of Egypt. As Christ, therefore, is the blessed mean, by whom, and through whom alone, obedience to these commands is rendered *efficacious* to our growth in grace, and in our knowledge of God; remember, my young friends, that whosoever *keepeth* these commandments, through faith in Christ, shall find mercy, and acceptance with God. Whosoever, therefore, breaketh the least of these commandments; and, either by example or precept, teacheth men so; “shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;” “shall in no wise enter” the kingdom of God. Be wise now, therefore, and resolve to observe and to do them, all the days of your lives,

that ye may live, and that it may be well with you: for if ye “do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them; I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish.” But you will justly say—*Of ourselves*, we cannot keep the commandments of God. You will not, however, fail to remember, that when man was weak and ignorant, and wicked and rebellious; when he wandered in the wilderness of *sin*, as ‘a lost sheep of the house of Israel; a merciful God shewed him his error; pointed out to him his duty; promised him his divine assistance to enable him to do it; ensured him an eternal reward if he would obey; and, to crown all, sent his beloved Son, to perfect his obedience.

The Commandments of God, like their Divine Author, are full of truth, holiness, justice, and mercy. They lead us to duty, to peace, and to eternal life; and will preserve us, through grace, from death, and eternal misery. They direct us to whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, virtuous, and holy. They check and restrain us, in whatever is sinful. In a word, they teach us first, to *abhor* that which is evil, and hence “to *cease* to do evil;” then, “to *learn* to do well,” and hence

“to cleave to,” “to follow,” “to hold fast that which is good.” These Commandments are *ten* in number. The four first, or, as they are called, the first table, contain our *duty to God*. The remaining six, or the second table, contain *our duty to our neighbour*.

In contemplating the opening of the *first great commandment*, with that reverence and humility, with which it becomes the *creature*, to receive the *will* of the Almighty Creator, we cannot but be struck with the inspiring words.

“THOU SHALL HAVE NONE OTHER GODS BUT ME!”

“Hear, O Israel!” saith the Word of the Everlasting Jehovah, “The Lord thy God, is one Lord.” “Unto thee hath he shewed, that thou mightest know, that the Lord, He is God: there is none else beside Him.” Can you, my young friends, have higher sanction or authority, for the *singleness* of your faith, than the word of everlasting truth and faithfulness? “What” then, let me ask, “doth the Lord require of you, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?” “Behold the heaven, and the heaven

of heavens is the Lord's thy God : the earth also, with all that therein is : For the Lord thy God, is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and terrible !" " Thou shalt therefore worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve." In him alone you live, and move, and have both your temporal and spiritual being : " He giveth you your daily bread, and feedeth your souls with the bread of life : " " He saveth thy life from destruction, and ever crowneth thee with mercy, and loving-kindness." If then, ye cannot breathe without his Spirit ; if ye cannot move without his power ; how can ye speak without uttering his praise ? From the fulness of your hearts, then, give freedom to the tongue, in the language of inspiration ; " Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits !" " Praise the Lord ! O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his glorious name !" " For who is so great, and good, and merciful a God as our God, so glorious in holiness, so fearful in praises, doing wonders ?"

When, therefore, your heavenly Father addresses you in the language of paternal love and affection, " My son, give me thine heart ;" give him, my young friends, thy

whole heart, thy undivided and faithful allegiance. Say unto him, in the spirit of the devotion and confidence of Samuel, "Thou art my Father, my God; my Rock, in whom I will trust; my fortress and deliverer; my shield, and the horn of my salvation; my high tower, and my refuge; my Saviour!" "For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a Rock, save our God?"

We conclude then, my young friends, that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good;" and ever was so, from the beginning. Yet will it be no disparagement to the law, and to the testimony, to affirm, that never was it so glorious, as since "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ:" never so transcendently glorified, as since the Son of God has clothed it with the pure robe of his own righteousness; and adorned it with the bright mantle of his Gospel light. Never has the moral law displayed so perfect a pattern of "the beauty of holiness," as since "Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God;" and took away the deadly sting from the "curse of the law;" and "brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel." "For if the ministration of death, written and

engraven on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." "For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

And I would here endeavour, with earnest prayer for the Divine assistance, to impress *this sacred truth* upon your hearts and minds— That the highest glory and honour that can be offered unto Almighty God, is *that*, whereby he is honoured and glorified in his beloved Son; whereby he is adored as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and wherein the Lord's Christ is glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world; is honoured and worshipped as the eternal Son of God, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" "very God of very God." Whereby, also, "God the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, is

worshipped and glorified, *together with the Father and the Son*, ever one God, world without end :” thus expressed in the language of our Church; in which believing and adoring Christians delight to confess the unity of their faith, in the three divine Persons of the ever blessed Trinity : “Thou only art holy ; thou only art the Lord ; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father.”

In concluding my observations upon the first commandment, I would refer you to the words of the articles of our religion, which instruct us, on the authority of Scripture, “That there is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions : of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness : the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead, there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity : the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

Hence we should learn to fix in our understandings, and establish in our hearts, a *settled conviction*, that to whatever Person of the blessed Trinity we address ourselves in the spirit of supplication and prayer ; whether to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy

Ghost; it is the One eternal and unchangeable God, that we adore.

The doctrine of the Trinity, is confessedly a great *mystery*; and it hath pleased the God of all wisdom, to leave his Divine nature rather as a subject of *faith*, than of *knowledge*; as a trial of our humility and submission; and not as an object of presumptuous curiosity and inquiry. Nevertheless, my young friends, I would have you bear it in mind, that it is a doctrine perfectly *established*, though not *clearly explained* in the revelation of God's word: doubtless upon the same merciful principle, that the Lord God permitted not the glory of his Divine Majesty to be fully seen by the patriarch Moses; because the full brightness of the knowledge of the glory of God, is too wonderful for mortal nature to bear.

This however is the *faith*, in which the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs, were contented both to live and to die.

Let it, therefore, be the subject of your daily prayer, that you may embrace and hold fast this saving "faith, once delivered to the saints:" a *faith*, "built upon the foundation

of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord."

In proceeding to consider the *second* commandment, we cannot but be sensible of the peculiar *strictness*, with which the Lord God repeatedly instructed Moses, to enforce its obligation upon the minds of the children of Israel; as a safe-guard and protection from the idolatries of the heathen nations, and the rebellious dispositions of their own hearts: and also, to mark in the strongest manner, the dishonour He would consider done unto his Holy and Divine nature, by the slightest deviation from it. The words of precaution are so particularly striking, that I think it may be beneficial to you to transcribe part of them, as an introduction to the commandment itself.—“Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me.” “Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart, all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy son’s sons; specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb.”

“ And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no *similitude*; only ye heard a voice.” “ And He declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.” “ Take ye good heed unto yourselves; for,” he *repeats* you will observe, “ ye saw no manner of similitude, on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female; the likeness of any beast that is on the earth; the likeness of any winged fowl, that flieth in the air; the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground; the likeness of any fish, that is in the waters beneath the earth: and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship and serve them which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations, under the whole heaven.”

Take ye also good heed unto *yourselves*, my young friends, for I will address you in the impressive language of Moses, “ lest ye

forget the covenant of the Lord your God which he made with you" at your baptism, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the commandment declares,

"THOU SHALT NOT MAKE TO THYSELF ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, NOR THE LIKENESS OF ANY THING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR IN THE WATERS UNDER THE EARTH. THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM, NOR WORSHIP THEM, FOR I, THE LORD THY GOD, AM A JEALOUS GOD, AND VISIT THE SINS OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN, UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME, AND SHEW MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS OF THEM THAT LOVE ME, AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS."

If *mercy* be then treasured up for thousands, from generation to generation, to them that *love* God; will ye, my young friends, "treasure up to yourselves *wrath* against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgments of God;" by "changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made with hands, made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and

four-footed beasts, and creeping things ;”
 “by changing the *truth* of God into a lie,
 and worshipping and serving the creature
 more than the Creator, who” *alone* “is” God
 “blessed forever?”

From the eternal God, in the blessed union of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; in the sacred relation of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier ; from that one eternal, immortal, invisible, and only wise God, you derive, my young friends, all the faculties of your souls, and all the powers of your bodies. The highest exercise of which the *soul* of man is capable, is the contemplation, the knowledge, and the belief of his God, derived from the works of nature and of grace. Indeed, the faculties of man’s soul can then only be said to attain their fullest enjoyment, “when God is in all his thoughts ;” when *He alone* reigns triumphant as the *one supreme good* in his heart, and when his honour and worship are the objects of his daily service.

The *body* of man is consecrated by the word of God as the *temple* of the Holy Ghost, ordained as a vessel of honour, and, *as such*, should be set apart *also* as “a living sacrifice,” “holy and acceptable unto God.”

Is it possible, then, that ye can so far oppose the will of God for your good, as to turn a blessing into a curse, as to “quench the Holy Spirit” of God, who would “seal you *his* to the day of redemption?” Can ye, my young friends, meditate upon the sure *mercies* of God to his obedient children, and upon his equally sure *judgments* to the children of disobedience? Can you see before you the awful and awakening example of the Israelites, whose history we have been describing, and yet, after all, be profited nothing, but set up idols in your hearts, riches, pomp, vanity, pleasure, lust, pride, intemperance, or self-righteousness, and bow down your bodies and souls to other lords besides the true Lord? Can ye, after all your promises and vows, turn aside from the covenant of the Lord your God, and cleave unto the false gods, which be no gods, and to the idolatries of your forefathers? For this, be assured, you will do, when ye allow other creature, or thing, to separate you from the Lord God; whenever the world, the flesh, and the devil, tempt you to forget God, or so to fix your affections on earthly things, as to rob him of the honour which is due to him alone.

But hear what the Lord saith of such backsliders: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him;" "if thy children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their sin with scourges." "When ye shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed." But, on the contrary, my young friends, if henceforth "thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul." "Seek the Lord, therefore, while he may be found, call upon him while he is near." Seek him in fervent, daily, persevering prayer; worship him "in spirit and in truth." Be diligent in your attendance upon him, in the sanctifying duties of his own appointment; both in the duties of public devotion, when you visit the temple

“where his honour dwelleth,” and in the silent hours of private meditation, when you commune with your own heart, and in the stillness of your chamber, make your requests known unto “your Father which seeth in secret,” but “will reward you openly.” But in all your supplications and prayers before the throne of grace, let the all-prevailing and ever-effectual *Name* of your blessed Saviour be “the anchor of your hope, sure and steadfast;” that while “you name the name of Christ,” you may have grace to “depart from iniquity;” and thus be enabled, practically and faithfully, to keep the sacred precept, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

Now, of the duties that remain for our consideration, a sacred reverence for the holy name of the Almighty must next claim our serious attention; and in approaching towards the “High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity,” we cannot but remember, that we are treading upon sacred ground. And as Moses was commanded, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy,” so likewise must we, my young friends, divest ourselves of all unholy affections, and “put off the old

man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and put on Christ, when we draw near unto his Father, and our Father, to his God and our God."

If Moses were afraid to look upon God, when the Almighty declared, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," but hid his face; how much more shall we hide ourselves from the presence of the Lord, until we be "cleansed from dead works to serve the living God," when he proclaims himself to be the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!" Let the awful circumstances under which the great I AM that I AM manifested himself to the children of Israel, in the majesty of his glory; when he revealed his eternal *Name*, and his everlasting *Will*, to all nations and languages, from generation to generation, awaken in us, my young friends, the most humble reverence and godly fear; that when we desire to make use of that ever-blessed Name, at which "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth," and which "every tongue should confess," we do so always, "to the glory of God the Father;" either in the "spirit of prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving," "making our requests known unto him," or, in the language of *faith*, confessing Christ before men, and openly testifying, that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Weak indeed must be the mind that is not convinced of the sinfulness and impiety of breaking God's commands; and hard must be the heart, that bends not to the power of the word of God. That *word* declares to every one of us the unchangeable counsel of Almighty wisdom—

"THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN; FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS, THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN."

That word proclaims the eternal glory and excellency of the *Name* of the one living and true God, in language most sublime and inspiring to the humble and devout believer; but fearful and alarming to the scoffer and blasphemer. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." A name, saith St. Paul, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is

named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. "As I live, saith the Lord God, the King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts: if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of the law, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, the *Lord thy God*, then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed great plagues, and of long continuance; and sore sickness, and of long continuance." "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, whose name alone is Jehovah, whose name only is excellent; I am the Lord thy God, which leadeth thee by the way thou shouldest go." "O! that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments: then had thy fear been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." "Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them: Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. Sanctify my name, and fear; for the Lord, whose name is Jehovah, is a jealous God: thou shalt not profane the name of thy God, I am the Lord!"

I entreat *you* also, my young friends, by this word of wisdom and truth, to "sanctify the name of God, and fear." Contemplate this blessed Name as the pure and sacred

spring of all *holiness*; and ask yourselves how ye can dare to pollute it. Meditate upon it as the divine fountain of all *truth*; and ask, again, how ye can venture to blaspheme it. Reflect upon God's holy name as the alone source of eternal *justice* and *mercy*, of everlasting *goodness* and *love*; and see, and know, and consider, and understand what that Scripture meaneth—"I the Lord thy God am a *jealous* God." "Him that honoureth me, I will honour; but those that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed."

With what studied tokens of reverence and respect do we bend before the footstool of *earthly* majesty; and in regarding the *title* and *person* of our sovereign, what other language can escape from our lips, what other sentiment inspire the heart of every faithful and loyal subject, when speaking of him, but, The King! God bless him! What, then, I beseech you, my young friends, ought to be the emotions of love, devotion, gratitude, and praise, when we approach, as Christians, the invisible Majesty of heaven, and proclaim the name of the King of kings, and Lord of lords! This is the language which the Spirit of God has revealed to man, who of himself could not conceive

words to express the honour due unto that glorious name: "To the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever." "Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen." Regard then, I beseech you, the holy name of the Almighty, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as the most sacred and most holy name that the tongue of man can utter; the highest privilege and honour of the human speech: and the *adoration* of that name, as the greatest glory and sublimest effort of the soul of man. *Pause*, then, with reverential awe, whenever you are called upon to pronounce it; let it be almost exclusively confined to the solemnity of prayer; and even then, remember that God is in heaven; and thou upon earth, and therefore let thy words be few and fervent. "Thine enemies take thy name in vain," saith the Psalmist; "but by *Thee* only will we make mention of thy name." Let this, then, my young friends, be your guide and rule in the worship of God:—to serve the Lord with fear, and to approach unto him with a remembrance of his holiness; lest if

ye draw near with unclean lips, and un-sanctified hearts, “ye be witnesses against yourselves, that you have chosen the Lord to serve him;” lest ye be reckoned amongst the number of those which “swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in *truth* nor in *righteousness*,” and it be said of you, in the language of the prophet, “Though they say, as the Lord liveth! surely they swear falsely.” And again, “A son honoureth a father, and a servant his master: if, then, I be a father, where is mine honour? If I be master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of Hosts, that ye despise my name?”

Let us rather, my young friends, implore the Spirit of Grace to sanctify our hearts, that we may ever “praise the name of the Lord, and magnify his name together.” Let us ever preserve in our minds the sacred and inspiring thought, that “his name, as our Redeemer, shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace:” that we may *all*, “young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord; for his name only is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.” “Praise the Lord,

ye servants; O! praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this time forth, for evermore. Amen."

I might have entered, my young friends, more particularly into the circumstances of the guilt and heinousness of the aggravated sin of taking God's name in vain. I might have shewn you, that it is the companion of intemperance; the associate of angry and violent passions; the friend of pride, vanity, and wantonness; the partner of infidelity and irreligion: indeed, of all those sins, of which the Spirit of the Word of God declares, that those who do such things, shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. And in respect of *vaths*, as a general rule, I might have represented it contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel, to swear by the name of God. "Swear not at all. Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than this, cometh of evil." But the limited character of my exhortations, obliges me to content myself with inculcating the *general principle*, that whosoever nameth the name of Christ, should depart from iniquity: and leave it to the power of the grace of God, to apply it to your souls, and to exhibit it in your lives and conversation.

Suffice it to add, that to make use of the name of God, for an idle or wicked purpose, in *any* of the titles or persons of the blessed and glorious Godhead; to mention so much as the name of God, after any light or thoughtless manner; to swear by it, in our ordinary and common conversation; to use profane curses and oaths; to swear falsely, or break any solemn oath and vow which we have made; much more, to take an oath, or swear to do that which is, *sindful*—are all variations of *taking God's holy name in vain*, forbidden by the third commandment: whereas, to swear by the name of God, for the purpose of public justice; “for the punishment of wickedness and vice, and for the maintenance of true religion and virtue;” is not only lawful, but the bounden duty of every Christian; and a laudable zeal for the service of God. •

Have a care then, I beseech *you*, my young friends, who are now about to take upon yourselves the sacred name of *Christians*, and to confess God and your Saviour publicly before men, how ye dishonour, in thought or word, that Holy Name, by which ye are called; “but fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God;” for remember,

“ the Lord will not hold *him* guiltless, who taketh his name in vain.” “ Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God : I am the Lord.”

The obligations of the fourth Commandment, to which I am now anxious to direct your serious attention, afford us so practical an application of the foregoing duties of believing in, fearing, loving, and serving God, that we cannot but feel deeply interested in entering upon the consideration of them.

As, of all the dispensations of God’s love to fallen man, the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ, must ever stand pre-eminent, as the supreme manifestation of his favourite attribute of mercy : so, of the manifold and beneficent provisions, which the same Almighty Father of the Universe has made, for the temporal comfort, but, more especially, for the spiritual wants and happiness of mankind, none can be valued more highly than the gracious appointment of one day in seven, for the *Sabbath of the Lord*. A blessed period of rest from the labour and toil of the world, for the worship and service of God.

As a sacred memorial to future generations,

of the creation of the world, and that the care and anxiety of making provision for the mortal body, might not interfere with the infinitely more important concerns of the immortal soul, an all-merciful Creator sanctified a day of rest, by himself ceasing from the works and wonders of creation, on the seventh day, as the Scriptures record: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the *seventh* day, God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day, from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all the work which God created and made."

Let me now remind you, my young friends, that soon after the deliverance of the children of Israel from the house of bondage, in order to protect his people from the idolatry of the Egyptians, and to preserve in their hearts and lives the worship and service of the one living and true God; from which happiness, it is probable, they had been much prohibited, the Almighty, in wonderfully providing for their daily subsistence, in a very remarkable manner *re-established* his divine appointment of the Sabbath, by withholding his bountiful

gifts of manna and quails, on that holy day; and *miraculously* providing for the supply of the *seventh* day, on the day previous: "See for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath; therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place: let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day."

Thus did the Lord God deliver to the Israelites clear and practical directions for the strict observance of the Sabbath. But in order that the revelation of his will might be more perfectly made known, not only to his people Israel, but to *all* people and nations under heaven, from generation to generation: "God spake these words and said"—

“REMEMBER THAT THOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH DAY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR, AND DO ALL THAT THOU HAST TO DO: BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD: IN IT THOU SHALT DO NO MANNER OF WORK, THOU, AND THY SON, AND THY DAUGHTER, THY MAN-SERVANT, AND THY MAID-SERVANT, THY CATTLE, AND THE STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES: FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN

VEN AND EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY: WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY AND HALLOWED IT.

The first impression I would make upon your young minds, after reading this holy Commandment: the first principle I would, with the blessing of God, establish in your hearts, is *this*:—that the Sabbath is the *Lord's Day*. “Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the *Sabbath of the Lord thy God*.” Though a portion of every day will be set apart by sincere and devoted Christians, the *whole* Sabbath will be dedicated by Christ's true disciples, to the *public* and *private* worship and service of Almighty God; to the improvement of their souls in religion; to their growth in grace, and in the knowledge and love of their Lord and Saviour; and to works of mercy and charity to their fellow creatures. Blessed, then, my young friends, be that which the Lord hath blessed; and holy be that which the Lord hath sanctified! Blessed be “the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.” For believe me, there is no divine

institution by which the whole Christian Church is so perfectly sanctified; no solemn period during which the Spirit of God so freely breathes into the souls of men, the breath of spiritual life; and moves within their hearts, with such inspiring and renewing grace, as the *Sabbath of the Lord*; when thousands and tens of thousands of adoring Christians, with one heart and voice, proclaim, "Glory to God in the highest, and in earth peace, good-will towards men." Listen to the words of the evangelical Prophet, as Isaiah is called, on this subject: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing *thy* pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, *the holy of the Lord*, honourable, and honour him: not doing thy own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

With this gracious promise in our minds, my young friends, let us "awake right early" to the duties of the Lord's Day; and "labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that

meat which endureth unto everlasting life.”
 “ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

I observed, that the *whole Sabbath* will be dedicated by the true disciples of Jesus, to the *public* and *private* worship and service of Almighty God. When we awake on the morning of the Sabbath, refreshed by the blessings of rest and sleep, let the remembrance that it is the *Lord's Day*, consecrate your earliest thoughts to him, in *private* meditation : and let the subject of that meditation be the *Resurrection of Christ*, which, as Christians, we commemorate on this day ; and the blessed hopes and promises which he, in that memorable event, unfolds to those Christians, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality. For what subject can be more appropriate, when you awake from sleep, and arise from your beds, than that which presents to your minds the solemn reflection, of awaking from the sleep of death, and arising from the grave at the last day ?

Let these meditations be succeeded by your usual morning sacrifice of prayer and praise, for the mercies of the past night, and for the

return of the Lord's Day; as well as for such a continued measure of divine grace, as may preserve you from sin, and prepare your hearts and minds for the solemnities of the Sabbath—so that in all your “works, begun, continued, and ended” in God, you may glorify his holy name, through Jesus Christ.

And now, having been brought by the spirit of prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to a pious frame of mind, well fitted for the more *active* exercises of religion; enter, I intreat you, upon them, under the influence of the word of God. Read a portion, however short, be it a verse only, of the Holy Bible, at the commencement of *this* day, and, if possible, of every day. “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye” truly “think ye have eternal life;” and they are they that testify of Christ. “Hear with meekness the engrafted word, and receive it with pure affection.” So shall you bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and be prepared to join in the happy duty of *family prayer*, as members of one household, of which Christ is the head. A bond of domestic peace and happiness, which I sincerely hope every one of you, my young friends, have the privilege of enjoying.

Two short periods, of only *half an hour* each, thus devoted, on the Sabbath morning, to the purposes of meditation and private prayer, to reading the Scriptures, and uniting in family devotion; provided they be *regularly* and *uniformly* observed, will, through the power of the Spirit, which is promised us, be a means of imparting to our minds so holy a sense of the divine presence, in the ministration of the word, and in the ordinances of God's appointment; as shall excellently predispose us to enter "his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise;" "to keep his Sabbath, and reverence his sanctuary." Pause, then, for a moment, my young friends, for now have I brought you within the sanctuary of the Most High God: into the place, of which he hath said, "I have chosen to set my name there;" into the holy temple, where "his honour dwelleth." Remember, therefore, that *here*, in an especial manner, the all-searching eye of the Almighty is upon you; draw nigh unto him with reverence and godly fear, and he will draw near unto you; fix your hearts and their affections upon things above; let your conversation be in heaven; let God be in all your thoughts; worship him in the beauty

of holiness ; pray to him in spirit and in truth ; listen with *faith* to his holy word ; and take heed, with all diligence, to keep thy soul near unto God : for now truly must the words of your blessed Lord be a light to your eyes, and a guide to your feet.—“ Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” “ I will come into thine house even upon the multitude of thy mercies ; and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.” But *of ourselves*, we can do no good thing, not even think a good thought—will be a reflection that must continually arise in our minds. And again, the sweet assurance, that “ we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us,” hastens to allay our fears, and to animate our hopes. In dependance upon him, then, let us enter the house of God, and let our first prayer be, that “ his strength made be made perfect in our weakness ;” that his power may rest upon us, and his Spirit so abide with us ; that “ the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, may be always acceptable” to God, in Christ. For, “ of him, and through him, and to him, are all things ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

And here I cannot but observe to you,

what large and abundant provision the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls has prepared for the sheep of his fold! What rich pastures of divine truth, what still waters of comfort, are in his holy Word! How impressively does the spirit of revelation pervade all the services of our pure and apostolical Church! What a truly Christian faith breathes through every address to the throne of grace, of her inspiring Liturgy; and which nothing can so devoutly express, as the evangelical *conclusion* of every prayer, in the all-prevailing name and merits of our only Lord and Saviour, our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ!

How rich a legacy of piety to God, and charity to man, have the Christian fathers of our church thus left to us; and how clearly do they shew forth the power of the Spirit of grace upon their hearts, directing them to "do all things to the glory of God," and to the honour of his name: "to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things!"

In the *use* of these sanctifying means of grace, I can only commend you to the guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, with an earnest prayer, that he may "sanctify you wholly in body, soul, and spirit," so that you

may approach unto 'a holy God, through your divine Redeemer, and find it good to draw near unto him; that you may be "fervent in spirit" in "serving the Lord," "continuing instant in prayer;" that you may "hold fast the form of sound words which you have heard, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus;" that the "Holy Ghost may shed abroad in your hearts the love of God our Redeemer, and fill you with all joy and peace in believing;" that you may "be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." For it is in an humble confession and repentance of sin before God; in effectual, fervent prayer for mercy and pardon through faith in Jesus Christ; and in unceasing supplication for the sanctifying assistance of the Holy Ghost, in order to newness and holiness of living; that the spirit and excellency of the services of our Church consist.

Let me then presume, my young friends, that your minds have been seriously impressed by this spirit of prayer; have been animated by the public confession of your faith in the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, and inspired by the psalm of praise and thanksgiving. With what joy and gladness will

you then, as devoted Christians, open your ears and incline your hearts to the *preaching* of the Gospel of your Divine Master ! With what affectionate confidence will you look up to your beloved minister and friend, as the servant of Christ for your edification : and how delightfully will your hearts burn within you, while he opens to you the Scriptures, and with fervent zeal preaches to you Christ, and Him crucified ; “ who of God is made unto you wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : ” while he pleads with you as the ambassador of Christ, in his stead, “ Be ye reconciled to God ; ” and to that end exhorts you, in the words of the Saviour, “ Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand : ” while he teaches you the saving doctrines of that kingdom, “ Without *faith*, it is impossible to please God ; ” but “ *believe* in the Lord Jesus-Christ, and thou shalt be saved ; ” “ without *holiness*, no man shall see the Lord ; ” therefore take up thy cross, and follow Christ ; “ work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; ” never ceasing to remember, that “ it is God. worketh in you both to *will* and to *do*, of his good pleasure ; ” and that “ no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost : ”

while he reasons with you "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," and proclaims Christ "the Lord our Righteousness;" the Judge both of quick and dead; the "Resurrection and the Life;" the Prince and Saviour exalted at the right hand of God, that "ever liveth to make intercession for us," and who is "able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through him:" whilst he leads you, "meek and lowly in heart," to the *foot of the Cross*, as the holy sanctuary consecrated to repentance, faith, and holiness; where, gazing with the eye of faith upon that awakening scene, you may learn to know the sinfulness of sin, and to feel your *need* of a Redeemer, and thence be taught with humility to "look up to Jesus as the author and finisher of your faith;" as "the *way, the truth, and the life*;" as the fountain of living waters, ever flowing, yet ever full, out of whose fulness you may freely draw "grace to supply all your wants, to conform your souls to his divine image, and to enrich you with the blessings of his salvation:" and whilst, finally, he implores, with earnest devotion, that "the *peace of God*, which passeth all understanding, may *keep* your hearts and minds in the

knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;" and that "the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," may "be amongst you, and remain with you" for ever.

Under the influence of the preaching of the Gospel, and with the blessing of God upon you, let your *last* prayer, ere you leave the solemnity of the sanctuary, be an humble petition to the throne of grace, that the word of God may not return to him empty; but may sink deep into your hearts, and be effectual to your growth in divine knowledge, and in the Christian temper and life.

Then may you hope, my young friends, to carry these blessed graces and principles with you into the world, and to exhibit them in your conversation and example. Then may you hope, that the seed of the word, which has been sown, will neither be taken out of your hearts by the devices of Satan, nor be left to perish for want of root; nor be choked by the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things; but may be sown upon good ground, may be received into "an honest and good heart," and be *kept* there, and "bring forth

fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold.”

Hence the mind* will preserve a serious though cheerful disposition, and will seek such occupation as corresponds with its frame and temper. The pleasures and vanities of the world will for a time be shut out from our view; and the duties and charities of life be substituted.

The privilege of approaching a *second time* into the courts of the Lord's house, to offer up your evening sacrifice, will be also esteemed by you, as an unspeakably precious opportunity of holding spiritual communion with God, on the things that belong to your everlasting peace; a blessed means of renewing and confirming the sacred impressions of the morning devotions; a happy occasion to hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest God's holy word; of embracing and holding fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which God hath given us in his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. For a devoted zeal for the glory of God, and a deep anxiety and concern for the salvation of your souls, will inspire and awaken your hearts to the duties of religion; and thus will the Sabbath become indeed a delight, the holy of the Lord,

honourable, and you shall honour Him; not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure; nor speaking your own words: then will you delight yourselves in the Lord.

The same spirit of reverence and respect for the Lord's day, will prevail in your hearts, in the intervals, between and after the public services of the temple; and during the hours that are usually devoted to what is called *innocent recreation*, you will ever keep alive a jealous watchfulness over yourselves, that your relaxations be *strictly* so; that they do not degenerate into levity, intemperance, and slothfulness; nor partake of any character, that might lead you into sin, or have a tendency to impair or weaken the maintenance of those religious professions and engagements, which you have publicly made before God and the church; or cause you to forget, what I would *again* and *again* remind you of—that this is the Sabbath of the *Lord thy God*.

To enter particularly into all the duties which are appropriate to the Lord's day, would far exceed my purpose, in addressing you, my young friends. I must leave this to the spiritual dictates of your own hearts. But there is *one* imperative duty which I

cannot pass by; *one*, that you will hereafter, if it please the Almighty to spare you, be called upon to practise; and the neglect of which, I cannot conceive it possible for a conscientious Christian to reconcile with himself: I allude to the duty of assembling the members of our families together, on the Sabbath evening; and after reading a portion of Scripture, or of such religious books as may be suitable for the instruction of our children and dependents, concluding this happy and holy day, as we are bound to commence it, in the sacred exercise of *family worship*; "That as there is but one body, and one spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all; so we may be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity; and may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen.

One *final* duty still remains: Let the Lord's day be brought to a close by private meditation and prayer. Ere you "suffer your eyes to sleep, or your eyelids to slumber," meditate a few moments upon the mercies of the past day; search your hearts diligently, and

try your spirits, "whether they have been of God," during his holy rest. And if his Holy Spirit bear witness with your spirit, that your God has blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day to you; gratefully acknowledge the mercy, and say, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord! but to Thee be the glory."

Such, however, is the weakness and infirmity of our nature, that "in many things we offend all." Much coldness of worship, and wandering of thought, will present themselves to our view, in the retrospect of the duties of the Lord's day. Examine yourselves therefore strictly, as before God; and see if any besetting sin be still lurking within, that has disturbed your sacrifice of prayer and praise, and robbed you of the enjoyment of that peace and rest, which the Sabbath was ordained to give. Examine yourselves under the solemn reflection—Should this be the last sleep, the sleep of death, that I am about to take; and when I awake, should I awake to the dawn of an eternal day, to stand before the judgment seat of Christ; what will be the state of my soul? And devoutly raise your heart and voice to Him, that heareth prayer; that he will "give you his true repentance, forgive you all your sins, negligences

and ignorances, and endue you with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend your lives according to his holy word." Then may you lie down in peace, and take your rest, with the blessed thought, that "He that keepeth thee will neither slumber nor sleep;" and commit your souls to God with pious hope and confidence,—“ Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.”

Thus, have I endeavoured to recommend to you, my young friends, a practical lesson of keeping holy the Sabbath day. And I would fix upon your minds a *truth*, which you may carry with you through life; a *rule*, which will safely guide you in your Christian course—that upon the serious and faithful discharge of the obligations of the Lord's day; upon the religious and devout impressions, with which a pious attention to its ordinances will undoubtedly be accompanied; in a word, upon the sanctifying influence of the Divine Spirit upon the heart, which is specially promised to *all*, who rightly use the means of grace which God hath given us, in his word, his house, his worship, his sacraments, and his ministers, on his holy day—the character and conduct of our whole

lives, will in a great measure, if not altogether depend. A devoted adherence to the service of God, on the Sabbath of the Lord, is a strong presumption, nay, almost a certain assurance, that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us; and is therefore an earnest, that the duties of morality and religion will be maintained during the remainder of the week. And as the Christian life may be said to be made up of short *sabbatical* periods; and the renewing and reforming power of divine grace, in public religious worship, more especially operates to keep us close, or to bring us back to God, every seventh day; I may affirm, with the sanction both of reason and revelation, that the spiritual condition of a Christian's soul, may be justly estimated, by the value and importance which he attaches to the strict observation of the Sabbath.

If such, then, be the moral and religious importance of keeping holy the Sabbath day—and such I firmly believe it to be—let me intreat you, my young friends, not to rob this holy day of its solemnity; nor religion of its perfect work; nor the word of God of its power over you; nor the house of God of its honour; nor the altar of God of its sacrifice; nor yourselves of the divine

blessing. Quench not the Spirit of God that waiteth to be gracious to you, but open your hearts to his divine influence, that he may breathe into you the breath of life, and create within you a *living* soul; that you may feel and know that the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever; that you may worship and adore the holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabbaoth, while on earth, and enter into the eternal rest prepared for the people of God in heaven.

In concluding my observations upon the first table of testimony, I would simply add, in reference to the application of the fourth Commandment to our children, our servants, and our cattle, that they are all, in their respective situations, committed to our care and protection. And if the Spirit of Grace be the inspiring *cause*, and the love of God the living *principle* of holiness within us, it will make us that we be neither barren nor unfruitful in love to our fellow Christians, nor in humanity and mercy to any of God's creatures. "The righteous man," saith the wise Solomon, "regardeth the life of his beast." And "he that loveth God," saith St. John, "will love his brother also."

The holy principle of *loving God, because he first loved us*, is the life-giving spirit of the Gospel, and the most sublime devotion of which the soul of man is capable, towards a God of Love. Now the most acceptable expression of our love to God, is our faith in Christ; and the strongest evidence of the sincerity of our faith in Christ, is our obedience to his "new commandment, to love one another." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." And, "by this we know that we love God, because we love the brethren."

This vital principle of Christianity must, therefore, be the foundation of our obedience to the obligations of the second table, which contains our duty towards our neighbour. For our blessed Lord, you will remember, after declaring that the *first and great* Commandment was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength," added, "and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Building, therefore, upon this foundation of all practical religion, *love to God*, I proceed to observe to you, that the fruit of this godly spirit dwelling in us, will be visible in

our lives. The constraining principle that inspires you to fear, love, and serve your *heavenly Father*, will actuate you to honour and obey your *earthly parents*, knowing that the same divine word which requires, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," commands likewise, "HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT, THY DAYS MAY BE LONG IN THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE."

This is the sacred duty, my young friends, which, next to your duty to God, claims your first and most serious attention. And in addressing myself to you on this deeply interesting subject, I cannot impress upon your minds a stronger conviction of the solemnity of the appeal made to you by this Commandment, than by reminding you that it is the *only* Commandment with a *promise* annexed to it. Judge, therefore, how precious in the sight of the Almighty, is the conduct of a dutiful and affectionate child, from the reward which he has expressly held out to encourage it, even the *blessing* of long life. Should, then, any motive, any influence, be half so strong, half so prevailing, as the *approbation of your God*, to urge you to the discharge of

your duty? Natural affection is, indeed, a powerful constraint to incline us to the exercise of filial love and tenderness. But the bonds of nature, *alone*, are far from being sufficient to unite and cement the ties which should bind the child to its parents. Sad experience, in too many instances, records how cruelly the best affections of the human heart are perverted, and changed into their opposite passions: how unnaturally the virtuous dispositions of tender love, and willing obedience towards our parents, are converted into impatience under their salutary restraint, disregard to their authority, forgetfulness of their pressing and sacred claims, in birth, in infancy, in youth, nay, in every stage of life—tenderest anxiety! trembling solicitude! patient devotedness!

The only principle which can preserve in our hearts a pious and prevailing sense of these obligations, and endue us with kindred feelings of affection, gratitude, and respect for our earthly parents; is the principle I have already described, as the fountain and source of all moral and spiritual excellence in man—*Love to God*. This, my young friends, is a divine grace communicated to your souls, by the Spirit of God; which sets the path of duty

before your eyes, free from the dominion of your natural passions, and undisturbed by the violence of worldly and selfish desires. When the love of God dwells in your hearts, you behold, in one amazing view, the infinite goodness, mercy, and loving-kindness of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in all the wonderful scenes of creation, redemption, and sanctification; you feel a deep conviction of the *free* and *unmerited* character of these divine dispensations and attributes; and while the sacred impression dwells upon your young minds, and penetrates your hearts, the thoughts of your minds, and the meditations of your hearts will be: How shall we render unto God the praise and gratitude which is due, for his inestimable gifts? What suitable return can we make to our Almighty Father, for all the mercies that he has done unto us? with what sacrifices shall we come before the Lord our God? Then shall you find an answer in his holy word: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams." "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments;" and one of his commandments is, "Honour thy father and thy mother." The voice of nature will respond to the voice of God; and

kindle in your bosoms a glowing flame of affection, towards the authors of your being ; and thus, in the service of your heavenly Father, you will find a close and happy connexion with your duty to your earthly parents. With the love of God in your hearts, and the fear of God before your eyes, you will no longer regard the restraints and severities of your parents with feelings of unkindness and resentment ; but measuring their conduct by the rule with which your heavenly Father deals with the children of men ; that “whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth ; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth ;” ye will also reverence the hand that corrects you ; and honour the father or mother, who dares not *encourage* you, by mistaken indulgence, or culpable indifference, in the path that leadeth to destruction ; but even stems the tide of natural affection, and checks the tender pleadings of parental fondness, in order to bend the stubborn will, and turn the rebellious heart into the good way that leadeth unto God. Such, my young friends, is the view that children, brought up in the fear of the Lord, will take, of the moral discipline, which pious parents *force* themselves to exercise towards them, both for conscience sake,

and for the spiritual welfare of their souls. Such is the feeling, too, with which even the most depraved child, when brought to reflection, by the galling slavery of sin, and the dreadful misery that attends it, must contemplate a return to his duty, and to his Father's house. Like the prodigal, losing sight of all *fear* of the salutary restrictions of parental authority, and protection, in the overwhelming conviction of his own utter *unworthiness* of the least of the comforts and blessings of home; and finding in the forgiving embrace of a justly offended father, an undeniable proof of the extraordinary power of parental affection, springing from the principle of love to God, which can forget all the anguish and wretchedness so bitterly inflicted by a profligate child, in the yearnings of a fond, and anxious, and Christian hope; "This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost and is found." *

What child can read the affecting parable of "the prodigal son," alluded to—and oh! how carefully, and frequently, should every child be taught to meditate upon it!—what child, I say, can read and understand this affecting parable, without observing, how exactly the conduct of a tender parent

corresponds with the dealing of our Almighty Father, with his children of mankind. The truth is, that the word of God is the rule, and the Spirit of God is the guide, by which a godly parent "trains up his child in the way he should go." Let those children then tremble, and fear exceedingly, who set themselves in opposition to such parents; lest haply they be found to fight against God, who, although he has left an everlasting promise of length of days to *obedient* children; has also, in his awful visitation upon Eli and his sons, both of whom he cut off in one day, left us an example of the severity of his judgments upon the *disobedient* and *rebellious*; which it will be wise in you seriously to consider.

I observed, my young friends, that an abiding sense of the love we owe to God, would inspire us with a fervent desire to render unto him the tribute of gratitude and praise. The same principle, when exercised towards our *parents*, will also incline us to entertain the tenderest anxiety, and most watchful solicitude, for their temporal and spiritual happiness; justly considering, that if the best days of their lives were so incessantly devoted to our every care and comfort,

in providing for the many wants and weaknesses of our earliest years; soothing our sorrows, and softening our distresses; above all, in teaching our infant tongues to speak our Maker's praise, "bringing us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and guiding us to know God, and "Jesus Christ whom he hath sent:" If, I repeat, their best years have been spent in *our* service; surely in the latter end of their life, they should experience a corresponding return of dutiful attention from their offspring; so that the infirmities of their declining years may be supported by the hand of filial affection, and the last scenes of life be comforted by the consolation, which the hope of meeting again must ever afford, to the happy parent of obedient and beloved children. •

Never did child repent a faithful discharge of the duties, a willing and cheerful compliance with the claims, attached to the sickness and death-bed of a Christian parent. The patient suffering, pious resignation, and humble but steadfast faith; the godly repentance, not to be repented of; the free and undisguised confession of sin; the deep and indwelling sense of the heinousness, and hatefulness of sin in the sight of God; the

fervent and unceasing prayer for the sanctifying and supporting assistance of the Holy Ghost ; the earnest desire for communion with God, in his word, his Spirit, his sacrament ; the well-grounded hope of forgiveness of sins, and of acceptance with God, *only* through the atoning blood, and merits, and intercession, of a crucified Saviour ; the apparent resignation of all earthly interests and affections, in comparison with the unspeakable importance of the things eternal ; the calm and peaceful, yet cheerful frame and temper of mind, beaming with love to God, and with charity and good-will to all men ; the conversation in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour ; the solemn blessing upon a dutiful and affectionate child ; and, finally, the joyful looking forward to a resurrection to eternal life, through the same Jesus Christ ; all these precious fruits of the Divine Spirit, living and moving in the soul of a devoted Christian, while they afford a cheering evidence of the *blessedness* of those who live and die in the Lord ; at the same time, present a powerful and inspiring means of grace, an awakening call to the surviving and heart-broken child, that, with the blessing of God, may reward the patient and mournful duties of

filial love and piety, both in time and in eternity.

Happy the parents who thus treasure up for themselves comfort and solace in their latter end, by bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord, and feeding them from their birth with the "bread of life," and with the "milk of the Word." And blessed the child, who, by honouring his father and mother, in obedience to God's command, finds in the promise of length of days, an earnest of the promise of eternal life.

Lay, then, my young friends, the foundation of your duty to your parents, in your *first* and greatest duty to God, your heavenly Father. Diligently use every means of grace that is given you, to establish this vital principle of *love to God* within your hearts. Pray, I beseech you, more and more, for a spiritual blessing upon your endeavours; learn, daily learn, to *know* God, by a daily meditation upon the Holy Scriptures; and then learn to *love* God, because He "*so* loved us, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Thus, every advance you make in your Christian course, from grace to grace, from

faith to faith, from strength to strength; the more you grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God and your Saviour, the closer will you be drawn, in the bonds of affection, to your natural parents. The remembrance that, under God, you owe your lives to them, will fill you with all the tender sympathies of nature; and the reflection that, under the guidance of the same merciful Providence, you were brought by them to be admitted into the Christian covenant; to be made, in the divine sacrament of Baptism, “members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven;”—*this reflection* will inspire your hearts with gratitude and love towards *those* who have been faithful stewards of the *trust* committed to them in *you*, and willing and obedient instruments in the hands of God, of bringing you out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto Christ, and of delivering you “from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

Such, my young friends, are the spiritual as well as temporal obligations, which many, if not all of you, *owe* to your Christian fathers and mothers, and guardians; and which are strictly required of you by the Fifth

Commandment. And here I would claim your serious attention for a moment to the following observation : viz. That, should an instance exist among you, where the finger of God, though unseen, has been *more* visible in conducting you, by a chain of providences, to the fountain of light and life, than the hand of *parental* care ; in a word, if any one of you have been so unhappy as to have been neglected by your parents in your Christian education ; yet, blessed by God, with the knowledge of Himself, and of his Son, notwithstanding such neglect—even were it so with any of you—suffer not, I intreat you, the fault of your parents to cause you so far to forget your Christian principles, as to depart from your duty to *them*. God forbid ! Rather, “let your light so shine before them, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Let your lives and conversation so “adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour,” that your parents may know that ye are, indeed, the disciples of Christ ; and *they themselves*, influenced by the mercy of God in your example, be no longer “strangers and foreigners” to the Gospel of salvation, but become “fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

I have confined my observations, in a great measure, to our duty to our natural parents. But the same principle of obedience may be extended still farther. . . “For, in proportion as any one stands in the place of a parent to us, it is fit that we should return him a due proportion of love, honour, and duty. For example, the king, and every lawful magistrate, is a father to all those people whom they govern and protect, and, therefore, we are bound to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. Spiritual pastors and teachers are as fathers to those whom they guide and bring up in the way of godliness; therefore, we ought to submit ourselves to them, following those good directions which they give us. Governors and masters are as fathers to their families, and those whom they take care of and provide for, and therefore may justly claim a submission from them; and lastly, elderly persons are as parents to those that are young, to whom they ought to give counsel and advice, and, therefore, there is a particular respect to be paid to those that are aged.”

Thus will the divine principle of *love to God*, upon which it is impossible to dwell

too much, be manifested in the fruits of holiness and true righteousness. The graces and virtues of the Christian life will flow from this fountain of all moral and spiritual good, and animate you, while you "honour and succour your father and mother," to extend this Christian spirit to all mankind, and "to love your neighbour as yourself;" to "honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honour the king."

But human nature, we have seen, is depraved as well as weak; and prone to evil, as well as weighed down with infirmity. And the malice of Satan, and the influence of lust and passion, have too visibly made such dreadful inroads upon the Gospel principle before us; and the great adversary has so successfully sown tares among the wheat, that there is no sin, be it ever so heinous, which the wicked imagination of man's heart is incapable of conceiving, and which the cruel and unrelenting hand of man is unwilling to execute. Oh! what a melancholy monument of the fall of man is the prohibition contained in the Sixth Commandment, "THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER."

In what language shall I describe this inhuman and merciless crime to you, my

young friends, so as to fill your breast with horror and trembling at the contemplation of it? If there be a sin both against God and man, that exhibits the condition of a *lost state*, or betrays the total absence of moral virtue from the heart of man, more awfully than another; if there be any sin by which the children of the devil may be more fully distinguished, it is the dreadful sin of deliberate *murder*; which is the *wilful taking away our own life, or the life of a fellow creature.*

The *life* of man is the merciful *gift* of the Almighty Creator, a *trust* committed to his keeping, for the glory of God, and the happiness of man; a *talent*, for which he must give an account at the last day. The gift of life may be regarded as embracing *three* several relations—Natural Life, Spiritual Life, and Eternal Life. *Natural* life is represented in Scripture as living, moving, and having our being. It is the period of our existence and probation here on earth. God is said to have “breathed into man the breath of life.” But holy writ further states, that when God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,” then “man became a *living soul.*” Hence we distinguish the *spiritual* life to be to the soul, what then *atural* life is to the body; and

it is the *life* by which we live unto God, through the Holy Spirit, and enjoy that heavenly communion with God in Christ, which fills us with “joy and peace in believing;” a joy and “peace that passeth all understanding.” And this *spiritual* life is the *way to life eternal*, which, O blessed truth! is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ, and is that eternal state of happiness, glory, and blessedness, which He hath prepared for the “spirits of just men made perfect” in heaven. And here it is worthy of remark, that the *truth* which renders the *natural life* so precious and important, and exalts it to a *value* beyond what its short, uncertain, and mortal nature might seem to claim, is *this*,—that it is the appointed season, the only opportunity determined in the counsels of Almighty wisdom, in which man can work out his salvation; the only day in which man must work before “the night cometh, when no man can work;” in which, alone, he can exercise the gifts and graces of the spiritual life, in order to the attainment of eternal life.

Need I then express to you the inestimable value of every hour of our life, or represent to you the extreme necessity of redeeming and improving the time? If every moment

of life be but too short a space to prepare our souls for eternity ; if the loss of a *single day* be a loss, that we can never recover, and may possibly be, for “ we know not what a day may bring forth,” the loss of *life itself* ; and may be, O awful thought ! the loss of *eternal life* :—How seriously ought we, as accountable creatures, “ so to number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wisdom !” How solemnly are we called upon, as Christians, who must give an account of our stewardships, to look upon life as a *treasure*, that, for the purposes of grace and salvation, is indeed of *great price* ; a *sa gift* and a *blessing*, which, for the sake of a beneficent Giver, and for the glorious and immortal end for which it was first bestowed, cannot be sufficiently regarded as a cause of praise and thanksgiving, of adoration and love, to God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier !

If *life*, therefore, be so precious, and the *object* of life so inestimable, in what light can we contemplate the *waste* and *abuse* of this blessing, but as a doing despite to the goodness of God, and a most ungrateful, as well as sinful return, for the unspeakable mercies of the great Author of life, and breath, and all things ! In what colours shall I paint, then,

the desperate and premeditated wickedness, the rash and presumptuous sin, of the wretch, who has so far delivered himself over to the dominion of Satan, and is so confessedly "without God in the world," as to commit the dreadful crime of *murder*; as to destroy the noblest work of God; to embroil his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature, and to send a soul, in an instant, before the awful tribunal of the judgment-seat of Christ, without warning, without preparation, it may be, without a single prayer for mercy!

Perhaps the best means, I can adopt, to enable you to form a just estimate of the malignant *nature* of this crime; of the deadly *passions* which engender it; of the fatal *consequences* that must follow; and of the *heinousness* of this sin in the sight of Heaven, will be to refer you to an example in Scripture, which was recorded to answer all these purposes. And the example I would place before you, is that of the perpetrator of the *first murder* that was ever committed: the example of Cain, the *murderer* of his *brother* Abel.

In order to stamp, as it were, *at once*, a faithful image of *himself* upon fallen man; to represent, in *one* atrocious act, the

depravity of human nature; to exhibit the corruption of the *parent* in the corruption of the *offspring*; and to record the melancholy truth, that every son of Adam is “born in sin, and the child of wrath:” our great adversary, the devil, too fatally succeeded in fixing upon Cain, the *first-born* of fallen man, the character of “*murderer from the beginning*,” a character, which, by the destruction of the peace and innocence of our first parents, he had appropriated to *himself*. Infusing into his victim the deadly poison of his own “evil heart of unbelief,” he soon persuaded him to rebel against the commands of his Creator, to despise the ordinances of his God. And when the tempter saw that the *obedience* of Abel was accepted, whilst the *sin* of Cain caused his sacrifice to be rejected, as an *offence* to the Almighty; with subtle address, he converted this *reproof* into an occasion of his *fall*; and, exciting in Cain’s breast the fierce and implacable passions of anger, envy, malice, and revenge, he hurried him on with impetuous force to wreak his vengeance upon the innocent head of his brother Abel. For, awful to relate, when they were in the field together, “Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

Such, then, is the malignant *nature* of the crime of *murder*; and such the deadly *passions* that engender it. Now, let us proceed to deduce from this awakening example, the inevitable *consequences* of this sin, and its *heinousness* in the sight of God.

Sin, my young friends, hardens the heart; and the effect produced upon the murderer Cain, was even so: He approached unto God with "a lie in his right hand;" and again, added insolence and murmuring to falsehood. For when the Lord said unto Cain, Where is thy brother Abel? He said, I know not; am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; and when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." "And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day, from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that

every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." Thus, besides the remorseless despair, producing hardness of heart, and the fearful looking forward to judgment, which overwhelmed Cain; in order to express his utter abhorrence of this inhuman crime, Almighty God inflicted a *curse* and a *mark* upon the murderer; that should for ever hold him up to future ages, as a monument of his abiding wrath, and indignation; and *preserve* him to *that* generation, as an abandoned object of universal execration and contempt. *

A serious consideration of the awful event now related, will afford us a highly instructive lesson; one that has been taught us most perfectly, by the inspiring wisdom of the meek and lowly Jesus: That it is not the cruel and merciless act of murder, *alone*, which the Gospel represents as strictly prohibited by the moral law; but *every* evil passion or affection that corrupts the heart of man, and leads and tends to this hateful crime, in the most remote degree, is denounced as a violation of the *spirit* of the Sixth

Commandment. The Saviour's words are these: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Returning then to *the gospel principle*, by which I would have you weigh every thought, word, and action: How dwelleth the *love of God* in him, who so shutteth up his bowels of compassion and mercy against his brother, as to rob him of the blessing of existence?

Before I leave this subject, I must remark, that there is another grievous violation of this commandment, which has become of late years so frequent, that I cannot omit to warn you of it. *Self-destruction*, my young friends, however the offence may be palliated, is as much *murder*, and therefore as

highly criminal in the eye of God, as the taking away the life of a fellow-creature. To cherish the *hope*, that by the rash act of *self-destruction*, we shall flee from ourselves, and be released from the stings of a guilty conscience; or to flatter ourselves, that we can thus escape the censure, and well merited contempt of the world, is an instance of desperation, as full of delusion, as of madness. This cruel and unfeeling infliction upon the peace and happiness of the innocent surviving relations, must inevitably brand the memory of the *suicide* with lasting ignominy: And to incur the righteous penalty of *unrepented sin*, the bitterness of *eternal* misery, in order to evade the suffering of *temporal* punishment, is a dreadful expedient, from which I pray God ever to preserve us. Let the Scriptures again support us by the force of example. The traitor Judas, the son of perdition, who *betrayed* his Lord and Master, unable to bear up against the terrors of an accusing conscience, in the moment of despair, went out and hanged himself. Whilst the penitent St. Peter, who impiously *denied* his Saviour, yielding to the dictates of godly sorrow, and overpowered by the compassionate look of his Divine Master, went out

and wept bitterly. The former added *murder* to the crime of treachery; deprived himself of every means of grace, of every hope of glory; and must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, *once* his gracious Master, but now his avenging *Judge*, with *self-destruction* recorded as the last action of his life. The latter, by divine grace, was renewed unto "repentance, not to be repented of:" He cherished the Holy Spirit, which Judas quenched: he confided still in the Lord, whom Judas had forsaken: he resisted the solicitations of Satan, who would have sifted him as wheat, and who entered into Judas; and the blessed consequence to *him*, as it will ever be to all Christians who follow his steps, was, that his *faith* failed not; for his Lord interceded for him. He afterwards sealed that *faith*, with his blood, in the service of his beloved Master; and is now reaping the reward which Christ has prepared for all his faithful servants, in his kingdom of glory. Let the awakening *contrast* sink deep into your hearts, my young friends, and teach you, with the blessing of God, to "watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

If *sin* be the mother of all the evil passions,

lusts, and affections which war against the soul, *herself* the child of the devil; judge for yourselves, how *contrary*, the indulgence of *these* must ever be to the spirit of the Gospel, while I remind you, that “the wisdom which is from above, is first *pure*, then *peaceable*, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of *mercy* and good fruits.” The Gospel is a dispensation of mercy; and the great Author of the Gospel is the fountain of mercy: and the fruits of the spirit of the Gospel are “*love*, joy, *peace*, long-suffering, *gentleness*, goodness, faith, *meekness*, and temperance.” And the voice of the Gospel, “preaching *peace* by Jesus Christ,” exhorts—“Be ye merciful, even as your Father which is in heaven is merciful.” “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.” “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for *He* maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good; and sendeth rain upon the just and on the unjust.” “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed

him; if he thirst, give him drink." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Since, then, the "word of reconciliation" breathes *only* the spirit of brotherly love, and "good-will towards men;" and that such is the wonderful love of God in Christ, that "he willeth not, the *death* of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and *live*;" where shall the ungodly *murderer* appear, who hath resisted that *will*, and rejected that *word*? "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!" Marvel not that God, who hath loved so amazingly, should avenge so tremendously. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall *he* be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" I will tell you, my young friends, what the Scrip-

ture saith, *concerning the murderer*, that still more dreadful punishment shall be; that you may know “what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.” “When the Lord judgeth his people,” *murderers* “shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death!”—Let me beseech you, then, “if it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.” “Be angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil.” “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another; even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.” Ever remembering the words of St. John, “He that hateth his brother is a *murderer*, and ye know that no *murderer* “hath eternal life abiding in him.” “For he that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” And “whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”

In my anxious desire to offer you every instruction in my power, I feel I have been led to extend my remarks upon *this* and the

other Commandments far beyond my original intention. In concluding my observations upon the *Sixth* Commandment, I shall only briefly add, that to be the unhappy cause of depriving a fellow-creature of life, either by *accident*, or for the necessary *protection of our own lives*, is a deplorable, but perfectly justifiable *exception* from the Commandment; provided always that *there be no other means of self-preservation*. The sin of *duelling*, therefore, must ever be considered a deliberate violation of the laws both of God and man; and will, without doubt, incur the most aggravated guilt of *murder*.

It has been often attempted, in our courts of justice, to palliate the guilt of *murder* by the plea of *drunkenness*. But our upright judges, in the exercise of a sound moral integrity, have ever regarded intemperance as an *aggravation* of the crime, and rescued the laws from the reproach of sanctioning one of the worst of vices. Now I would ask you seriously, in reference to the sin of habitual *drunkenness*—Is there a more deliberate or more fatal instance of *self-destruction*? Can there be a more desperate attempt upon the life, than the destruction of the constitution, both of body and mind, by poisoning

the very fountains of existence? Shall man deprive himself of *reason*, that noblest *gift* of God, and degrade himself, by intemperance, below the level of the "beasts that perish?" Shall he debase the faculties of his immortal soul, for the sake of mere animal gratification; and abuse the beautiful structure of the human frame to the purposes of vile and brutal excess? Is it possible that a human being can so far lose sight of every principle that ennobles man, and distinguishes him from the rest of the creatures; can so entirely forget in whose image and likeness *he alone* was created, as to abandon *all* that renders this life valuable, and eternal life attainable, for the low and slavish indulgence of sensual appetites? What evil thoughts, what criminal desires, what violent passions, what fleshly lusts, what profane and filthy conversation, what murderous actions accompany and follow this deadly vice! And yet, how many thousands pursue it to their own destruction, though it be denounced as excluding man from the kingdom of heaven, and though the *drunkard* and *murderer* be included in the *same* condemnation.

The destruction of *public enemies*, either

in *war*, for the restoration of the general peace and moral happiness of nations, or in the punishment of *valefactor*s, for the maintenance of the moral laws of our country, admit of equal *justification*; being the exercise of *justice* towards a *few*, for the sake of *mercy* towards thousands. But the inhuman immolation of victims, under the superstitious cloak of religion, as represented to us in the abhorrent practices of Indian Sutteeism and Infanticide, bear so near a relation to the idolatrous sacrifices of Molech, that they must ever be regarded as an equal abomination in the sight of God, and come under the denomination of *murder*, in the view of every enlightened mind.

With an earnest admonition to you to meditate seriously upon the almost irreclaimable crime of wilful *murder*; and to check instantly, the very first sensations of angry passions, as directly leading to it; I shall proceed to explain to you the sacred obligations of the seventh commandment, "THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY."

Now *adultery*, in its *primary* sense, is the *violation* of the most sacred contract or covenant of *marriage*; an engagement entered into under the solemnity of an appeal to the

three Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, as expressive of the religious sanctity of the vow or covenant therein made.

Our Lord and Saviour, in his memorable sermon on the mount, declares, that “blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall see God.” And truly there is no moral state on earth, in which the spirit of this divine principle may be more beautifully exemplified and honoured, than the conscientious and faithful observance of the pledges mutually given and received, at the celebration of this rite of Matrimony; if we except, as we are bound to do, that higher state of moral excellence and purity, by which we be constrained, through grace, to “*love God, because he first loved us* ;”—“a principle, which we must always regard,” says an ornament of our Church, “as the foundation of all duty; the regulating movement of our hearts and lives; which, if it be *wanting*, every thing else is wanting; but if it be really present, every thing else will follow.”

The *sanctity* of marriage cannot be established upon more sacred authority, than its *divine* appointment by the great Creator of the world, and the sanction and honour it has since received, in the *presence* of the Son

of God, and the *first miracle* that he wrought at a marriage in Cana of Galilee.

Now the *purity* of this civil and religious covenant, as *designed* by Almighty wisdom, may be estimated by two striking particulars. *First*,—That it was instituted at the time of man's innocency; and is made use of in Scripture, not only to *represent* the mystical and holy union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; but, whatsoever things are pure, spiritual, and holy, both in heaven and earth, are more particularly conveyed to us, by this sanctified emblem, than any other. Thus, we learn from revelation, how blessed are the righteous, who shall sit down in his kingdom, at "the marriage supper of the Lamb." And the coming of Christ, is signified, by the coming of the *Bridegroom*. The invitation of the Gospel, is also represented under the similitude of a king, who made a *marriage* for his son: and the *qualifications* necessary for admission to the marriage feast, are expressed under the figure of a *wedding garment*: while the *words* of the invitation are—"the Spirit and the *Bride* say, Come! And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely." "Blessed are they which

are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The *purity* of the marriage union, as ordained by the Almighty, may be understood, *secondly*, from the circumstance of this holy contract being especially consecrated, as a safeguard to moral virtue, against the deceitfulness of sinful lusts; and a shield to protect us from the depravity of a corrupt nature.

If marriage then be so honoured, and its object so honourable and excellent, as, under Providence, to extend its blessings to all future generations, as well as to provide for the present happiness and holiness of mankind; if it be esteemed so worthy the Divine approbation as to be sanctioned by the protection of a law from God; I need no arguments to convince you, my young friends, how fearful a resistance to the *will* of the Almighty, must be the grievous sin of *adultery*. Perhaps there is no transgression of our duty to our neighbour, more productive of national calamity, and domestic misery, by severing the sacred ties, which secure the bonds of social happiness in *general*; and tearing asunder the tender and endearing links of fond affection which unite the members of a

family in *particular*, than a dishonour brought upon the marriage state. It is, besides, a sin of such magnitude, as to be subversive of that faith, and fear, and love towards God, which are only *genuine* when productive of *obedience* to his Commandments; and hence, must be considered a violation of the vital principles of *all* religion, and especially of the *pure* and *spiritual* religion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How entirely then must it be inimical to every moral principle also: a total prostration of character; an inevitable loss of self-esteem; a just forfeiture of the respect of all good men; a deplorable alienation of the heart from every virtuous feeling: in short, a fatal deprivation of that *peace of mind*, which renders life so truly blessed; and without which, we had better have never been born. At the same time, to complete this melancholy picture, *adultery* is not only an abandonment of all moral good, but it is a way of admission to all moral evil. For it is as impossible that moral virtue should spring from a polluted heart, as for a corrupt tree to bring forth good fruit: or for a "fountain to send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter," or "yield salt water and fresh." Out of the corrupt "heart, proceed evil thoughts,

murders, *adulteries*, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." When *one unclean spirit* takes possession of the heart of a man, it will never rest until it hath taken unto itself "seven other evil spirits, more wicked than itself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Or, in other words, when Satan has made an entrance into the hearts of men, by means of any *besetting sin*, he will never be satisfied until he has, *by that sin*, defiled the whole heart, and its affections; and made it full of all corruption, and uncleanness. And hence it is, that the Holy Scriptures lay so much stress upon the precept which teaches us to "abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul."

From the foregoing observations, we must conclude, that, as in the case of *murder*, not only the savage and cruel act itself, but every angry passion conducive thereto, is strictly prohibited; so neither must the meaning of the word *adultery* be confined to the violator of the conjugal duties; but be extended to embrace the deliberate transgression of those, who "walk after the flesh, and not after the Spirit." And this rule will necessarily apply to unmarried, as well as married persons;

and requires, in both, that chastity and purity of thought, word, and deed; that holy conversation and godliness, which becometh the followers of the pure and holy Jesus; "That they put off, concerning their former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness;" that they "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, as those that are Christ's;" that they "be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their minds;" that they make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, "but denying *all* ungodliness and worldly lusts, do live soberly, righteously, and godly." For *adultery*, as explained by our blessed Lord, is not only the lust of the *flesh*, but the lust of the *eye* also. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit *adultery*; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh upon a woman, to lust after her, hath committed *adultery* with her already in his heart." "It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the

cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery."

The perfection of the Christian character is to have "that mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus;" and to walk as "*He* also walked." Now the word of eternal truth hath testified concerning Christ, that "He was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." To be like-minded with Christ, therefore, we must "purify ourselves as He is pure," and desire to be "holy as He is holy:" having our "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." But this, I am bound in duty ever to remind you, is the work of divine grace. It must be the work of *His* Spirit, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." It is "the grace of God, that bringeth salvation," that must "work in us, both to *will* and to *do*" this. It is the Holy Spirit that alone can guide and direct us unto Christ as our perfect pattern and example: first convincing us of our fallen nature, shewing us our weakness, humbling our pride, teaching us the

depravity and corruption of our hearts : warning us of the enemies of our soul, the craftiness of the tempter, the seductions of the flesh, the delusions of the world, the deceitfulness of sin :—It is the Spirit of God, that ever waiteth to be gracious unto us, that must bring us unto Jesus ; having regenerated our hearts and minds, subdued their passions, sanctified their affections, softened their tempers, and endued them with that purity and holiness, which become the worshippers of Him, the infinitely pure and holy God. Armed with the power of the Spirit, ye shall be enabled to “mortify your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence :” “for which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.” *Pray* then, earnestly pray, my young friends, for the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost ; that ye may not only be preserved from the dreadful sin which we have been contemplating, but be “more than conquerors,” over *all* the enemies of your souls, “through Him *that loved us.*” And thus we again trace to the constraining *love of God* in Christ, the *fountain head*, whence flow those spiritual streams of pure water of

life, clear as crystal, which are not only figurative of the purity and holiness of “the saints in light,” but actually represent the cleansing power of divine grace upon the heart; by which “ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

And in reference to that purity of living which is here inculcated, I might appear, without explanation, to have omitted to apply this subject to the prohibition of intemperance and excess, both in eating and drinking: but as I have endeavoured to expose their fatal effects both upon body and soul, in considering them the causes of *self-destruction*, I may venture to hope that they have been sufficiently noticed, to excite your utter abhorrence and detestation of them.

In passing through life, whatever your station may be, “herein to exercise yourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men,” is a Gospel precept, so beautifully associating the *first* great commandment, of love to God, with the *second*, of love to your neighbour; and expresses so perfect a state of Christian watchfulness over both the inner and outward man; such a fear to do evil, and desire

to do well; that you cannot cultivate a more excellent frame of mind, nor a disposition more suited to the character of a disciple of the immaculate Jesus; whose whole life, while upon earth, was spent in one continued course of doing good to the souls and bodies of men, in implicit obedience to the will of his heavenly Father: and “who hath left you an example to follow his steps.” While you keep that active principle of Christian benevolence in your hearts, and this perfect pattern before your eyes; the *Golden Rule* of doing to others as you would be done by, will, with God’s blessing, be the measure of your general life and conversation. Far then, very far will you be preserved from the wilful sin, of doing violence to the person; and equally so from that of laying unlawful hands upon the *property* of your neighbour. For ye will remember, that against this unjust violation of duty, it has pleased the Almighty Jehovah to establish the law of the Eighth Commandment, “THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.”

And for this wise reason: that if the practice of *theft* and *robbery* were to prevail, it would naturally lead to the most frightful scenes of violence and bloodshed. To accom-

plish the ends of spoliation and plunder, wicked men would not scruple to commit the most wanton excesses and cruelties, not excepting the crime of murder, to which envy or avarice might instigate them. Admire and adore, then, the beneficent wisdom and goodness of God, in not only protecting us from this last-mentioned most dreadful of sins; but in providing against the dangerous approaches to it, which a licence to steal, or an indulgence in any of our sinful passions, would necessarily become. — *Peace*, both outward and inward peace, is the benign dispensation of a merciful providence. “Peace on earth,” was the sacred harbinger of the Gospel. It must needs be, saith the Lord of that Gospel, that offences come; such is the frail and corrupt state of human nature, “but we unto that man, by whom the offence cometh.” How foreign, then, to the blessed spirit of the Gospel, must be any thing that would create or make tumult and discord!

Now, it cannot be denied, that the *property* which any one has lawfully and morally obtained by the exercise of his own talent and industry, or has justly inherited from the industry and talents of his relations and friends,

is a right of possession, as sacred as the laws both of God and man can make it. It is the means by which we are enabled to bring up and maintain our families, and contribute to the public and private charities of life; by which we have the power of supplying our own wants, and those of our children and dependents, and of relieving the wants and necessities of our poorer fellow-creatures.

To encourage *industry* and *carefulness*, by giving security to the *fruits* of labour; and to preserve the *peace* and *order* of the nation, by protecting the *just rights* of all classes of society, the laws of our country, founded upon the divine authority of the law of the Ten Commandments, are framed for the administration of equal justice, to the rich and to the poor. And although no human government can be free from imperfections, I believe there is no nation in the world that enjoys the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and the privileges attached to it, or has so little *real* cause for discontent, as our highly-favoured, heaven-defended island of Great Britain; and no people, I am bound to add, who owe so inestimable a debt of love, gratitude, and praise, to the God of nations, as the people of England.

By the righteous administration of the laws of God and man, the different ranks of society are maintained in a state of order and concord. A happy union is preserved between high and low, rich and poor. An unbroken chain of dependence connects the prince with the peasant, and the king and his nobles with the humblest of his subjects.

As one great mean to promote and establish this union of interests, and to guard against the dissension and confusion that must follow any disturbance or interruption of this social compact, the Almighty Governor of the universe has proclaimed, with the word of unerring justice,—“*Thou shalt not steal!*” • And the impression I would leave upon your minds, in drawing this part of my duty to a close, is *this*,—that the *slightest* deviation from the commandment is a breach of its sacred obligations, and cannot possibly escape the all-seeing eye of God. He that can so far overstep the bounds of rectitude, as to allow his hands to pick or steal *at all*, be it the smallest trifle, has forfeited his *integrity*, has resisted *conscience*, has debased his *morals*, has violated his *religious principles*; and, doubtless, upon any favourable opportunity, will not hesitate to

inflict a *deeper* injury upon his neighbours' *property*, and upon his own *character*. Perhaps there is not an evil propensity, to which young persons are more addicted, or to which, unhappily, they attach less importance, than *petty theft*. Assuredly, there is no temptation by which Satan more commonly prevails over the moral scruples of youth. I warn you, therefore, my young friends, of the danger of once yielding to his treacherous solicitations. Avoid the first beginnings of wrong and robbery. If sinners entice you, consent not; but "keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right, for this alone shall bring you peace at the last."

But you will observe, lastly, that not only the positive *act* of *stealing*, or taking away, but *receiving* and *concealing* what we know to belong to another, as well as *fraud*, *cheating*, and *dishonesty* of every description, are strictly forbidden by the Eighth Commandment. Hence, the rigorously oppressing the poor, *especially*, but indeed, *any* one within our power, by exacting more than reason and *equity* would allow, even though the law might give us a just right, is undoubtedly included in the prohibition. The voice of *conscience*, which is the law of God within

us, must in all these cases become our guide. Our dealings with our fellow-men must be *as in the presence of God*, and in reference to *that Day*, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed; when we shall be “sifted as wheat,” and all our *intentions* and *motives* be weighed in the scale of Truth. Then shall it appear, that the Lord hath required of us to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly” before him. The light weight, and false balance, must be equally renounced, and “all false ways be utterly abhorred.”—See Lev. xix. 11, 13.

Strive to preserve, my young friends, this constant sense of the *omnipresence* of God in your hearts, and it will lead you, under all the *trials* of your virtue, to the throne of grace. And regulating your regard and desires for worldly advantages, by the principle of Christian *moderation*, you will enter into the spirit and prayer of the pious Agur: “Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of the Lord in vain.”

We now advance to the consideration of the Ninth Commandment; and no sooner do

we rehearse its benevolent restriction, "THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR," than we again discern the Christian spirit of *love to our neighbour* beaming forth from the brighter principle of the *love of God*. For what provision can be more beneficent, what security more necessary, than the protection which a God of truth has thus extended over *integrity* and *virtue*? And here we trace a close relation to the Eighth Commandment. For as the value of *reputation* and *character* is infinitely greater than that of worldly possessions; so the loss of property is trifling and insignificant, compared with the loss of our *good name*. *Slander* and *detraction* therefore, are a robbery beyond measure serious: for whilst the taking away any thing by false accusation may be remedied, as in the example of *Zaccheus*, by a fourfold restoration; the malevolent defamation of the moral worth of our neighbour, is an injury, however unmerited, that can seldom, if ever, be repaired. We may venture for once to borrow the sentiment of our immortal Bard:

" Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something,
 nothing;
 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;

But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

But no language can speak like the Word of eternal Truth. And that Word with authority declares, that a *false witness* speaketh lies, and "sheweth forth deceit." What else then is it, to be a *liar* and *deceiver*, than to be the child of Satan, who is denounced by the Saviour of the world, to be a *liar*, and the *father* of lies; a *deceiver*, and "murderer from the beginning; that abideth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him."

So to violate the pure and holy principle inculcated in this Commandment, as to go forward publicly in a Court of Justice, with "a lie in the right hand;" and shamelessly and profanely to provoke the divine judgments, by blasphemously appealing to the God of all Justice, in support of a malicious and revengeful attack upon the *life* and *character* of our neighbour; betrays a depravity of heart, so full of subtilty and all mischief; and exhibits so truly the spirit of the *child of the devil*, and of the *enemy* to all righteousness, and of the *perverter* of the right ways of the Lord; that I cannot, viewing the sin in all its bearings, represent to

you a more hateful instance of deliberate murder, nor a more lawful contempt, of the laws both of God and man. And this may, perhaps, account for the circumstance of the sin of *perjury*, or *false witnessing*, considered in this *heinous* light, being so frequently *connected* with other grievous crimes in Scripture, as bringing down “God’s wrath and indignation upon the nations.” “I will come near to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerer, and against the adulterer, and against *false swearers*; that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless; that *turn aside the stranger from his right*, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” “Will ye steal, and murder, and commit adultery, and *swear falsely*?” “Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, 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 through, and blood toucheth blood.” From which passages, and the judgments of the Lord attached to them, we may form a just opinion; that the man who is represented as bearing false witness against

the *property* of his neighbour, was not restrained from the commission of direct *fraud* and *stealing*: and that he who conspired against his brother's *life*, by false accusation and swearing, was not free from the *guilt* of the criminal, who would proceed to open violence. In the sight of *Him* who knoweth our inmost thoughts, such an one hath already committed murder in his heart. "These are the things that ye shall do: speak ye every man the *truth* to his neighbour; execute the judgment of *truth*, and peace in your gates; and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against your neighbour, and love no *false oath*: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord."—See Matt. xv. 19.

Prompted by this stricter and closer view of the subject, we shall now leave the terrors of the Law, and come into the courts of the Gospel kingdom; and stand before that judgment-seat, where *Christ*, the searcher of all hearts, is our *Judge*; and where *conscience* is our unerring accuser: where the word of truth, the book of life, lies open, and we shall be judged, not with the uncertain voice of human testimony, but "out of those things which are written in the book:" and where *it is written*, that not only "the *false*

witness shall perish," but, "whoso *privily* slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off." "He that worketh *deceit*, shall not dwell in my house:" "he that *telleth lies*, shall not tarry in my sight."

To *slander* our neighbour, is to speak that which is false, or to raise or spread any evil report, by which his honesty, credit, or character in general, may be injured or questioned. It is an unjustifiable indulgence in unkind and uncharitable observations upon friends or associates, or upon any of our fellow-men: for the term *neighbour* means all mankind. All deceitful and ungenerous insinuations and expressions, whether true or false, if their tendency be to do mischief, and can promote no moral good, are a wanton gratification, to say the least, of envy and jealousy; and too often, of anger, malice, and revenge; and therefore must be regarded as forbidden by this Commandment. As there is no principle of virtue more lovely than *truth*, so there is no quality in vice more despicable than *lying*. And as no Christian grace is more highly exalted and sanctified than the former; so the curse is denounced in Scripture upon no moral evil, more awfully, than upon the latter. For *falsehood* is as

contrary to the spirit of religion, and as opposite to the will and word of God, as darkness is to light; as unrighteousness is to righteousness; as Belial is to Christ. Pause then, and consider, I beseech you, for a moment, the heavenly nature of the attribute of truth: That the Lord God himself is “the God of truth;” that He “keepeth *truth* for ever;” that his judgment is according to *truth*; for that, indeed, “He cannot lie.” Reflect again, my young friends, that Christ, the eternal Son of God, “the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and *truth*,” is “the way, the *truth*, and the life:” and, that “grace and *truth* came by Jesus Christ.” Contemplate, further, the Holy Ghost as the “Comforter, the Spirit of *truth*, who will guide us into all *truth*.” Lastly, behold the glorious “Gospel of our salvation,” which is the “Word of *truth* :” of the *truth* as it is in Jesus;—and search, and know, that *Truth* consists of whatever is holy, just, and pure. Judge then, I intreat you, and make it a subject of deep and serious meditation, how derogatory to the *honour*, and what an abomination to the *holiness* of God, must be the wilful and habitual sin of *lying*. The punishment of Ananias and Sapphira must ever

remain as an awful record of God's temporal judgment upon the liar; but to remind you of the awakening consequences, of the final retribution, that awaits this sin, will most strikingly convey to you its *heinous* nature. Know then, for I declare it to you upon the faithfulness of the word of eternal life, that among the number of those, who, at the last day, shall be *shut out* from the glory of Christ's kingdom, from the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, shall be, "*who-soever loveth and maketh a lie.*" For "*there shall in no wise enter into it, any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*"

Thus have we been led, in the first instance, to contemplate the injurious effects occasioned to our *neighbour*, from the sin of *bearing false witness*; and, afterwards, to consider how deep an injury we are inflicting on *ourselves*, by being guilty of this grievous offence. For be assured, my young friends, that if the sanctuary of *truth*, within our bosoms, be once violated; if our *integrity* sustain the slightest wound; farewell, alas! to peace and tranquillity of mind. The spirit of true religion hath suffered wrong; and nothing but a godly

sorrow, and immediate reformation, *both* made effectual by the healing virtue of Redeeming Love, can ever restore them.

So highly did the patriarch Job, whom the Lord blessed for his *fidelity*, esteem this sacred principle, that he valued it as the "one thing needful," as the touchstone of all religious and moral worth. And when his patience seemed almost sinking and exhausted beneath the weight of more than human suffering, so interwoven was *truth* with every thing pure, virtuous, and godly, that he expressed the last effort, as it were, of moral fortitude, and pious confidence, in the final resolve of triumphant faith. "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. Till I die I will not remove my *integrity* from me; my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live." Can you but read or hear this inspiring resolution, and not feel a glow of virtuous emulation arising in your bosoms? What, then, should be the zealous fervour of your minds, when you meditate upon the purer and more holy inspirations of Gospel *truth*? If the language of the servant of

God, speaking to the *ear*, make so strong an impression upon you, how deeply ought the voice of the Spirit of Holiness to affect you, speaking to your *hearts* ?

If, then, the *liar* be so offensive in the sight of God, as to call down his most fearful and eternal judgments ; and so contemptible and worthless in the eyes of men, as that he is not believed even when he speaks the truth ; would it not almost appear unnecessary to admonish you to shun and abhor this reprobate character ? Yet such is the proneness of the heart of man to evil, that we may remark upon *this* sin even more strictly than upon the sin of *stealing*, that it is a favourite temptation, by which the great adversary of mankind draws young Christians aside from the path of rectitude. It is the subtle instrument which he makes use of to *justify* the commission of crime, and to add to its enormity. If he can but seduce you so far as to transgress by a *single* lie, he will find but little difficulty in persuading you to *conceal* your guilt by repeated falsehoods. Fly, then, from this accursed thing as you would from a serpent ; for “ if you will love life, and see good days,” if you would “ flee from the wrath to come,” “ refrain your tongue from evil, and your lips

that they speak no guile." "Putting away lying, let every man speak truth with his neighbour." "Speak the truth in love." "Speak the truth, in Christ, and lie not." For thus saith the law of God, which "was made for *liars* and *perjured persons*:" "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." "Thou shalt not raise a false report, neither shalt thou put thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness."

"Let *truth*, then, be without dissimulation." For, if ye resist the truth, and turn away from the truth, and leave the paths of uprightness, and walk in the ways of darkness, beware, lest your "feet stumble on the dark mountains," and there be none to deliver you, and "while ye look for light, it be turned into the shadow of death." Remember the solemn warning, "That this is the *condemnation*, that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth *truth* cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

I would yet leave you one simple *rule*, in

reference to this Commandment, a rule which, if generally adopted, would, I believe, be a means, through the divine blessing, of preventing much of the evil we have been treating of. And it is *this* : That if you cannot speak *well* of any person, *be silent*. But, above all rules and directions which I can suggest to you, seek, O seek, I beseech you, the guidance and assistance of heaven. Let your daily prayers to God be, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips," that I offend not with my tongue. "Shew me thy ways, O Lord ; teach me thy paths, lead me in thy *truth* and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation."

Finally, my young friends, if you be influenced by pure and undefiled religion, by that love to God and your neighbour, which is the fulfilling of the law, truly, *covetousness*, which is idolatry, will be put away far from you. The spirit of purity and holiness, which must distinguish you as the servants of God, and the disciples of Christ, will work in you to will and to do what is good, and so regulate your hearts and their affections, that you shall listen without fear to the words of the Tenth Commandment.

“THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE; THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS HIS.”

To *covet*, is to indulge inordinate and unlawful desires and passions for that which belongs to another. And so *fatal* are the consequences of the depravity of a fallen nature, that if you so far allow yourselves, in the commission of sin, as to set your affections immoderately upon any sinful object, be it “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life,” you have let go the anchor of your safety, sure and stedfast, and have launched out into a perilous ocean; that, without a merciful interposition of divine grace, will engulf you in the waves of destruction; for you have voluntarily surrendered yourselves into the hands of Satan, and he will prove himself a willing auxiliary to gratify your inclinations to the utmost. He will not suffer you to retreat from the darling attraction, the favourite temptation, the besetting sin, but will keep it continually before your eyes, until he have prevailed with you to silence the reproaches and scruples of conscience, to stifle every painful misgiving and

uneasiness, to quench the Spirit of grace within; and at length make you so bold and courageous in sin, so completely his slaves, as to hesitate at nothing, but be ready for the execution of any crime, however atrocious, in order to attain the thing *coveted*. It was thus, you will remember, he tempted, it was thus he unhappily triumphed over, the virtue of Eve. He brought her near to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; first seduced the eye, and then corrupted the heart. Thus also he tempted David to the crimes of murder and adultery, in order to compass the object of his concupiscence. Thus he deluded Ahab to become a partner in the murder of Naboth, to get possession of his coveted vineyard. Thus, too, he beguiled Herod to put John Baptist to a cruel death, to continue his adulterous intercourse with his brother's wife.

Touch not, then, taste not, handle not; no! nor consent even to *look* upon the *forbidden fruit*. It may be "pleasant to the sight," and to outward appearance, seem "good for food," but within it is full of poison, and whosoever eateth thereof, shall surely die. And believe me, my young friends, that *every thing* which is contrary to the spirit of the

Gospel of Christ, every *evil* thought, word, and action, is the *forbidden tree*.

The sin of *covetousness*, though the last of the moral offences provided against by the law of the Ten Commandments, is by no means the least in importance. So far from it, that it is productive of evil to so unlimited an extent, as to comprehend a transgression of the *whole* of our duties, both towards God, and towards our neighbour. For if we contemplate it in the character of *idolatry*, the setting up idols in our hearts, paying that devotion to things of time and sense, which is due to the one living and true God *alone*; and honouring other lords, besides the true Lord, viz. riches, pleasure, honour, or lust; serving mammon instead of God, the god of this world instead of the God of heaven and earth; preferring the pleasures of sin for a season, rather than enjoy the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore; loving the praise of men more than the praise of God, or worshipping the creature more than the Creator: in this light there can be no difficulty in pronouncing *covetousness* to be a breach of the commandments of the first table, which enforce the honour and reverence that is due to the eternal God, his Name,

and his Worship. And if we regard this evil passion, or rather combination of evil passions, as the violation of the peace, Honour, and chastity of families, the invasion of the rights of property, and evasion of relative duties; an indulgence of self-love and self-interest, at the expense of love to parents, and respect to superiors; the commission of violence upon the life and person, or of fraud and robbery upon the property and character of our neighbour, from malice, envy, or avarice: in all these respects, *covetousness* is the transgression of the commandments of the second table, which require us to love our neighbour as ourselves.

You will doubtless expect, my young friends, that I should not only point out to you the heinousness of the sin of *covetousness*, but suggest to you the remedy for the disease. To the Apostle St. Paul, I refer you, with a confidence that could not arise from any suggestion of my own. "I have learned," saith he to the Philippians, "in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, neither can we carry any thing out. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that

will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lies, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some *coveted* after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Contentment therefore, is the valuable secret which the inspired Apostle reveals to you, to prevent the malignity of this infectious disease of *covetousness*. And what is *contentment*? perhaps you may inquire. I answer, that *contentment* is that happy frame of mind, that blessed spiritual state, which springs from a meek and humble heart; a heart deeply sensible of the blessings of creation and preservation, but above all, of the inestimable love of God, in the redemption of the world, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and at the same time, fully convinced of our unworthiness of the least of these mercies. To Christians thus endued with divine grace, "every good and perfect gift *cometh from above*;" and as it is *received* in reference to the bountiful Giver, with gratitude and thankfulness, so is it *used* in reference to his *will*. Such Christians feel, that the Almighty has "given them all things

richly to enjoy:" but they forget not, that to whom much is given, of them much is required; as also, to whom little is given, of them that little must be accounted for. Hence they will *use* the gifts of God, "as not abusing them." Whatever they do, they will endeavour to "do all to the glory of God;" and "walk as seeing Him that is invisible." Their temperance and "moderation will be known unto all men." "If riches increase," they will not "set their hearts upon them;" for they will be impressed by the fearful *truth* of their Saviour's words: "How hardly shall they that *trust* in riches, enter into the kingdom of God!" They will not *trust*, therefore, "in uncertain riches, but trust in the living God," being "rich in good works." In the exercise of a lively *faith* in that Saviour, and of an humble *hope* of acceptance with him, they will not lose sight of that spirit of Christian *charity*, which is the perfection of *both* these graces. Hence they will be "ready to give; glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation, against the time to come, that they may inherit eternal life." If such, then, be the true character of spiritual *contentment*, contentment with *godliness*, your own hearts,

I doubt not, will have anticipated me, in concluding, how little *such a spirit* in Christians can have to do with *covetousness*. How much rather, will the abundance of *others* be regarded as a *trust*, consigned to their care: and the only anxiety, the only solicitude, they will feel, respecting the possessors, will be, that *they may be found faithful stewards* of the talents committed to their charge. They will look at home, into their own bosoms; and be too busily engaged in *occupying* the treasure which the Lord hath blessed them with, be it *one* or *ten* pounds, to find time or inclination to intermeddle with, much less to *envy* the condition of others.

But you may probably observe, that *covetousness* is a much more dangerous temptation to the *poor* than to the *rich*: and that, therefore, the virtue of *contentment* with them, is far more needful, and is a more glorious manifestation of divine grace, than in those of better condition. There may be an apparent, but no real truth in this observation; for those who possess *much*, are naturally prone to desire *more*, “to heap up riches, though they cannot tell who shall gather them;” from a miserly spirit of avarice, jealousy, or envy: while there are many happy

instances of the poor in this world's good being "rich in faith;" *rich*, in a confiding *trust* in that blessed Lord, "who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich." Besides, there is reason to fear, that even the lowest condition is not free from a sordid love of lucre. Under these impressions, I am persuaded that I shall consult your best interests, by endeavouring to establish the *general* principle of *contentment*, contentment with the *faith*, and *fear*, and *love* of God, as the Gospel standard, to which "the rich and the poor may come together;" since "the Lord is the Maker of them all." But there is a *sin* included in *discontent*, or the not being satisfied with our lot and station, which I cannot pass by without noticing: I mean, the sin of *mur-muring* against God. It is an offence of the first magnitude, as you may ascertain from the divine judgments inflicted upon the rebellious children of Israel in the wilderness, already described to you. Consider first, my young friends, that we have nothing but what we have *received*. And then reflect, that what we have *received*, we are altogether *unworthy* of, being the unmerited *gift* of God in Christ, whether it be of mind, body,

or estate; whether of temporal or spiritual blessings. Be assured, moreover, that the greater part of the afflictions and privations which we suffer, are brought upon ourselves by our own *sin*, original or wilful; and that those which are *sent* upon us by the Almighty, are intended, and eminently fitted to do us good, if we use them as we ought to do. Meditate seriously upon these things; and say, What cause have we for *murmuring*? Resignation and submission to the *will* of God, whatever it may be, accompanied with honest industry, cheerfulness, and unceasing reliance upon Divine Providence, is the *debt* which is justly due, from the dependant creature to the beneficent Creator. And herein you cannot but recognize the heavenly virtue, *contentment*; that constellation of Christian graces, springing from the only true source of all heavenly-mindedness, *love to God*. The *path* that leads to this "wisdom which cometh from above," is to "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and a happy conviction will follow, that "whatsoever of the things of this world we have need of, shall be added unto us." It is, to "let our conversation be without *covetousness*; and to be content

with such things as we have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Go, then, my young friends, to the throne of grace, and make supplication for this peace of mind, which *He* hath left us, who was "meek and lowly in heart." Seek it in humble fervent prayer, as you do your daily bread; for it is the *gift* of God; but "not as the world giveth," giveth he it unto us. Pray that your *contentment* may not be the effect of a lukewarm *indifference* to the things that belong to your everlasting peace; nor of a presumptuous *confidence*; but may be the genuine fruit of *faith* in a crucified Saviour; and be made manifest in your fleeing from *covetousness*, and every evil way; and "following after righteousness, godliness, love, patience, and meekness;" that you may *keep all the Commandments* "without spot, unrebukeable; until the appearing of your Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus shall you be enabled, through grace, to fulfil the whole will of God concerning you; "to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord." In obedience to your duty to God, you will, therefore, delight to "believe in him, fear him, and love him, with all your heart, with all your mind, with

all your soul, and with all your strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put your whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word; and to serve him truly all the days of your life."

And in obedience to your duty to your neighbour: you will desire "to love him as yourself, and to do to all men, as you would they should do unto you; to love, honour, and succour, your father and mother; to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit yourselves to all your governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters; to order yourselves lowly and reverently to all your betters; to hurt no body by word or deed; to be true and just in all your dealings; to bear no malice nor hatred, in your hearts; to keep your hands from picking and stealing, your tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering; to keep your body in temperance, soberness, and chastity; not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour diligently to get your own living, and to do your duty in that state of life, unto which it hath pleased God to call you."

Thus have "I set before you this day,"

my young friends, “ a *blessing* and a *curse* : a blessing, if ye obey the Commandments of the Lord your God, which he has commanded you; and a curse, if ye will not obey the Commandment of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which he hath commanded you.” The heavenly Canaan lies open before you; the New Jerusalem, a city not built with hands, whose maker and builder is God,” opens wide its gates to receive you; the glory of the Lord giveth light to it; and the unsearchable riches of Christ are treasured up within it. Jesus, the Captain of your salvation, stands ready to lead you over Jordan to the land of your inheritance; and “ when you pass through the waters, He will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” Though enemies encompass you on every side, “ fear not, and be not afraid of them; be strong and of good courage; for the Lord thy God he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” Only obey the voice of the Lord thy God, to love him, and cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the city which he sware unto his

beloved Son, thy Saviour, to give it you; the eternal inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation."

But think not, my young friends, to say within your hearts, for *my* righteousness, the Lord hath promised to give me this abiding city, this heavenly inheritance. For *your* righteousness! Alas, "there is none righteous, no, not one." If ye would inherit the promises, ye must, "count all things as loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus your Lord, that you may be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but *that* which is through faith in Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith." Let your hope, let your prayer, ever be, "We do not present our supplications before thee, O God, for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies." "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" but, "when you have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants."

"To-day, then, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilder-

ness;" lest he swear in his wrath, that ye shall not enter into his rest. "And to whom sware he, that they should not enter into His rest? To them that believed not." "Take heed, then, that there be not in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God:" "looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God." Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves, by the law, and by the testimony; and when you can read over the Ten Commandments, and can truly thank God that you are free from the wilful and deliberate transgression of any one of them; then may you hope that the Spirit beareth witness with your spirit, that you are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." And "if you hold fast the profession of your faith," steadfast unto the end, "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." You shall "come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge

of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," who hath redeemed you from the *curse* of the law, having ransomed you from the power of death, and the grave; and shall give unto you the *blessing* of the Gospel, even life everlasting. To Him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Let us Pray.

Perfect, O Lord, we beseech thee, the work of grace, which thou hast begun, in the hearts of these thy children; and establish, strengthen, and settle them in the knowledge and faith of the Gospel covenant; that they may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given them in Christ, their Saviour. Direct them, O Lord, in the way that they should go; incline their hearts, ever more and more, to keep thy laws; sanctify them in body, soul, and spirit, which are thine; fill them with all joy and peace in believing; open to them the path that leadeth to the heavenly Canaan, and guide them to the land of everlasting peace and rest; for the merits and sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO

LECTURE IV.

My Young Friends!

HAVING completed my observations upon the Baptismal Vow, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, two most important subjects remain for our serious consideration.—The Lord's Prayer, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The former of these will at present claim our attention. But before I endeavour to explain to you the value of that most excellent of all prayers, I would offer you a few remarks on the *gift* and *privilege* of prayer in general.

It is indeed a *privilege* unspeakably precious, and full of consolation, that *we*, the sinful and unworthy children of disobedient and fallen man, should be admitted at all into the holy presence of a justly offended God; and be permitted to “make known our requests unto Him, in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.” But, that we should not

only be permitted, but co'mpassionately *encouraged* to come unto God—nay to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”—is an inestimable blessing, which nothing short of the redemption and intercession of a crucified Saviour, could have purchased, and extended to us.

The spirit of prayer is a free and unmerited *gift*, as well as privilege; because such is our condition by the fall of Adam, saith one of the excellent Articles of our Church, that we cannot turn and prepare ourselves by our own natural strength and good works, to faith, and *calling upon* God; but by the grace of God in Christ preventing, or going before us, that we may have a good will; and working with us, when we have that good will.

Both the gift, and the privilege of prayer depend upon, as well as are derived from Christ; and we can only truly estimate the value of this, and his other gifts of grace, by contemplating the amazing *price* which He paid for them; even the price of his own precious blood.

As Jesus Christ, through the Spirit, is the Author of prayer, so is he the *means* also by

which prayer is rendered efficacious and prevailing. For as "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved;" so is there none other name in which we can appear before God, with hope and confidence that our prayers and oblations will be heard, accepted, and answered, but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we plead before the mercy-seat of God, with faith in his name, for pardon of sin, for grace to fulfil our duty, and for such temporal blessings as he knoweth we have need of; we, in effect, implore Him, as our Advocate, to intercede for us; to receive our prayers, made according to his will; to sanctify them by his Spirit; and to present them before God, supported by his everlasting claims upon his Father's love.

Christ, who is "over all God blessed for ever," is the *object* of prayer, and is to be worshipped and glorified, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end, Amen. Whatever name of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, therefore, we mention in our prayer, it is the One Eternal Jehovah that we adore: and such at all times, as I before observed, should

be the indwelling impression upon our hearts and understandings, when we pray.

Having thus endeavoured to impress you, my young friends, with the *great first principle* of making your Saviour Christ the beginning and ending, the sum and substance, the power and efficacy of prayer, as well as of every spiritual gift and grace, since “of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;” we will next inquire what practical rules and directions he hath left us to frame our prayers by. We learn, that, upon a particular occasion, the disciples came unto their Lord and Master, and intreated him to *teach them to pray*, as John Baptist had taught his disciples. In answer to this petition, Jesus gave them that most perfect form of prayer, which, from its Divine Author; is called the Lord’s Prayer. But, as that merciful Saviour hath blessed us with many other gracious instructions on the right use of prayer, I shall first make selections from them, before I enter upon the Lord’s Prayer, as the peculiar subject of the following Lecture. And, perhaps, I cannot represent to you the true spirit of effectual fervent prayer more strikingly, than by one of the parables of our blessed Lord, expressly given for that pur-

pose. I allude to the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, wherein the Saviour describes, in the character of the pharisee, the natural fruits of *spiritual pride*, hypocrisy, self-conceit, presumption, and uncharitableness. And in that of the publican, he represents the true spirit of *Christian humility*, self-abasement, godly sorrow, repentance, and faith. Both these men, it will appear, were seeking the same place—the temple of God. They had likewise, we shall learn, the same object in view—it was to *pray*. The grounds of difference between them, were the *language* and *spirit* of their prayer. Of this, however, as well as of the peculiar features in each character, we shall form the best judgment, by reading the words of the parable itself. They are as follow: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a *pharisee*, and the other a *publican*. 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. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be

merciful to me a sinner." Now the *hypocrisy* of the self-righteous pharisee, in approaching unto God with his lips, while his proud heart was dwelling upon his own merits, will strike your young minds most forcibly; while the *affected sanctity* with which he makes use of the sacred name of the Almighty, is but too apparent in the *vain boasting* which accompanies it: "Thank God! I am not as other men are." Observe what arrogance and *self-conceit* are visible in the comparison which he draws between himself and others; depressing the character of other men to exalt his own. Hypocrite! exposing the mote in his brother's eye, without casting out, first, the beam in his own eye. You will notice his *presumption*, also, in enumerating the works of righteousness which he had done, as a *claim* to the favour of God. In the deceitfulness of *spiritual pride*, he little thought what an insult he was offering to the majesty of heaven; to that pure and spiritual Being, who regarded not obedience to the rites and ceremonies of the law, unless they were accompanied by the weightier matters of judgment, mercy, and truth; and who, you well know, my young friends, cannot have

respect unto the most perfect offerings of the best of Christians, except they be purified and perfumed by the intense of redeeming love. Not less conspicuous is the *uncharitableness* of the pharisee, in the disdainful and contemptuous mention of his fellow-worshipper, in an address to that God who is no respecter of persons, but heareth such as worship him in spirit and in truth, and is nigh unto all them that call upon him faithfully. How ignorant must the proud pharisee have been of the nature and attributes of the Almighty, and of the purity of his service, to suppose that the offering of a heart, destitute of brotherly love, could be acceptable in his sight. Such, however, is the blindness of spiritual pride, that the influence of self-love occupies every avenue of the heart, and engrosses all its affections.

But you must now turn from the proud pharisee, to contemplate the conduct of the humble and self-condemned *publican*. Observe, then, the *self-abasement* of the pious penitent, in standing afar off, through a consciousness of his unworthiness to approach unto the courts of the sanctuary, not daring to lift up his streaming eyes unto heaven, from a deep and inward conviction of his

sinfulness; *godly sorrow* and remorse weighed down his aching heart, broken with an awful sense of his own guilt, and of the dreadful nature of sin; and, in the language and spirit of true *repentance* and *faith*, hear him pouring forth the humble petition of his soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner." His own necessities too fully engaged his thoughts, to admit of his censuring the failings of others; and much more did the assurance of his many transgressions exclude the deceitful expedient of lightening his own burden, by ungenerously adding to that of his neighbour, or exalting himself at the expense of others.

Thus have we viewed the characters presented to us in the parable before us; and seen, that notwithstanding they had the same object in going up to the Temple, viz. the *public worship of God*—most essential was the difference between them, both in the *language* and *spirit* of devotion. The prayer of the pharisee, was the language of the lips; of the publican, that of the heart. The words of the former, were chiefly addressed to himself; of the latter, to God. The spirit of the pharisee, was the spirit of pride, self-confidence, and vanity. That of the publican,

was the spirit of meekness, self-denial, and humility. The pharisee commended *himself*, and expected to be heard, though he asked for nothing. The publican, on the contrary, sensible of his many wants, though he deserved nothing, implored for mercy; mercy to be heard; mercy to be forgiven; mercy to be saved. Which, then, of these was accepted at the throne of grace? Let the divine Author of the parable answer for us. "This man," though a poor despised publican, "went down to his house *justified*, rather than the other." For whom then, my young friends, and for what purpose, was it delivered down to us? Again we refer to our Lord for a reply. It was spoken to those "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." And the purpose for which it was intended, is to teach us, that "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The light of the blessed Gospel has been so bountifully shed around our favoured land, that we can clearly discover the folly of trusting to the mere outward observance of religion, without the corresponding inward spiritual devotion of the heart and affections to God. The same bright beams of truth,

have revealed to us the vanity of self-confidence, and the insufficiency of all human obedience. Yet, after all this light, are there not many who pride themselves upon their strict attention to the forms of religion, while they neglect the *spirit* of devotion? Let this reflection afford you an instructive lesson for the regulation of your own conduct, now that you are entering upon a new life, and taking upon yourselves more fully the care and keeping of your souls. Ever remember that it is very possible for you to attend upon doctrines and ordinances, in the place of vital religion: to attend church, come to the sacrament, make long prayers, and be liberal in charity to the poor, and imagine that these things will wash out the crimson stain of every sin. But you are miserably deceiving yourselves; for attendance upon these duties, *whilst you regard iniquity* in your hearts, will be so far from making atonement for sin, that it will only make your guilt and condemnation the greater. Add then to a strict and regular observance of the external duties of religion, an equally strict attention to the inward devotion of the heart, and be "fervent in spirit, in serving the Lord." Should you feel disposed to compare

your own fancied *merit*, in this respect, with the *neglect* of others, and to cherish the treacherous and deceitful persuasion: "Thank God, I am not as other men are;" or, to contemplate the immoral conduct of your neighbour, with a feeling of self-approbation in your own righteousness, instead of giving glory to God, for preserving you from falling; call to remembrance the fate of the wretched Herod, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and take warning from his example; who, in the pride of his heart, took upon himself the honour due unto God alone. And should you be inclined to treasure up the fond conceit of the pharisee, that your good works shall come up before God, as a holy and meritorious sacrifice, ask yourselves, for what end Jesus was crucified; and wherefore he left us that solemn exhortation, "When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, ye are unprofitable servants." Be assured, my young friends, that if you be deluded in any of these ways, in making your prayer unto God, whatever progress you flatter yourselves that you have made in the path of the just, it is to no purpose; you must begin again; your foundation is laid in the sand, and your building cannot

endure. Pride was the fall of man ; pride will be to you an occasion of falling. Inquire and see the reason that St. Peter denied his Master, and you will find that it was *self-confidence* ; and if you follow the same slippery path, it will lead you to the same sad consequences. How can it be otherwise ? Consider the true character of man ; contemplate his nature, and say, how such a wreck as man, should be able to weather the storm which sin has brought upon him. How can his shattered bark, unless a speedy relief, unless a permanent relief, be afforded, do otherwise than sink ? Without a ready help in the time of peril, nothing can save it from destruction. Surely then, to trust to such a helpless thing as man for protection from the storm, were madness ; it would be to trust for shelter to a falling ruin ; to lean upon a broken reed for support ; to trust to vanity itself. Be persuaded, my young friends, that man's greatest hope of strength lies in his sense of his weakness : and as the physician, with prudent skill, reduces the frame of this mortal body to the lowest state, in order to subdue the raging fever that preys upon it ; and then, by the application of salutary medicine and healing

remedies, with God's blessing, restores the patient to renewed health and strength; so must it be with the spiritual disorders of man's immortal soul; he must be brought low, humbled to the dust, till he feel himself weak, and "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Then, and then only, will he with efficacy apply the spiritual remedy, the healing balm, to restore his sinking spirit, and revive his drooping strength. When the corruption, which sin has caused, shall be purged away by the mortifying, but wholesome medicine of *humility*; then shall he come to the fountain of life, and wash and be clean. Christ Jesus, my young friends, is that renewing, that healing balm, that life-giving fountain; and when you feel and know how weak and sinful you are by *nature*, then shall you learn of Him, how strong you may be through *grace*: when you think that you are sinking in the waves of temptation, the effectual fervent prayer, "Save, Lord! or I perish," shall reveal to you the right hand that is able and willing to save you. When, from an awakened sense of the burden and slavery of sin, you with the humble spirit and godly sorrow of the publican, exclaim, "God be

merciful to me a sinner ;” you, like him, shall also go to your house, justified through faith in your Redeemer. ‘

Although the practical improvement to be derived from the foregoing parable, may be considered as chiefly applicable to *public* worship ; yet, the vital principle and spirit of prayer may be carried from hence into the sanctuary of *private* devotion. And in respect to the silent meditations of the closet, we are not left without the benefit of our Lord’s example and precept. For in his frequent retirement to a mountain, apart to pray, we learn the necessity and happiness of holding devout secret communion with our heavenly Father ; while in the instructive direction of the Saviour, “ When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly,” we are encouraged, by the promise of a blessing, to pour out the desires of our hearts to God, when we retire alone and unseen, within the quietness of our chamber, and are still.

Now, for the proper frame of mind, preparation of the heart, and due regulation and expression of your thoughts, in the *private* as

well as public service of Almighty God, I beseech you to commit yourselves, my young friends, to the guidance of that Holy Spirit, through whom Christ Jesus offered himself to God; and through whom, in Christ, you alone can hope to attain that happy state of devotedness, that effectual fervency of prayer, which availeth much to the glory of God, and the eternal good of your souls: for God is graciously pleased to consider whatever tends to the salvation of man, a glory to himself; as manifesting the accomplishment of his exceeding love to the world, through his dearly beloved Son.

As in the discharge of the sacred duties of the Lord's Day, I urged upon you the necessity of stated periods of devotion; so also must you observe regular times for your *daily* supplications before the throne of Him that *heareth* prayer—yes, that is more ready to hear than we to pray, and is wont, moreover, to give more than either we desire or deserve. When you awake in the morning from the refreshing slumbers of the night, let your first thoughts be raised to heaven; and, when you arise from your beds, humbly kneeling upon your knees, offer unto the God of your life, the tribute of prayer and praise; of praise,

for the 'enjoyment of past and present mercies ; and of prayer, for a continuance of them. Thus, " early in the morning will you direct your prayer unto God, and will look up." When health and strength invigorate the body, and every member thereof seems to rejoice in the blessing, the mind participates in the joy ; and a secret desire is awakened in the heart, " to give unto the Lord the honour that is due." It is the Holy Spirit that imparts this secret influence ; and if the spirit of man be obedient to the motions of Divine grace, rich will be the harvest which he will reap, from the right cultivation of such precious seed. Lose no opportunity thus offered you during the day, of yielding to this inward solicitation to lift up your heart to God ; and with the mind or voice, give freedom to the emotions of gratitude, which a sense of happy dependance and security under his unceasing providence, inspires you with. Ever keep in your remembrance, that the Author and Finisher of your faith is the blessed source whence all your temporal and spiritual blessings flow to you. " Christ is the Angel," saith a holy writer, that " hath much sweet odour to mingle with the prayers of the saints ; he purifies them with his own merits,

and intercession, and makes them pleasing unto the Father. How ought our hearts then to be knit to Him, by whom we are brought into favour with God, and kept in favour by him; in whom we obtain all the good we receive, and in whom all we offer is accepted." Casting therefore, all your care upon Him, from whom all your supplies of grace and hopes of glory proceed, in losing the fears and apprehensions of *self-dependance*, you will find a full assurance of ~~hope~~ and trust in Christ, that shall accompany you into the world, as a safeguard to protect you from its evil, and animate you to the active and cheerful performance of the duties of life; that shall attend you in the tranquil scenes of sweet retirement, and inspire you with a peace of mind, that the world can neither give nor take away.

The last meditation at night, as well as the first in the morning, must be given to God: and the oftener these precious seasons of holding communion with God, in Christ, are preceded by a portion, however short, of his holy Word, the more pure and devout, will the heart ascend unto Him, thus sanctified by the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

From the general remarks that I have

ventured to offer you upon the subject of *prayer*, we are led to conclude, that it is the most important, as well as most beneficial duty of a Christian, and the greatest privilege the Almighty has conferred upon man; as it is an imperfect yet blessed harbinger of that glorious and heavenly intercourse with our God and Saviour, when we shall see him, not as we now do, "through a glass darkly," but shall view him "face to face:" when we shall behold him as he is, surrounded with glory, and arrayed in majesty. What heart does not expand with love, what bosom does not glow with gratitude at the goodness of God, thus graciously manifested to the children of men!

A faithful *use* of the blessing, however, is the best evidence of a heart truly sensible of its value. And in this respect we must *watch* as well as *pray*; we must be diligently careful, not to mistake the secret agitation of our feelings, the enthusiastic workings of our passions, for the sincere, and genuine affections of the heart. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;" not with intemperate and misguided zeal; not in familiar and profane address. Such service, which is derogatory

to his divine nature, cannot be consistent with our condition as sinful creatures, in the presence of a Holy Creator. And here, let me again exhort you, my young friends, as a guide to your thoughts, words, and actions, particularly when they are devoted to the sacred duty of worshipping God, to "let all things be done to his glory;" "for with such sacrifice God is well pleased." As the mind then, by divine grace, must be clothed with humility, the spirit endued with meekness, and the heart filled with devotion, so must each of these graces of the Christian character be free from the most remote tendency to *familiarity* and *presumption*, so contrary to that reverence and godly fear, which is due to the "High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy;" who dwelleth in the high and holy place; yet condescendeth in mercy, to "dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

How unspeakably comfortable it is to Christians, to be assured that their Saviour has not only taught them, but encouraged and commanded them to pray: intimating how willing, nay, how anxious he is to hear, as

well as powerful to answer, the prayers of the righteous. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "Hitherto, ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive that your joy may be full."

The eternal Son of God hath opened a way into the heavens to *all* who will embrace his gracious offers of mercy. But the prayer of *faith* is the only effectual prayer. "All things whatsoever ye ask, *believing*, ye shall receive;" but, ye *may* "ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." *Perseverance* in prayer, will be the fruit of faith in Him to whom we pray: "for there is no state of mind, no condition of life, in which prayer is not a necessity, as well as an obligation?" and hence the Apostle's precept, "pray always," pray evermore, "pray without ceasing," "men ought always to pray." Jesus appeared to disregard the petition of the woman of Canaan, but the perseverance of her prayer of faith, conciliated his mercy, and caused him to grant her request. *Repentance* and *confession* of sin, will accompany faithful prayer; for while "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

were the words of St. Peter:—"I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me," of David. Pardon for sin is, indeed, the prevailing *subject* of prayer; and whence should this arise, but from a deep sense and sorrow for sin, which bring us as suppliants before Him, who is "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins." But, above all other subjects, prayer for the grace of God, and the influence of his Holy Spirit, is the most needful, as the means by which all other gifts and blessings are attainable." "By this we shall make constant advances to perfection. Prayer will thus become both a cause and an effect. It will strengthen the power of the Spirit of God on our hearts; the Spirit of God will animate our souls to more fervent and effectual prayer. When prayer is produced by this disposition, its effects are universal. It wakes with us in the morning, and soothes our senses at night with the balm of sleep; it attends us in our daily employments, and makes our labour light; it invigorates every action, animates every pursuit, removes every difficulty, and overcomes every obstacle; it cheers the gloom of affliction, and brightens the smile of prosperity; it enlivens the cheerfulness

of youth, it supports the toils of manhood, and comforts our declining age; it gives a double relish to health, and softens the anguish of disease; it smooths the bed of agony; and leads us, through the dark valley of the shadow of death, to the bosom of that Saviour, by whose merits we are admitted into the presence of our Father and our God."

Holiness, which is the fruit of a lively faith, will be the constant attendant upon godly prayer; for it is the effectual fervent prayer of the *righteous* that availeth. The Holy Spirit, you will recollect, is the chief *object* of prayer, and the fruits of the Spirit are holy thoughts, holy conversation, and holy living. "This is the will of God, even your *sanctification*." On precisely the same principle, the great secret of the *power* of prayer lies in a knowledge of the word of God. No one that has diligently read, carefully marked; meekly learned, and inwardly digested, the Holy Scriptures, will complain of his inability to pray; for the Holy Ghost, who is the energy of prayer, is the Spirit of the word of God. That Spirit, which dwelleth in the Gospel, shall teach you to "count all things as loss, for the excellency of the *knowledge* of Christ Jesus." And the excel-

lency of the knowledge of Christ will inspire you with a sense of your many wants; want of spiritual health and strength, want of faith, want of pardon, want of a Saviour, want of grace; and a sense of your wants and weaknesses will instantly oblige you to cry for help. In a word, as the Holy Scriptures can alone discover to us the true condition of our souls, and reveal to us the calamities of their fallen state, so can they alone prescribe to us the remedies to heal and restore them. None need a physician, it is true, but those that are sick; but when we behold sickness and death before us, and the Spiritual Physician within our reach, where is the sufferer who will not pray earnestly to be permitted to touch even the hem of his garment?

Come unto Christ, then, my young friends, and beseech him to open your understandings, by his Spirit, to understand the Scriptures; that "from a child you may" each of you "know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus." Implore Him to send down the Holy Ghost into your hearts, to enrich you with his heavenly grace, and endue you with the spirit of prayer, of prayer with humility, repentance, faith, perseverance,

and holiness. The Spirit of the Lord thus resting upon you, my young friends, no prayer will be so powerful, none so prevailing, as the Lord's Prayer. No prayer can impress you so fully with confidence in the presence, and providence of the Saviour, as that sacred *gift*; every word of which is a pledge of his mercy and love to us, and a memorial of his promise, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be in the midst." Under this persuasion of the faithfulness of Christ's promises, I beseech *you*, who have now met together for the purposes of religious instruction, in order to prepare yourselves for confirmation in the Christian covenant, to join with me in the *practice* of prayer, and humbly implore Almighty God to give us a hearty desire to pray, and to grant that those things, which we faithfully ask, according to his will, may effectually be obtained, to the relief of our necessities, and the setting forth of his glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us Pray.

Teach us, O Lord, we beseech thee, to pray, as thou didst teach thy disciples, and

in mercy pray *for* us, that our “faith fail not.” Enable us, in the spirit of thine own inspiring words, to approach unto thy Father, and our Father, unto thy God, and our God; that we may realise the truth of thy blessed promises, that “where two or three are gathered together in *thy name*, there wilt thou be in the midst,” and “whatsoever we shall ask in *thy name*, believing, we shall receive.” And that we *may* obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to ask such things as shall please thee, our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ, Amen. .

LECTURE IV.

The Lord's Prayer.

OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN,
HALLOWED BE THY NAME. . THY KING-
DOM COME. THY WILL BE DONE IN
EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US
THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. AND
FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE
FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST
US. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTA-
TION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL;

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE
POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND
EVER. AMEN.

To be guided and directed, my young friends, in our devotions, by the words and example of our blessed Lord, is the distinguished privilege of Christians. And the prayer which we have just repeated, is not only in *itself* a complete form of prayer, to be used upon all occasions, but it presents us also a beautiful model to frame our prayers by. .

The Lord's Prayer, as we might imagine it would be, coming from so holy and excellent a source, is a composition most wonderful; "being so short," as an ornament to the Christian Church observes, "that the meanest capacity may learn it; so plain, that the most ignorant, may understand it; and yet so full, that it comprehends all our wants, and intimates all our duties; shewing, not only what is fit to be asked, but what manner of persons we that ask, ought to be. It contains our persuasion of God's love; our desire of his honour; our subjection to his authority; our submission to his will; and our dependance on his providence; our need of his

mercy to pardon our former sins; and of his grace, to keep us from future sin; and of both his mercy and grace, to deliver us from the punishment due to all sin. It concludes with acts of faith, and praise, and adoration."

"This sacred prayer was made by our most glorious Advocate with the Father, who knew his Father's mercy, as well as our wants. It is therefore the most perfect in itself; the most agreeable to God; and the most useful to us, of any form of prayer in the world. Though men should speak with the tongues of angels; yet words so pleasing to the ears of God, as those which the Son of God himself has made, it were not possible for men to frame. He therefore who has made us to live, hath also taught us to pray; to the end that speaking unto the Father in his own name and words, we may be sure that 'whatsoever we ask, believing, we shall receive.'"

In the opening of this divine prayer, we are admitted to the contemplation of Almighty God, as the Eternal Creator of the worlds, and of all things therein; the Lord of all creation; the Father of the universe; and more especially, as the great Author and Giver of *life* and breath: that adorable Being

“in whom we live and move;” “who breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” And not only as the Giver, but the Preserver of life; by whose superintending care alone we are sustained, and upheld from sinking into *that* dust, from which we were made; and upon whose favour and protection, every moment of our existence entirely depends. For creation is not only the manifestation of the infinite power of God; but displays also the beneficent exertion of his providence, for the happiness of his creatures.

Contemplate, then, your God, my young friends, in these benevolent relations, as your Creator and Preserver; and regard yourselves as the creatures of his will, and the dependents of his bounty; and adore the power that brought you into being, and trust in the hand that supports you: “Praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men.” I said, *trust* in the Lord, my young friends; but let it not be the impression of the moment, but an everlasting and unceasing principle in the heart; a daily, hourly, and perpetual dependance upon God. Let it produce in you, humility and godly fear;

and lead you with wonder and gratitude to exclaim, "What is man, O God, that thou regardest him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Man is like a thing of nought! At all times, and in all places, at your going out, and coming in, endeavour that this sacred feeling of trust and confidence may ever dwell within your breast. For which purpose, be frequent in prayer for Divine grace, to inspire you with an indwelling sense of God's presence, and providence; and to teach you to think always, with the solemnity of the pious patriarch, "Surely the Lord is in this place."

Unbounded cause of faith, and trust in God, shall we discover, as we proceed to consider, what rich provision, what wonderful exertions of Divine power and goodness, have been made for the sake of man, and for the preservation of life: while we view God not only as the great Father, and Preserver of mankind, but as the Almighty Creator of all things, "By whom all things were made, and for whose pleasure they are, and were created;" "Whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all they that dwell therein;" "Who laid the foundation thereof, that it should not be moved;" "Who

spake, and it was done ; who commanded, and it stood fast ;” at whose word, the “ earth brought forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after their kind,” and grass for their support ; and the “ herb yielding seed, and the tree yielding fruit.”

These wonderful operations of Divine power, are every day before us ; for “ the *earth* is full of the riches of the Lord.” But raise your eyes on high : behold the Almighty “ covered with light, as with a garment, and stretching out the firmament as a curtain, and decking the *heavens* with brightness.” Behold Him, “ dividing the light from darkness ;” by causing “ the sun to rule the day, and the moon and the stars the night :” and “ appointing them for signs, and for seasons, and days, and years.” Witness too, His “ wonders in the deep :” that great and wide *sea*, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great. Observe the mighty operation of the Spirit moving upon the face of the waters : “ dividing the waters under the firmament, from the waters above the firmament ;” “ and setting them bounds which they cannot pass.”

Thus contemplate the God of all created

nature: "Who in six days made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all things that are therein; and rested the seventh day, and hallowed it." And while every day calls forth your gratitude and adoration, let the Sabbath-day, more especially, claim your wonder, love, and praise. Go out, my young friends, into the fields with the patriarch Isaac, for the purposes of meditation; and learn to exclaim with the Psalmist, "All thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee." Let a religious spirit accompany you; and every thing around you will inspire a solemn remembrance,—"*My* Father made them all." Then, while under the influence of this happy reflection, inquire and see, for whom this beautiful world was made? And ask, to whom the Eternal said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth?" to whom God said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat:" And learn from the word of God himself, by his

servant David, that “He caused the herb to grow for the service of *man*, that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man’s heart.” Consider this, my young friends,—that for *man*, all these things were created and made: for man, the glory of the Lord hath appeared upon the earth; and “out of the ground hath he made to grow all things pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” And lift up your voices and say, with grateful hearts, “O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing praises to my God, while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet, I will rejoice in the Lord!”

The rich and abundant provision which the beneficent Creator and Father of the universe, has thus made for his creatures, and especially for *man*, the best and noblest work of his hands, created in his own image and likeness, exhibits to us the Divine purpose, in respect to mankind, that “all things” should “work together for good, to them that loved him.” And thus the blessed prin-

ciple of *love to God*, “ *because he first loved us,*” takes its origin from the foundation of the world; and should produce in us the fruits of gratitude, trust, and dependence upon our heavenly Father. Such was the happy relation which existed between the eternal Creator and his rational creatures, when they came forth from his holy hands; themselves pure, innocent, and holy. With filial affection, and confiding love, they looked up to the Lord God, as their beneficent Father and Friend; holding unreserved, but reverential intercourse with the All-merciful Being, who condescended to converse with his created children. Such homage, and devotion, and confidence, were justly offered by the creature *then*, and must *ever* be the necessary obligation of man to his Maker; since it is the debt due, the rightful claim of the great Author and Giver of life and breath, from his rational offspring. How that happy intercourse, that blessed privilege of drawing nigh unto God without fear, was interrupted, and man removed to an awful distance, has been already explained to you, my young friends. You will remember, that the entrance of *sin* into the world, was the unhappy cause of that separation. But, doubtless, you will remem-

ber also, that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” That in consequence of the fall of man, a scene of *mercy* and *grace* has been unfolded to us, which, while *they* have flowed to us as freely as the gift of *life* at the creation, presents to us an evidence of the *infinite* love of God, unspeakable, and full of glory: and exalts the principle of “*loving him, because he first loved us,*” to a degree, which the grace of God alone can enable us to estimate; which that grace alone can enable us to practise. “God *so* loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that all who believe in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life.” It is only, therefore, as Christians, as believers in, and followers of Christ, the beloved Son, that we attain to the exalted blessing and privilege, of addressing the Almighty, as our Father and his Father, as our God and his God.

As the loveliness and splendour of the light of day can only, perhaps, be duly appreciated by its loss, or absence, by the dominion of darkness; so neither can the height and depth of the love of God our Father in Christ Jesus, be truly estimated, but from a deep and awakened sense of our lost state as

sinners. Nor can we discern the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the light and life of the world, but through the dark valley of the shadow of death. When we, therefore, address God, as our Father, it is with a full assurance of hope, that he is reconciled to us by the death of his Son; who has not only perfected *his* part of the Christian covenant, by making a “full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of all mankind; but hath instructed fallen and sinful man, to fulfil *his* part of the covenant, by bringing him out of darkness into a marvellous light; by teaching *him* that was afar off, to come near unto God, in the spirit of prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving;” and by supplying him with such spiritual aid and assistance, as are necessary to enable him to work out his salvation. Blessed with the precious gift of prayer, a gift made efficacious by His ever-prevailing intercession, in the spirit of humble faith and devotion, we approach unto the throne of grace, in his own inspiring words:—“OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.”

Let me, then, remind you, my young friends, that in using this sacred form of

words, we can alone hope that our supplications will be heard, when our hearts accompany our prayers; when, in full assurance of the power of our Redeemer's name, and merits, we appear before God. All our thoughts of God, as our heavenly Father, must be associated with that alone saving Name; for take away *this sanctifying presence*, and we must ever be left in the condition, in which His mercy found us. Let that *condition*, therefore, be never forgotten; that we may worship at the mercy-seat of heaven and find it good to draw near unto God.

Faith in the Saviour, it is true, will teach us with boldness to ask, that we may receive; to seek, that we may find; and to knock, that the door of mercy may be opened unto us: but the recollection of what we are, of ourselves,—weak, helpless, and sinful,—will humble our minds, and keep us “meek, and lowly in heart.” Filial affection, and confiding adoration, will be the prevailing emotions of the Christian's heart and soul, in exercising his happy privilege of addressing the Almighty, “Our Father!” Yet the sense of *His* eternal majesty and glory, who dwelleth in the *high and holy place*, ever preserves in him, the reverence due unto

His holy name; at the same time that the assurance, that He “dwelleth with *him* that is of a contrite and humble spirit,” will “revive the spirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite ones,” weighed down with the consciousness of sin and unworthiness. Dwell, therefore, my young friends, upon the sure mercies of God, to animate you to love, gratitude, and praise; and when you are beginning to think too much of yourselves, and too little of Christ, come to the foot of the cross, and consider, for whom He suffered, and for what He died.

We have already observed, how beautifully our blessed Lord has represented the merciful dealings of our heavenly Father with the children of men, in the affecting parable of The Repentant Prodigal. Read that instructive comparison, and apply it to yourselves; and when *you*, like the penitent son, shall see your error and misery, in leaving your Father's house, in forsaking the covenant of the Lord your God, then, with *him*, also “arise, and go to thy Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” And when you are even a great way off, He will

see your tears, and hear your prayers, and turn unto you to meet you, and will receive you into the arms of his mercy; and welcome you with the smile of parental affection, for his dear Son's sake. Then shall He free you from the "spirit of bondage to fear;" and shall admit you into the "glorious liberty of the children of God;" teaching you, as the children of adoption and grace, to cry unto him, Abba, Father!

I have already endeavoured to impress upon your young minds, the awakening thought, that the Almighty is present every where; that he fills all space; and that "His all-seeing eye is *ever* upon you." "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?"—I shall content myself, therefore, with calling your attention to the sublime and illustrative language of the Psalmist; "O Lord, thou hast searched me out, and known me: thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thoughts long before; thou art about my path, and about my bed; and spiest out all my ways; for lo! there is not a word in my tongue, but thou, O Lord! knowest it altogether: though hast fashioned

me behind and before ; and laid thine hand upon me : such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me ; I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go then from thy spirit ? or whither shall I go from thy presence ? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there : if I go down to hell, thou art there also : if I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, peradventure, the darkness shall cover me ; then shall my night be turned into day ; yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day ; the darkness and light to thee are both alike.” In which passage of Scripture, the omniscience and omnipresence of our God, are represented to us with a grandeur, and yet with a simplicity truly inspiring, and eminently calculated to instruct us, when we pray, “Our Father *which art in Heaven* ;” that though *Heaven* be the *throne* of Jehovah’s glory, and “earth be his footstool ;” though “Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of his glory ;” yet *the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him* ;” and a thousand worlds are filled with the immensity of his fulness.

Now, to inspire you with a reverential devotion to the unspeakably great, wonderful, and holy NAME of God, I can only *repeat* to you some of those solemn and affecting passages of Scripture which can alone express the honour and dignity due to so glorious a Being: I AM THAT I AM, is the eternal Name, by which the great JEHOVAH revealed himself to the patriarchs: "I am ALPHA and OMEGA, the beginning and the ending," is the everlasting title given also to the immortal and invisible GOD. Of God, in the inestimable character of the Redeemer, it was prophetically foretold, that "His name should be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And at his blessed and adorable name, JESUS, the wisdom of the Word of God hath declared, nay commanded, as an unceasing and indispensable obligation of all his rational creatures, that "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Under the solemnity of this universal claim of adoration and worship, let us, my young

friends, humbly confess the debt of honour and devotion which is justly due, from each of us individually, rehearsing with thought and understanding, the first *petition* of the Lord's prayer, "HALLOWED BE THY NAME." Ever adored and glorified, ever worshipped and magnified be the name of the Lord God! May we be endowed with divine grace, to give glory, and honour, and blessing, to the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity; that Triune Name, in which we were consecrated, and dedicated to the service of God and our Saviour. May we be sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, to confess Him before men, and to esteem it our highest privilege and happiness, to be called his disciples; to take up his cross as the *badge* of our profession, and to bear his Name as the *mark* of our high calling; Christians in faith and practice, in heart and life, as well as in *name*; animated by the unchangeable promise, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

And in order that God's holy Name may be made known among men, and "his saving health among all nations," what more effectual means can we use, than those with

which the mercy of God hath provided us? “Faith,” in the name of Christ, “cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” That blessed word is the Gospel; the kingdom of Christ upon earth; “the power of God unto salvation.” What abundant cause have we, then, my young friends, to pray, both with regard to ourselves, and all mankind,—
 “**THY KINGDOM COME.**”

Have you not, I ask, during the period of your preparation for the solemn engagements which you are about to take upon yourselves; have you not felt in your hearts the unspeakable value of the Gospel of Christ, to instruct you in the knowledge of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? What exercise of *charity*, which that blessed Gospel teaches us is the greatest of the Christian graces, can you then engage in, either so conducive to the glory of God, or to the eternal benefit of mankind, as to offer up your fervent supplications to Heaven, that “all men may come to the knowledge of the *truth*, the truth as it is in Christ;” that “the whole earth may be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;” that the influence of the Spirit of the Gospel may extend to the ends of the earth;

that all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, much more those who are sitting in darkness in our own nation, may have the hardness of their hearts, and their contempt of God's word, taken from them; and that they may, through mercy, be brought home to Christ's fold, and become one flock under one Shepherd, Christ Jesus the Righteous. It is for this blessed manifestation of the Spirit and power of the Word of God, that we pray; when we present before our heavenly Father the sincere desire of our hearts, that His kingdom may come, and His divine will, contained therein, be done on earth, as it is in heaven. May it be the constant object of our petitions, my young friends, and of our humble endeavours also, that this spiritual kingdom of the Lord's Christ, by which He dwells in, directs, and sanctifies the hearts of men, may so mightily grow and prevail, that, like the grain of mustard seed, it may extend its flourishing branches to the uttermost parts of the earth; and that all nations, and people, and languages, may come under its shadow, and protection; thus may "the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings;" thus may the benign and saving principles of the Christian faith, take deep root in the

hearts of men, guiding and directing them to the one great and eternal Saviour; as servants of one merciful Lord, children of one Almighty Parent, disciples of one blessed Master, and members of one holy family, of which Christ is the head. Thus may the same divine influence of Christian love, and the same prevailing graces and virtues which shone forth so brightly and gloriously in His life and character, constrain us, in one bond of peace and brotherly affection, to look up to Jesus, as the perfect pattern of all things necessary for salvation; and teach us to come unto Him "that we may have life, and that we may have it more abundantly."

Do we wish to see the Redeemer's kingdom thus established upon earth? Let us use the gifts and powers with which a merciful God has endowed us, to co-operate with him in working out our own salvation, and in zealously promoting his unceasing labour of love for the salvation of all mankind. Let us be watchful unto prayer, for the "peace of Jerusalem;" and fervent in spirit, that "the fulness of the Gentiles may come in," and the whole world may see the salvation of God, and "rejoice together." Adding, to our prayers, pious and active endeavours to

disseminate the Word of God, and make his holy will known among men, by so letting the light of his truth shine before them, that they may see the good work, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

As the Will of God is most perfectly made known to us in the Word of God, so by *obedience* to the word of God, we shall most fully and practically express the *sincerity* of our petition, when we pray, "THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN." The accomplishment of the preceding petition, "*Thy kingdom come,*" may indeed proclaim God's will being done on earth, by the glory and honour which He hath bestowed upon His beloved Son, in the extension of his Gospel kingdom throughout the world ; and its reigning power over the hearts and lives of men, in order to their eternal salvation. But it is the undissembled humility of man's heart before God, manifested in the unhesitating submission of his own will to the will of God, in all circumstances, and under all conditions, which the Christian contemplates, when he addresses his heavenly Father in these words, "*Thy will be done.*" It is the voluntary and cheerful surrender of the privilege of *free-will*, with which God has

blessed us, to the excellency of divine wisdom; or rather, it is the most exalted *exercise* of that rational *gift*, in humble adoration of the Almighty Giver, with perfect reliance upon his eternal justice, righteousness, and truth; and in full assurance of faith, in his everlasting mercy and love, that we should regard this comprehensive petition of the Lord's Prayer. Let me, then, lead you, by a few practical examples, selected from Scripture, to view this holy principle of resignation to the divine will. And where shall we seek for an example so inspiring, where shall we find a pattern so perfect, as that of Christ Jesus? of Him, whose meat and drink was to do the will of his heavenly Father; who, in all the graces and excellences of a Christian life and conversation, "hath left us an example to follow his steps." Attend the Saviour, then, my young friends, in his *temptation* in the desert; meditate, with deep interest, upon the pressing state of privation under which he encountered the crafty solicitations of the tempter, and observe his confiding steadfastness in the providence of God, when he replies to the deceitful arguments of the devil: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that pro-

ceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." And hence learn an instructive lesson, that the principle of spiritual life dwells in the *word*, and in the *service* of God; so beautifully expressed by, "*Thy will be done.*" Accompany your Redeemer again into the garden of Gethsemane, and contemplate his exceeding sorrow, and unutterable agony; and read the affliction of his soul, at that hour of anguish, in the words, "O, my Father! if it be possible let this cup pass from me;" then, behold the most amazing example of resignation to the will of God, that the world ever witnessed,—“ Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.” O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, "*Thy will be done.*" Thus, as we before remarked, He that hath taught us how to *pray*, hath also shewn us how to *live*. In devotedness to the service of God, Christ hath recommended to us a never-failing refuge in temptation. That service, is *to do the will* of God. In the living principle of faith and trust in God, under afflictions or distresses of mind, body, or estate, we have a healing and reviving medicine, that

shall restore our drooping spirit, and turn our mourning into joy, and our sorrow into "songs of deliverance." "Not my will, but thine be done," is the unfailing recipe, which our Spiritual Physician hath left us in mercy, to mitigate the wretchedness of our mortal condition. Nor is it alone applicable to the particular cases which have been noticed; but it is a medicine of universal efficacy; and there is no case of spiritual necessity for which it is not a wholesome remedy, nor a human infirmity, which it cannot enable the spirit of a man to sustain. For it has power to subdue the proud and stubborn heart, and to render it lowly and meek; it endues the soul with the spirit of devotion, and disposes the mind to humility and self-denial; in a word, it casteth down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. "*Thy will be done,*" is the law of the Spirit of God, in our members, "mortifying the flesh with its affections and lusts." It is that exercise of *faith*, which inspired the Apostle St. Paul, at one time, to "glory in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon

him:" and at another, to exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And I may briefly add, that it was this genuine principle of a living faith, with which the Spirit of God inspired the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs of old, "both to will and to do, according to God's good pleasure." And the same implicit obedience and resignation must exemplify the sincerity of a Christian's faith, till "time shall be no more."

Be ye, then, my young Christian friends, frequent and fervent in prayer, that the Spirit of God may ingraft in your hearts, and exhibit in your lives, this gift of grace. And let your prayer be followed by a diligent search into the lively oracles of divine truth; for there only can you discover the *will of God*. In the Law of the Ten Commandments, that divine will has been proclaimed to you by the voice of the great Jehováh himself: and in the Gospel, the Eternal Son of God has clearly and practically revealed to you, "what is that good, and acceptable, and holy will of God."

Taking then the Gospel as your rule and guide, examine yourselves strictly by the Law. And at the conclusion of each com-

mand; when the lips pray, "*Thy will be done,*" inquire and know, if the *heart* too incline to keep God's law. Accustom yourselves thus, to communion with God, and with your own hearts; and the prayer of faith shall receive an "answer of *peace,*" in a blessed frame and temper of mind, which shall enable you, under every dispensation of Providence, to preserve your trust and confidence in God,—"*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good.*"

May we, thus, my young friends, begin the life of heaven here upon earth; and approach as nearly, as our human frailties will admit, to the blessed state of the angels, and spirits of just men made perfect; who are represented as continually occupied in one unceasing and blessed exercise of adoration and praise, "to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." Thus, "the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne; and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever; and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." So may

“thy will be done on earth,” O Lord; so may
 “thy kingdom come;” “turning the hearts of
 the disobedient to the wisdom of the just;”
 and in thine own good time, bringing us to
 thine everlasting kingdom of glory in heaven;
 so may “the kingdoms of this world become
 the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;”
 so may He “reign for ever and ever.”

From the succeeding petitions of the
 Lord’s Prayer you are invited to observe,
 what should be the practical effects of
 Christ’s religion upon your hearts and lives.
 The faith of the Gospel once established
 within you, will cause you to consider the
 salvation of your souls as the one thing
 needful: and your most anxious concern will
 be, to be directed to “choose that better
 part which shall not be taken away from you.”
 In daily and hourly dependence upon the
 providence of God, to sustain you in the state
 of life in which he hath placed you, and to
 bless and prosper the work of your hands,
 you will, while you pray, “GIVE US THIS
 DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,” labour, at the
 same time, diligently to procure it; remem-
 bering that the servant of God, though he
 “cast all his care upon *Him* that careth for
 him,” yet will endeavour, with the Apostle

St. Paul, to be a burden to no man. While he, therefore, labours diligently for "the meat that perisheth," his *most* diligent labour will be "for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life." His heart's desire and prayer will be,—Give me, O my God, this day, and every day, my daily bread; food for my mortal body; but, above all, spiritual food for my immortal soul: that bread of life, even Christ Jesus, of which, whosoever eateth with faith, shall never hunger; and those living waters of the Spirit, of which, whosoever drinketh shall never thirst. Give me, O Lord, this "bread which came down from heaven," that I may eat thereof, and live for ever. Such dependence on God, for both temporal and spiritual support, must undoubtedly arise from our sense of the *need* we ever stand in, and from our knowledge of the *source*, whence alone either of these mercies can come to us. There is a happy reliance upon the providential care of the Almighty, implied in this petition of the Lord's Prayer, which cheers the Christian's spirit with the sweetest assurance, that "His grace is sufficient for him." It is thus expressed by the Saviour: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your

clothing, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? And why take thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet, I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore, if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Therefore take no anxious and needless thought, my young friends, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed; "for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and whatsoever of the things of this world ye have need of, shall be added unto you." Think ye then, my young friends, that you can approach unto Almighty God, with a deep conviction of sin upon your hearts and minds, and of the absolute neces-

sity of pardon and forgiveness, in order to your salvation?—Can you remember 'the great and precious price, with which your Redeemer has purchased that pardon and remission of sin, for you, and yet indulge an unforgiving temper towards your neighbour? Can you, to use his own beautiful words, "bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee;" that thou art *not* in peace and love with all mankind, and yet hope for acceptance with God? No, my young friends! I trust you cannot deceive yourselves thus; for it is a truth as certain as the faithfulness of God's word can make it, that before you can expect the favour and love of God; before you can encourage a hope that your prayers and supplications for mercy have ascended up before Him; you must be in *charity* with all men. "Leave then thy gift before the altar," saith the Saviour; "first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." In the spirit of our Lord's precept alone, we are permitted to draw near unto the Father of mercies; and, in the strictest sense of his words, only, to implore him to "FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US." "For,"

he adds, at the conclusion of his instructive prayer, as if to impress the religious importance of this principle, particularly, upon the minds of his disciples, "if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And in order to stamp this impression upon *your* young minds, let me direct your attention to the enlarged view of this subject to which we are admitted, in the comprehensive answer which our divine Master returned to the inquiry of St. Peter, "Lord! how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times? I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven." Would ye wish still farther to consider the practical application of this Christian grace of charity, or forgiveness of injuries? Come again to the feet of Jesus, and learn the affecting lesson that He, immediately after his reply to St. Peter, gave to his disciples, and through them to us, in the character and punishment of the cruel and unrelenting servant, who showed no mercy to his fellow-servant, though he had received it, to the utmost, from his compassionate Lord. And

when you have yielded your hearts to the just feelings of indignation at the hard-hearted ingratitude of the wicked servant;* pause for a moment, to ask yourselves, whether, in your zeal, you are not transgressing the *very principle* which you intend to vindicate, by steeling your hearts, so entirely, against the unfeeling wretch,* as to exclude from your breasts the sigh of Christian pity and sorrow, for the aggravated nature of his guilt? If so, my young friends, ye have not learnt of Christ what he intended you to learn: doubtless his precepts, as well, as example, ever inculcate a most undeviating abhorrence of sin, in every sense; but, you will remember, that your Saviour's anger was always ennobled with *grief* for the hardness of men's hearts. "Let that mind, then, be in you which was also in Christ:" and the mind of Christ was, "If thine *enemy* hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink:" how much more, then, thy *brother*, thy fellow-Christian! "Dearly beloved," let me again beseech you, "avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men." For "the

wisdom which is from above is pure, peaceable, and gentle." "Let all bitterness, then, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."

"The kingdom of God," we are taught, is "joy and peace in believing." And what abundant reason have we to pray for the establishment of this kingdom of peace, when we consider the spiritual warfare to which we are called, during our journey through the wilderness of life; when we know, upon the authority of our Lord himself, that "in this world we shall have tribulation." In this state of probation, in which a merciful God hath placed us, to prove and try us "whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear;" whether we will turn unto Him and believe, and be saved, or not: In this vale of sorrow and tears, surrounded, as we are, by the enemies of our souls, and the hindrances of our salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil, from *without*; what need have we, my young friends, of the unspeakable blessing of peace, *within*. But if, in addition to these outward enemies, we contemplate the *secret*

adversaries that beset us, the carnal and sensual passions and affections which proceed from the heart, and which truly "defile the inward man," we cannot surely be so blind to our danger, and heedless of our safety, as to neglect to implore that "peace, which passeth all understanding." That peace is the gift of Christ:—"My peace I give unto you; my peace I leave with you; but not as the world giveth give *I* unto you." And, you perceive, how freely, how graciously, he offers 'it to you.' Taste, then, and see how blessed that peace is, how happy the man that seeketh it in Him. He that forewarned us, "In this world ye shall have tribulation," hath not "left us comfortless," but added, in compassion to our infirmities, "be of good cheer," for I have overcome the world." He that hath conquered all our bitterest enemies, hath taught *us* also how to prevail, in the day of battle; and leads us on, in full assurance of hope in the Lord of all power and might, to fight the good fight of faith. Thus, ere the battle rage, and the struggle commence, he lifts up our hearts in prayer, that we may have strength for the victory from Him that is able to save.

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT

DELIVER US FROM EVIL," are the inspiring words that animate us to meet our foes with confidence; and to oppose them valiantly. Let, then, my young friends, this godly and spiritual armour be yours. With the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, constantly in your hands, and with the spirit of prayer as constantly on your lips, fear not, "for He will be with you always, even unto the end." If temptations assault you, fly to Him, who was in all things tempted as we are, but yielded not, and is able to succour them that are tempted. Do afflictions encompass you on every side? Learn of "Him that was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" and like him, "be meek and lowly in heart;" and with him, pray, "not my will, but thine be done." Do you feel the grievous weight of besetting sin? Come unto Him, who invites all "that are weary, and heavy laden," to come unto him, that he may give you rest. Though you be weak, "He is strong;" His "grace is sufficient for you." He will not suffer you to be "tempted more than you are able to bear, but with the temptation will give you a way to escape." Without him, my young friends, "we can do nothing." But, blessed be God, for this most faithful saying,

and worthy of all men to be believed, “ We can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us,” for “ Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

Of all the *evils* from which we have need daily to pray to God to deliver us, *sin* is the greatest. The author of all sin is the *devil*; the *world* is the habitation, and the *flesh* is the slave of sin. Against these, we must be “ watchful unto prayer;” from these, we must seek deliverance; seek it early and late, by day and by night, in public and private, in godly sorrow and repentance, in self-denial and humility, in faith and holiness of living; above all, we must seek it in Christ.

It would be impossible, in one short Lecture, to explain to you, my young friends, as fully as I could wish, the inspiring excellences, and practical value of the Lord’s Prayer. Indeed, the subjects of intercession, embraced in this sublime prayer, are so necessarily comprehended, as we might presume they would be, coming from the same divine Author, in the provisions of the Ten Commandments, as well as in the Creed; that a more extended explanation would, in a great measure, be a repetition of previous observations. In conclusion, therefore, I

would add, that you cannot show your sense of the value of your blessed Saviour's merciful gift, so sincerely, as by a constant and thankful *use* of it. Let it be, often, as an excellent homily of our Church saith, of the Bible, "in your hands, in your eyes, in your ears, in your mouths, but, above all, in your hearts." Use it with faith in the great Giver, as the only Mediator between God and you; as your only Lord and Saviour, "*whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth throughout all ages;*" to whom "all *power* is given both in heaven and earth;" who is, also, "the Lord of *glory*;" and to whom, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed THE KINGDOM, THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER. Amen.

Let us pray.

O! Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who art the giver of all goodness, send thy grace unto us, and to all people, that we may worship thee, serve thee, and obey thee, as we ought to do: and we pray unto thee to send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies; and that thou wilt be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins;

and that it may please thee to save and defend us from all dangers, ghostly and bodily; and that thou wilt keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death. And this we beseech thee to do of thine infinite mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO

LECTURE V.

My Young Friends,

THE great object and end of confirmation are to prepare you for, and conduct you to the *higher duties* of Christianity, as well as to confirm you in its holy principles; and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper stands pre-eminently at the head of these. It may, indeed, be said to comprehend all the duties of the Christian faith, and practice, as it expresses all that is generally necessary to be believed, in order to salvation; and more fully exemplifies the spirit of our blessed Saviour's words, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," than any other act of obedience to the Gospel whatever.

Immediately previous to the institution of the Last Supper by our Lord, he sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare us the *passover*, that we may eat." Now the *Passover*, my young friends, was a solemn festival

among the Jews, instituted of God himself, by his servant Moses, as a memorial of his signal mercy in sparing the children of the Israelites, when he smote all the first-born of the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh upon his throne, unto the first-born of the captive in the dungeon, and all the first-born of cattle. This was the last of those awful judgments which the Almighty sent upon the rebellious king of Egypt, because he would not let the people of Israel go to serve the Lord their God, but grievously afflicted them in bondage.

The institution of the *passover* is thus recorded in the twelfth chapter of Exodus:—
 “ And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, Speak ye unto the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of the month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house; your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening: and they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two

side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses wherein they shall eat it." "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girt, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."

The feast of the *passover* was, thus, ordained to commemorate this especial mercy of God, in sparing the Israelites, as well as to keep up a constant remembrance of their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, to which this last visitation of God's power led.

Our blessed Lord, in order to fulfil all righteousness, to show his obedience to the commands of his Father, went up to Jerusa-

lem to keep the passover with his disciples. It was now that the Saviour of the world, the last night before he suffered, while setting his disciples this example of obedience to the law of God, at the same time established a more sacred memorial, a more excellent festival, by instituting the holy sacrament of his Last Supper; a memorial of a far greater deliverance than that of Egypt, a deliverance from the bondage of sin and death; and a festival as far exceeding the former, as the inward spiritual grace exceeds the outward visible sign; as the substance exceeds the shadow; and the accomplishment of a blessing, its expectation: in a word, as the celebration of God's mercy in Christ Jesus, his beloved Son, redounds more to his honour and glory; and transcends, and surpasses all other monuments of his love and mercy to mankind. For in the holy sacrament of his body and blood, which Christ now gave to his disciples, and through them to Christians of every succeeding age, he commanded them to call to remembrance the death and sufferings he was so soon about to undergo; and thereby, to keep up a perpetual memorial of his exceeding great love to mankind, in dying for them; and of the amazing mercy of

God in sending his only-begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." The former mercy of God, shown, by the *passover*, to his chosen people Israel, was, as I before intimated, but a figure, a type, or emblem of *this* wonderful manifestation of his love and mercy, — to his *chosen* people still; to his elect children in Christ; to "his called according to his purpose;" even, to all who believe. "For as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

Let us, then, my young friends, compare these two festivals; and we shall clearly perceive, that the lamb which was killed and eaten at the *passover*, was intended to represent the Lamb of God, who was slain from the foundation of the world; and whose sacrifice upon the cross we commemorate in the Lord's Supper. The lamb at the feast of the *passover* was required to be *without blemish* and spot; and the Lamb, whose precious blood-shedding we celebrate in the Christian *passover*, was required to be most holy, and pure; truly, "He was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." He was

“holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” And, hence it is, my young friends, that He offered unto God, a “full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.”

To the attentive reader of the Old and New Testaments, it will plainly appear, that all the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation were intended to foreshew the great sacrifice of the death of Christ. They were evidently ordained to keep up in men’s minds the *necessity* of an atonement for sin. When, therefore, that *one* all-sufficient sacrifice was offered up, and finished; as there remained no more offering for sin, so the former dispensation, under Moses, with all its rites and ceremonies, its shadows and emblems, was, as it were, swallowed up, and made perfect, in the great consummation of the sacrifice of the Cross. In the commemoration of that great event, *we*, likewise, are commanded to keep up in our minds, and to keep alive in our hearts, the great necessity of the death of Christ; “for as oft as ye eat of that bread, and drink of that cup,” saith the Apostle, “ye do shew the Lord’s death until he come again.” The religious importance of this sacred feast, this heavenly banquet, unlike

that of the Jewish passover, can never cease nor be diminished, so long as a soul remains to be saved; and the *accomplishment* of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, so far from dissolving it, is the very knot that binds this obligation upon us so *closely*, that nothing, but an utter insensibility to our eternal welfare, or a total disbelief of that death, can possibly release us from it.

Our blessed Lord knew, full well, that a deep sense of our lost state, of our perishing and sinful nature, a deep sense of our need of our Saviour, was the only thing that could lead us unto Him; that the remembrance of His death and sufferings, could alone teach us to consider, for whom he suffered, and for what he died; to consider, that it was for *man*, fallen, rebellious, and apostate man, that he consented to leave the bosom of his Father, and his glory in heaven; that it was for *man*, that he submitted to take upon him "the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation;" that "he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheek to them that plucked off the hair;" that "he hid not his face from shame and spitting;" that "he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself:" that "it was for *man* that he humbled him-

self, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." He well knew, that the godly remembrance of *this* could alone humble our proud and deceitful hearts, and convince us of the dreadful and destructive nature of *sin*; which, nothing else, but the "blood of the covenant," could possibly atone for, and, from the curse of which, nothing less than His death and sacrifice could redeem us. The last blessing, therefore, which, by his will and testament, he left us, the last precious legacy which he bequeathed to us, was his blessing of *peace*, in the sacrament of his body and blood—a legacy, more rich and valuable, a treasure more costly, than all the treasures of this world. This dying tribute of affection, this heavenly and spiritual gift, unlike the frail and perishable nature of earthly gifts, was to be a source of perpetual blessing; a means of grace to the soul, a path to repentance, faith, and holiness; efficacious through the mediation of the Giver, to call down abundant mercies from above, pardon of sin, the assistance of the Spirit, the favour of God, strength to resist temptation, power to lead a holy life, comfort in affliction, support in sickness, and a blessed hope in death. Christ Jesus knew, that the one thing, needful to

man, miserable, wretched, and sinful man, was the salvation of his soul. This was his greatest concern; indeed, his only real interest. To keep, therefore, the salvation of our souls continually before our eyes, he gave us his Last Supper, to keep *Himself* continually before us: Himself, the only means of grace, the only hope of glory: Himself, “the way, the truth, and the life.”—Christ Jesus beheld the great danger man was in; the danger of everlasting death and misery. He knew the enemies of his soul, and the hindrances of his salvation; the power and craftiness of his adversary, the devil; the snares of a seducing world; the powerful influence of the flesh,—that “law in the members, warring against the law of the mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin.” He knew the infirmity of our nature; our proneness to evil; our liableness to offend; the painful and difficult duties of self-denial, mortification, and humility. He knew all this; and, therefore, in pity and compassion, gave us a safe-guard, and protection, in the Lord’s Supper. Therein he furnishes us with the whole armour of God, against the day of trial; the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith; the sword of the Spirit, and the breast-

plate of righteousness ; to “ fight the good fight,” and to be “ more than conquerors, through Him that ‘loved us.” He gave us the holy sacrament of his body and blood, to teach us to “ resist the devil, that he might flee from us ;” to enable us “ to mortify the flesh, with its affections and lusts, as those that are Christ’s.” To instruct us how to use the world, as “ not abusing it ;” not being “ conformed to this world,” but being “ transformed, by the renewing of our minds.”

To these Christian duties and graces, to these blessed advantages, the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is ordained to lead all of us. First, to repentance and faith, in our preparation for this holy festival ; and then, to holiness of life, as the evidence of a worthy communion ; that these, united, may bring us unto Christ : Repentance and faith, to him, as our only Lord and Saviour ; and holiness, to him, as our perfect pattern and example, as a guide to our feet, and a light to our eyes ; that when we take up our cross and follow Him, we may find peace and rest to our souls. Thus it is, my young friends, that this holy sacrament is so precious a gift, so rich a legacy, so inestimable a treasure. Who then, it may be asked, shall be

admitted to partake of this spiritual blessing? The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel were commanded to observe the great feast of the passover, and to keep it, upon pain of death. And as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper has succeeded to the feast of the passover, as the Gospel has to the law; as the value also of the salvation from sin, by Christ, is infinitely precious, compared with the deliverance from Egypt, by Moses; we may justly conclude, that it is the bounden duty of all Christians to commemorate that great salvation, "by an ordinance, for ever." "All Christians must come to the sacrament," writes a once "burning and shining light" of our Church. "They, indeed, that are in a state of sin, must not come so, but yet they must come. First, they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbours, must come; only they must not bring their enmity with them, but leave it, and then come. They that have variety of secular employments must come; only, they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come, and converse with God. If any man be well grown in grace, he must needs come, because he is

excellently disposed to so holy a feast. He that is but in the infancy of piety had need to come, that he may grow in grace. The strong must come, lest they become weak ; and the weak, that they become strong. The sick must come to be cured ; the healthful, to be preserved. They that have leisure must come, because they have 'no excuse ;' and they that have no leisure must come, that by so excellent religion they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified ; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still."—*Taylor's Holy Living.*

Under the impression made by this truly Christian exhortation upon your minds, that it is the indispensable obligation of every one of us, who have been admitted by baptism into the Church of Christ, to come to the holy communion, "for the edifying of the body of Christ ;" that we may all come, "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ ;"—Under this impression, I would lead you on to a more close and scriptural examination of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; but would remind you first, to com-

mend yourselves, in prayer, to Almighty God, that he may create in your hearts a lively remembrance of his mercy, in the death and passion of your Saviour Christ; that your love toward him may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that be excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God.

Let us Pray.

O! Lord Jesus Christ, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, didst humble thyself to become obedient to death, even the death of the cross; and in mercy hast left a commandment, "This do in remembrance of me," to the end, that we may continue a perpetual memory of thy death, until thy coming again; give these, thy servants, grace, we beseech thee, to humble themselves to the obedience of thy will; and, that they may evermore keep Christ, and Christ crucified, before their eyes; incline their hearts to the Communion of thy body and blood; that they may eat bread, at thy table, in remembrance that thy blessed body was offered up; and may drink

wine, in remembrance that thy precious blood was shed upon the cross for their sakes, and for their salvation. Prepare them, O Lord, by thy Spirit, to be worthy guests at thy Supper; clothe them with the wedding garment; feed them with the bread of life, and give them to drink of living waters; that they may thereby grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of Thee, their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE V.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

My Young Friends!

IN introducing you to the solemnity of the Lord's Supper, I am bound to conclude that you have already been *confirmed*, or are anxiously desirous of being so. I feel myself called upon, therefore, to address you as *Christians*, who have heartily embraced the Gospel; and, under these impressions, I am persuaded that I cannot recommend this holy sacrament to your serious attention with a higher sanction, than that which is afforded by the word of God, viz. that it was *instituted* by our blessed Lord himself. As long, therefore, as your *faith* in Christ as your Redeemer shall influence your *obedience* towards him as your Lord and Master, so long will you regard this divine institution as a practical part of your Christian covenant. And of the Lord's Supper, it may be said, as was observed of the Lord's day, that there is no standard by which we may more safely measure the spiritual condition of a Christian,

than by the *importance* which he attaches to this sacred duty.

The knowledge which you have attained of the principles of the Christian faith, from your instruction in the excellent Catechism of our Church, has already taught you, that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, like that of baptism, consists of two parts,—an outward visible sign, and an inward spiritual grace. “Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received,” is the *outward* part or *sign* of the Lord's Supper. And the *inward* part, or thing signified, is “the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the *faithful*.”

The *benefits* whereof we are partakers, by this holy sacrament, we also learn, are “the strengthening and refreshing of our *souls*, by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. And the due *preparation* which is required of us, before we presume to “eat of that bread, and drink of that cup,” you must ever bear in mind, is repentance of past sin, a steadfast purpose to lead a new life, a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, a thankful remembrance of his death, and to be in love and charity with all men; which state of holy preparation can alone be ascertained by a strict examination

of our hearts and lives by the word of God, with humble prayer for the direction and assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Your reverence and regard for this sacred ordinance will be increased and strengthened by another serious consideration, that, like its fore-runner, baptism, it also carries with it the authority of our Lord's *command*, as well as instruction. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," was the *precept* issued for the establishment of universal baptism, as the introduction to the universal *Church* of Christ. Not less solemn and impressive is the command, "Do this in remembrance of me," which was as mercifully given, for the "growth" of that Church "in grace, and in the knowledge and love of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" the former sacrament being ordained for the increase and conversion, the latter for the sanctification of his Church, through the divine operation of his Spirit.

I have thus endeavoured, by a few preliminary observations upon the divine *institution* of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and on the *spiritual* character of its *benefits*, and of the *preparation* which is necessary for a worthy partaking thereof, to awaken your

minds, my young friends, to a lively sense of its unspeakable value ; to guide your souls in the way that leadeth unto life, and to “ keep them steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” And to confirm that sense within your hearts, I have pointed out to you the *mercy* of the divine *command* by which it is ordained, in bringing us to the obedience of the cross of Christ, “ whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven.” Let me then bring you to the table of the Lord, I mean, to the *institution* of this holy festival by our Lord, as it is represented to us in the writings of the Evangelists. And therein we learn, as we have had occasion before to mention, that Jesus sent two of his disciples forward into the city, with particular directions to prepare a chamber “ where he might eat the passover with his disciples.” “ And they went and found as he had said unto them, and they made ready the passover.” “ And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve disciples with him.” It may not be unprofitable to make a short digression in this place, with a view to your contemplating this solemn scene, with some acquaintance with the interesting and affecting circumstances which

accompanied it. And in this I shall include such portions of our Lord's discourse with his disciples before, during, and after the Last Supper, as I hope may be instrumental in improving your minds to serious meditation upon the *ordinance itself*.

Endeavour, then, my young friends, to represent to yourselves the Saviour of the world reclining in the midst of his chosen followers; the beloved disciple leaning on Jesus' bosom, and all the rest, save *one*, listening with deep attention to the divine words which fell from his lips, "who spake as never man spake." Mark the look of tenderness and anxiety with which he regards these faithful sharers of his griefs and sorrows, these constant partners of the toil and danger of his laborious ministry. Hear him, at one time preparing their minds by compassionate warning for the conflicts of persecution and tribulation, which he foresaw they would have to endure for his sake, in the glorious cause of the Gospel; and immediately afterwards cheering and comforting their sinking spirits with the bright hopes of glory, honour, and immortality in heaven. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that *ye* shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into

joy." "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own." "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." "But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. 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."

Listen again, my young friends, to the persuasive eloquence with which the blessed Jesus calms and soothes the sorrows and apprehensions that arise in the breasts of

his disciples, as he, by degrees, unfolds to them, in plain and convincing words, the afflicting separation that was so soon to take place between them and their beloved Master. "But now I go my way to him that sent me;" "but because I have said these things, sorrow hath filled your hearts." "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you."

And now, with the inspiring promise of the *Comforter*, he stems the torrent of their grief; and assures them that in every time of need, He, through his Spirit, "would be with them always even unto the end." At the same time convincing them, both of the necessity of his departure to the throne of his Father, as a Prince, and a Saviour, and of the coming of the Holy Ghost, in order to the full accomplishment of the divine purpose, for the salvation of the world.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he will guide you into all truth." "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Direct your attention once more to the affecting manner in which our divine Master confirms and strengthens their faith in him, by the consoling and animating assurance of his own and his Father's love ; and by conferring upon them a new and efficacious privilege of praying in his Name : by which direct intercourse with the Father, through faith in his name, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and his ever-living intercession for them, the necessity and benefit of his prayers for them while on earth would be removed, and fully compensated, after his ascension into heaven. "In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name : ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. At that day ye shall ask in my name ; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you ; for the Father himself loveth you ; because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."

Such was the spiritual consolation and encouragement which Jesus administered to the hearts of his chosen disciples, deeply afflicted, and almost broken by their Saviour's last farewell discourse. The separation from

friends is no light source of uneasiness to an affectionate, to a *sensible* mind. The loss of a tender father or mother, of a devoted husband or wife, of an attached brother or sister, or of a beloved child, not to mention the sacred ties of long and faithful friendship, harrows up every natural feeling of distress, and wrings the heart with anguish little short of agony. Such feelings, each and every one of you have ere this experienced; and some of you perhaps in their most acute sense. To you, therefore, my young friends, I shall not appeal in vain. Ye that have hearts alive to the dictates of nature, and open to the impulse of compassionate sympathy, consider what must have been the dreadful bitterness of spirit which the disciples laboured under, at so awful, so eventful, so melancholy a conclusion of their happy intercourse with their Lord and Master! To them he was both an earthly and heavenly parent; he was their guardian under spiritual, as well as temporal afflictions; a friend in all distresses, a preceptor in all difficulties, and a guide to them in all temptations; in sorrow he was their consoler, in danger their protector, in death their Saviour.

Is it possible for you to suppose, for an instant, that the Son of man, who was so

feelingly alive to the wants and weaknesses of others, and so willing, and anxious to relieve them, could be insensible to the infirmities and sufferings of the nature he had taken upon himself? Was *his* spirit free from the disquietude and dejection that oppressed the hearts and minds of his disciples? Had He no care nor solicitude, but on their account; no anticipation of coming trials; no apprehension of being left and forsaken; no foresight of approaching agony; no dread of the pains of impending sufferings, and death? Alas! my young friends, all these threatening storms and tempests were lowering over his devoted head; all were seen, and felt by him, with an acuteness, that his foreknowledge tended only to aggravate. Yet, such was his unceasing affection towards those, who had left all, and followed him; such his love for all mankind; such his desire to glorify his heavenly Father; that, with amazing fortitude, he overcame and suppressed the struggling emotions of fear and trembling, that nature herself recoiled at, and with a single eye to the work which his Father gave him to do, proceeded to add *another* to the many tokens of his care for the souls of men, by instituting his Last Supper, as a memorial of the offering up Himself,

the true paschal Lamb, by which the feast of the passover would be abolished for ever.

Judge, then, of the value of this holy ordinance, from the very forcible language which the Saviour made use of, to express his anxiety to establish it: "With desire, have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:" words which, in the original, convey to us the strongest possible interest in the object alluded to. And now, my young friends! let us approach nearer to the table of the Lord, and give attentive ear, while he explains to his disciples, and through them to us, the complete and spiritual redemption, of which the holy sacrament, he was then instituting, was to be a living memorial: that blessed dispensation of divine mercy, which he had, in his infinite wisdom, provided for the salvation of a lost world; that covenant of grace, which he had executed, and proclaimed, with his own hand, and voice; and which he was about to leave them, by his last will and testament, signed and sealed with his blood; which, moreover, could only be perfected and fulfilled, in a complete and triumphant manner, by his return to his Father's kingdom; where, he declares to them, he will celebrate its glorious accom-

plishment with all the assembly of the faithful, and drink with them of "the rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand," "with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." "I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Having thus prepared their minds for the holy communion of his body and blood, by such affecting and edifying preaching, he, in the most solemn and impressive manner, implored the Divine blessing upon the ordinance he was proceeding to institute, sanction, and establish; that it might, in all succeeding ages, be a means of grace and comfort to the souls of his servants, who should receive it with reverence, faith, and thanksgiving.

This prayer of dedication ended, and a solemn silence being imposed by this last act of pious supplication, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me;" or, in other words, let this be to you a sensible sign, and representation of my body, which is freely given, and

even now, to be broken, bruised, and offered up for you. Let it become a constant and affectionate commemoration of my dying love: let it be a sincere and open profession of your steadfast reliance upon the merits of my sufferings and death; and inspire your hearts with a zealous and lively faith, and hope in the redemption purchased by my cross.

Taking likewise the cup, after supper, in the same solemn and affecting manner, our gracious Saviour begged a blessing of his heavenly Father; then extending it to his disciples, he said, "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins;"—accept this cup, my brethren, as a representation, as a seal of the new covenant, established in my blood: receive it, therefore, with a fixed resolution, by the grace of God, of adhering strictly and faithfully to the sacred engagements of the gospel covenant; and wait, with cheerful hope, and steadfast faith, for its promises and blessings, the rewards in Christ, of your humble obedience.

Thus did our blessed Lord "institute and ordain holy mysteries, as pledges of his love,

and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort; to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which, by his precious blood-shedding, he hath obtained to us." And herein also does he graciously enforce a practical obedience to his *new* commandment, "that we love one another, as he hath loved us." For, as "by this, shall all men know that we are his disciples, if we have love one to another;" so truly did he design, in the communion of his body and blood, that "all who profess and call themselves Christians, should be so guided and governed by his good Spirit, and led into the way of truth, as to hold the faith, in *unity of spirit*, in the *bond of peace*, and in righteousness of life;" that when we commemorate the death of our Saviour, we may commemorate his dying love, *jointly*, as servants of one Master, disciples of one Lord, members of one family, of which he is the head; partakers of the same covenant of grace, and of the same hope of everlasting life, which God hath given us in his Son. For remember, that when we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ,

and drink his blood, "we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us:" so that it is impossible that this blessed union subsist, between Christ and his church, unless the members thereof be united in the same bond of spiritual love, one for another. For every Christian principle must animate us to that union of hearts and interests, which the very act of communion so strictly requires.—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread," "and every one members one of another."

With this holy purpose in view, of cementing the true members of his church in one great family of love, in a blessed fellowship, through the Spirit, with the Father and Himself, the Father in him, and he in them, and they in him,—a holy "communion of saints;" "to give glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will among men,"—the Redeemer of the world bequeathed to us his last dying legacy; in order also, as St. Paul saith, that in the

celebration thereof, "as often as we eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, we might show the Lord's death until his coming again." The supper ended, behold, with amazement, my young friends, the Lord of the feast rising from the table, laying aside his garments, and taking a towel, and girding himself: "after that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded: so after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, "he said to them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." "And, if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Finally, my young friends, contemplate the "Author of peace, and lover of concord" breathing forth his parting benediction upon those, whom he regarded in the endearing character of friends, and brethren. "Peace

I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The world giveth peace, where there is *no* peace ; but the peace that I give unto you, is a peace that passeth all understanding ; which will keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ. It is the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which shall be with you, and abide with you, for ever.

It has been my anxious study, in reliance upon divine grace, to direct your young minds to the consideration of the *institution* of the Lord's Supper, and the interesting circumstances connected with it : and I doubt not, my young friends, that you have all along seen, how entirely the inspiring principle of "*Love to God, because he first loved us,*" which it has been my endeavour to keep constantly before your eyes, pervades, and consecrates every part of this solemnity. Under the influence of this life-giving spirit of Christianity, I would now interest you in the *spiritual* character of this holy sacrament. And, as the words of our blessed Lord have, hitherto, been "a light to our eyes, and a guide to our feet," let us, with joy and gladness, con-

tinue to follow his steps ; confessing with the holy Apostle St. Peter, that He hath “ the words of eternal life,” and we know not to whom we should go, if we go not to Him, who is “ the way, the truth, and the life.” Hear, then, what the Lord saith concerning the communion of his body and blood, as they are represented to us by the elements of bread and wine, that you may form a right understanding of the spiritual meaning, which *alone* he attaches to them. But, in meditating upon the Scripture which I have selected, for this purpose, from the sixth chapter of St. John, treasure up in your hearts, and keep in your minds this great *foundation-stone* of the Gospel, with which the passage opens.—“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, *he that believeth in me, hath everlasting life.*”—And, then, listen to your Saviour declaring,—“ I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever ; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, strove among them-

selves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

I know not any passage of Scripture whence we can form a clearer conception of the *spiritual* nature of eating and drinking Christ's body and blood, than *that* which I have now transcribed for you. We learn, from it, that there is a mystical bread, a bread of life, that descended from heaven; by eating which, "we shall never die," but "have eternal life," or, "shall live for ever;" for all

these expressions are used : that this bread is not like the manna which miraculously descended from heaven, to sustain the life of our forefathers from perishing in the wilderness ; for *that* bread, we are told, could not keep them from death. It could not mean, therefore, *natural* food of any kind. But our Lord tells us, that the bread, which He means, is his *flesh*, and that he has given it for the life of the world ; and, that so great is the necessity of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, that, without this, “ we can have no life in us ; ” for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The Jews, it appears, understood his words in a literal, or *carnal* sense ; and, though ignorant of the truth, yet, very *justly* concluded, that it was not possible for him to give them his very *flesh* to eat, and his very *blood* to drink. This they thought too ridiculous, and unnatural ; and some of his disciples, also, were offended at it, viewing it in this sense ; they said that “ it was a hard saying ; who could bear it ? ” This offence of the Jews, and murmuring of his disciples, called forth from their Lord, in pity to their hardness of heart, slowness of understanding, and weakness of faith, the following explanation, to which I entreat, my

young friends, your most serious attention. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, *dwelleth in me, and I in him.*" which he thus illustrates. "As the living Father hath sent me, and *I live by the Father*, so he that eateth me, even he shall *live by me.*" He, then, proceeds to ask, Doth this offend you? "What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" and concludes thus—"It is the *spirit* that quickeneth (or giveth life); the *flesh profiteth nothing.* The words which I speak, *they are spirit*, (or, *spiritual*), and they are life."

Now, from our blessed Lord's explanation, we are taught that he intended his words to be taken altogether in a spiritual way; that as faith is the life-giving principle of his Gospel, and Christ the giver of faith, so the *exercise* of this vital gift of faith in Christ crucified, by eating and drinking the elements of bread and wine, in obedience to his command, and in remembrance of the sacrifice of his body and blood, would be the exercise of that means of grace, by which "we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us;" would be the enjoyment, in some measure, of that spiritual union, which he thus graciously prays for in behalf of his disciples,—“that they all may be

one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us." Now, we believe, and know that the 'mysterious union by which Christ liveth in the Father, must be a spiritual union, for God is a spirit; the mystical union of Christ with his church is, therefore, a spiritual union also.

Christ Jesus, then, my young friends, is "the bread of life, who descended from heaven, and took upon him our flesh; and gave his body to be nailed to the cross, and his blood to be shed, for the life, for the salvation of the world. And we believe that through his precious blood-shedding, and through that alone, we have eternal life: and this *life* is applied to our souls, which, by nature, are dead in trespasses and sins, through the principle of *faith*, by the power of the Holy Ghost. "For this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." "He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Next to Scripture, no words can express the spiritual application of the communion of Christ's body and blood to our souls, more

simply or more intelligibly, than those of our admirable Liturgy, in the office appointed for that sacrament. In administering the bread, the Priest thus prays: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life:" and then exhorts: "Take and eat this, in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on *Him*, in thine *heart*, by *faith*, with *thanksgiving*."

One more important consideration, relative to our Christian practice, remains to be mentioned, and briefly dwelt upon, previous to our entering *more largely* upon the general subject of this lecture. I mean, the *preparation* which is required of those who would come *worthily* to the Lord's supper. And this, indeed, is an inquiry which will demand, my young friends, your most attentive frame of mind: for as the *benefit* is great, if, with a true penitent heart, and lively faith, if with newness of life, and Christian charity, we receive that holy sacrament; so is the *danger* great, if we receive the same unworthily; for then we be "guilty of the body and blood of Christ;" and so far from receiving any benefit from it, we stand convicted of a *very heinous sin*. When "ye

mind, therefore, to come to the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour, ye must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all men diligently to “try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” Now the words of St. Paul’s exhortation are found in the eleventh chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians; the greater part of which I have copied for you, that, together with the passage before cited from St. John, and the words of the institution itself, you may be provided, from the word of God, with the best possible means of instruction, for obtaining a right understanding of this holy ordinance, and of the duties, and qualifications which are needful for a worthy partaking of it.

The following are the words of the great Apostle alluded to; “Now in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it; for there must be heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you. When ye come

together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper; for in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not. What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you; that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me; for as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, *unworthily*, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily,

eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. *For this cause*, many are *wetk* and *sickly* among you, and many *sleep*. For if we would *judge ourselves*, we should not be judged. But when we are *judged*, we are *chastened* of the Lord, *that we should not be condemned* with the world; wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home: that ye come *not* together unto *condemnation*. And the rest will I set in order when I come."

These words of St. Paul harmonise with the writings of the Evāngelists, in every particular of the *institution* of the Lord's Supper. And they contain, also, a solemn and awakening warning and rebuke, not only to the Corinthians, to whom he specially addressed them, but to Christians of every age and nation. For although it is not possible, such is the admirable discipline of our church, that we should fall into the gross sin of the professing Christians at Corinth, in desecrating the Holy Supper, by *strife* and *drunkenness* at the very table, yet, you would miserably deceive yourselves, my young friends, by supposing that you may live in the commission of *any* wilful and

habitual sin, or in the omission of any known and positive duty, and not incur a *guilt*, as heinous as *that* of the Corinthians; if, in this sinful state, you “presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” And although the judgments here threatened by St. Paul, in illustration of the word *damnation*, viz. sickness, weakness, and death, are not so awfully tremendous as the *irreparable loss of the soul*, which that dread word sometimes expresses; and, moreover, were inflicted, as all the judgments of God in this world are intended to be, as wholesome chastisements to “convert the sinner from his ways,” and “to save his soul alive;” still, the eyes of your understanding must be sadly blinded by the deceitfulness of sin, if you flatter yourselves that those who “obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness,” are not treasuring up for themselves “wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.” “Be not deceived. God is not mocked; for whatsoever ye shall sow, that shall ye also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” “This I say,

then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

After considering the *guilt* of the *unworthy* partaker of the Lord's Supper, we must not omit to inquire, of how much lighter punishment *he* shall be thought worthy, who refuses to cherish a faithful remembrance of Christ, and Christ *crucified*, by disobedience to his dying command, "Do this in remembrance of me." Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the *degree* of guilt, there can be *none* as to the *consequences*. The guest who was found without a wedding garment, was "bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where was weeping and gnashing of teeth." And those men, in the same parable, who refused the invitation, were excluded from the feast: "I say unto you, that none of these men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper." Whether we be *shut* out, or *cast* out, from the marriage supper of the Lamb, avails nothing; so long as, in either case, we shall be ranked among the workers of iniquity. The wavering, timid, or careless Christian, may express his fears and alarm in presuming to attend the table of the Lord; but an equally anxious inquiry is this—How can we escape, if we *neglect* so

great salvation? The Holy Scriptures abound with instructions for the attainment of a right frame of mind and heart to prepare us for being welcome guests at the Lord's Supper; and the promises and encouragements offered in the Gospel to humble and sincere penitents, leave no just grounds to Christians for entertaining unreasonable fears, as to their compliance with a positive command. But no defence nor justification is any where to be found for the omission of this most essentially Christian obligation. The renovating grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit are ever near, unto all them that ask with the prayer of faith, to "create in them a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within them." But search the Scriptures through, and you will find no encouragement offered to the unstable, inactive, or lukewarm professors of the Gospel. These only cry Lord! Lord! but do not the will of their heavenly Saviour; and must expect the doom of the slothful servant, or to receive the rejection of the foolish virgins; "Depart from me, I know ye not."

The safest, nay, the only safe course, is to come unto Christ, in the way of his own appointment:—"That the grace of God,

which bringeth salvation, may teach us, to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

In bringing this important subject to a conclusion, and thus terminating my proposed labours for your instruction in the great duties of the Christian religion, I may be permitted to enter more largely upon the good effects of communion, in the Lord's Supper, as generally necessary to salvation.

In a former lecture, I endeavoured to describe the exceeding value of our immortal souls, as qualifying us for the enjoyment of the high and holy privileges of spiritual communion with the Almighty, and affording us the power of contemplating his divine attributes and perfections, displayed in the wonders of creation and providence: but, my young friends, the worth of the soul of man can only be truly estimated by a close and diligent examination of the wonders of *Redeeming* love. For thereby

we discover the infinite excellence of the soul, from the awful and awakening consideration of its *lost state*; and more especially from the contemplation of the *preciousness* of the *price* which was paid for its redemption. The *one* revealing to us the dreadful nature and consequences of *sin*: the other, representing to us the inestimable value of the sacrifice of the cross: in accordance with the spirit of our Lord's words, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Now I know no channel by which we can be conducted to so just and profitable an inquiry into these sublime and affecting subjects, as a serious consideration of the duty of regular attendance at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: for in the communion of the body and blood of Christ, we commemorate the death and passion of our blessed Redeemer, "who did humble himself even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life." Therein we call to remembrance, as we before observed, "the

exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits, which by his precious blood-shedding, he hath obtained for us, to our great and endless comfort.”

This sacred duty, so vitally important to the spiritual improvement of our souls; so truly conducive to our growth in grace, and in the knowledge and love of a crucified Saviour, and so closely interwoven with the public worship of Almighty God, cannot but create a deep interest in every heart. For I would fain entertain a hope that there is not *one* of you, my young Christian friends, that has not already been impressed with a lively sense of the great *necessity*, as well as *usefulness* of this divine institution! Wherefore, then, let me ask, should there be a single individual among you, capable of denying his soul the benefits, and blessings of communion with his Redeemer? If ye *know* these things, wherefore deprive yourselves of the happiness of *doing* them? Would that I might be spared the pain of answering this searching question. But the truth, the melancholy truth is, that although the *knowledge* of a crucified Saviour, is sweet and pleasant to us, the *obedience* of the

cross of Christ is irksome and grievous. His yoke is *not* easy, and his burden is *not* light to us; notwithstanding, he hath declared it to be *indeed* so. That any of us, my young friends, should be thus living in direct contradiction to the *truth* of Christ's word, alas! is not a reflection calculated to inspire quietness and assurance within us! Whence then arises this unhappy difference, between *profession* and *practice*? It is because our knowledge of God, and our Saviour, is not built upon *living* principles. Our religion is the religion of the head and understanding, and not deeply seated in the heart. Hence we willingly *assent* to the duties and obligations of the Gospel of Christ; but they have no constant and *practical* influence upon our lives and conversation. Worldly cares and pursuits, sensual appetites and affections, draw us aside from the service of God, and render us unstable and inconstant in our devotion to him; and therefore we need not be surprised at our falling away from our steadfastness; for God will not accept any service less than that of our *whole* heart; and this we hesitate to give him; while Satan is ready to receive us upon any terms; and we

willingly yield ourselves captives to his solicitations, even with our eyes open, to the deceitfulness of the tempter. Thus we must be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, not knowing whither to steer our course: like a ship without pilot or compass, with a strong and fearful tide too against us; and nothing can preserve us from making shipwreck of our faith, but the grace of God bringing us back, in our distress, to that haven of mercy which we have forsaken; and teaching us, in the spirit of humble prayer, to seek the protection of Him, who can still the raging tempest with a word; and to cry aloud for the saving strength of that out-stretched arm, which alone can preserve us from sinking. But I would proceed to show, without further delay, that the lost state of the soul of man, and the *preciousness* of the *price* paid for its redemption, may be more perfectly contemplated in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, than in any other Christian duty. Can any one of you, my young friends, require to be told, that the very *cause* and *necessity* of the sacrifice of the death of the cross, entirely arose from the *fallen state* of man's once innocent and spotless soul. And if not, can we conceive

any religious exercise so calculated to impress upon our hearts and minds a deep sense of that *fatal loss*, as touching ourselves, and a just value of the *ransom* which was offered for its recovery, as that devout solemnity, by which “we keep Christ crucified before our eyes, and show the Lord’s death until he come?” There is *no* spiritual duty, by which we can so richly estimate the unspeakable love of God, in sending his beloved Son into the world, to save the perishing souls of men; and yet, after all, “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,” the inestimable *price* that was paid, by the death and passion of our crucified Lord! Nevertheless, it is our happiness, as well as our bounden duty, to use all the means of grace and wisdom; which a merciful God has given us, to understand and believe this “wonderful mystery of godliness;” and to employ all the faculties of our souls, not in prying into those deep and “secret things, that belong” only “unto the Lord our God,” but in seeking diligently after “those things which be revealed, which belong unto ourselves and to our children;” “that we may do all the words of the law;” that we may

obey all the precepts and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ; which “is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe.”

Inquire, then, and see upon what bright and glorious object the soul of man can dwell and meditate so “full of grace and truth,” as upon that eternal Redeemer, who has bought us with the *price* of his own most precious blood? Contemplate, with the eye of faith, the amazing and unutterable scenes of agony and anguish, of sufferings and death, by which the “Man of sorrows” was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and while we gaze with wonder and astonishment at the immensity of the price, the costliness of the sacrifice, let those emotions of just admiration give way to the better feelings of gratitude and love, at the awakening reflection, that nothing less, than this, could have atoned for, and redeemed our lost and perishing souls: no fountain, less deep and open, could have washed away their corruption and impurity: no stream less rich and copious, ever flowing and ever full, could have sufficed for the healing of their diseases. Which of us can look upon that radiant orb, which fills the universe with light and life, without emotion?

Who can behold its fiery brilliancy, and, with a tearless eye? Look, then, with fervency upon the “Sun of Righteousness, as He arises with healing in his wings:” look upon Him whom you have pierced: behold the bleeding “Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world;” and let the tear that starts into the eye, at so overpowering a scene, be but the index of the sorrows with which your hearts are melting, at the humbling conviction, that “all we, like sheep, have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all;” that, “for our transgressions, he was stricken, put to grief, bruised, made an offering for sin, and poured out his soul unto death.”

These are the affecting scenes which the true Christian loves to dwell upon, and contemplate, in the sacred duties of communion, at the Lord’s table: these are the wholesome impressions of unfeigned repentance, and godly sorrow, which are stamped upon the soul; and which spring from a right apprehension of the *sinfulness of sin*, in crucifying the Son of God; and from a deep sense of the fearful consequences inevitable to ourselves, if we continue to “crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame,” and

tread him under foot, "by our contempt; and count the blood of the covenant, whereby we are sanctified, an unholy thing," by our neglect; or "do despite unto the Spirit of grace," by our unworthiness of the privileges and blessings of the Lord's Supper. But the renewing effects of a faithful obedience to the command, the dying command of our Lord, to keep a perpetual memory of his death, by a frequent participation in the communion of his body and blood, by no means end here: they are not confined to a conviction of sin, a fearful sense of its destructive consequences, and an humbled and penitent frame of mind; these genuine evidences of awakened, or returning life in the soul of a Christian, arising from a religious contemplation of that high and exalted sacrifice, by which Christ Jesus "became unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," are but the beginning of better things; and will, through grace, ripen and advance us to those higher walks of *faith*, and patient *perseverance in well-doing*, which shall reveal to us the Saviour, in the glory of his triumphant majesty, as well as in the humiliation of his sufferings; and lead us on to fulness of joy in believing. Think not, my young

friends, that we can approach to our Lord upon more sanctified ground, upon a more holy mount, than *that* upon which he himself has appointed to meet us: much less suppose, that when we have accepted his gracious invitation, and come unto him, “weary and heavy laden,” that he will leave us comfortless; that he will deny us the *rest* that he hath promised; that he will still leave us to mourn, with the heavy burden of sin. Far be such thoughts from our minds: faithful is He, that hath promised; “Fear not little flock, neither be afraid.” He that hath begun a good work in you, shall continue the work unto the end: he that hath brought you to his supper, shall meet you at his table; shall even condescend to gird himself, and wait upon you: he shall feed you with the bread of life, and give you to drink of the waters of life; you shall draw out of his inexhaustible fulness, grace sufficient for you. “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye then 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; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely:” But, whosoever will *not*,—what says the Spirit of the Lord to these? Even to

these “the Lord waiteth to be gracious:” to these, his rebellious and disobedient children, the Lord is long-suffering, and full of compassion, and of great goodness; “he spareth them when they deserve punishment, and in his wrath, thinketh upon mercy:” even to these, the Spirit and the Bride continue to say, *Come!*—But the day of grace has an end; and if, notwithstanding the riches of God’s goodness and forbearance, day after day, and year after year, they refuse to accept his gracious invitation; if, by vain excuses of oxen, farms, merchandise, or marriage; in a word, from any worldly interest, they stay away from the “marriage supper of the Lamb,” I need not repeat to you the sentence of exclusion that is passed upon them.

From the observations that I have addressed to you, my young friends, I trust you have learnt, that the exceeding value of our immortal souls is not to be seen from a casual glance at their spiritual and intellectual endowments, but only from a patient and serious contemplation of their *lost state* through sin, and of the preciousness of the price that was paid for their redemption, by the sacrifice of the cross; that these important subjects of serious meditation are more

practically seen and felt in the faithful celebration of the Lord's Supper, than in the exercise of any other Christian duty; since the sacrifice of the death of the cross is the great passover, to commemorate which that festival was purposely instituted by our Lord; that a worthy receiving of this sacrament necessarily leads us to deep reflection upon our spiritual condition; teaches us how to apply the remedy, which the cross of Christ affords, to the diseases of the soul; and to estimate truly the greatness of the riches of the love of Christ, in leaving the bosom of his Father, and his glory in heaven, to take upon himself our nature, in the form of a servant, and to become obedient to death, even the shameful and painful death of the cross; that he might glorify his Father in the salvation of a lost world. You have further been instructed, that this sanctifying duty awakens us to "repentance not to be repented of;" to a lively faith in a crucified Saviour, and to universal love and charity, (these being the needful qualifications for its due performance) and is *in itself* a living evidence of a sincere and hearty obedience to Christ's commands. By it, moreover, we are admitted into holy communion with God,

who mercifully renews with us, in Christ, the covenant of grace which we have broken; imparts fresh communications of his love and favour; breathes into our souls the spirit of peace, and makes us partakers of his holiness.

Such, my young friends, are the benefits and blessings offered to us in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; benefits and blessings extended to all who will seek them; to high and low, to rich and poor, upon the merciful terms of "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." If, then, ye call yourselves Christians, and Jesus, Lord and Master, "hold fast," I beseech you, "your profession' without wavering," and prove yourselves to be his disciples, by "doing the things which he commands you." You have given solemn pledges; or are about to give them in the sacred rite of confirmation, of your sincere desire to come to the table of the Lord, to strengthen your faith, and confirm you in the practice of the pious and godly resolutions which you have formed to live a Christian life. "Go on," then, "unto perfection." Seek a blessing in the breaking of bread, and in the cup of salvation. Think not that you can break the vows which you have made, and yet retain the favour of God.

“Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.” Halt not, I pray you, between two opinions, but “join yourselves unto the Lord in an everlasting covenant, that shall not be forgotten.” Come now, and resolve, one and all, and answer and speak,—when it shall be said unto you,—“Choose you this day whom ye will, serve!”—“The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.” Listen to the gracious words of Him who laid down his life for your sakes,—“This is the Father’s will, which hath sent me, that of *all* which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.” And “whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” Listen, I entreat you, my young friends, to the language of compassionate love, and answer every one for himself, these awakening questions:—“If God thus willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live;” that he come unto Christ and be saved; why should I dwell in the dark valley of the shadow of death, when the light of life is shining around me? Are the promised gifts and graces of the Lord’s Supper less necessary and precious to *my* soul than to the souls of

other Christians? Have *I* no need of Divine grace and pardon? Hath Christ ascended to the right hand of God to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, to others, and not *to me*? Does he ever live to make intercession with God for tens of thousands, and not for *me*? Is he able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through him, and am *I* cast out? Let your examination of your hearts, my young friends, be thus *personal* and *searching*, and then shall your conscience answer you thus—Christ is indeed a Prince and a Saviour, an Intercessor and a Mediator; but only to those who come to Him that they may have life. The privileges and comforts of the Lord's table are doubtless most precious and refreshing to the souls of Christians, but only to those who accept with faith and thanksgiving the spiritual invitation of their Lord, to eat and drink of his body and blood. At the Lord's Supper, is a rich and abundant supply of "the bread of life, of which, whosoever eateth shall never hunger; and of the living waters, of which, whosoever drinketh, shall never thirst again." But those alone can find their secret virtues who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," "even the

righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ." Such is the faithful answer, such the word of exhortation which *conscience* shall whisper in a "still small voice," to those Christians, who ask *not*, yet wonder they do not receive; who seek *not*, yet marvel they do not find; who care not to knock, but still expect the door of mercy to open to them; who obey *not* the command of their crucified Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of me;" and yet hope to have their souls strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ. To such Christians, what reply can their Lord make but this,—“Without *faith* it is impossible to please God;” for whosoever cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is “the rewarder of them that *diligently seek him.*” “Without *holiness* no man shall see the Lord.” “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;” and my commandment is, “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you: drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The unqualified declaration of Christ,—

“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,”—appears to me to contain full as much cause for serious apprehension to *negligent* Christians, as the misunderstood language of St. Paul concerning eating and drinking unworthily; accompanied, as it is, by the assurance of the Apostle, that if we will *examine* and *judge* ourselves, we need entertain no fears of condemnation. A blessing, and not a curse, mercy and grace, and not wrath and chastisement, await those who sincerely set about a due preparation; and pretend not, as many do, under the cloak of *hypocrisy*, to be so overcautious about a fit state of mind, when, in reality, they never seriously exercise that self-denial and self-examination which are required of them.

Imperfect and erroneous, indeed, is the idea which some have formed of the last gracious ordinance of our Lord; most limited is the view they have taken of its design, and most unworthy the estimate they have made of the character of the merciful Founder of the institution, who suppose that He would leave us a commandment which it is morally impossible for us to obey. At the same time, sadly ignorant must they be of the condition

of mankind, for whom it was provided, who imagine that Christ Jesus, who, in the most simple and encouraging manner, invites us to come unto him, and assures us that "his yoke is easy, and his burden light," in leaving us a perpetual memorial of Himself, should require of us weak, frail, and offending creatures, so unspotted a purity of heart and life, as to exclude the humble services, and imperfect offerings of a penitent and believing Christian. The qualification he expects from us, is, to be *willing*, in reliance upon his grace, to have *faith*, in dependence upon his power, and to *obey*, with confidence in his righteousness. Yet we must never forget for a moment, my young friends, that "he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

And, in reconciling the fear of those who regard the holy communion with unwarrantable dread, let me not be misunderstood to give the slightest countenance to the *careless* and *indifferent* professors of the Gospel. Although it be the indispensable duty of every disciple of Christ to obey the command of his Lord and Master, yet, safer and wiser is the Christian who shall pause, ponder, and consider the sacred responsibility of the covenant he has entered into; and "serve the

Lord with *fear*, and give thanks unto him, with a remembrance of his *holiness*; who shall “ watch and pray,” that he fall not into sin: far wiser and safer than *he*, who presumes upon the *certainty* of his fitness, and acts from the force of habit, rather than from the dictates of conscience. A Christian, it is truly said, ought always to be in a state of preparation for the Lord’s table: The same observation may even more forcibly be made with regard to *death*. But the deplorable neglect which is manifested in the conduct of men with respect to the *latter*, is but too convincing an earnest of the insensibility of men towards the duties of the *former*. Blame not, my young friends, the watchfulness of our Church in providing against the frailty and corruption of the human heart, by urging and requiring a strict examination of her children, in her impressive and awakening exhortations. Few, I fear, are those who reach the height at which they aim, in the attainment of holiness, compared with the *many* who fall far short of the mark, and of “ the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus.” Few, I fear, perseveringly discharge the great duty of self-examination, and search strictly into the motives which bring them to

the table of the Lord ; while many, from a fear of being thought *too* rigid and particular in the self-denying principles of the Gospel, perhaps run into the opposite extreme, and think little of the offerings, they should bring to the altar, till the hour arrives that they are summoned to the heavenly banquet. Happy will it be for them, on such an occasion, to stay away, lest they be discovered by the Master of the feast without a wedding garment.

It must be left to the individual Christian, to determine what period of preparation is necessary, according to the peculiar circumstances of his own case : a week's preparation has been proposed and *objected* to ; upon the grounds, that to prescribe a stated period of devotion to a watchful Christian, is quite unnecessary ; and to a wilful and habitual sinner, the short space of seven days, is very insufficient for the purposes of conversion, and reformation, and admission to this Holy Sacrament.

While we acknowledge the force of this objection, let us not deny the *spirit* of this proposal, of dedicating a week previous to the day of Communion, to devout meditation. Happy those Christians who have

piety and resolution enough, to adopt a series of devotional exercises, specially relating to the duties in question. That some stated period of preparation, be it longer or shorter than seven days, is essentially necessary to “wean our affections from earthly things, and to have our conversation in heaven,” who will be rash enough to deny? The offering of an heart, unprepared by previous meditation, can possess little of the humility and devotedness of a true disciple of Christ, who would “forsake all and follow Him;” and it can carry with it, but feeble hope of his blessing and acceptance. It is a delusion to suppose, that we can be *too* religious; we may, through misguided zeal, through zeal without knowledge, become enthusiasts; but let not enthusiasm be called religion. It is much more probable, my young friends, that we sacrifice the duties of religion, to the vanities, and pleasures, and business of the world; that we “be careful and troubled about many things,” and neglect “the *one thing needful*,”—that “better part, which shall not be taken away” from us. The rational and temperate enjoyments of social life, if they do not interfere with more important interests, are not inconsistent

with the obligations of a Christian ; but if it be necessary that *one* should give way, we cannot doubt for a moment, which it must be. When the divine and spiritual ordinances of religion call upon us, the sacrifice of even our favourite inclinations, and darling affections, must be cheerfully made, be they as dear to us as a right hand, or a right eye ; and we may well blush to admit, that we consider it a *sacrifice*, when, not only our eternal interests are concerned, but the rich and intellectual enjoyments of religion present to us, in themselves, a recompence of reward, as far beyond the sensual and perishable pleasures of the world, as heaven is high above the earth. “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting :” For although, my young friends, none of these attachments and affections need interfere with our devotion to Christ, yet must He be preferred to them all.

If you then desire to become Christians in heart and in spirit, you will come unto Christ, in his Supper, and hold communion with

him. If you desire to grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God and your Saviour, you will come often, as often as you have opportunity; you will come with penitent and contrite hearts, which God hath declared he will not despise. If you desire to be renewed by the Holy Ghost in the spirit of your minds; to be strengthened and refreshed by the sanctifying influences of divine grace dwelling in you, you will come to the Lord's Supper, that you may "dwell in him and he in you:" you will come with faith and thanksgiving; with *faith* in the death and sufferings of Christ, and with *thanksgiving* for his inestimable mercy, infinite love, and wonderful grace, in dying for you. If you desire to mortify sin in your bodies, to crucify your corrupt affections, to be "buried with Christ in his death," and, in him, to be "a new creature;" to "die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness,"—you will go up with him to celebrate the Christian pass-over. If you would commemorate the glorious resurrection and ascension of your Lord, and pray that "your mortal bodies may be made like unto his glorious body," through his mighty power; and "seek those things which be above, where he sitteth at the right

hand of God ;” you will come to his table, and remember them there. You will come, meek, and lowly, to the *foot of the cross*, as the only place where you can behold Jesus, as the Author and Finisher of your faith,” “the Lord our righteousness.” That *cross* is now planted at the Lord’s table: there may we still, as the disciples of the Lord, gaze with the eye of faith upon the crucified Jesus. The ministers of Christ obey the command of their master, “Go ye and prepare the passover.” As the servants of the Lord of the feast, they are sent to say unto you, The Lamb is slain, the supper is ready, and all things are prepared ; come ye to the table. Come then, my young friends, I say unto *you*, “taste and see how gracious the Lord is, how blessed the man that trusteth in Him.” Come, I intreat you, to this heavenly banquet ; this sanctifying feast. “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ?” “Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your *soul* delight itself.” “Incline your ear, and come unto me,” saith God by his prophet ; “hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you ; even the sure

mercies of David." In the language of that prophet I exhort you: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near." Seek Him, my young friends, at his table, at that most holy place in his temple, where his honour dwelleth; where, "if the sinner forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," and come unto him, "He will have mercy upon him and abundantly pardon him." And when you eat of the bread, remember that his holy body was bruised and broken for you: and when ye drink of the cup; remember that his blood, his precious blood, was shed for your sakes and for your salvation. This is the pledge, the proof of your love, your faith, your obedience to him. The *true* Christian cannot stay away, it would be misery to him. He knows the blessedness of that holy Communion; and as earnestly desires to partake of that feast, as the Saviour, *with desire*, desired to give it him. Those of you, therefore, who really wish to serve and please God, to "*love him, because he first loved you,*" who "*seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,*" who resolve to "*continue in his word,*" that ye may be "*his disciples indeed,*" will accept his invitation,—and come to his Supper:

those who do *not*, will stay away. Those among you, my young friends, who love the world better than God, and the riches of this world better than the riches of his grace, will stay away. Those who walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit, who prefer darkness rather than light, and the pleasures of sin for a season, rather than, by patience and suffering to become the children of God, will stay away. Those who live thoughtless, and unsettled lives, with no fixed principles to guide them, with little fear of God before their eyes, who pass by; and give but a transient look at the sufferings of the cross, or view the awful scene only at a distance, will stay away. All these, with one consent, will begin to make excuse. It is well they do not come. They would but add sin to sin, to their greater condemnation. It were *better*, far better, did they forsake sin, and the world, and folly, and thoughtlessness, and then come and offer their gift. But, alas! it is far otherwise. To how large a portion of those I am addressing, may the words of Christ to the unbelieving Jews, often referred to, be truly applied, "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." To whom then, let me ask those who turn their backs upon the

Lord's table, and refuse his blessed invitation, to whom will ye go? Christ, and Christ only, has the words of eternal life; and we know, and are sure, that he only is the Son of God. To whom will ye go?

“Other foundation can no more lay,” and “there is none other name by which you can be saved.” Turn ye then, my young friends, turn ye, for why will ye die? “I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord; turn ye then, and ye shall live.”

Let us Pray.

Grant, we beseech thee, most merciful God, that as these thy servants have “by one Spirit, been baptized into one body of Christ;” so by the same Spirit, they may be admitted into the Holy Communion of his body and blood. That according to the riches of his glory, they may be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in their hearts, by faith: and being rooted and grounded in love, they may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

Awaken in these thy children, O gracious Father, for thy dear Son's sake, a godly sorrow for sin; a steadfast faith in their crucified Redeemer; a holy purpose to lead a new life; and Christian love, and charity to all men. Renew with them, we humbly pray thee, thy covenant of grace, which they have too often forsaken, through the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. And as thou hast *now* given them a hearty desire to present themselves, their souls, and bodies, as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee; so may they continue to serve and please thee in all things; that "as they have *received* the Lord Jesus Christ," so they may henceforth "*walk* with him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith." We ask all in the name, and for the merits, of our only Mediator and Advocate; who hath taught us thus to pray.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the

kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord : And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

THE OFFICE OF CONFIRMATION

BRIEFLY EXPLAINED

IN A SHORT ADDRESS TO THE CANDIDATES ON THE
MORNING OF THE DAY OF CONFIRMATION.

!_____

My Young Friends,

WE are again assembled in this holy place for the purpose of bringing to a conclusion the serious duties which are required by the Church, preparatory to your receiving the solemn rite of Confirmation from the hands of the Lord Bishop of this diocese; and I would endeavour to direct your particular attention to *this* most important consideration: That upon the *impressions* of this day, the moral and religious character of your future life may, in a great measure, depend.

Regard, therefore, I intreat you, this sacred duty, as a most excellent means of grace, afforded you by the Almighty, for your spiritual good; and strive diligently, with prayer, for the divine assistance, to make a right use of this golden opportunity; for if you do so, I know no limit to the blessings that may

follow. "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." But if, on the contrary, you neglect the mercy of God, and turn it into an occasion of *sin*, take heed, lest ye change the blessing into a *judgment*. "From him that hath *not*, shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

Now, in order to preserve in your minds, and hearts, an awakened sense of the sanctity of the engagements you are taking upon yourselves; carefully read over the *Baptismal Service*, and consider, I pray you, the Divine nature and perfections of the "One Living and True God," who so graciously condescends to enter into a covenant of grace with his disobedient and rebellious children; for so must sinful man, *of himself*, be ever regarded in *his* sight. Contemplate, then, his everlasting power, justice, truth, holiness, mercy, and love! and wonder that a being of such infinite perfection, should deign to respect the happiness, eternal happiness, of sinful creatures like yourselves. Let such meditations occupy your thoughts, till the moment of your entrance into the house of God, to dedicate yourselves to his service; and let them be accompanied by a godly fear, lest you "regard iniquity in your hearts,"

while you make an outward profession of faith. And to assist you to attain this happy frame of mind, I have invited you to employ a portion of this much to be remembered morning, in rehearsing with me the Confirmation Service, which you will all be careful to find in your Prayer Books, that you may be prepared to take *your part* in the solemnity, with readiness and understanding, which, though extremely short, will require your strictest attention.

You will observe, then, that the service opens with a short preface or introduction, by the Bishop, or his chaplain; explaining to the young candidates, who are placed in order before him, in the temple of God, the prudent care of the Church, in providing for the edification of her young members; by requiring, before they be admitted to Confirmation, that they be actually instructed in the saving principles of the Christian faith; and be of an age capable of understanding the serious nature of this most important duty; that they may “hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering.” He addresses them thus:

“To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as

shall receive it, the Church has thought good to order, that none hereafter shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments ; and can also answer to such other questions, as in the Short Catechism are contained : which order is very convenient to be observed ; to the end, that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth, and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same ; and also promise, that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things as they, by their own confession, have assented unto."

The Bishop then appeals with impressive solemnity to your hearts and consciences, whether in godly sincerity you approve of the pious care of your spiritual guardians, in bringing you up in the faith of Christ ; and are heartily disposed to confirm the pledges they have given, for your continuance in the same unto your lives' end.

Listen with silent attention to this solemn appeal : "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn

promise and vow that was made in your name, at your Baptism ; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things, which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you ?” And, at its conclusion, be ready to “ give an answer of the hope that is in you ;” and with one heart, and voice, affirm aloud, “ I do.” I do here, in the presence of God, most gratefully and thankfully, acknowledge the excellency of the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ ; and most solemnly resolve, from henceforth, both to live and to die in this faith.

Now, lest ye should think to do this, as of your own sufficiency, the Bishop, in the spirit of humility, proceeds to exhort you :—

“ *Bishop.* Our help is in the name of the Lord.

“ *Ans.* Who hath made heaven, and earth.

“ *Bishop.* Blessed be the name of the Lord !

“ *Ans.* Henceforth, world without end.

“ *Bishop.* Lord hear our prayers.

“ *Ans.* And let our cry come unto thee.”

Then shall the Bishop offer up a prayer for grace. That “ as you have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so you may” now “ walk with him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith,” saying—

“ Let us Pray.

“ Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. Amen.”

With humble hope that the faithful prayer of the Bishop and the Church, for your sanctification, may be heard and answered, you now prepare yourselves to go up to the altar; where the Bishop, after the example of the Apostles, shall lay his hands upon you, again, pray for you, and bless you: beseeching the Author and Giver of all grace, to send down his Holy Ghost into your hearts; “to sanctify you wholly in body, soul, and spirit,” and “to seal you *His* to the day of redemption.”

And as you draw near unto God’s minister for your good, let your hearts draw nigh unto your Father which is in heaven: that his Spirit may “bear witness with your spirit,

that ye are the children of God ;” “ children, by adoption and grace.” And let a fervent *Amen* accompany every word of the following affecting prayer :—

“ Defend, O Lord, this thy child [or this thy servant] with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine for ever ; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.”

After this impressive ceremony shall have been performed over every one severally, and you shall have returned to your proper place : the Bishop adds :—

“ *Bishop.* The Lord be with you.

“ *Ans.* And with thy spirit.”

A mutual interchange of spiritual benediction, that shall prepare you for the solemnity of the Lord’s Prayer, which meekly kneeling upon your knees, you shall mentally repeat after the Bishop.

Let us pray.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass

against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Bishop then prays to Almighty God, that his Spirit may effectually work in the hearts of the confirmed, "both to will, and to do:" that his inward spiritual grace may accompany the outward visible sign; and that his word may be powerful to convert their souls, and confirm their faith, and make them wise unto salvation, through Jesus Christ.

"Almighty and everliving God, who makest us both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable unto thy divine Majesty; we make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certify them (by this sign) of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let thy fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them; let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen."

Before you leave the sanctuary of God,

and go forth into the world to commence a new life, the Bishop supplicates the Almighty, through the mediation of Christ Jesus, to "guide you into all truth;" to "make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you;" "till you all come in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" using the words of one of the beautiful and inspiring Collects of our Church, in which you, and the whole congregation join:—

"O, Almighty and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that, through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen."

The Bishop finally dismisses you, with his blessing; in the name of the Holy Trinity.

"The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. Amen."

And thus concludes the office of Confirmation. But not, I trust, *with the service*, end the godly *impressions* which the solemnity of

this affecting ceremony cannot fail to produce upon the hearts and minds of those "who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity." Long may the Holy Ghost preserve to you a sacred memorial of the Christian duties you shall this day take upon yourselves; not written upon tables of stone, but inscribed upon the fleshly tablets of your hearts by the Spirit of God! Long may this day be sanctified to you, and become a living monument of the blessing of God the Father, of the love of God the Son, and of the fellowship of God the Holy Ghost; a blessed means, by which, through grace, you shall be enabled to "adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things;" and to "bring forth fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life!"

But, if ye do despise unto the Spirit of God, that waiteth to be gracious to you on this day of grace, and quench his holy influences upon your hearts, by departing from grace given; and forsaking the covenant of the Lord, by a return to the world, the flesh, and the devil, *which ye have promised to renounce*: if ye thus deny, in your after lives, the Christian faith which you have professed before the Church; listen to

the words of the Apostle St. Peter, describing the consequences of such a falling away from Christ : " If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning : for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them : " for, adds St. Paul, " If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. "

But I hope, my young friends, that ye " are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul, " through Jesus Christ.

Let me, then, finally exhort you, with the most affectionate concern for your spiritual good, to be careful to maintain, throughout this day, a seriousness of manner and conversation, becoming your " high calling " as Christians. I need not remind you that you are now in the immediate presence of the Most High God ; the searcher of all hearts ; and the " rewarder of them that diligently seek him. " " The Lord is in his holy temple, let all his earth keep silence before him. "

Let the awakening thought, also, that when you go out, he will go with you, incline your hearts to devout communion with him, that your minds being engaged in the service of God, till the solemnities of the Church shall commence, you may "enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise." In the mean time, if sinful companions entice you to change the sacred character of this day into an occasion of levity, idleness, and folly, consent not: be sober, be vigilant, against these enemies of your soul. And after the special duties of the day are over; with the same serious frame of mind; with which you leave the temple of God, return to your homes, and meditate frequently, during the remainder of the day, upon the mercies of God to you, and the promises you have made to Him; and commend your spirit into the hands of the Almighty, with devout prayer and confidence, that he who has graciously begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Give all diligence, therefore, to make your calling and election sure; for now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

And now, my young Christian friends, I leave my humble blessing with you, by the

privilege which is given me as an “ambassador of Christ in his stead;” and I shall cease not to pray for you, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of himself; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance of the saints.”

Let us Pray.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

A SERMON,

PREACHED ON AN EARLY SUNDAY AFTER
CONFIRMATION.

MATT. xxvi. 27.—“*Drink ye all of it.*”

THERE is not one, I trust, of this whole assembly, who has not been received into the Church of Christ by the sacred and regenerating sacrament of Baptism, the ordinance appointed by the great Founder of the Christian religion, for the admission of all people, and nations, and languages, into the covenant of grace. There is not one, therefore, but to whom the words of the text are addressed, either *prospectively*, as to those young persons who are now advanced, or progressively advancing, to that maturity of age, and knowledge of religion, when, under the sanction of the Church, they may be admitted to the privilege of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and become partakers of the benefits and blessings of that holy communion: or *immediately*, as to those who have

long since arrived at years of discretion, and taken upon themselves the sacred obligations of the Christian covenant, and are therefore imperatively called upon to perform this sanctifying duty, in obedience to our Lord's express command, "Drink ye all of it."

Although I might wish more particularly to address those young Christians, who have so lately undertaken the responsibility of their Baptismal Vow, in the apostolical office of Confirmation, yet would I exhort you all, my brethren, as Christians, as those who have willingly, and from choice, after due deliberation and reflection, taken upon you the obligations, and become participators in the promises and blessings of the Gospel. And I entreat you, *first*, to consider seriously what were the *motives* and *principles* which influenced you to form this engagement; and *then*, to inquire strictly, whether you *have* fulfilled, and are still fulfilling, the terms and conditions of your Christian covenant. What, then, I repeat, were the motives and principles which influenced you to enlist under Christ's banners, and to pledge yourselves to *continue* his faithful soldiers and servants unto your lives' end? Was it, let me ask you, a deep and settled conviction

upon the mind, accompanied by a corresponding impression on the heart, of the weakness and corruption of "the natural man," through the prevailing dominion of sin, that constained you to seek a remedy for your helplessness and depravity? And is there *now* any change so salutary in man's natural condition, as to render it *less* necessary to provide against the frailty and wickedness of human nature? Or was it, my brethren, a fearful and awakened sense of the dangerous and perishing state in which mankind, without an interest in a Saviour, are inevitably placed, that brought you unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith? And is the danger farther distant, and the *need* of a Saviour less urgent at one time than at another; or have you less cause *now* to look up to One that is mighty to save? Again: Was it by the inspiring Word of God that you were first taught to seek the kingdom of Christ, and his righteousness; that you learnt the treacherous and destructive nature of the world, the flesh, and the devil; that you were directed to contemplate *these*, as the fatal causes why sin has reigned in our mortal bodies, and death has triumphed in our corruption; why man was robbed of the image of God, de-

privied of the abode of innocence and peace, and reduced to a state of wretchedness and misery? And are the declarations of that sacred and divine revelation less forcible and faithful, in impressing your hearts and minds with the knowledge of these truths? Do the Holy Scriptures cease to admonish you of the power of your spiritual enemies, or to warn you of the prevalence of fleshly lusts, that war against the soul? And do they *now* assure you that the divine likeness is restored, and satisfy you that peace and innocency have resumed their seat in the human heart, and that joy, and gladness, and happiness, and tranquillity, have obtained uninterrupted possession of the souls of men; while temptation and trial, and sorrow and affliction, and sin and misery, are *now* no more known? Or did *conscience*, the voice of the Spirit of God within, rouse you from your lethargy and carelessness, and create in you an uneasiness and disquietude, under the heavy burden of sin; either speaking aloud in the voice of warning the terrors of the Lord, to save you from the wrath to come, or in the persuasive language of mercy, whispering the promises and blessings of repentance, faith, and holiness—liberty to the captive, the opening of the

prison to them that are bound, release from bondage and slavery, and rest from their burdens to the weary and heavy-laden? And here also let me ask you: Has *conscience* left off to speak in the still small voice, or to affright with the thunders of divine vengeance? Are the threatenings and judgments of Almighty God removed for ever to a distance; and are his gracious dealings with the children of men no longer influential, to "turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just?" Is there no "tree of knowledge of *good* and *evil*," now planted within us? no sense of the divine approbation when we do well; no compunctious visitations, or prickings in the heart, when we do evil? Is there, above all, I ask, no *love*, all-prevailing love of Christ constraining us to "cease to do evil," and to "learn to do well?" Yes, my brethren, these abundant means of grace—an humble sense of our frailty and corruption; an indwelling persuasion of our great need of a Saviour; a full assurance of faith, that Jesus Christ alone is that Saviour; the warning and encouraging word of revelation, and the unerring agency of conscience, the Spirit of God within: these motives and reasons of the faith that is in us;

these doctrines, and principles, and graces of the Gospel, by which we take up our cross to follow Christ, as disciples of one Lord, and servants of one Master, and members of a Church of which Jesus is the head: *these* still remain, *in as full force as ever*, to divert us from the “broad way that leadeth to destruction,” and to guide us to that narrow path which leadeth unto life.

No change has taken place in “the natural man,” to authorize a belief of any safety in a continuance in that state. No release has been given from the obligations of the Gospel covenant, that will admit of less *diligence* in making our calling and election sure; or of less *perseverance* in working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

Let us, then, since this is the case, proceed to inquire, as we proposed to do, whether we *have* been faithful, and are *still* faithful in fulfilling the terms and conditions of the Christian covenant. Are we *all*, for universal is the claim, are we *all* acting up to the profession of our faith, without wavering? Are we, in our lives and conversation, striving to “adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour in all things?” Acknowledging as we do, by our sureties, on our public admission

into Christ's church, that "we are born in sin, and the children of wrath," and therein expressing an earnest desire to be "born again" the children of grace—an *acknowledgment* and *desire* which we have since confirmed and ratified in our own hearts, I trust, as well as with our lips—are we, my Christian brethren, while we daily guard against the corruption, the deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of the *natural* man, seeking, with unceasing prayer for divine aid, to be renewed in the spirit of our minds? Are we striving earnestly to "put off the old man, which is corrupt" through sin, and to "put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness?" "For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, all things are become new." Moreover, since ye have received the Spirit of adoption, and have been released from the spirit of bondage, have ye desired to be led by the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit; that the Spirit may bear witness with your spirit, that ye are the children of God? And, since ye were regenerated at the waters of baptism, have ye, my brethren, entered into *this* new and living way, ceasing to be "strangers and foreigners," and

becoming fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God? Have ye securely built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, and in whom are ye also builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit? This is an inquiry, my brethren, of vital importance; for “except ye be born again,” except ye be born of the Spirit, as well as of water, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God, ye cannot be the disciples of Christ. If the foundation of your faith be laid in the sand, the building cannot stand securely: if the root be not sound, the tree cannot be healthy, nor its branches bring forth fruit.

But in taking upon ourselves the obligations of the Christian covenant, we promised, you will remember, to renounce the devil, and all his works; to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh. Let us inquire here also, in what respects we are fulfilling our promise and vow. Can we conscientiously affirm, as in the sight of a holy God, that we are manfully fighting against these spiritual enemies? Do we live in a constant state of warfare and resistance to our great adversary

the devil? Are we as assiduous and active in our defence against his wily and treacherous attacks, as he is represented to be in planning our destruction, continually "walking about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour?" Steadfast in the faith, and confiding in the mighty hand of God, do we wrestle, not only against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world? Taking the whole armour of God, the helmet of salvation, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, are we able to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;" are we able to "withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand?" Instructed by the holy Apostle St. Paul, to "use the world, as not abusing it," and whatever we do, to "do all to the glory of God;" are we careful and cautious, not to be "conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds?" Admonished by the same Apostle, to mortify our members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness; as the things for which the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; are we putting off

all these, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, as those that are Christ's? Exhorted also by St. John, "Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world;" do we "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," from a conviction that "whatsoever of the things of this world we have need of, shall be added unto us?" No principle, however, can be so influential in awakening us to embrace the Gospel, as *that*, which is the key-stone of the whole Christian fabric—a deep sense of our *need* of a Saviour. *This* must be an ever-living memorial of our fallen state, and an ever-inspiring motive to "embrace and hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which God hath given us in his Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ." Bearing, therefore, as we do, his sacred name, do we also take up our cross, confess him before men, and follow him? Do we, with St. Peter, readily acknowledge, that we know, and are sure that he has the words of eternal life, and that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Are we persuaded, that for the lost and perishing

condition of mankind through sin, there is but *one* remedy, but *one* Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; that, therefore, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved;" that other foundation can no man lay; and, that "whosoever *believeth* in Him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life?" Again: animated by this faith, do we gratefully and thankfully impute to the gracious and merciful condescension of the eternal Son of God, in leaving his glory in heaven, and taking our nature upon him; to the mighty and prevailing efficacy of his ministry; to the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction of his sufferings and death upon the cross; to his miraculous resurrection from the grave, and triumphant ascension into the glory which he had before with the Father; to the all-powerful operation and influence of his Holy Spirit, which he hath sent to comfort the world, and to guide men into all truth; and to his ever-availing intercession with the Father, now that he is raised by the right hand of God, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins;—Do we, I ask, gratefully and thankfully impute to this per-

fect obedience of Christ Jesus, to the will of his heavenly Father, to this glorious finishing of the work which his Father gave him to do, our freedom and deliverance from the wrath of God, and from the slavery of sin; our restoration to the favour and presence of our heavenly Father, and our blessed assurance of his mercy and acceptance; our triumphant release from the sting of death, and from the dominion of the grave; and our final and blessed hope of a resurrection to eternal life, and of a glorified admission into the kingdom of heaven? Such, truly, are the doctrines and *articles of the Christian Faith*, which we have pledged ourselves to believe in; and if such *be* our steadfast and established faith in our crucified and glorified Redeemer, that we can do nothing without him, but must perish everlastingly; and that “we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us,” for his “grace is sufficient for us;” permit me to put this apparently strong profession of faith to a trial; that we may be enabled to judge fairly, from a test which will undeniably prove, whether it be in us a sound and practical profession of faith; a faith, careful to maintain good works, and bringing forth the fruits of holiness; a faith,

working by love, and keeping God's holy will and commandments. That *test*, my Christian brethren, is "the command of Christ, "Drink ye all of it;" "This do in remembrance of me;" a command enforcing a *duty*, the faithful discharge of which comprehends all that is generally necessary to salvation. Now, *that duty*, most sacred of duties, is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, instituted by Christ himself, and left by him, as a rich and invaluable legacy, to all who "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Try this standard of our Christian faith, we can have no hesitation in affirming, a just estimate may be formed of our spiritual state. No Christian will deny the *obligation* of the covenant he has entered into: no Christian can suppose that he can knowingly violate that covenant, without being wilfully guilty of a breach of his engagement, and therefore, without losing all the benefits and advantages arising from it. Christ Jesus, we have seen, is the blessed Mediator of the Christian covenant; he hath made peace between God and man; he hath opened to us a living way into heaven; by him, and through him alone, we become "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." That

same holy Mediator, having provided for our admission into the covenant of mercy, hath also richly supplied us with a special *means of grace*, by which we may fulfil the conditions, and enjoy the blessings of that covenant. By the sanctifying Sacrament of his Last Supper, he would put a seal upon your faith, and give life to your practice. For there is no Christian duty, no religious communion, no spiritual exercise, by a faithful discharge of which, we are so fully enabled to comply with the obligations of the Gospel, and to fulfil the engagements we have entered into, at our Baptism, and ratified at our Confirmation, as the blessed communion of the body and blood of Christ. There is no mean of grace, by which we can so constantly keep alive an awakened sense of the destructive nature and deceitfulness of sin, or by which we can so carefully cherish a daily conviction of our great *need* of a Saviour, and preserve an anxious desire to come unto him; no duty, by which we can so diligently practise the gifts and graces of "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" no divine ordinance, in which we can so faithfully "keep Christ crucified before our eyes," and "shew the Lord's death until his coming

again ;” no Christian appointment, by which we can so truly “ die unto sin, and live unto righteousness,” or be “ renewed in the spirit of our minds,” and “ walk in newness of life,” as by a regular and humble attendance at the table of the Lord ; no safeguard can shield you more effectually from the power of the great adversary ; no retreat can more surely secure you from the undue influence and seduction of the world ; no Christian discipline be more conducive to mortify the whole body of sin, and to subdue our carnal and sensual passions and affections ; than a serious and devout preparation for this holy Sacrament : lastly, there is no divine instruction, by which we may obtain such abundant promises of grace and strength to perform *this* and every other Christian duty ; by which we may hope to be so fully endued with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and through which, we may so truly experience the power of God unto salvation, as the heavenly banquet, the spiritual feast, provided by our Saviour, for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls, in his body and blood. If then, my Christian brethren, these things be so ; if

your love to God and your Saviour can never be so sincerely exercised, as in a faithful obedience to the command, " Drink ye all of it," " This do in remembrance of me ;" and if your love to one another can in no way more truly distinguish you as the disciples of Jesus, than in the Christian union and communion of the Supper of the Lord ; if the devout, and worthy celebration of this holy Sacrament, be the most solemn acknowledgment of your Baptismal Vow, the most perfect confirmation of your Christian faith, and the most sacred pledge of your Christian life and practice,— " I beseech you, brethren, and exhort you, by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more, for ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for you ; this do in remembrance of me : after the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood ; this do ye,

as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me; for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

FINIS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

A

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