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S E R M O N S.

BY

JOHN CAWOOD, M.A.

OF ST. EDMUND HALL, OXFORD, AND PERPETUAL CURATE  
OF BEWDLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# SERMONS.

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## SERMON I.

### THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD.

MATT. iii. 16, 17.

*And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water ; and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him ; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

OUR scriptural church yearly celebrates the great facts of our Saviour's abode on earth, and His return to heaven. She celebrates His birth, His temptation, His death, His resurrection, His ascension to His Father, and His sending of the Holy Spirit. In this she acts wisely ; for while she recalls to our memory the great facts which concern our Saviour, she presents also to our hearts the great doctrines which concern our salvation. In one instance our church celebrates a doctrine, the doctrine of the Trinity, and dignifies the day on

which I speak with the name of "Trinity Sunday." This doctrine is of essential, universal, and eternal importance. Our reformers believed it to be revealed in the words of our text. "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him; and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

These words *reveal a great doctrine for our belief, and afford much instruction for our practice.*

Let us contemplate,

#### I. THE GREAT DOCTRINE WHICH OUR TEXT REVEALS.

As the Baptist was preaching on the banks of Jordan, multitudes came to him to be baptized. Among these multitudes came Jesus, more lowly, yet more exalted, than all the sons of men. John said to Jesus, "I have need to be baptized of thee; and comest thou to me?" Jesus replied to John, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Then John baptized Jesus. For though Jesus had "no spot of sin," and therefore had no need of baptism; yet, "to fulfil all righteousness" in His own person, as our representative, and to become a pattern to all His followers, He was, as a sinner, baptized. "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water praying; and lo, the heavens were opened

unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending, in a bodily shape, like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son; in whom I am well pleased." What a scene is here disclosed! The heaven of heavens opened; the Spirit of God in bodily shape descending down the sky; the light of glory shining on the streams of Jordan! And what an assembly is here revealed! God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all at once perceptible to the senses of man. We see the person of God the Son; we behold the form of God the Spirit; we hear the voice of God the Father.

At the baptism of Jesus,

1. *We see the person of God the Son.*

Jesus, as the Son of Man, stood on the banks of Jordan, and received baptism from the hand of His forerunner. But though Jesus was baptized as a sinner, yet was he perfectly sinless; though he had taken upon Him our nature, yet was He truly God. He was Jesus! He was God incarnate; God in our nature; God with us; God our Saviour. For thus said the Baptist, "I, indeed, baptize you with water unto repentance; but He," even Jesus, "who cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather the wheat into His garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." These words proclaim the divinity of our Lord. For what

creature is so exalted, that the greatest of the sons of men is unworthy to touch His feet? What creature can judge the world, and unerringly separate the righteous from the wicked? What creature can exalt the righteous to everlasting glories, and consign the wicked to everlasting fires? No creature can do any of these things; but Jesus can do them all; Jesus, therefore, is not a creature, but the Creator; He is "God over all, blessed for ever." But, O wondrous! Jesus, *as* a sinful creature, was baptized in the waters of Jordan.

Again: in the baptism of Jesus,

2. *We behold the form of God the Spirit.*

The gates of heaven, as at the death of Stephen, were opened; the throne of God, as it were, appeared to mortal sight; and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form from the Father, and rested on the Son. Whether the Holy Ghost assumed the *shape* of a dove, or descended in a luminous body with a *hovering motion* like that of a dove, we shall not decide;\* but this descent of the Spirit not only convinced the Baptist that Jesus was Messiah, but fulfilled the prophecy that "the Spirit of the Lord God should rest upon Him." (John i. 32—34. Isa. lxi. 1.) Besides, His name is declared, "The Spirit of God;" and the Spirit of God *is* God. We hence conclude that the Holy Ghost, who descended in a bodily shape like a dove on Jesus Christ, is not an *attribute* of the

\* The Spirit visibly descended upon Him, resembling a dove, perhaps in shape as well as in its hovering motion.—*Robinson.*



Deity, or a *quality* of the Godhead, but a *real*, and *distinct*, and *divine* person, *equal to the Father, and to the Son*, TRULY AND ETERNALLY GOD. Further:

At the baptism of Jesus,

3. *We hear the voice of God the Father.*

“A voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” The language of the Father, whose divinity will not be questioned, and needs not to be proved, implies the divinity of the Son. The Father calls Jesus, not a Son, but “The Son;” not only “The Son,” but “My Son;” not only “My Son,” but “My beloved Son;” not only “My beloved Son,” but “My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Our Lord employed, and the Jews understood, this expression, “The Son of God,” as implying divinity, or equality with the Father. “The Jews sought to kill Jesus, because He said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” (John v. 17, 18.)

And our Lord, so far from denying their conclusion, instantly confirms it, and commands “all men to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” For “He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who hath sent Him.” (John v. 23.) “Thou art my beloved Son;” “Thou art,” emphatically, “that beloved Son of mine, whose advent has been so long foretold, whose salvation has been so much desired.” The language of the holy baptist corresponds with the language of the evangelical prophet, “Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put

my Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." (Isa. xlii. 1.) We have in these words the testimony of God the Father, that Jesus is Messiah; and Messiah, we know, is God.

Thus, therefore, does the text reveal the *distinct personality* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit. The Father *speaks*, the Son *is baptized*, the Spirit, in a bodily shape, *descends*. They have distinct *names*—Father, Son, Spirit. They are in distinct *places*—the Father in heaven; the Son on earth; the Spirit between earth and heaven. They have distinct *offices*—the Father *sends*, the Spirit *is sent*, the Son *receives* the Spirit. On the Son the Spirit *rests*; the Father *approves* the Son; the Son, for the sake of sinners, *fulfils* all righteousness. If there be not three persons in the Godhead, what can be the meaning of the text? We say, therefore, confidently with the ancients, "Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity." For verily, "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal." "Glory, therefore, be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

Having contemplated the great doctrine which the text reveals; we proceed, as we proposed, to consider,



## II. THE PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION WHICH THE TEXT AFFORDS.

### 1. *The Trinity in Unity effect the salvation of mankind.*

*The eternal Father* so loved the world that He gave His only begotten and beloved Son to the death of the Cross, that whosoever believeth in Him might be saved; for He would not save mankind from destruction, without an atonement for their sin. Hence *the eternal Son* is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world; slain by divine appointment, and slain as a sacrifice to atone for our sins. In the fulness of time a body was prepared for the Son of God, and He appeared in our nature and in our world. He was born at Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth, baptized in Jordan, tempted in the wilderness, rejected in Jerusalem, crucified on Calvary. He came to make a full atonement for sin, to work out a perfect righteousness for believers, and to bring all His sons to glory. To effect these immortal purposes, He shed that "precious blood," which "cleanses from all sin," and procured that "*eternal Spirit*," who renews the hearts of believers. The Holy Spirit affords to believers grace sufficient for all the duties of the Christian life, and for all the conflicts of the Christian warfare. He sprinkles the blood of Jesus on the consciences of them that repent, sheds the love of God in the hearts of them that believe, and gives an earnest of heaven to them that are sanctified.

In the redemption of sinners, Father, Son, and Spirit, display united might, partake united pleasure, and obtain united glory. The Son of God stood in mortal guise on the banks of Jordan; the Spirit of God in mystic form rested on His head; and the voice of God in heavenly melody proclaimed to all around, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." THE ETERNAL THREE IN ONE are well pleased with the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. And happy are they, who are by the Spirit of God created anew in Christ Jesus, and through Him made heirs of life eternal! "Through the Son and by one Spirit, they have access to the Father;" and the love of the Father, and the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, are ever with them.

2. *How great is the salvation of sinners!* In the salvation of sinners all the power, and glory, and riches of the Trinity were displayed. The *love* of the Father, the *blood* of the Son, and the *grace* of the Spirit, effect our salvation. The Son became incarnate; the Spirit descended from heaven; the Father spake from His throne. The greatness of the agents implies the greatness of the work; and of all divine works the salvation of sinners is the greatest. In every view the redemption of sinners is great. Who were redeemed? Countless millions of souls. Who was the Redeemer? The eternal Trinity. How was redemption effected? By the blood of the Lamb. From what are souls redeemed? From everlasting punishment in hell. To what are

redeemed souls exalted? To everlasting glory in heaven. No wonder that the apostle calls the salvation of sinners a great salvation. No wonder that angels with intense desire study its mysteries. No wonder that saints and seraphim will ever sing, as the noblest song of heaven, "Salvation to God and the Lamb." Have our hearts been filled with the love of the Father? Have our sins been washed away in the blood of the Son? Have our souls been renewed by the power of the Spirit? Are we partakers of this great salvation?

3. *How beneficial are the means of grace!* Our blessed Lord would not exercise the office of teacher until He was divinely commissioned and qualified for the work: and *in the use of the means of grace* He was commissioned and qualified. When he was baptized and while He was praying, the heaven of heavens was opened over Him, the Spirit of God descended upon Him, and the voice of the Father wondrously approved Him! The Spirit of God cannot be expected unless we use the means of grace; nor can we expect the Spirit of God in using the means of grace, unless we pray to God while we use them. But, we repeat, "When Jesus was baptized, and while He was praying, the heavens were opened over Him, and the Spirit descended upon Him." Let us come, therefore, regularly to the worship of God, to the hearing of the Gospel, and to the table of the Lord; and while we diligently use these means of grace, let us pray to God, like our Saviour, and then the Spirit of God will descend on

our souls. “The heavens,” saith Bishop Hall, “are never shut, while either of the sacraments is duly administered and rightly received: neither do the heavens ever thus open, without the descent of the Holy Ghost.”

The sacrament of the Lord’s supper will, we humbly trust, be duly administered this day; and will, we earnestly pray, be by you rightly received; and, while ye do receive it, O may the heavens be opened over your heads, and the Spirit of God descend on your souls, through Jesus Christ our Saviour!

To conclude:

1. *The doctrine of the Trinity is clearly revealed in the Scriptures; and the belief of this doctrine is essential to your salvation.* Do you believe this doctrine? Salvation is the great work of the Trinity. Are you neglecting this great salvation? God the Father is well pleased in His beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. And will you be offended in Him? Will you disobey His command; will you neglect His sacrament; will you grieve His Spirit? Let the guilty conscience answer!

2. *But, ye careless ones,—*Father, Son, and Spirit, united in love and power to save you; and will you unite with Satan and the world to destroy yourselves?—Father, Son, and Spirit, will be well pleased in your salvation, and will you despise the love of the Father, trample on the blood of the Son, and quench the grace of the Spirit? Will you be well pleased with sin, with misery, with ruin? But, my

brethren, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."—Pause in your careless career. Consider your ways. Flee from the wrath to come. Flee from sin. Flee to Christ. Pray for the Holy Spirit to enlighten your minds, to renew your souls, to make you new creatures in Christ Jesus. Then will the Father be well pleased with you; He will reckon you among His children, preserve you unto His kingdom, and ye shall be His in that day "when He makes up His jewels."

But,

3. *Ye Christian believers*, be comforted, be encouraged. How complete is the work of your redemption! How perfect is the safety of your souls! The Father, the Son, and the Spirit, effected your salvation. The Father loved you with an everlasting love; the Son died for your sins on the cross; the Spirit has renewed your souls in the image of God. You are "new creatures in Christ Jesus." O, honour the Father, love the Son, cherish the Spirit. For, if you would enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Trinity, you must have no fellowship with sin, no agreement with Satan, no union with the world. But you must be holy in all manner of conversation, and zealous of all good works. You must be diligent in all the means of grace; and "pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." You must ever live by faith in Christ Jesus, and be obedient unto death.

Then in the last day, when Jesus shall come in glory to judge the world, the gates of heaven will be opened to your souls, and the voice of the Son will invite you into the kingdom of God. “Come, ye children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Now to the King of glory, to the Prince of peace, and to the Spirit of love, three Persons and one God, be equal, undivided, and everlasting praise. Amen.

## SERMON II.

THE WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN INVITED TO  
CHRIST.

MATT. xi. 28.

*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

How different is the conduct of the King of kings from the conduct of the kings of the earth! The kings of the earth, turning their eyes from sights of misery and shutting their ears to sounds of distress, invite to their banquets the healthy, the wealthy, and the gay. But the King of kings went through the world in search of the poor, the diseased, and the distressed; and wherever He found them, He invited them to His feast. "Come unto Me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In considering these words, let us notice,

1st. *The Inviter*, "the Lord Jesus Christ;" 2ndly, *The invited*, "those who labour and are heavy



laden ;” 3rdly, *The invitation*, “ Come unto Me ;” and, 4thly, *The promise made to the invited*, “ And I will give you rest.”

We are, then, to notice,

I. THE INVITER ; “ The Lord Jesus Christ.”

Jesus is the Son of God ; and He is so the Son, as to be the equal of God. “ He is God over all blessed for ever.” Just before our text, He asserts His equality with the Father : “ All things,” says He, “ are delivered to Me of my Father ; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.” In the Son is all the fullness of the Godhead : the Father gave the Son for our redemption ; and we have redemption through His blood. In Christ Jesus are all things needful for our present peace and everlasting salvation. The Inviter to the feast of salvation is Jesus, and we cannot *deny his authority* ; for the Father hath sent Him, and said, “ This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him.” The Inviter is Jesus, and we *cannot distrust His word* ; for He is “ the faithful and true witness ;” “ He is the truth.” The Inviter is Jesus, and we *cannot question his power* ; for “ to Him all power on earth and heaven is given.” The Inviter is Jesus, and we *cannot doubt his willingness* ; because “ He laid down His life for us.” “ He died for our sins ;” “ He rose again for our justification ;” He is now at the right hand of God, interceding for us ; and He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto



God by Him. Such then is the Inviter ; such is Jesus Christ, who cries, " Come unto Me."

We proceed to notice,

II. THE INVITED. " Those who labour, and are heavy laden."

A man, with a heavy burden so fastened to his body, that through day and night he can neither endure it a moment, nor lay it aside, nor carry it along, labours much and wastes his strength, toils hard and spends his spirits. He sighs and groans, staggers and trembles under his burden. How weary must he be of his toils ! how desirous to be free from his load ! This wretched man is a figure of those who are weary and heavy laden with sin. For, by the weary and heavy laden, our Lord does not mean all mankind ; for, though all men are corrupt in nature, and sinful in practice, all men do not feel their corruption and sinfulness. Nor does our Lord mean even all those who are oppressed with worldly sorrows ; for the heaviest of worldly sorrows, as in the case of Cain and Judas, work only despair and death. But our Lord means those persons who, by the Spirit of God, are convinced of their natural corruption and actual wickedness. These persons are weary and heavy laden. Their hearts faint, being weary of sin. Their souls mourn, being burdened with guilt. The remembrance of sin is now grievous, the defilement of sin is hateful, the burden of sin is intolerable. Of all burdens sin is the heaviest. Sin pressed Satan into the bottom-

less pit ; sin, when laid on Jesus Christ, filled His soul with storms of agony, and forced from his body streams of blood. Our Lord, indeed, as the Lamb of God, bore on His spotless soul the sins of the whole world ; but one sin is heavy enough to press our souls to hell. In the burden of sin is a threefold pressure—the pressure of defilement—the pressure of punishment—and the pressure of guilt. How weary must we be under this threefold load ! How sadly must we cry, “ O wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from this body of death ? Who relieve me from this burden of sin ? ”

All the sins of the weary and heavy laden, all their sins of ignorance and negligence, of ingratitude and wilfulness, of rebellion and defiance ; all their sins against truth and mercy, against knowledge and conviction, of omission and commission ; all their sins of all kinds in the most gloomy colours of condemnation, and most frightful shapes of guilt ;—all their sins in one huge mass rise up against them, and in one huge mass press heavily on their souls. Under this heavy load of guilt “ they are wearied, perplexed, hardly bested.” “ Mine iniquities,” they cry, “ have gone over my head ; as a sore burden, they are too heavy for me to bear. I am troubled ; I am bowed down greatly ; I cannot look up ; my heart faileth me.”

When men, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, recollect how long they have lived in sin, and how careless they have been of their souls ; when they hate themselves for committing sin, and yet con-

tinue to commit it ; when they know how offensive sin is to the Almighty, and yet continue to offend Him ; when they fear that their sins are too numerous to be forgiven, and yet hourly increase the number ; when they fear that their hearts are too vile to be renewed, and yet see them hourly grow viler ; when they feel the stings of an accusing conscience, and dread the wrath of an offended God ; when they know that they may die the next moment, and that if they die next moment, they must perish for ever : when their spirits are thus oppressed with a burden of infinite guilt, and their hearts are thus afflicted with the guiltiness of eternal death ; then, my brethren, then are they weary and heavy laden ; and then, my brethren, then it is that Jesus Christ invites them to His rest.

But this leads us to notice,

### III. THE INVITATION : “ Come unto Me.”

How gracious is the *manner*, how glorious is the *meaning*, of this invitation. “ Come unto Me !”

#### 1. *How gracious is the manner of this invitation !*

This invitation is *tender*. The weary and the heavy laden secretly weep over their sins, and earnestly desire deliverance. Jesus sees their secret tears, and hears their earnest desires. As the physician of souls, He sees nothing but their disease ; as the friend of sinners, He hears nothing but their distress ; and for healing and peace invites them to Himself. He neither reproaches them for their ingratitude, nor reproveth them for their disobedience ;

but knowing their wretchedness, and feeling for their infirmities, He stretches out to them His arm of mercy, and opens for them His bosom of repose. "Come, ye weary and heavy laden sinners; come, come unto Me."

This invitation is *free*. Jesus prescribes no conditions, demands no services, requires no merits, asks for no recommendations. He only says, "Come unto Me!" "With all your burdens, and weariness, and weakness; with all your sins, and guilt, and worthlessness, Come unto Me! If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. If any sinner be weary and heavy laden, let him come to Me for rest."

This invitation is *universal*. ALL who are weary of sin may come; all who desire to be saved may come. As there is no sin, for which the blood of Christ cannot atone, and no heart which the Spirit of Christ cannot renew; so there is no sinner whom Christ cannot save. All the ends of the earth may look to Him and be saved. But as the sick only seek the physician, as the thirsty only pant for the fountain, as the weary only long for rest; so lost and perishing sinners only will come to Christ for salvation.

2. *How glorious then is the meaning of this invitation, "Come unto Me!"*

To come to Christ is as perishing sinners to believe in Christ as the only Saviour. "He that cometh to Me," says our Lord, "shall never hunger; and he that believeth in Me, shall never thirst."

(John vi. 37.) Penitent and perishing sinners, weary and heavy laden with their guilt, come by faith to Christ crucified, and seek salvation in Him. Touched with the deepest feeling of their perishing state, with neither goodness, nor strength, nor hope in themselves; but persuaded of His power and willingness to save, as weary and heavy laden, as lost and miserable sinners, they come to Christ alone for salvation. By faith they lay hold on Christ; by faith in Christ their souls are justified; and their souls being justified by faith in Christ, they have peace with God.

In the blood of Christ is an atonement for our sins; in His righteousness a justification for our souls; in His Spirit a sanctification for our natures; in His grace an infallible support; in His merits an everlasting reward. “The weary and heavy laden,” therefore, come to Christ *guilty*, that they may be *pardoned*; *unrighteous*, that they may be *justified*; *polluted*, that they may be *sanctified*; *weak*, that they may be *strengthened*; *worthless*, that they may be *glorified*. “Come,” then, says Jesus, “come unto Me!” Stay neither to atone for your sins, nor to recommend yourselves to God, nor to qualify yourselves for heaven; but come at once to Me; come now; come as you are; come with all your sins, and defilements, and unworthiness; “come to ME,” and my blood will cleanse you from sin; my righteousness will justify your souls; my Spirit will sanctify your natures; my grace will support you



in the Christian warfare ; my merits will enthrone you in glory.

But we hasten, lastly, to weigh,

IV. THE PROMISE TO THE INVITED. “ And I will give you rest.”

The word *rest* signifies both rest and refreshment, and both as *rest* and *refreshment*, it is a free gift. It is a rest which the world can neither give nor take away ; it is a refreshment suitable and precious to the soul ; it is spiritual rest ; it is spiritual refreshment. We cannot claim this rest as a right, nor deserve it as a reward. Were it to be bought, we are poor, and cannot buy it ; were it to be won, we are weak, and cannot win it. Jesus bought it for us, and bought it dearly ; He bought it with His own blood ; and now, we repeat, both as a rest and a refreshment, He bestows it freely.

1. “ *I will give you rest.*”

True faith is not faith in speculation, but faith in motion ; it is a faith which *comes* to Christ for salvation. But the motion of the soul is desire ; and heavy laden sinners above all things desire Christ ; and desiring Christ, they believe in Him, and believing in Him, they find rest to their souls. For Christ delivers them from the terrors of the law, from the tyranny of sin, from the power of Satan, from the love of the world, and from the fear of death. This deliverance, in beautiful correspondence with the character of the weary and heavy

laden, is called REST. It is rest to the weary ; ease to the oppressed ; peace to the troubled ; joy to the mourner ; freedom to the slave ; salvation to the lost. It is rest ; it is the rest of the soul ; it is spiritual rest ; it is an emblem and a foretaste of perfect and eternal rest in heaven. “ I will give you rest.” The Lord laid on Me the iniquities of you all ; I bore your griefs, and I carried your sorrows ; I was wounded for your transgressions, I was bruised for your iniquities ; I bore your sins in my own body on the tree ; I bore your load, and I will now give you my rest. I will free you from your burden ; I will deliver you from your guilt ; I will acquit you of your sin ; I will justify you ; I will not only wash away your sins in my blood, but I will clothe your souls in my righteousness ; and ye shall appear before my Father, as righteous as Myself. “ For God hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us ; that ye, who knew no righteousness, might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Again :

2. “ *I will give you refreshment ;*” “ I will refresh you.”

Faith in Christ ensures to all believers all the benefits of His life, and death, and intercession ; and the constant enjoyment of these benefits is a constant refreshment of the soul. When this refreshment is enjoyed, what a heaven pervades the tranquil breast ; what a song moves the happy tongue ! “ O Lord, I will praise thee, for thou wast angry with me ; but thine anger is turned away, and thou

comfortest me." When Jesus pardons the penitent believer ; when He calms the troubled conscience ; when He heals the broken heart ; when He comforts the afflicted spirit ; when He gives peace, and hope, and joy, in the Holy Ghost ; O, how divinely does He refresh the soul ! How sweet is the peace which passeth all understanding ; how cheering is the hope which is full of glory ; how transporting is the joy which is an ante-past of heaven !

1. And now, in conclusion, *what shall we say to those among you, who have not felt the burden of sin, nor found rest in Christ?* The conceit of earthly felicity or the fancy of mortal goodness may have kept you from seeking rest in Jesus. And you may be seeking rest in the possession or in the pursuit of the honours, or pleasures, or riches of the world. But in these things you cannot find rest. There is a restlessness in your spirit, which no creature can quiet. There is a vacancy in your heart, which the world cannot fill. In your best moments, you are far from rest ! You are ever uneasy, dissatisfied, distressed. Your own heart often condemns you ; your own conscience often alarms you ; you dare look neither backward on your past life, nor inward into your own heart, nor forward to death and judgment. Your time often hangs miserably on your hands ; your thoughts often sadly disturb your souls. You hurry from yourself into company ; you return to yourself and are restless and miserable. The soul, my brethren, can find rest only in Christ. Christ only can give rest to the



soul. None will desire the rest of Christ, but those who feel the burden of sin. Only the weary and heavy laden will come to Christ for rest; and they must come to Christ, as perishing sinners to an almighty and all-merciful Saviour. He is willing to receive, and He is able to save all, who come to Him. He now invites you to Himself. "Come, ye sinners, come unto Me! and him that cometh unto Me, I will not cast out." O let not Jesus say of any of you, whom He has this day invited to Himself, "Ye would not come to Me that ye might have life." May God incline your hearts to come to Christ! May you find rest in Him!

2. *But you, whose eyes have been opened, and whose conscience has been awakened, you feel that you are sinful, and you know that you have sinned. You are heavy laden with your iniquities; you mourn under the burden of your sins.* As the weary labourer longs for the evening's repose; as the burdened traveller wishes to lay down his load; so do you desire rest in Christ. As if He called you by name, Jesus now invites you to Himself. "Come unto Me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Fear not that your burden is too heavy to be removed, or your sin too great to be forgiven; for the blood of Christ can pardon the most aggravated sin; His Spirit can sanctify the most polluted nature. Christ now waits to be gracious; He waits to pour all the virtues of His blood and Spirit on you. Behold! now is the accepted time. By His word and Spirit

Jesus invites you to His rest. Come then to Jesus; and He will remove your burden; He will pardon your sin; He will give you peace. Distrust not His faithfulness; question not His power; doubt not His willingness. Come to Jesus; come to Him without fear; come to Him without delay; come to Him in prayer; come to Him in faith; come to Him now, and He will give rest to your souls.

But, finally :

3. *How happy are you, my brethren, who having once laboured and fainted under the burden of sin, have come to Jesus Christ and found rest in Him!* In all the doubts and distresses of your earthly pilgrimage, you can cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you, and give you rest. In all the dangers and conflicts of the Christian warfare, you can look to Jesus, and He will strengthen your heart, and grant you peace. In all the toils and trials of this mortal state you can rely on your Saviour, and from His presence, streams of refreshment will flow into your souls. For, as perishing sinners, ye have believed in Christ unto salvation; and now, through faith in His blood, and the sanctification of His Spirit, you have obtained the pardon of sin, and peace with God, and spirituality of mind, and holiness of life; and in the pardon of sin, in peace with God, in spirituality of mind, and in holiness of life, “you have entered into rest.” Jesus has already given you the rest of grace; and, when this life is ended, He will give you the rest of glory. For, Jesus is the Eternal God; and “the Eternal

God is your refuge, and underneath you are His everlasting arms." Nor will He, who has already given rest to your souls, cease to support and refresh you until He bring you in triumph to that rest, which remains for His people in heaven !

## SERMON III.

## THE HUMILIATION OF THE SON OF MAN.

MATT. viii. 20.

*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

THE Jews, when our Saviour was born, ardently expected their long-promised Messiah. They fancied, also, that, when He was come, He would not only deliver them from the yoke of the Romans, and restore to them the glory of their kingdom, but establish his throne in Jerusalem, and make them the masters of the world ! Hence, when our Lord came out of his mysterious solitude in the wilderness, preaching the Gospel and working miracles, many believed that he was the Messiah. “ And a certain scribe came to Him, and said, Master, I will follow thee, whithersoever thou goest.” This scribe secretly desired a place in that worldly kingdom, which he fancied our Lord was about to establish. But, the answer of our Lord would quell his aspiring

hopes, and quench his kindling ambition. For, Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head!"

*The divine glory, the wonderful humiliation, and the great work of the Son of man,* will be the subjects of the following discourse.

Let us consider,

### I. THE DIVINE GLORY OF THE SON OF MAN.

1. *The divine glory of our Lord is implied in the expression, "The Son of man."* For, if our Lord were merely man, this expression, "The Son of man," would have the same meaning when applied to Him, as when applied to any other man. Why should He be called emphatically the "Son of man," since every other son of Adam is the same? Without reference to his divine glory, this description of Him, as "The Son of man," would be altogether unmeaning. But, our Lord is "the Son of man" in a peculiar sense. For He is the eternal and only begotten Son of God, but for the express purpose of saving lost mankind, He became "the Son of man:" He assumed our nature in its lowest guise, that He might die for our sins on the cross. "For God sent forth His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3, mar.) There is, therefore, mighty meaning in the expression, "The Son of man." It means "God incarnate: God our Saviour." It means that the Son of God, who is the brightness of

the Father's glory, and the express image of His person, became the Son of man, that He might wash us from our sins in His own blood.

2. *The holy Scriptures clearly indicate the wondrous incarnation and divine glory of Jesus Christ, as "The Son of Man."*

Before He came into the world, it was written of Him, "Let thy hand, O God, be upon the man of thy right hand—upon the Son of man whom thou madest strong for Thyself." (Ps. viii. 17.) "I saw," says Daniel, "in the night visions one, like the Son of man, come with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days, to receive the dominion which shall not pass away; and the kingdom, which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) "No man," says Christ, "hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven." (John iii. 13.) "Hereafter," says Christ, "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man." (John i. 51.) And at the end of His temptation, in the night of His agony, in the morning of His resurrection, and in the noon of His ascension, angels, as ministering servants, ascended and descended on Jesus Christ, as "the Son of man." The Son of man had on earth "power to work miracles, and to forgive sins." "The Son of man sowed the good seed, or the word of God in the hearts of men: the Son of man was Lord even of the Sabbath-day." St. Stephen, just before he was slain for Christ, "saw the Son of man through the opened



heaven, standing in glory at the right-hand of God." (Acts vii. 55.) And St. John, in mystic visions, saw one like the Son of man arrayed with glorious majesty. "And when I saw Him," says St. John, "I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the First and the Last. I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. And have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 13—18.) "God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man, whom He has ordained, even Jesus Christ, and God has given His Son Jesus Christ authority to execute judgment in that day, because He is the Son of man." (Acts xvii. 31; John v. 27.) The terrific sign and glorious coming of the Judge of all are the sign and the coming of the Son of man. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory." (Matt. xxv. 31.) Of the wicked, the Son of man will be ashamed in the day of judgment; but the righteous in that day shall be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of man. "Whosoever," says Christ, "shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but whosoever denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." (Luke xii. 8, 9.) "For the Son of man will send forth His angels," first to separate the righteous and the wicked, and then to cast the wicked into hell, and conduct the righteous to heaven!



Such, then, is the divine glory of Jesus Christ, as  
“the Son of man.”

We proceed to consider,

## II. THE TEMPORARY HUMILIATION OF THE SON OF MAN.

“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head!”

1. *He was in the beginning with God, and was God; He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.* From all eternity He dwelt in glory one with the Father. Heaven was his throne; angels were his worshippers. But He unrobed Himself of his glory, and descended from his throne. He assumed our nature, and came into our world. “He was made flesh and dwelt among us.” “He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” He was born in a stable; He grew up in obscurity; He laboured for his bread. “He was despised and rejected of men.” Domestic animals are always sure of food and shelter, but food and shelter were not always sure to the Son of man! He knew not in the morning whether He should refresh his body through the day; nor where He should rest his head at night! Nay: the untamed beast and the uncaged bird were more sure of rest and refreshment than the Son of man. The young lions seek their meat from God, and then rest in their dens: the fowls of heaven have their habitations in the trees,

and rest among the branches: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head!"

2. "*Not where to lay his head!*" *Does this language intimate that Jesus sometimes passed his nights as a wild bird in the open air, or as a wild beast in some secret cave? Verily, the solitary hill, where human foot scarce trod—the lonely vale, where wild beasts often prowled, were not seldom the scenes of the sleepless, but not prayerless, nights of the Son of man! And did He, who not only teaches the wild bird to build her nest, and upholds the wild beast in his chase, but clothes the seraphim with their wings, and upholds archangels on their thrones;—did He ever faint for want of food, or need a place to lay his head? Was His head ever pillowed only on a stone, or covered only with the sky? Sooner than this could be, the angels would forsake their thrones to lay His head on their breasts, and the seraphim would fly from heaven to shelter Him with their wings! But, no! this is all fancy or fable; for the truth is, that "The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head!" "For, ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich!"*

But, this leads us to consider,

### III. THE GREAT WORK OF THE SON OF MAN.

*From the Scriptures it clearly appears that the*

*great work of Jesus Christ, as the Son of man, is the salvation of sinners.* For it was necessary that “Jesus, the Son of God,” should become the Son of man, that He might be the Saviour of the world. “Forasmuch,” therefore, “as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus also Himself took part of the same, that, being in all things made like to his brethren, He might redeem us to God by his blood.”

1. “*It is written, of the Son of man, says our Lord, that He must suffer “many things.”* Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer.” (Luke xxiv.; xxvi. 45, 46.) What Moses and the prophets wrote of Christ, could not have been fulfilled, unless Christ had become the Son of man. The prayer of the ancient church, before noticed, implies the divine appointment of Messiah to be at once the Son of man and the Saviour of the world. “Let thy hand, O God, be upon the man of thy right hand;—even upon the Son of man, whom thou madest so strong for thyself.” (Psal. lxxx. 17.) In the language, therefore, of the patriarch, our Lord could be “a Daysman” between the offended Creator and the offending creature, and lay his hands upon both:” or, in the language of the Apostle, He could be the one Mediator between God and man;—the man Christ Jesus.” Further:

The voice of prophecy had said, “A virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a son, and call his name Immanuel, or God with us. And in the fulness of time God sent forth his Son made of a woman;” and a virgin conceived and brought forth her first-

born Son, and called his name Jesus, or God our Saviour. The Son of God thus became the Son of man, that He might die for our sins. The Evangelists from the Prophets foretel that the Son of man must be betrayed, rejected and condemned, that He must be delivered to the Gentiles, and be scourged and crucified. They foretell the burial, the resurrection and the ascension of the Son of man. "The Son of man shall lie three days and nights in the heart of the earth;" "on the third day the Son of man shall rise again from the dead;" and "ye shall see the Son of man ascend up to heaven, where He was before."

How then, we ask, could these prophecies have been completed, if Messiah had not been the Son of man? How could Messiah have been rejected, betrayed and condemned, if He had not been the Son of man? How could His cheek be beaten with rods, or His back ploughed with the scourge, or His temples crowned with thorns, if He had not been the Son of man? How could His hands and feet be pierced; or how could He be lifted up and slain on the Cross, if He had not been the Son of man? How could His parched lips be tortured with vinegar and gall, or His dying ears be tormented with derision and blasphemy; or His writhing side be speared to the heart, if He had not been the Son of man? How could His dead body be wrapped in a shroud, or laid in the grave, or raised from the dead, or taken up to glory, if He had not been the Son of man?

2. But *why did Jesus become the Son of man?* Why, when on earth, “had the foxes their holes, and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of man not a place for His head?” Why, when He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, why did He make Himself of no reputation, and take upon Him the form of a servant, and assume the likeness of man? Why, when found in the fashion of a man, did He humble Himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross? Why was this divesture of divine glory; why this eclipse of the divine majesty; why this abandonment of the divine throne? Why this unmeasured, and immeasurable depth of humiliation, not merely lower than the poor man’s wants, but lower than the wants of the free tenants of the air, and the wild beasts of the field? Why was this accumulation of injury, of insult, and of ignominy; why this variety of pain, this intensity of suffering, this bathing in blood, this long endurance of unknown and inconceivable agonies? Why is God to expire on the Cross; why is man to burst the tomb; why is glorified man to ascend in triumph to heaven? Why were these wonders manifested to the heavenly world; why did angels bend from their thrones to study these wonders? Why was this? It was, my brethren, “for us men and for our salvation.” “For the Son of man,” they are his own words, “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” When our Lord partook in the councils of the eternal



Trinity, and engaged to do the will of His Father ; when He left His glory and came into our world ; when as an infant, He lay in the manger, and as a man, He had not a place for His head ; when He died on the Cross, and slept in the tomb ; when He burst the bands of death, and ascended to His throne in glory ; it was “ for us men, and for our salvation.” He was humbled, that we might be exalted ; He was punished, that we might be pardoned ; He was disgraced, that we might be honoured ; He was crucified, that we might be saved. “ He was despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions ; He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed.”

“ The Son of man is come to save the lost.” The free salvation of perishing sinners is the great work of the Son of man. And with his Son, and with the work of his Son, the Father is well pleased. For the Son of man is glorified in the salvation of sinners ; and the Father is glorified in the Son of man. “ Now is the Son of man glorified,” says Christ, “ and God is glorified in Him.” (John xiii. 31.) “ Father,” He cries, “ the hour is come, O glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. For I have glorified thee on the earth ; I have finished the work which thou gavest Me to do ; and now, O Father, glorify thou Me, with the glory which, before the world was, I had with thee.” “ The great

work of the Son of man is the free salvation of perishing sinners." And we would, therefore, repeat the glad tidings through earth and heaven, that men and angels might hear, "Now is the Son of man glorified" in the salvation of sinners; "and God is glorified in the Son of man."

From this subject we learn,

1. *To believe in the Son of man.*

Jesus is the Son of God; Jesus is the Son of man; Jesus is truly and perfectly man; Jesus is truly and eternally God; Jesus is truly God and man; He is the God—"man Christ Jesus." He is God incarnate; He is God our Saviour. He is the only "way" to the Father; He is the only "door" into heaven, He is the only "foundation" for eternal life; He is the only Saviour of perishing sinners. Do you, my brethren, believe in "the Son of man?" Have you felt your perishing state by nature? Have you repented of your sins? Have you believed in Christ Jesus?

Further :

From this subject we learn,

2. *To love the Son of man.*

For us, the Son of man left the riches of heaven, and became on earth more destitute than "the birds of the air," or the beasts of the field. For us, He left "the bosom of the Father," and had not on earth a place where to lay his head. For us, He laboured, prayed, and wept; for us, He agonized in Gethsemane, bled on Calvary, and slept in the tomb. For us, He rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, where, at God's right hand, He pleads



his blood for our salvation. All this "the Son of man" has done for us; and shall not we love "the Son of man?" Do you, my brethren, love the Son of man? And as a proof of your love to Him, do you keep his commandments? "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is, says Christ, that loveth Me." "For if a man love Me, he will keep my words." (John xiv. 15, 23.) Washed in His blood, and sanctified by his Spirit,—guided by his word, and devoted to his glory, do you, from love to his name, keep his commandments?

Finally :

From this subject we learn,

3. *To imitate the Son of man.*

In all things He was obedient to God; and though He had not anywhere on earth a place to lay his head, yet He went about everywhere doing good to men. He has left us an example that we should follow his steps: and having the same mind that was in Him, we should at all times "do good to all men, but especially to the household of faith."

Are you, my brethren, in all things obedient to God, and at all times doing good to mankind? Do you avoid all sin, and practise all righteousness? Do you daily search the Scriptures, and daily pray for the Holy Spirit? Do you "keep the sabbath, and reverence the sanctuary" of God? Do you attend to the preaching of the Gospel, and kneel at the table of the Lord? Do you love His people, and labour to advance His kingdom in the world?

But, what shall we say to you, *who neither believe*

*in the Son of man, nor love Him, nor imitate Him?* You have been privileged to see the days of the Son of man; but you have not improved your privilege. You have heard the Gospel of Christ, but you have not obeyed the Gospel. You have neither repented of sin, nor believed in Christ. You neither delight in His service, nor keep His laws. You do those things which He has forbidden; you leave undone those things which He has commanded. You are now ashamed of the Son of man; and, unless you timely repent, "the Son of man" will, in the last day, be ashamed of you. But while there is time, repent and turn to God by Christ Jesus. "For, this is a true and faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "And now, brethren, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

But, happy are you, my brethren, "*who through grace have believed*" *in the Son of man, as the only Saviour of sinners.* You would love Him with all your heart, and in all your conduct you would be like Him. You would ever be obedient to God, and be ever doing good to man. You will especially rejoice in doing to the poor and the distressed, and to the children of the poor, as the Son of man has done to you. But after all, what is the greatest which you can do for the poor and distressed—for the ignorant and the young, compared with the least, which the Son of man has done for you? What, if you give your wealth, your labour, your life for suf-

fering man ; what are all these, compared with the riches which Christ abandoned, or the labours which Christ endured, or the blood which Christ shed for you ? His were the riches, the labours, and the blood of God, and all were given for you. Besides, you know, my brethren, that as you are not ashamed of the Son of man, but confess Him before men—as you prove your faith in the Son of man by keeping his commandments, and show your love to the Son of man by imitating his conduct, the Son of man will not be ashamed of you in the last day ; but will confess you before His angels, and welcome you into His heaven. And when you are in possession of the unsearchable riches of heaven, you will never forget that you owe these riches to “ the Son of man, who on earth had not a place where to lay his head.”

## SERMON IV.

THE HIGH COMMENDATION OF THE LOWLY  
MARY.

MARK xiv. 8.

*She has done what she could.*

THE action to which these words relate is most interesting and instructive. “Six days before the passover, Jesus came to Bethany, and abode in the house of Simon the Leper. In this house a supper was made for Jesus; Martha waited on Christ; but Lazarus sat with Him at the table. Then Mary, the other sister of Lazarus, took an alabaster-box, containing a pound of very costly ointment of spikenard, and having broken the top of the box, she poured it on His head as He sat at meat; she then anointed His feet with the ointment, and afterwards wiped them with the tresses of her hair. And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. But one of His disciples, even Judas Iscariot, who was about to betray Him, being moved with indignation, said aloud, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

Why was it not sold for much and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and kept the bag, and carried what was put therein. But Jesus, knowing the design of Judas, said to the disciples, Why do you trouble the woman? Let her alone; for she hath done a good work on me! For the poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good; but me ye have not always. But in pouring this ointment on my head this woman has anointed my body for the burial. She has done what she could. Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this action also, which this woman hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”

“ She hath done what she could.”

In the following discourse we shall notice *the Action of Mary, the Character of Judas, and the Kindness of our Lord.*

We are to notice,

#### I. THE ACTION OF MARY.

“ She poured a box of precious ointment on the head of Jesus; and after anointed his feet, and wiped them with her hair.”

*In this action her motive was love to Christ.*

Jesus had often seen her at His feet, and had often instructed her soul. Jesus had wept with her at the grave of Lazarus, and had raised her brother from the dead. Jesus had given her a proof of the

resurrection of her body, and had planted the hope of glory in her soul. Jesus had bestowed upon her “the one thing needful;” and made her partaker of the good part, which is never taken away! Jesus had forgiven her much, and she loved much. Jesus, in grace, loved Mary, and put the spirit of love in her heart; Mary, in return, loved Jesus, and poured the precious oil on His head!

*In this action her object was the honour of Christ.*

She singled the lowly Saviour out of the richer guests, and pouring the ointment on His head, gave Him public honour. Besides this mark of public regard from Mary, Jesus received but few tokens of respect from mankind. Of these few tokens, the chief were the tears of some pious women, and the hosannas of some little children. But, these outward tokens of regard, proceeding from love to His person, and devoted to the honour of His name, He gladly received.

*In this action her demeanour was very humble.*

She could not repress the manifestation of her love; but her love was meekly manifested. She did not place herself with the guests at the table of Simon; but she sat at the feet of Jesus. Often had she been profited in hearing His words; and she now deemed herself honoured in wiping His feet. Her lips were sealed in silence; her actions spoke humility. Her eyes were fixed on the ground; her heart was fixed on Jesus. Humility in the person of Mary sat silent at the feet of Christ, desirous to



hear His words, and to do His will. O how different was Mary from the vain and the talkative Christian ! Finally :

*In this action her offering was very liberal.*

She offered, not the most common, but the most costly sacrifice, within her power. Besides ; she deemed the most costly gift not only utterly unworthy of the acceptance of her Saviour, but utterly inadequate to express her gratitude. Jesus, however, will not refuse the least offering of love to His person or to His people. For He looks not on the magnificence of the gift, but on the motive of the giver ; and would rather receive two mites from the heart of love, than ten thousand talents from the hand of pride ! O how does the generous love of Mary shame those professors of Christianity, who grudge every expense in the cause of Christ, or for the support of His people !

We proceed to notice,

## II. THE CHARACTER OF JUDAS.

“ And one of Christ’s disciples, Judas Iscariot, who would betray Him, said, Why was this waste of the ointment made ? Why was it not sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor ? This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and kept the bag, and carried what was put therein.”

*Judas was a hypocrite.*

When Mary poured the precious ointment on the head of Jesus, Judas seemed deeply grieved at the



waste, and hotly reprov'd the extravagance, because it deprived him of the means of relieving the distressed. But while he recommended economy to the attention of Christ, and pleaded the cause of the needy, he was a hypocrite. He neither loved Christ, nor cared for the poor; but conceal'd his love of money under the mask of economy, and hid his hatred of Christ under the profession of charity. O, how many profess the religion of Christ, when it suits their worldly interest to seem religious! And how many, who do profess to be Christians, will, when it suits their worldly interest, unite with wicked and worldly men against the people of Christ!

Again :

*Judas was a thief.*

The love of money so prevail'd in his heart, that he thought that whatever was expended on Christ was wasted; and he thought it was wasted, because, as the Scriptures speak, it did not come into his "own bag." He was in heart a thief, desiring the price of the precious ointment, not to relieve the poor, but to enrich himself. For, even while he was recommending economy to the disciples, and pretending kindness to the distressed, he was only devising how he might rob the poor of their right, and sell his Saviour to the Jews. This sin of covetousness, this love of money, which makes a man think every thing to be lost which does not increase his own wealth, is most dangerous and damnable, when, as in the case of Judas, it is cover'd with a profession of religion, or robed as a minister of Christ. And, O how many,

who profess, like Judas, to be followers of Christ, will spend more money to support a single luxury, or to gratify a diabolical spite, than would feed thousands of the poor, or support a minister of the Gospel!

Further :

*Judas was a traitor and apostate.*

He would not sell the ointment for less than three hundred pieces of silver, which he pretended that he would give to the poor; but he *could* sell his Saviour for not more than thirty pieces, which he *did* put "in his own bag." When the heart is filled with covetousness, or the love of money, Jesus Christ and his religion are deemed of little worth. O cursed thirst of gold, which, in the person of Judas, clothed itself in the garb of charity, that it might plunder the poor, and spoke the language of piety that it might betray the Saviour of the world. When the heart of man is filled with the love of money, he is ready for a price to sell his soul to Satan, or to betray his Saviour to His enemies.

We hasten to notice,

### III. THE KINDNESS OF OUR LORD.

#### 1. *He vindicated the action of Mary.*

The conduct of the righteous is most hateful to the wicked. The humility, and sincerity, and liberality of Mary, convicting the traitor of his hypocrisy, and covetousness, and baseness, were most hateful to Judas. He could not restrain his anger, but loudly condemned her good deeds, because his own deeds were evil. But Jesus vindicated her conduct. "Let her

alone." What right have you to interfere? Why do ye interrupt her work; why do ye distress her feelings; why trouble ye the woman? Do you covet her property, or envy my honour? May she not do what she will with her own? "Let her alone! she hath wrought a good work on Me." The poor are always with you; and to the poor ye can always do good; but I am about to leave you; and to Me ye cannot always thus do good. Her act of anointing my head is prophetic of my death; she is come aforehand to anoint Me for my burial. She is come now in silent sorrow, as if she were come to embalm my body, or to weep at my tomb. The precious ointment which you deplore, is expended in piety; the grateful act, which you condemn, is approved in heaven; the meek woman whom you despise, shall be honoured for ever.

Again :

2. *He eulogized her piety.*

Jesus, who knows the secrets of all hearts, knew the sincerity of her's; and overlooking every defect in her manner, and every imperfection in her aim, kindly said, "She has done what she could." Never was eulogy so simple or so complete. Favoured Mary, who so purely loved her Saviour! Adorable Saviour, who so graciously accepted her love. "She has done what she could." Through life, in death, at judgment, who can covet higher praise? But of what living man can this eulogy be pronounced? Of what instance of his charity, of what act of his devotion, of what deed of his life could our Saviour say of any man, "He has done what he could."

### 3. *He accepted her offering.*

This offering was bestowed exclusively on Christ, and not on the poor; for though He will never permit His people in their gifts to forget the poor, He requires them peculiarly to remember Himself. Under the pretence of doing our duty to man, we must not neglect our duty to God; for the most costly bounty to the poor will not avail without supreme love to Christ. The offering of Mary was in itself most costly, but Jesus did not on that account accept it. But Mary loved Jesus with all her heart, and honoured Him with her most costly gift; and Jesus, who knew the heart of the giver, graciously accepted the gift of her love. "She hath done what she could!" "She hath wrought a good work on Me."

Finally :

### 4. *He proclaimed her reward.*

"Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this deed also, which she hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her!" How many heroes and kings, whose deeds once filled the earth, whose fame once reached the heavens, are now totally forgotten, or only remembered to be execrated! but the name of Mary every day more widely spreads, and more brightly shines among the saints. Her deed shall be known and praised throughout the world; her piety shall be recorded in heaven; her memorial shall brighten through eternity. O thrice blessed Mary! "She has done what she could." Her reward is eternal in the heavens.

To conclude :

1. *Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, claims our supreme love, and utmost service for Himself.*

He not only demands, but he deserves all our hearts, and all our services. And if we love Him with all our heart, we shall not only show Him every token of affection, but make every sacrifice for his sake, "and do all we can" for His glory! We shall be willing not only to sit and learn at His feet, but to spend and to be spent in His service: not only to pour the costly ointment on His head, but to shed our blood in his cause. We show our love to Christ, when, like Mary, we sit and learn at His feet; when we attend His worship; when we practise His instructions; when we feed His poor; when we teach His little ones; when, with all our power, we advance His cause in the world.

2. *Have you, brethren, like Mary, sat at the feet of Jesus, and having learnt His will, are you "doing what you can" for His glory?*

Have you been instructed by His word, and justified by His righteousness, and sanctified by His Spirit? Have you "chosen the good part," and secured "the one thing needful?" Does the love of Christ constrain you to keep His commands, to honour His name, to promote His worship, to advance His glory, and, after all, to deem yourselves unprofitable servants? Let each of you ask, "What have I done for Christ? What have I suffered for Christ? What have I bestowed on Christ? What time, what labour, what influence, what wealth, have I used for Christ? What has



been the support of my soul? What has been the rule of my conduct? What has been the motive of my actions? What has been the object of my gifts? Was my support, His grace? Was my motive, His love? Was my rule, His word? Was my object, His glory?

3. *How wretched is the state of those who have never sat at the feet of Jesus, nor desired to learn His will*;—never humbly read His word, nor earnestly prayed for His Spirit; never felt His love, nor striven to advance His glory! What shall we say to you? What can we say, but that, though you “have professed His religion, and called yourselves Christians,” you are still loving the world, and living in sin? What can we say, but that you have refused “the good part,” and rejected “the one thing needful;” you have trampled on the blood of Christ, and resisted the Spirit of God; you have slighted the blessings of the Gospel, and neglected the salvation of your souls? O what shall we say to you?—How awful is your state! How immense your guilt! How unutterable your danger! The light of heaven shines around you, but you close your eyes against the heavenly light! The Gospel of God sounds in your ears, but you shut your ears against the joyful sound! The Spirit of truth strives with your conscience, but you resist the striving of the Spirit! The Saviour of the world knocks at the door of your heart, but you will not admit the Saviour of the world! But the heavenly light may cease to shine, and leave you in seven-fold darkness!

The glorious gospel may cease to sound, and leave you in seven-fold errors! The Spirit of truth may cease to strive, and leave you in seven-fold hardness of heart! The Saviour of the world may cease to knock, and leave you in the seven-fold chains of Satan! Oh! then, brethren, while you have the light, walk in the light! While the Gospel sounds, obey the joyful sound! While the Spirit strives, yield to His holy strivings! While the Saviour knocks, admit Him into your hearts! Pause in your careless career! Consider your ways! Remember your soul! Remember your God! Remember death! Remember judgment! Remember eternity! Turn from sin! Turn from sinners! Turn to God! Turn to holiness! Search the holy Scriptures! Pray for the Holy Spirit! Shun all scenes of temptation! Improve all the means of grace. Be persuaded, and be persuaded *now*, to forsake all sin, and to come to Christ! At His feet only can you learn the way to heaven, and secure the salvation of your soul! O come, then, to Christ, and be saved!

Lastly:

4. *How blessed is the condition of those, who, like the humble, but generous Mary, at the feet of Jesus, have learnt the way of salvation; who have discovered "the one thing needful," and have "chosen the good part!"* Constrained by the love of Christ, you will, like Mary, be humble and obedient; and consecrating your heart, and talents, and property, to His service, you will, like her in the midst of



reproach, "do all that you can," to promote His glory ! Supported by the Spirit of God, and guided by the word of truth ; clothed in humility, and walking in holiness ; animated by the most constraining motive, and engaged in the most hallowed work, your labour will be delightful, your satisfaction will be complete, and your end will be glorious, through Jesus Christ our Lord !

## SERMON V.

THE POOR WOMAN HEALED OF HER GRIEVOUS  
INFIRMITY.

LUKE viii. 48.

*And Jesus said unto the woman, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.*

SUCH were the kind and the cheering words which our Lord spoke to a poor woman, once long afflicted with grievous infirmity, but now suddenly healed.

*When the history of this woman has been related, it will furnish some observations.*

We are,

## I. TO RELATE THE HISTORY OF THIS POOR WOMAN.

As our blessed Lord was preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, fell at His feet and said, "My *daughter*, my *little daughter*, my *only daughter* lies even now at the point of death: come, lay thine hand upon her, and

she shall live." Jesus instantly went with the ruler, and a large multitude thronged Him as He went. In the midst of the thronging multitude was a poor woman eager to come to Jesus. Probably she was a daughter of Abraham; certainly, she was a daughter of sorrow. Her tattered garments bespoke her poverty; her pale face proclaimed her pain; her watching eyes, and constant struggles manifested her desire to come to Christ. For twelve years she had been painfully afflicted; through twelve years she had sought for help from many physicians; in twelve years she had on all these physicians spent all her living; after twelve years of anxiety, and sorrow, and pain, and expense, she was not only uncured, "but rather grew worse." In these twelve years she had probably passed from blooming youth to premature old age, from the delight of health to the despondence of disease, from the cheerful haunts of men to the cheerless glooms of solitude. Without money, without friends, without health, she sadly trod on the borders of despair. The inveteracy of her disease had baffled all the skill of all her physicians, and consumed the whole of her living. Extreme poverty was now added to extreme pain; and her only prospect was constant suffering, ending in certain death. As a case of poverty and pain, her case was doubly pitiable; once she had something in the world, now she had spent her all; once, though diseased, she had hope of a cure, now her disease seems incurable. How precious is health! This poor woman sacrificed her

all to obtain it. Nor is she to be blamed, but commended. For health is the crown of earthly blessings; it is the life of life; without it, life is a burden, and the world a blank.

Just as this poor woman was sinking in dark despair, she heard of Him, who healed every infirmity and every disease; she heard of Jesus; and to Jesus, through a secret impulse of the Spirit, she resolved to go. Her belief in His power to heal was wonderful; she believed that He healed not by virtue derived from God as a prophet, but by inherent virtue as God Himself. She came to Jesus full of confidence, yet full of humility; and either through a sense of unworthiness, or through fear of the multitude, her heart failed her in his presence. But though her heart failed, her faith failed not; "for she said within herself, if I may but touch the border of His garment, I shall be whole!" "Though I am unworthy to speak in His ear, or to appear in His sight; though it were unfit that He should lay His hand on me, or that I should kiss his feet; yet, doubtless, I may secretly touch the border of His garment; and if I can but touch the border of His garment, I shall be satisfied, for I shall be healed." Conceiving that she could touch Christ without being discovered, and receive a cure without being known, she came in the press behind, and touched His garment; and though great infirmity was mingled with great faith, her disease in a moment was removed. O what a moment of joy! She felt in an instant the irrepressible and inexpressible joy of returning health.

Though so miraculously and graciously healed, she now wished to depart in silence and secrecy. But Jesus, who suffered her in secrecy to be healed, would not suffer her in secrecy to depart. He would have His power glorified in her cure, and her faith proclaimed to His glory. Had her cure been concealed, the woman would have been hindered from comfort, the world would have been deprived of instruction, and Christ would have been despoiled of His glory. Conscious of the woman's faithful touch, and instantaneous cure, Jesus inquired, "Who touched me?" When all around denied the touch, and Peter even wondered at the inquiry, Jesus more strongly said, "Somebody *has touched Me.*" Somebody has touched Me *with a special intention*, "for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me." Looking round, He fixed His all-seeing eye on the healed woman, and she felt that she could not be hid. "He who can *thus cure*, and can *thus know* when He has cured, cannot be ignorant of my person." With beating heart, and downcast eye, and trembling step, she came and fell at the feet of Jesus, confessing how she had humbly touched, and how she was instantly healed. With an eye of tenderness Jesus looked on the trembling woman at His feet; the trembling woman caught His tender eye, and was about to supplicate forgiveness; but before she could speak, the benignant Jesus said, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

Nothing more is recorded of this faithful woman. Doubtless, however, she returned home, if home

she had, with joy, and spent the rest of her days in the service of Him who had made her whole. But Jesus instantly went on His way to work yet greater wonders.

We now proceed, as we promised,

## II. TO MAKE SOME OBSERVATIONS.

We observe,

1. *This woman felt her disease before she sought for a cure.*

And we must feel the disease of sin in our nature, before we shall seek for healing in the blood of Christ. "There is no health in us," for we are all spiritually diseased, we are all conceived in sin; we are all born in sin; we all from our birth live in sin. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Or how can he be clean, who is born of a woman?" "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil." "The imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually." "In us, in our flesh dwelleth no good thing!" "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "We have sin" in our nature; and "we have sinned" in our practice. "There is not a just man on the earth, who doeth good, and sinneth not." "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God!" Truly our whole heart with all its powers is diseased, and our whole life with all its deeds is defiled by sin.

But though we are all thus spiritually diseased, we do not all feel our disease. Few, indeed, feel



the leprosy of sin in their nature, and seek for healing from the only Physician of souls. And many, who confess that their nature is in some degree corrupt, yet will not *do* as much for the health of the soul, as for the cure of the body ; nor *give* as much for eternal salvation, as for temporal life. The great multitude, who thronged Christ, did not touch Him, because they did not feel their need of healing ; but the poor woman, who did not throng Him, touched Him ; but she touched Him because she felt her disease, and believed His power to heal.

Multitudes in our day press, as it were, on Christ to hear His word ; but few touch Him by lively faith. The multitudes, who crowd churches to hear the Gospel by some celebrated preacher, and who yet continue to live after the course of this world ; these multitudes *throng* Christ, but they do not *touch* Him. But how is it that while multitudes throng Christ, so few touch Him ? How is it that while all, who hear the Gospel, are diseased by sin, so few of those who hear it, are healed ? Because they do not feel their disease. O would to God, that we, like this woman, felt the disease of sin in our souls ; and then, like her, sought for healing in Christ !

We observe again,

2. *This woman, in seeking for a cure to many physicians, spent all her living.*

She came not to Jesus till all her money was expended, and every other attempt at healing had failed. Men commonly feel themselves miserable ;

and, ignorant of the only cure of misery, they look to men like themselves for a cure. But such vain helpers are men, even in temporal calamities, that they often increase the sorrows which they attempt to relieve. And if in temporal calamities they are such vain helpers, how vain must be their help in distresses of the soul! Some men seek relief for their distress in a variety of diversion, others in the hurries of business; some enter deeply into the speculations of science, others fondly attempt to establish their own righteousness. But diversion and business, the pursuits of science, and the attempts of self-righteousness, are all "physicians of no value." If oppressed with a load of mental misery, you look to the men of the world for help, you will find the men of the world to be physicians, who widen the wounds, which they attempt to close. If you seek to the pleasures of the world, you will discover the pleasures of the world to be medicines, which exasperate the pains, which they are employed to soothe. You may indeed, like this poor woman, spend all your living on these worldly physicians, and mortal medicines, and like her ye will not be made better, but worse. Seldom do men in their afflictions think on God until they have experienced the insufficiency of all human remedies. But distress sometimes leads men to seek relief in Christ; and Christ, such is His mercy, ever delights to help men in distress. What a blessing then, my brethren, is it to be forced by misfortune, disease, or persecution, to seek relief in Christ!

But, while multitudes in our day throng Christ, as it were, in places where His blessed Gospel is preached, the lives only of a few show that they have by faith touched Him! Have you, my brethren, discovered the disease of sin in your nature; have you discovered, too, the endless pains, and the second death in which the uncured disease of sin ever terminates? And, feeling your sinful disease and perishing state, have you sought for, and have you found, spiritual health and salvation in “the precious blood of the Lamb?”

We observe further,

3. *This woman, believing that Jesus was able to heal, touched the border of his garment, and was made whole.*

She felt her disease; she believed that Christ could heal; and her belief was not idle, but active, and excited her to vigorous exertion. She did not despondingly say, “I shall never force my way through this multitude; I can never come to the person of Christ; I will cease to seek Him, and turn aside.” But she seemed to feel through all her soul, and to say by all her conduct, “I must touch or die; and I will touch or perish!” Though weakened by long disease, she pressed through a close-wedged crowd, came to Jesus; she touched, and was healed? Greatly did she honour Christ by her faith; and greatly did Christ comfort her by His grace. No sooner did she touch the hem of His garment, than she was made whole! Virtue went out of Him, and she was healed! Faith ren-

ders things, which are weak and mean, both mighty and efficacious to the soul. Whatever part of Christ faith touches, He allows Himself to be gained by the touch. We must touch Christ by faith, if we would receive from Him the grace of His Spirit. For Christ touches our hearts by the virtue of His Spirit, and we touch the heart of Christ by the grace of faith.

In order that our diseased souls may be healed by Jesus Christ, we must approach Him, deeply feeling our need of healing, and fully believing His power to heal. As perishing sinners unfit to appear in His presence, we must fall at His feet, and supplicate for salvation through His blood. If you are convinced of the corruption of your nature, and feel yourselves to be miserable sinners, if you believe that Jesus alone can save you, and that without an interest in His atoning blood, you must "everlastingly perish;" neither obstructions, nor difficulties, nor dangers, will deter you from seeking salvation IN HIM! You will, like this poor woman, burst through a crowd of opposers, and will say, "I am perishing; Jesus alone can save me. I must touch Him or die; and I will touch Him or perish! If I draw back, I must perish; if I go on, I can but perish; if, therefore, I must perish, I will perish seeking salvation in Christ!" Before such faith as this, all obstructions remove, and all difficulties vanish. The roughest way is made smooth; the highest mountain sinks to a plain; the inquiring soul presses forward; and by faith lays hold on Christ. And no sooner does He believe on Christ

crucified, than his soul is justified, and his sins are forgiven. His bleeding heart is healed, his troubled conscience is at rest. Jesus says to him, "I am the Lord, who healeth thee;" and the believer cries, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; who has forgiven all thine iniquities; who has healed all thy diseases! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name!"

We observe, lastly,

4. *How great is the power and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord!*

Jesus Christ wrought miracles, not like the prophets and apostles, by power derived from God, but by power inherent in Himself—by His own power. He knew of the coming of this woman: He knew the disease of her body: He knew the desire of her soul: He knew both her faith and her weakness: He knew the secret touch on the border of His garment, and the divine virtue which went out of Him to heal! The woman touched in secret, and was healed in a moment! Is not the power of Jesus almighty? Is not Jesus truly God? This poor woman concealed her disease and her grief, her desire and her faith, and spake only in her heart, "If I may but only touch the hem of His garment I shall be whole!" None could hear this voice in the heart but He who made the heart; and He who made the heart, did hear this voice, and healed the woman! Is not the knowledge of Jesus infinite? Is not Jesus truly God? What encouragement have we in the case of this woman to pray to Christ!



What an encouragement to secret and mental prayer ! For we may freely confess to Christ, what we could not at all confess to men.

The grace of Christ, like His power and wisdom, is infinite and divine. By what an endearing appellation, in what a tender manner, did He address this poor woman ! “ Daughter, child, be not afraid ! I am not offended, but pleased. Be comforted, be encouraged. I have healed thy infirmity ; I have rewarded thy faith. Thou art restored to perfect health. May every blessing be with Thee ! Go in peace.” She came to Christ with feebleness, and fear, and prayer ; she went away with strength, and joy, and praise. How great and free is the grace of Jesus ; how suitable and sufficient for our perishing state ! It is the only remedy for our spiritual diseases. Though, therefore, ye are in your own sight poor, and miserable, and perishing sinners, yet may you confidently seek for pardon, and peace, and salvation in Christ. His blood can purge away the most flagrant sins, and calm the most troubled conscience ; His Spirit can subdue the most inveterate lusts, and overcome the most appalling difficulties ; His grace can plant in your hearts the principle of righteousness, and produce in your lives the fruits of holiness. Nor does He require anything from you but a sense of your sinfulness, and a reliance on His atonement. He saves by grace ; he saves freely ; He saves “ without money and without price ;” He delights to save. This poor woman trembled, indeed, to appear in His presence ; but how soon did he dis-



miss her fears ; how tenderly did He speak peace to her soul ! He never cast out any that came to Him ; He sent none unhealed away ! “ He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” He is ever able and ever willing to save. Be not afraid to approach the Saviour of sinners. He delights to open the ear of His mercy and majesty to the prayer of faith and humility : He delights to cast the eye of His love on those trembling penitents, who dare not lift their eyes to Him ! Draw near, then, with faith to the Saviour of sinners, and He will say to your souls, “ Be of good comfort ; thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace !” We cannot speak peace to ourselves ; nor can the world speak peace to us ; only the Lord Jesus, who is Lord of all, can say to our souls, “ Go in peace !” “ For there is no peace to the soul, but by the healing of our corruption ; there is no healing of our corruption, but by virtue from Jesus ; there is no virtue from Jesus, but by faith in His blood !” “ Lord Jesus, give, increase, and perfect in us this faith,—the only principle of true righteousness,—the only root of all good works.” Victory over sin, deadness to the world, an advance in the practice of holiness, delight in communion with God, joy in the ordinances of religion, the heart, with all its affections, fixed on the glories of heaven ;—all these are proofs that a man has received virtue from Jesus. But grace has, also, entered the soul of that man whose heart is humbled at the view of his own corruptions. Such a heart is more to be desired than all the treasures of the universe ; for a broken and a contrite heart, God Himself will not despise.

Are any of you, my brethren, wounded by sin, and laden with guilt, and distressed in spirit? Do any of you desire pardon of sin, and health of soul, and peace with God? "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" Truly there is Jesus, the Physician of souls; and is not He able to heal? Truly there is the balm of His blood; and is any other balm needed to heal a broken heart? Why, therefore, should you spend your money on that which is not bread; and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Cease, then, from sin; cease from self, cease from men; and whatever be the weakness, the want, or the woe of your soul, go to Jesus, and virtue will come out of Him and heal you all! With a deep sense of your corruption and sinfulness and misery, go by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will heal your souls, and pardon your sins, and give you peace with God.

Finally:

Jesus Christ our Lord, though ever gracious to all, was, as in the case of this poor woman, abundantly gracious to the poor. The preaching of the Gospel to the poor was one great proof of His mission. "To the poor, says He, "the Gospel is preached." For, if His Gospel had not been suitable to the state, and if it had not been offered to the acceptance of the poor, He could not have been the Messiah. He went about doing good among all men; but He went chiefly among the sons of poverty and pain. During the whole course of His personal ministry, He invited the weary to His rest and to the poor was divinely kind. And now en-

throned, as He is in glory, He still, as their Advocate and Friend, looks in tenderest mercy on the poor. Still He chooses the poor of this world to be rich in the works of faith, and heirs of the glories of His kingdom. Multitudes of the poor have, in our day, felt the disease of sin in their souls, and by the faithful touching of Christ in the great congregation, have been spiritually healed. And, though they may seem to be destitute of outward comforts, and devoid of inward peace; yet have they bread to eat of which the world cannot partake, and they taste of joy with which strangers do not intermeddle. And though they are quite unknown, or, if known, are quite despised in the world; yet are they well known, and rightly valued in heaven. And in the day when the Lord Jesus shall make up His jewels, He will confess these poor and hidden ones before the angels of God, and welcome them to the thrones of glory.

Grant now, blessed God, that we all, feeling the corruption of our nature and the guilt of our sin, may by faith so touch thy Son Jesus, that our sins may be forgiven by His blood, and our souls may be healed by His Spirit; and that we may at last be admitted into that land, where is neither sin nor sorrow—neither pain nor death—to partake of life and health, and holiness and joy in thy presence for ever, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SERMON VI.

THE LITTLE FLOCK OF CHRIST GREATLY  
ENCOURAGED.

LUKE xii. 32.

*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

“TAKE no thought,” says our blessed Lord, “what ye shall eat, nor what ye shall drink, nor what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, the body more than raiment. Consider the ravens, which neither sow nor reap; and yet God feedeth them: how much better are ye than the fowls? Consider, again, the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If, then, your heavenly Father, who knows your need of food and raiment, so feed the fowls of the air, and so clothe the lilies of the field, how much more will He feed and clothe you! Leave, then, these things to his fatherly care, and seek first the kingdom of God, and ye shall not only obtain this kingdom, but these

other things, without your anxious care, shall be added unto you. For He, who has promised to give you His glorious kingdom, will not withhold inferior blessings. Fear not, therefore, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

We may contemplate from these words, *the condition and the consolation of the people of the Lord.*

Let us contemplate,

### I. THEIR CONDITION.

"They are a flock, a little flock," never exempt from the calamities of life ; but ever liable to wants and sufferings, ever exposed to enemies and dangers.

#### 1. *The people of God are a flock.*

Sheep, never willing to join with other animals, always love to unite themselves in flocks. They love to move and rest and feed together. The people of the Lord are "His flock, or the sheep of His pasture." They believe through grace in Jesus as the only Saviour ; they are "born again of God" through the work of the Spirit in their hearts ; and, being thus "born of God" themselves, they cannot but love all those who are born of God. (1 John v. 1.) They are all by this new birth of the Spirit the children of God and brethren in Christ Jesus ; "and they know that they have passed from death unto life, because they love the brethren." As the children of God, and as brethren in Christ, they unite and associate together. For the people of the Lord, or the sheep of his pasture, are divinely sepa-

rated from sinners. Jesus Christ, the Good shepherd, takes them out of the world, brings them into His fold, and unites them to His flock. All, who belong to the flock of Christ, have discovered, by divine teaching, that they had strayed into the way of destruction; and, by divine help, have returned into the way of salvation. For no man will ever desire to be saved, till he feels himself a perishing sinner; and no perishing sinner can obtain salvation but through Christ crucified. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep; by me, if any man enter, he shall be saved." "I am the Good Shepherd," "and I lay down my life for the sheep." All the members of His flock have repented towards God, and believed in His Son; they are renewed in His image, and they walk in His ways. His blood washes away their sins; His righteousness justifies their souls; His Spirit sanctifies their lives; His merits entitle them to heaven.

All true believers, therefore, in the Lord Jesus Christ, however dispersed or distressed over the face of the earth, form the flock of Christ. They are beloved of the same Father, redeemed by the same Son, and sanctified by the same Spirit. They are, in their passage through the wilderness of the world, guided by the same rule, walking in the same way, and travelling to the same kingdom: they are guided by the word of God, walking in the way of holiness, and travelling to the kingdom of heaven.

But,

2. *The people of God are a little flock.*



In every age and place the number of true believers in Christ is comparatively small. Many throned the broad road of destruction: few find the narrow path of life. For it is a lamentable fact, that Satan reigns in more hearts than Jesus Christ. The slaves of Satan have ever been a vast multitude; the servants of Jesus a little flock: and they will ever be a little flock compared with the multitudinous herd of ungodly men who serve Satan, until the day of God's power is revealed to the universe:—until the Spirit of Jehovah is poured on mankind from on high, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of Christ. O Lord Jesus Christ! “pour Thy Spirit on all flesh,” that all the ends of the earth may turn unto Thee, and all the kindreds of the nations worship before Thee!

But further:

3. *This little flock is ever in the midst of enemies and dangers, and is ever liable to want and woe.*

The people of God are in the world, where ungodly men, like wolves, prowl around them; they are in the wilderness, where Satan, as a roaring lion, ever seeks to devour them; they are in the body, where an evil heart of unbelief ever inclines them to go astray. The world, by its tribulations or temptations, will ever strive to distress or to terrify them. The devil, as an angel of light by day, or as a demon of darkness by night, will ever labour to deceive, or to destroy them. Some “thorn in the flesh” will wound them, or some trial of mind grieve them; some worldly loss may depress them,

or some bodily pain distress them ; some false friend may betray them, or some besetting sin surprise them. They may sometimes fear that their supply of grace will be exhausted, and their hope of glory be disappointed ;—that the enemies of their souls will prevail, and their souls perish for ever.

Such is the *condition* of the people of the Lord in this world.

We proceed to contemplate,

## II. THEIR CONSOLATION.

“ Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Jesus encourages them in the midst of their fears, assures them of the favour of their heavenly Father, and promises them the kingdom of heaven. How great and suitable is their consolation !

1. *Jesus encourages His people in the midst of their fears.* “ Fear not, little flock.” Ye are, indeed, a weak and little flock ; but your Shepherd is great and strong. Ye are in the world, where wicked men hate and trouble you ; but “ fear not,” “ for I,” saith Christ, “ have for you overcome the world, and I will give you that faith in my blood which will enable you to overcome the world, and make you more than conquerors.” Ye are in the wilderness, where Satan ever seeks to deceive and devour you ; but “ fear not ;” I have vanquished Satan, and will enable you to “ tread him under your feet.” You are in the body, and your evil heart ever inclines you to go astray from God ; but “ fear not ;” I will reclaim you when you wander,

and will restore your souls : I will never leave you nor forsake you ; I will put my fear in your hearts, and ye shall not depart from Me ; I, who have begun the good work in your heart, will complete it. My grace shall be sufficient for you. As your day is, so shall your strength be ; for my strength shall be made perfect in your weakness." (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.) Finally : Ye are in a mortal state, and must soon pass through the valley of the shadow of death ; but " fear not ;" I am the Good Shepherd, who give my life for the sheep ; when, therefore, ye pass through the vale of death, ye shall fear no evil ; for I, the Good Shepherd, will be with you : my rod and my staff shall comfort you."

Do you, then, my brethren, belong to the fold of Christ? Are you but the least and weakest of the lambs of his flock? Then, He says to you, " Fear not, little flock, for I am your Shepherd ; be not dismayed, for I am your God. Have I not purchased my flock with my own blood? and shall not my power protect what my blood has purchased?" Is not then, we ask, the promise of Jesus sure? Is not His wisdom infinite, His mercy boundless, His grace inexhaustible? Is not His arm the strength of omnipotence, and His bosom the seat of bliss? Who then can break His arm, or tear you from His bosom? Who can endanger your safety, or disturb your repose in Him? " Fear not, then, little flock."

Again :

2. *Jesus assures his people of the favour of their heavenly Father.* " It is your Father's good plea-

sure to give you." *God is their Father in Christ Jesus*; and they, as His children, are interested in the great power and good pleasure of their Father. His ability to supply their wants is equal to His love to their souls. He possesses all the perfections of the Godhead, and commands all the treasures of the universe. Whatever, therefore, divine wisdom can devise, or almighty power can effect, or boundless love can supply, their Father will be well pleased to give them.

God is the Father of His people; *and they are His children in Christ Jesus*. "For as many as receive Christ, to them He gives power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe in His name." Through receiving Christ, or by believing in His name, they are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Spirit of God. Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

God is their Father; *and it is their Father's good pleasure to save them*. He has no pleasure in the death of sinners, but to them He tenderly and earnestly cries, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will you die?" But He has pleasure in the salvation of His people. He loved them with an everlasting love; and with never-failing kindness gathers them into His fold. They are washed from their sins by the blood of His Son; they are renewed in His image by the grace of His Spirit. They are His peculiar property, His purchased possession, His delightful

charge, His ransomed flock. As an earthly father pities his children, so God pities them that fear Him. Nay, the love of God towards His people is infinitely greater than the love of parents to their children. A woman may forget or forsake her sucking child ; but God will never forget nor forsake His people. He has written their names in the palms of His hands ; He has graven them on the table of His heart. He knows the thoughts of peace, which He thinks towards them ; it is the delight of His heart to do them good, and resting over them in His love, He rejoices over them with joy and gladness. (Jer. xxix. 11, xxxii. 41 ; Zech. iii. 17.) It is their Father's good pleasure to save them ; they may, therefore, ever rejoice in the good pleasure of their Father. " The Lord is my light, and my salvation ; whom, then, shall I fear ? The Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom, then, shall I be afraid ? The Lord is the Father of my spirit, and my Father in Christ ; whom, then, shall I dread ? " Behold, then, we repeat, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon you, that ye should be called sons of God ; and because ye are sons, ye are, also, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ of His kingdom.

Finally :

3. *Jesus promises to His people the kingdom of heaven.* " It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

(1.) *God will give the kingdom of grace.*

He will give to His people the repentance, the faith, and the hope, of the Gospel of Christ ; and



they shall know that “the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.” “Being justified freely by His grace through faith in Christ Jesus, they shall have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of glory.” Christ will be revealed to their souls, and formed in their hearts; and they shall possess His lowly mind, and walk in His holy steps. The eternal God will be their Father; the eternal Son will be their Saviour; and the eternal Spirit will be their Sanctifier: and they shall enjoy “the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.”

Again:

(2.) *God will give the kingdom of glory.*

This kingdom is *pure*; it excludes sin, and misery, and pain, and death! This kingdom is *perfect*; it includes all life and rest, and holiness and joy! This kingdom is *everlasting*; it is a kingdom which cannot be moved—strong as omnipotence, and lasting as eternity! The throne of God and the Lamb is in this kingdom, and the saints in glory shall worship the Lamb on His throne. For they shall in heaven “be made kings and priests unto God:”—as priests they shall serve Him, and as kings they shall reign with Him for ever and ever! They shall sit on thrones of glory, and wear crowns of life; and through eternity their song will be, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by his blood!”

But,

(3.) *This kingdom of grace and glory is a free gift.*



“It is your Father’s good pleasure to *give* you the kingdom!” This kingdom is not the reward of merit, nor the wages of service, nor the desert of righteousness; but “a free gift through Jesus Christ our Lord.” This kingdom, indeed, is a costly inheritance,—a purchased possession; but the Son of God is the Purchaser, and the Blood of God is the price: it is, therefore, the gift of God to His people only for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ! God has prepared this kingdom for you; and, if you belong to His little flock, He has determined to invest you with this kingdom. It is His work to make you meet for its holy service: it is His delight to preserve you to its eternal enjoyment! Happy, then, are you, O little flock, who have such a Father, who, for Christ’s sake, will give you such a kingdom. Were all the kingdoms of the world in ruins together, why should ye fear? for ye might stand on the ruins of the world, and say, “We have lost nothing, our kingdom is secure.” “Fear not, then, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

And, now, my brethren, may I, in conclusion, ask—

1. *Do you not desire to obtain that gracious and glorious kingdom, which God, in His good pleasure, will give to His people?*

Do you not desire to know that “repentance, which is unto life,”—that “faith, which bringeth salvation,”—and that “holiness, without which, no man can see the Lord!” You reply, “We do! we do!” It is well! Do you not desire to be “justi-

fied and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," that you may know that the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! In all the sorrows, and difficulties, and dangers of mortal life, do not you desire the Saviour to say to you, "Fear not; I will guide you, support you, and deliver you?" You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! When life, and all its contentions, and toils, and troubles, are past, do you not desire the peace, and rest, and joy of heaven? You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! When you lie on a bed of sickness, and your flesh and heart begin to fail, do you not desire that, in this time of pain and languor, God would strengthen your heart, and refresh your soul? You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! When your last hour comes, and you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, do you not desire that the presence of the Good Shepherd would keep you from the fear of evil, and that His rod and staff would uphold and comfort you? You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! When death shall separate body and soul, and lay your body in the dust; do you not desire that your soul meanwhile, may, through "the good pleasure" and great power of your "heavenly Father," be safely kept in paradise? You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well! When time is ended, and the trumpet has sounded, and the graves are opened, and the dead are raised, and the living are changed, and all mankind shall stand before the worthy Judge

eternal; do you not desire to rise in the likeness of Jesus, to stand on His right hand, and to hear Him from His throne, say to you, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?" Do you not desire "robes of righteousness," and "thrones of glory," and "crowns of life," and "songs of salvation" in the "everlasting kingdom of God?" You reply, "We do! we do!" It is well, my brethren, it is well! But in vain, utterly in vain, do you desire these things, unless you belong to the flock of Christ! The kingdom of God will be given only to His flock; for, "It is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom!" Are you, then, my brethren, the sheep of Christ? Do you belong to His little flock? Is the Lord Jesus your Shepherd? Do you hear His voice and follow His steps? The great inquiry, which every one of us should make, is—"Am I one of the sheep of Christ? Is Christ my Shepherd? Do I belong to His little flock?"

The flock of Christ is easily known; it is known by many marks, distinct and strong. It is known by the *fewness* of its numbers, and by its being *hated* of the wicked; for it is a "little and a hated flock." It is known by its entire *separation* from the world, and by its singular *union* in itself. It is known by its *hearing* the voice and *following* the steps of Christ, the Good Shepherd. It is known by its delight in *devotion*, and by its *attendance at the table of the Lord*. It is known by its diligence in *righteousness*, and by its activity in *charity*, by

its *glorifying* God in all things, and by its ever *doing good* to mankind. Have you, my brethren, these marks of the people of God? Are you the sheep of Christ? Do you belong to His flock? If ye are the sheep of His pasture, and the flock of His fold, then the Good Shepherd says to you, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!"

But,

2. *Ye, who associate with the wicked, and live in sin; ye, who neglect the duties of devotion and the Supper of the Lord; ye must be inly conscious that ye are not of the flock of Christ, but of the herd of Satan! God is not your Father, but "ye are," says Christ, "of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye do!" We cannot say to you "Fear not," because ye have every reason to fear the worst evils in time and in eternity. In your present state, not only does the Word of God condemn you, but your conscience accuses and alarms you. In your present state, you can have neither peace in life, nor hope in death. In your present state, ye are liable to eternal destruction every moment. If you die in your present state, Jesus will not, in the last day, place you, as His sheep, on His right hand, but with the wicked on His left; He will not welcome you into the everlasting kingdom of His Father, but will sentence you "to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "O, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall endure everlasting*

burnings?" O that ye would forsake sin, and come out of the world. O that ye would repent of your wickedness, and return to God by Christ Jesus. For "Christ is the door" for the entrance "of the sheep." Enter then by Christ as perishing sinners, and He will save you. He will save you from sin, from death, and from hell. He will give you everlasting life, and ye shall never perish. O seek then, my brethren, to become the sheep of Christ. Search the Holy Scriptures. Pray for the Spirit of God to teach you. Intreat Him to bring you into the fold, and to join you to the flock of Christ. For, blessed be God, there is not a soul now present, the chief of sinners though he be, who may not become one of the flock of Christ. For Christ, standing at the door of salvation, invites *all* sinners to Himself, and says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." May the Spirit of God lead you all into the fold, and join you all to the flock of Christ, that all your souls may sing, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

But, finally :

3. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." *For ye, Christian brethren, ye have been taken out of the evil world, and brought into the fold of the Good Shepherd; ye have been born again of the Holy Spirit, and have been made the children of God in Christ Jesus.* While multitudes around you are left in their wilful ignorance to follow their chosen way, God in "His good pleasure" has revealed the things



of salvation to you. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!" "Ye are the sheep of Christ; ye know His voice; ye follow His steps; ye walk worthy of Him, who has called you to His kingdom and glory." "Fear not, little flock!" "The Lord is your SHEPHERD; ye shall not want." God, your heavenly Father, who offers you His kingdom of glory, will not refuse to you the supplies of life. God, your heavenly Father, who feeds the ravens, will not forget to feed His children. "Fear not, little flock, the Lord is your HELPER;" why then should you fear wicked men, or wicked spirits; why should you fear the floods of affliction, or the fires of persecution? "For when ye pass through the waters, they shall not overflow you; when ye walk through the fire, ye shall not be burned; for I, saith the Lord, will be with you." (Isa. xliii. 2.) "For ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men"—sinful, weak and dying men; "but I," the Living God, "am your God; and it shall be known that I, the Lord your God, am with you, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xxxiv. 30, 31.) "Fear not, therefore, little flock," but "cast your care upon God, for He careth for you;" "cast your burden upon Him, for He will sustain you." Be *fearful* of nothing, and be *careful* for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. "Fear not, little flock," FOR THE LORD GOD IS YOUR SHEP-



HERD, YOUR HELPER, YOUR FATHER; and “it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” of heaven. From eternity He purposed to give you this kingdom; and all the love of His heart is engaged, all the infinitude of His wisdom is employed, all the fulness of His grace is displayed, all the omnipotence of His power is exercised in accomplishing His eternal purpose. Walk worthy, therefore, of God, who has called you to His kingdom and glory; and God in His good pleasure will bring you into His glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. “Fear not, therefore, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

## SERMON VII.

## THE PRODIGAL SON.

LUKE xv. 24.

*For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.*

THE Scribes and the Pharisees were reckoned the most learned and holy men among the Jews. But the Scribes and Pharisees were always the bitterest enemies of Christ ; and they were particularly angry at Christ, because in His preaching “ He received sinners.” “ The Scribes and the Pharisees murmured against Jesus, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” They *professed* to be offended because He “ *ate with sinners ;*” but they were *really* offended because He “ *preached to sinners.*” And because the Scribes and Pharisees were angry at Him for receiving sinners, and for preaching to sinners, Jesus spake three parables—The parables of the lost sheep, of the lost piece of money, and of the prodigal son. The scope or design or lesson of these three parables is nearly

the same ; it is to show not only that our heavenly Father is indeed willing to receive the chiefest sinners, but to receive them with the greatest gladness. And the love of God to poor and penitent sinners is shown in the parable of the Prodigal Son with singular force and beauty. This parable touches the finest feelings of the soul ; it awakes the tenderest affections of the heart ; its effect is overwhelming and marvellous. *It is the purpose of the following discourse to relate and to improve this beautiful parable.*

We are,

#### I. TO RELATE THIS PARABLE.

“A certain man,” says our Lord, “had two sons;” and the younger son, disliking the restraints of his father’s presence, and tired of the dulness of his father’s house, panted to be his own master, and longed to see the world. He therefore somewhat roughly requested his father to give him that portion of substance which fell to his share. “Give me,” says he, “give me my portion of goods.” The father, without hesitation or delay, divided his substance between his sons. Rejoicing in fancied freedom, and anticipating future happiness, he determines to leave his home, and to go in quest of joy. In a few days he gathered all his substance together, and went into a far country. Free from all restraint in this far country, he pursues pleasure with eagerness ; and, as he knew not what pleasure to prefer, he greedily seizes all pleasures, and wildly wastes

his substance in riotous living. In gay apparel and in sumptuous fare, with sycophants and with harlots, he extravagantly spends his substance. His wild extravagance soon reduced the prodigal to want, and want soon plunged him in misery. For “when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want.” He was unused to dig; he was ashamed to beg; his all was spent; a mighty famine was in the land; “he began to be in want.” Never before had he been in want; to him, want was a new thing, and want made him acquainted with many strange things. To pass from plenty to penury, from the varieties of a feast to the stings of hunger, from fair apparel to filthy rags; all this was as distressing, as it was disgraceful. His companions, who had shared his substance, and flattered his pride in the time of his abundance, all forsook him in the time of his need. He now abjectly begs for bread, and no man gives unto him. Without a friend and without a home; without a character and without bread; what *CAN the poor prodigal do?* He must either kill himself or return home, he must either rob or work. *What WILL the poor prodigal do?* He determines to work. “And he went and hired himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.” In this vile servitude he is so stung with the cravings of hunger, that he fain would feed with the swine; but he was not suffered to taste the husks or acorns, “which the swine did eat.” He is now reduced to the lowest depths of shame, and want, and woe.

Recollections of his father's kindness, and of his father's house, now arise in his mind, and touch his heart; and reflections on his base ingratitude, and vile conduct, now depress and sting his soul. But these reflections, though very bitter, were very useful; they showed the wretched man to himself; they revealed to him his past madness, and restored him to his right mind. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare; and I, once a beloved son, feed these swine, and perish with hunger!" But now, having recovered his right mind, he reasoned rightly, and said, "I will neither continue in this vile employment, nor perish in this vile place; I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." He is now, truly, come to himself; and we repeat, "he reasons rightly, now he has recovered his mind." Not only does all the kindness of his father recur to his memory, but all the affection of a child returns to his breast, and he cries, "I will arise and go to *my father!*" He humbly confesses his sin, and condemns his ingratitude; he feels his vileness, and acknowledges his unworthiness. The meanest office in his father's house is too good for him. If he can secure the lowest place in his father's house, he will be abundantly satisfied.

But the prodigal has come from a country far off;

the journey back again is very long, and he is totally unprovided for a long journey. He must therefore, in this wretched state, beg his bitter way to his father's house. "And will not," he might say, "will not the dogs bark at me, as with tottering steps I go along? Will not my old companions laugh at my crippled walk and tattered clothes? Will not my offended father, when I come to his dwelling, reproach me from his door? May he not say to me, 'You wretch, what brings you hither? get back to your harlots and to your swine.' But I am perishing with hunger, and what can I do?" "And he arose and went to his father;" he instantly turned his face, and directed his steps towards that beloved home, where in "childhood and youth" he had spent so many happy days.

With the beggar's bare feet and limping pace; with the beggar's starven cheek and sunken eye; with the beggar's heavy heart and troubled mind; with many a beggar's stop by the way, to rest and weep, he creeps along the road. "But when he was a great way off, his father saw him;" and was not his father angry with him? No! "he had compassion on him." But did not his father sit in the house till the prodigal knocked at the door? No! he went out to receive him. But did not his father, when gone out, stand on the threshold till the ragged wretch arrived? No! he went forward to meet him. But if his father went to meet him, he would walk slowly along? No! the old man, forgetting his age and infirmities, "ran to meet him." But



when his father did meet the prodigal, he would not touch him, till the defilements of a long journey were removed, and till the rags of wretched beggary were changed? No! just as the prodigal was, all filthy, ragged, vile, he “fell on his neck and kissed him.” Before the son could utter his request, or confess his sin, the father gave him welcome and sealed his pardon. O, what a father! “He had eyes of mercy,” says one, “and saw his son afar off. He had a heart of mercy, and had compassion on him. He had feet of mercy, and ran to meet him. He had arms of mercy, and embraced him. He had lips of mercy, and kissed him.” As soon as the son could speak, he said, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;” and the father, though well pleased to hear this confession, made no reply to it, but led his son into his house with great gladness. When he came into the house he spoke in tones of joy to his servants, and said, “Bring forth the first best robe, and when you have stripped of his rags, put it on him, and put a ring on his finger as a token of reconciliation and favour; and as his bare and bleeding feet have been sadly cut on the flinty road, let them be washed and adorned with sandals; and on this glad occasion, ‘bring the fatted calf from the stall, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.’ My whole family shall share my joy; my whole mansion shall resound with songs. ‘For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.”

“ Likewise I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.”

But this leads us, as we promised,

## II. TO IMPROVE THIS PARABLE.

In this parable, “ the certain man, who had two sons,” represents our heavenly Father; and the prodigal son, who left his father’s house, represents every careless sinner. In order, therefore, to gain some instruction from this parable, let us consider the *departure* of the prodigal from his father’s house into a far country; his *return* to his father’s house; and his *reception* by his father on his return.

We are to consider,

1. *The departure of the prodigal from his father’s house into a far country.*

In the departure of the prodigal son from his father’s house, the conduct of every sinner, or the conduct of all mankind, is described. “ All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” “ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” “ For, the Lord looked down from heaven on the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God. But, they are all gone out of the way; they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.” (Isa. liii. 6; Rom. iii. 23; Psal. xiv. 2, 3.) In our natural state, we utterly dislike the restraints of religion, and the purity of devotion; we rebel against the laws of our heavenly

Father, "and follow," like the prodigal son, "the devices and desires of our own hearts." We fancy that, without help from above, we are well able to guide ourselves aright, and to create our own happiness. We forget all the obligations under which we lie, and all the duties which we owe to "our Father, who is in heaven!" We presumptuously claim, as our right, the mercies and the bounties of God, that we may use or abuse them as we please. We receive without gratitude all mercies from heaven, and then hasten into a country far from God, to spend them on ourselves! In a far country, where prayer is not made, and where God is not honoured, we abuse our talents in vain pursuits, or consume our time on worthless objects, or waste our substance on vile and sensual pleasures. Carnal delights, or sensual pleasures, are the vile, but blandishing harlots, among which the prodigal sons of the world waste their substance, and endanger their souls.

But,

Worldly pleasures perish in the using, and if they could continue, they could not satisfy; the supplies of a thousand worlds would not satisfy the desires of the soul. For the soul which could obtain the pleasures of a thousand worlds like ours would feed only on ashes, or live only on wind. The stock of worldly delights is but small; the time of earthly enjoyments but short; and the most successful worldly prodigal will soon have tasted every joy which the world affords. And, then, he will "begin to be in want;" he will be in want of a new plea-

sure to gratify his old passions, or in want of his old power to enjoy it. "And when the prodigal had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want." And what a want in that soul, which is void of the love of God! What a hunger in that spirit, which tastes not the bread of life! What a famine in that land, where the Gospel is not preached! What a disease in that heart, which relishes not the preaching of the Gospel!

But, the prodigal, you remember, joined himself to a citizen of that far country, who sent him into the fields to feed swine. And what is that far country?—The land of sin! And who is that citizen?—The devil! And what is meant by feeding swine?—The sins and pleasures of ungodly men! No land is so barren as the land far from God; no slavery is so tormenting as the slavery of sin; no master is such a tyrant as the devil! When a man is entirely engaged in worldliness, in pleasure, and in sin, without regard to his God or to his soul, he is still an immortal creature—still a lower kind of angel; but an angel feeding swine! For sin blinds the understanding and hardens the heart; it debases the man and degrades the soul! The prodigal, sunk below the level of man, wished for gratifications which he could not obtain, and which, if he could obtain them, he could not enjoy. "He would fain have eaten of the husks, which the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him!" Shame, and nakedness, and hunger, came at once "like an armed man" upon him, and he would have changed natures

with the brutes, and fed on the husks, which the swine devoured !

And, the lovers of “ this wicked world,” the men who seek for happiness in pleasure and in sin, though they seem to live in the midst of joys, yet is there always, with respect to real happiness, a mighty famine in their souls. And they will find at last, like the prodigal, that they have been spending their money for that which was not bread, and using their labour for that which could not satisfy : they will then, like him, “ eat the fruit of their own ways, and be filled with the bitterness of their own devices.” Until the prodigal, however, was brought into a state of shame and want and misery, he never thought of returning to his father’s house, and until the sinner feels his lost and perishing state, he will never think of returning to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us, then, further consider,

2. *The return of the prodigal to his father’s house.*

The prodigal son, when living “ in the far country,” lived like a man who had lost his reason, or was out of his mind ; his unreasonable conduct brought him into the most shameful misery ; and in his shameful misery, “ he came to himself.” When he came to himself, or when he was restored to his right mind, he reflected on the madness and misery of his past conduct, and remembered the wisdom and happiness of his father’s house. And he said, “ I will arise, and go unto my father, and will say



unto him, Father! I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father." After the prodigal came to himself, there was in him a double change—a change in his heart, and a change in his conduct. There was a change in his heart; he felt his misery, and was convinced of his sin. "I perish with hunger; I have sinned against heaven!" There was a change in his conduct; he not only confessed his sins, and made resolutions, but he actually arose and returned to his father!

The impenitent sinner—the wretched man, who lives altogether in worldliness and sin, is out of his mind, or quite beside himself. No creature in the world is so mad or distracted as he! And such a sinner only comes to himself, or is restored to his right mind, when the Spirit of the Lord comes with power to his soul, and makes him feel that he is a perishing sinner! Feeling his misery, and confessing his sin, he now appears like another man; like a lunatic suddenly restored to his senses, he wonders at his past blindness and folly! But the beginning of wisdom is to discover our ignorance; the beginning of holiness is to know our sinfulness; the beginning of happiness is to feel our misery!

As the commission of sin is a departure from God, so the doing of righteousness is a return to God; the penitent, therefore, says, "I will return to my heavenly Father, from whom by my sins I have so wilfully departed, and whom by my sins I have



so ungratefully grieved : I confess my sins, and my unworthiness, at thy feet, O Lord ; but, though I am unworthy to be called thy Son, yet admit me among the lowest of thy servants !” The penitent shows that he is come to himself by confessing and forsaking his sins ;—by turning from the world and its vanities ;—by the earnestness and humbleness of his prayers ; and, above all, by the consistency and holiness of his conduct. “ The prodigal arose, and with ceaseless steps, returned to his father :” the penitent arises, and, in the practice of holiness, returns to his God !

For,

When the penitent, like the prodigal, comes to himself, he experiences a change of heart, and a change of conduct ; he experiences a change, and feels his sin and misery ; “ I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, O God : my soul is perishing in its sins ! God be merciful to me a sinner !” He manifests a change of conduct ; he not only confesses his sins and makes resolutions, but he arises and returns to his heavenly Father ; he leaves the way of sin and the company of sinners ; “ and walks in holiness and righteousness of life.”

As the prodigal drew near to his father’s house, he would have many doubts and fears : “ Will my father know me in this wretched state ? Will he discover me in these vile and ragged garments ? And if he discover me, will he not drive me with reproaches from his door, as an ungrateful wretch unfit to appear in his presence ? All this I deserve

at his hands ; and I tremble to appear before him  
But still he is my father : I am determined to go on,  
and to fall down at his feet ; and if he reject me, I  
am rejected !” Thus, too, the penitent, when he  
returns to God by Jesus Christ, has many doubts  
and fears of his acceptance. His inward corrup-  
tions and his outward defilements, his vile ingrati-  
tude and his utter worthlessness, his innumerable  
sins and his infinite guilt—all appear in his troubled  
sight, and make him fear that God will reject him !  
But, feeling that his soul is perishing, and that God  
in Christ alone can save his soul, he determines to  
go, though with fears and trembling, to the feet of  
his heavenly Father, and *there*, says he, “ If I perish,  
I perish !”

Let us consider, lastly,

3. *The reception of the prodigal on his return to his father.*

The father was, it seems, looking out wishfully  
for the return of his child, and, notwithstanding the  
withered frame and ragged garments of the prodi-  
gal, discovered in him at a great distance his long-  
lost son ; and, as soon as he discovered him, ran to  
meet him. Meanwhile the prodigal, with beating  
heart and trembling steps, was slowly advancing to  
his father’s house ; the sight of which would quicken  
the beatings of his heart, and increase the trembling  
of his steps. But, while his heart thus beats, and  
his steps thus tremble, he suddenly finds himself in  
the arms and embraces of his father. The father re-  
joiced over him as a son restored from destruction,

or raised from the dead, and commanded all his household to rejoice.

Thus, too, the penitent sinner, while, in returning to God by Christ Jesus, fears that he is too guilty to be pardoned, and too vile to be accepted, is suddenly surprised to find that his heavenly Father is reconciled, and all his sins forgiven. While he is humbly confessing his sins before God, and earnestly begging pardon through Christ, his heavenly Father, seeing his broken heart, and hearing his humble prayers, opens for him the arms of mercy, and receives him into the family of heaven. "My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." As soon as he saw his returning child, the heart of the Father was melted into compassion, and he ran to embrace him. So far from reproaching him for his sins and ingratitude, He will scarcely hear his prayers. And, though the penitent sinner is utterly unfit to appear before a holy God, his heavenly Father will make him fit; He will wash him in the fountain opened for sin, and clothe him in the best robe of salvation; He will cleanse him in "the precious blood of Jesus," and robe him in "the perfect righteousness of Christ." "He will put a ring on his finger;" He will bestow on him a token of his favour, and fill him with a sense of his love; He will give him "the spirit of adoption," and "seal him to the day of redemption." "He will put shoes on his feet," and enable him to "run in the way of the divine commandments." "He will kill the fattened calf;" He will make the penitent believer a joy-

ful partaker of the feast of salvation : He will refresh him with the grace of his Spirit, and cheer him with the hope of his glory. “ He will command all His house to rejoice ;” and there will be, not only gladness among the saints on earth, but joy among the angels in heaven ! “ For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.”

From this parable we learn,

1. *That men, who depart from God, and live in sin, are fools and madmen.*

In the language of Scripture, sin is folly, and sinners are fools. The greatest sinners are the greatest madmen. They are bereft of their understanding ; they are deprived of their senses ; they are beside themselves ; they are out of their minds. Blind to their best interests, and regardless of their most reasonable obligations, they are, while living in sin, madly destroying their own peace, and murdering their own souls. Before the prodigal repented of his folly, and returned to his father, he came to himself ; and before a sinner repents of his sin, and returns to his God, he recovers his senses ; or, through divine grace, comes to a right mind. When, however, a sinner thus repents of sin and returns to God, the men of the world will say of him, that “ he is beside himself ;” or “ gone mad.” But angels, and the God of angels, know that he is now come to himself, and made wise to salvation. “ For there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

And had we, my brethren, been previously in-

formed that there frequently occurs on earth one event, and only one, which fills all heaven with joy ; our curiosity would have been excited to know what this event could be.\* And we should most likely have been disappointed to learn that it was when some poor man in a hovel, or some sick man in a hospital, or some criminal man in a prison, was weeping for his sins, and begging for mercy, was shuddering in guilt, and trembling at hell. Yet, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Again :

From this parable we learn,

2. *The great love of our heavenly Father towards returning sinners.*

The prodigal came to himself, and returned to his father ; but when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him before he saw the father. And while he is fearing that his father will angrily reject him, his father is gladly running to meet him. While he is expecting nothing but upbraiding and reproach from his father, he receives only kindness and affection. While he can aspire only to be the lowest and the least among the servants of his father, he is welcomed as a most beloved son. For, while a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. He is brought home, clad in the best robe, and adorned with his father's own ring ; sandals are put

\* Scott's Sermons, vol. iv. p. 545.

on his feet, the fatted calf is killed, and the whole house is filled with joy and gladness. "For, this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

SUCH IS THE LOVE OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER TOWARDS REPENTING SINNERS.—The prodigal came to himself and returned to his father: the sinner comes to himself, and returns to his God. The father saw the prodigal before the prodigal saw his father: God sees the penitent sinner, long before the penitent sinner can see his God. God sees him with compassion "afar off." God hears the first sigh, and the first cry of a broken heart; God sees the first tear, and the first step of a returning penitent. God sees him every step as "he goes on his way weeping, sowing the precious seed"—the seed of repentance. Though, in his own estimation, the penitent may be very far from God, yet God all the while is near to him and pities him. And though he fears that God will justly reject him, God is gladly ready to receive him. While he expects only upbraiding, and reproach, and rejection, the penitent receives every token of kindness, of love, and of favour. While, in his most hopeful moments, he can aspire to be placed only among the lowest servants in his father's house; yet, being washed in the blood, and clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he is received graciously, and pardoned freely; he is received as a child of God, and welcomed as an heir of glory. And the angels of God, and the God of angels, re-



joyce over the repenting sinner. "For there is joy in the presence of the angels of God in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

The penitent inquirer leaves at once the slavery of Satan and the practice of sin, and in humility and prayer returns to his heavenly Father. Shame, however, covers his face, guilt oppresses his spirit, and fear terrifies his soul; but he continues to wait on God in all the means of grace, and works of righteousness: and while he thus waits, he needs never despair. For "God looketh on men, and if any man say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; God will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light." The penitent, in returning to God, obtains more than he expected. He comes for the pardon of sin, and obtains the joy of salvation; he comes for deliverance from hell, and obtains a title to heaven.

About ninety years ago a widow lady of rank in London had an only child, who was the desire of her eyes, and the delight of her heart, and who, she fondly hoped, would be the support and comfort of her declining years. But some barbarous wretches in the shape of men, enticed her child from her door into a secret place, and then stripped him of his costly garments, and sold him weeping to that dingy class of men, whose blackness denotes their employment. Every inquiry was made, every search was instituted, every reward was proposed for the recovery of her lost child; but inquiry, search, and

reward were all in vain. And though her days of mourning still sadly continued, the mother began to reckon her son among the dead. Some years after, a party of these sooty characters came to the lady's own door to inquire for work; when lo, amid this sable group, the mother discovered her long lost child. We cannot express, but must leave you to conceive, the transports of the happy mother. The sooty blackness of her child's face did not hinder her warmest caresses. The filthiness of his dingy garments did not prevent her from clasping him in her arms and pressing him to her breast. For, says she, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

With such affection does our heavenly Father receive returning sinners. With such affection? Nay, with far greater. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget; yet will I never forget thee." "Is Ephraim my dear son; is he a beloved child? For, since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still. My bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

The chief of sinners may return to their heavenly Father, sure of welcome acceptance through Jesus Christ our Lord. However far they may have wan-

dered from God, or however vilely they may have sinned against Him, yet should they never despair of pardon and salvation; for the blood of Jesus can cleanse from all sin, and the Spirit of Jesus can renew the vilest heart.

If, therefore, any among you are troubled on account of your sins, and despair of salvation; to you we say, be not cast down, nor despair; but take courage. "Arise and go to your Father; He will not reject you." The Father of mercies will have compassion upon you. He will welcome you as dear children unto Himself, and receive you as beloved sons into His family; and there shall be again great joy in heaven over repentant sinners.

## SERMON VIII.

## THE LOVE OF GOD.

JOHN iii. 16.

*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

THESE words are a summary of Christianity, a brief but full description of the Gospel of Christ. They describe the *source*, the *means*, the *end* of salvation. The *source* of salvation is the *love of God*; the *means* of salvation is *faith in Christ Jesus*; the *end* of salvation is *eternal life in heaven*. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

From the text we learn three things,

- I. *We are by nature in a perishing state.*
- II. *We can be saved only by Jesus Christ.*
- III. *We owe Jesus Christ to the love of God.*

These three things will be the subjects of the following discourse :

## I. WE ARE BY NATURE IN A PERISHING STATE.

The words, "should not perish," in the text, intimate our state by nature; and *by nature we are corrupt, sinful, helpless, and perishing creatures*. God indeed, created Adam upright, happy, and immortal, the image of Himself, the image of His own holiness, goodness, and eternity; but Adam,\* by transgressing the divine command, lost the image and the favour of God; and now all his offspring, of woman born, are born in *his* image, born in sin, liable to perish for ever. "For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Or, how can he be clean, who is born of a woman?" In our flesh now dwelleth no good thing; but sin dwelleth in us. "Our nature is corrupt; our carnal mind is enmity against God; our heart is desperately wicked; every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only and continually evil."

Further:

We are not only born in sin, and the children of wrath, but *through the corruption of our nature, or the wickedness of our hearts, have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God*. "There is no man that doeth good and sinneth not." "There is none

\* "Adam," says our Church, "by his fall, instead of the image of God, became the image of the devil; instead of the citizen of heaven, became the bond-slave of hell; having in himself no part of his former purity, but being altogether defiled, he seemed only a mass of sin; and therefore was, by the just judgment of God, condemned to everlasting death."—Homily, for the Nativity, p. 372. 8vo.

righteous, no, not one." "If we say," therefore, "that we have no sin" in our nature, "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we say that we have not sinned" in our practice, "we make God a liar, and His word is not in us." Now, "the soul that sinneth shall die; the wages of sin is death."

As, therefore, we can neither change our nature, nor atone for our sins, can neither obtain a meetness for a holy heaven, nor a title to eternal life, *we must, if left to ourselves, eternally perish.* And to perish eternally, signifies not merely mental misery and bodily death, it does not signify the extinction of being, or a return to nothing; but it signifies the everlasting punishment of sin, banishment from the presence of God, and the torment and misery of body and soul in hell for ever. Born, therefore, as we are in sin, and sinful as we are in practice, we must both by nature and conduct be in a perishing state. But, God is love; God is not willing that any man should perish, but desires that all men should be saved; and that we might not perish, He has, in boundless love to our souls, given us His only begotten Son!

For,

## II. WE CAN BE SAVED ONLY BY JESUS CHRIST.

"Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish."

1. "*Other name is not given under heaven, by which we can be saved, than the name of Jesus.*"

And Jesus is able to save to the uttermost, "and



casts out none that come to Him for salvation." For He willingly died for all; His grace is abundantly sufficient for all; His salvation is freely offered to all; and all are earnestly invited to receive it. "Look unto Me," He cries, "all the ends of the earth, and be saved." For there is no sinner, however vile, whom His mercy will not receive; no sin, however aggravated, which His blood cannot pardon; no heart, however wicked, which His Spirit cannot renew; no life, however sinful, which His grace cannot reform; no believer, however weak in the faith, whom His merits cannot enthrone in glory. Jesus Christ is the only and the all-sufficient Saviour, whom God has given to mankind.

For, again:

2. *All men may believe in Jesus Christ.*

"This is the commandment of God, that we believe in the name of His Son." And, "Come unto Me," says the Son, "all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto Me," whoever he may be, however or whenever he may come, "I will in no wise cast out." "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters." "And 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." All men are *commanded* to believe in Christ; all men, therefore, who *do* believe in Him, *may* believe in Him; and all who *do* believe in Him, shall never perish.

For there is no difference with Christ between the Jew and the Greek ; but the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon Him ; and all who call upon Him shall be saved. For God did not give His Son out of love to a particular nation, but out of love to all the world ; nor did His Son assume the nature of particular men, but the nature of all mankind ; whoever, therefore, lives in the world, which God loved, and partakes of the nature which His Son assumed, may come to Him for salvation. There is no sin of exclusion, no limitation of mercy, no exception of person ; but “ WHOSOEVER ” cometh to Christ, or WHOSOEVER “ believeth in Him, shall never perish.”

But this faith or belief in Christ is not through the work or the worthiness of man ; it neither proceeds from human power, nor admits of human merit ; but it is “ the gift of God ” to a penitent sinner, and “ the work of His Spirit ” in a praying heart. “ This is the work of God,” says our Lord, “ that ye believe in Him, whom He has sent.” And, “ Ye believe in Christ,” writes St. Luke, “ through the grace ” of the Spirit. And, “ To you,” adds St. Paul, “ it is given ” from heaven “ to believe.” But, “ Ask, and ye shall have ; seek, and ye shall find. For God will give the Holy Spirit to all who ask.” Faith in Christ implies that, through the conviction of the Spirit, we feel ourselves to be perishing sinners, and that we rely on Christ alone for salvation ; it implies that by the teaching of the same Spirit we have learnt that all the riches of grace are treasured

up in the person, and all the perfections of God displayed in the work of Christ; that "He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" that nothing but His blood can pardon our sins, nothing but His Spirit can renew our hearts, nothing but His righteousness can justify our souls, nothing but His grace can sanctify our lives, nothing but His merits can entitle us to eternal life in heaven. Believers in Christ are born of God, and become new creatures; "they are justified" by faith "in the name of the Lord Jesus;" "they are sanctified" in the heart and life "by the Spirit of our God." Faith in Christ through the Word and Spirit of God, purifies their hearts and works by love, and overcomes the world, and resists the devil, and brings forth the fruits of righteousness. And, "being made free from sin, and become servants unto God, they have their fruit unto holiness, and their end everlasting life."

For,

3. "*Believers in Christ shall never perish.*"

They shall not be condemned with the unbelieving, nor be banished from the presence of the Lord. They shall not be lost, ruined, undone for ever. They shall not be cast body and soul into hell. They shall not feel the gnawings of the worm which never dies, nor the scorchings of the fire which is never extinguished. They shall never perish; they shall escape the bitter pains of eternal death, and shall obtain the perfect joys of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus Christ is

the only Saviour; all men may believe in Jesus Christ; and whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish; "for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

### III. WE OWE JESUS CHRIST TO THE LOVE OF GOD.

1. *Adore, first, THE BEING by whom this love was manifested.*

IT WAS GOD, even the most high God, the all-wise, the all-mighty, the all-sufficient, the eternal God, who so loved the world. The coming of Christ into the world, we may therefore remark, was not the cause of the love of God to mankind, but the love of God to mankind was the cause of Christ's coming into the world. And we remark again, that as the Three Divine Persons are one in essence, they are one in love; so that Father, Son, and Spirit, equally loved the world. Every morsel of bread, every thread of clothing, every atom of wealth, every moment of health, every pulse of life, every breath of being, is an evidence of the love of God; but the great manifestation of His love is the riches of His kindness in giving us His Son. "In this was manifested," says the apostle, "the love of God, because He sent his Son into the world." In creation God showed His wisdom and His power; but in redemption he manifested His kindness and His love. "In this," we repeat with the apostle, "was manifested the love of God, because He sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

The love of God was *altogether unmerited*. It was

not because we had shown love to God, or had merited His love to us; but it was out of the love of His own heart, that He gave His Son to die for us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 9, 10.) There was nothing in our nature or in our conduct to attract the love of God, but everything to repel it;—we were sinners and enemies, yet He loved us.

The love of God was *entirely unsolicited*. All our affections were estranged from Him, and fixed on His enemies; we neither sought His face, nor desired His favour; yet, even then He loved us. He remembered us, when we forgot Him; He loved us, when we hated Him; He sent His Son to die for us, when we were in rebellion against Him. He had no inducement from without to love us; all His motives were found in His own bosom. The display of His love to the universe was the reason of its manifestation, and the exercise of it was His delight. His love was the love of pity, and the love of love. He loved us, as Himself speaks, "because He loved us."

The love of God was *perfectly free*. He remembered us, when He might have forgotten us; He loved us, when He might have hated us; He sent His Son to die for our sins, when He might have left us to perish. All creatures in all worlds are His; and we know that other creatures in another world are fallen from their high estate; but God showed His love in sending His Son to redeem not fallen angels, but fallen men. Happy and glorious would

God have been, if no creatures had ever existed ; happy and glorious would He remain, if all creatures were destroyed. But though independent of all creatures, yet He loved fallen men ; He loved us ; and He so loved us as to give us His Son. O how wonderful is His love !

Let us, secondly,

2. *Consider* THE OBJECT *on which this love was fixed.*

THAT OBJECT WAS THE WORLD. God loved the world, the whole world, the whole wicked world, when perishing in its sin. God loved the Jews and the Gentiles, or the whole race of mankind. He loved all individuals, all families, all tribes, all nations, at all times, and in all places of the world. For when “ all men, like lost sheep, had gone astray, the Lord laid on His Son the iniquities of us all.” “ When the whole world lay in wickedness,” “ God sent His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.” God loved those, who, so far from deserving the brightest manifestation of His love, deserved the blackest visitation of His vengeance. We were fallen creatures,—in our nature inclined to evil, in our practice far gone from original righteousness. As sinners, we are guilty before God ; as guilty before Him, we are under condemnation ; as under condemnation, we are liable to punishment ; and the punishment to which we are liable, is eternal punishment in hell. But, still God loved the world, and so loved the world, as to send His Son to die for our sins. And Christ died for all the sins of all mankind from the beginning to the end of the world. Though



we had defied His power, and challenged His justice; though we had rejected His authority, and broken His laws; though we had abused His mercies, and grieved His Spirit—"yet he commended His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.)

But, further; let us, thirdly,

3. *Honour* THE GIFT *which this love bestowed.*

God gave not an angel nor a creature, but the Lord of all angels, and of all creatures: HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. Jesus Christ, however, is not the Son of God by creation, for He was never created; nor by adoption, for He was never an alien; but by eternal generation He is, so the Son, as to be the equal of God,—“the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His person.” “He is very God of very God;” “God over all blessed for ever.” If, therefore, ten thousand worlds like our own had been offered in sacrifice to God; or if all the angels of light had been sacrificed on the altars of heaven, it would not have been so great a gift as the sacrifice of His Son. The love of God to mankind can be measured only by the gift of His Son; but neither men in time, nor angels through eternity, can measure the extent of this love, or compute the value of this gift; both are unspeakable. Never could it have entered the mind of a creature that the Eternal Father should give His Eternal Son to die for the sins of the world; but it did enter the mind of God; and God so loved the world, that He gave His beloved Son to die for sin-

ners. A less gift would not have sufficed for our relief, and a greater gift God could not bestow. Heaven could not furnish a richer gift; His love could not further go; in giving His Son, therefore, He showed the utmost limit of His love, and emptied the treasury of heaven.

But, how did God give His Son? Did God send Him as an angel armed with divine powers, and clad in heavenly splendours? God sent Him in mortal guise, a man, like ourselves. But, though God sent Him, as a man, did He not send Him as a man of rank, a prince, or a king? God sent Him without rank or distinction. But, though God sent Him without distinction or rank, did He not send Him in a state of ease and competence? His Son was born in a stable, and laid in a manger; through life He was oppressed by labour, acquainted with grief, and despised by men. But, though His life was labour, and sorrow, and reproach, was not his death honourable and happy? His death was disgrace and agony. He was crucified between two thieves; He was tortured many hours on the cross; and He expired, complaining, "My God, my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" Thus the Father gave His Son—gave Him from His heaven, from His throne, from His bosom,—gave Him to the death of the cross. The universe, with all its glory, is not worth one tear or one sigh of the Son of God; and God gave not only the sighs and the tears, but the life's blood of His Son a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God gave His only-begotten Son not only to teach us by

His wisdom, and to guide us by His example; but to redeem us by His blood. A price less than His blood could neither redeem our souls from the eternal pains of hell, nor purchase the eternal joys of heaven for our souls. But, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because His Son laid down His life for us." The Son of God, however, was a willing sacrifice. "He gave Himself for our sins." (Gal. i. 4.) "He gave Himself freely." "He gave Himself a ransom for all." "Lo! I come!" he cries, "delighting to do Thy will, O God!" "For no man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Thus, as before remarked, the only-begotten Son, as well as the eternal Father, loved us, and shed His blood to atone for our sins. And "to Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Again: let us, fourthly,

4. *Contemplate* THE END *which this love attained.*

THIS END IS EVERLASTING LIFE. Jesus wept, that we might smile; He became poor, that we might be made rich; He descended to shame, that we might rise to glory; He died, that we might live for ever. "Whosoever believeth in Him shall have everlasting life." This everlasting life has a beginning in the present state. Believers are united by the Spirit to Christ, as the grafted branch is united to the vine; and from this union they obtain spiritual life to their souls. This spiritual life in the soul

differs only in degree from eternal life in heaven. Spiritual life is eternal life begun ; eternal life is spiritual life completed. But as a proof of union with Christ, and as a manifestation of spiritual life to the world, believers in Christ ever rise in practice from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. They live in holiness, and they live to God, and this only is life. Wicked men *exist* ; holy Christians *live*. The consecration of the whole life to true holiness, the delight of the whole heart in divine worship, the communion of the renewed soul with the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit—the peace of God, the favour of the Lord, the comfort of the Holy Ghost, the victory over death, the hope of glory—this is life, this is spiritual life, this is the life of believers in Christ, the beginning and foretaste of endless life in heaven. “ He that believeth on Me,” says the Son of God, “ HATH eternal life ;” he hath it *now*, and he shall have it *for ever*.

Believers in Christ, like other men, must die, and lie in the dust ; but Jesus, in the last day, will raise their bodies immortal from the grave, and bring their souls rejoicing from paradise, that, being glorified in body and soul, they may obtain eternal life in heaven. “ God will then wipe all tears from their eyes, and the Lamb will lead them to living fountains of waters.” Error shall not mislead, nor weariness oppress, nor sinners disturb, nor Satan tempt, nor sorrow grieve, nor sickness attack, nor death alarm ! The glorified saints will, in their capacities and faculties, be equal to the angels of God ; every

faculty will be employed in the service, and every capacity filled with the joy of their Lord. They will have the open vision of the glorified Redeemer, and the full fruition of the eternal God. They shall see Him as He is, and know Him as they are known! There will be no intermission in their service, no stop in their song, no pause in their bliss! They will ever serve God in His temple, and ever rejoice before His throne! This, my brethren, is *life*; this is the life of the saints; and this life of the saints will be eternal; it will be a happiness without mixture, without interruption, and without end. "They shall have everlasting life!" "Their life is hid with Christ in God," and "because He lives, they shall live also." They shall abide in a continuing city, and dwell in an "everlasting habitation"—in "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" Their kingdom will be everlasting, their throne immoveable, their crown unfading, their riches incorruptible, their glory eternal! Freed, as we have said, from the possibility of all evil, possessed of angelic capacities, and filled with all conceivable and all inconceivable bliss, they will live through eternity in communion with God and the Lamb! This, my brethren, is *everlasting* life! This is everlasting life *in heaven*!

Such, then, is THE BEING, by whom this love was manifested; such is THE OBJECT on which this love was fixed; such is THE GIFT which this love bestowed; such is THE END which this love attained!



In *such a manner* has God manifested His love to mankind ; God has so loved the world ! He has so tenderly, so greatly, so strongly, so freely, so richly, loved the world, that no created mind can conceive the freedom, the tenderness, the greatness, the strength, or the riches, of His love. God has not so loved any other order of beings as He has loved mankind ! He has not so displayed His wisdom, nor so exerted His power, as He has manifested His love to a perishing world ! His wisdom might be further displayed, and His power might be further exerted, but His love could not be further manifested than in giving His Son for the redemption of sinners ! God has so loved the world, that His love cannot be told ; the Son of God Himself does not tell it, but, putting an infinity of meaning in the word “so,” He leaves it for the everlasting study of saints and angels : but the everlasting study of saints and angels will not be able to comprehend this mystery of love, or to conceive the kindness of God to mankind ! “ God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life !”

1. And, now, my brethren, in conclusion, *who desires not to escape eternal perdition ; who desires not to avoid the bitter pains of eternal death in hell ? Who wishes not for everlasting life ; who wishes not for perfect and endless happiness in heaven ?*

But, allow me, brethren, to inquire, “ Have you, through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, felt your perishing state by nature, and through the power



of His grace, believed on Christ for salvation? Through His blood, and righteousness, and Spirit, have your sins been forgiven, your souls justified, and your hearts renewed? Has the Eternal Spirit made you, once dead in sin, alive to God, by communicating spiritual life to your souls; and are you now living by faith in holiness to His glory?" Can you say with the Apostle, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me?"

2. *Hope not, brethren, for everlasting life hereafter, unless ye now have spiritual life in your souls!*

Presume not on spiritual life in your souls, unless through grace you have believed on Christ Jesus! Pretend not to faith in Jesus Christ, unless in your life you bring forth the fruits of righteousness! And, however abundant may be your fruits of righteousness, however strong may be your faith, however manifest your spiritual life, yet expect not eternal life in heaven, but only as a free gift through Jesus Christ our Lord!

3. *Oh! that you, who hear the Truth as it is in Jesus, and yet live in sin, would consider the love of God in giving His Son!*

You are now in a perishing state, and Christ Jesus is the only Saviour. The God of love now intreats you to believe in His Son, and we beseech you, by the love of God, to yield to His intreaties! O submit to the sceptre of His love before He smite with

the rod of his anger ! “ For as justice did not prevent His mercy from sending His Son to save penitent believers, neither will His mercy prevent His justice from destroying incorrigible sinners.” How terrible are the words of God to those who hear the truth and believe not, but live in sin.—“ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him !” Again : “ He that believeth on the Son is not condemned, but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God !” And again : “ He that believeth shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned !” Finally : “ They all shall be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness !” To hear these words of God makes the ears tingle, and the heart shake ; but, O what will it be to taste eternal death in hell, or to feel the stings of damnation for ever and ever ! And, my brethren, if God has so loved the world as to give us His Son ; and if the Son has so loved us as to die for our sins on the cross ; what do those persons deserve who despise the love of God, and trample on the blood of His Son ? O ! ye thoughtless sinners, who hitherto have not received Jesus Christ, pause in your career, and ponder your ways ; repent of your sins, and pray for salvation : believe in Christ, and live for ever !

4. *For the love of God in sending His Son is glad tidings to perishing sinners !*

Can God give a greater proof of His love to us than His only-begotten Son? Can you desire any other Saviour than Christ crucified? Is He not able to save to the uttermost; and will He not receive all who come to Him for salvation? Cannot His blood cleanse from sin? Cannot His righteousness justify the soul? Cannot His Spirit give spiritual life to the believer? Cannot His merits entitle every believer to everlasting life in heaven? "Verily, whosoever believeth in Him shall have everlasting life!" But, you say, "I am a creature so corrupt and sinful, that I cannot have an interest in Christ." But, dost thou not partake of the nature in which Christ died? Dost thou not live in the world for which He shed His blood? Did He not come into the world to save sinners? Did He not taste of death for every man? But again you say, "I am so unworthy!" More unworthy, doubtless, than thou canst possibly conceive, but thy unworthiness did not prevent God from sending His Son, nor prevent the Son from dying for thy sins, nor will it prevent thy salvation! "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; this faithful saying is worthy of all acceptance; it is, therefore, worthy of thine!" Be encouraged, then, ye penitents, to believe in Christ Jesus! Believe in Him now, and he will save you for ever! He will never leave those who believe in Him. "For, if when ye were enemies, ye were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall ye be saved by His life!"

Finally :

5. *God has so loved us, that He gave His only begotten Son !*

“ *If God, my brethren, so loved us, we ought also to love God.* And this is the love of God”—this is the evidence of our love of God—“ that we keep His commandments.” And, if from the love of God we keep His commandments, we shall keep them all, and keep them always, and keep them with all our heart. But, “ *If we thus love God, we shall feel that we love Him because He first loved us ; and if we thus love God, we shall also love one another.*” For they who love not one another, know not the love of God ; for God is love ! Saved by the same divine love, and redeemed by the same precious blood, and sanctified by the same eternal Spirit, ye are all brethren in Christ Jesus, and will fervently love one another out of a pure heart ; ye will “ *love one another not in word and tongue only, but in deed and in truth.*” Thus loving one another, God dwelleth in you, and you in God ; His love is now made perfect in your hearts, and hereafter you shall be made perfect in love in His everlasting kingdom !

## SERMON IX.

THE PRINCIPLE, THE PRACTICE,  
AND THE PRIVILEGE OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

JOHN xiv. 23.

*Jesus said, If a man love me, he will keep my words ;  
and my Father will love him, and we will come  
unto him, and make our abode with him.*

TRUE religion is a personal and practical thing : it is a divine and spiritual reality ; it is a mysterious but actual intercourse between the soul of the believer, and the Trinity in Unity. “ He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,” says our Lord, “ he it is that loveth me : and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.” “ Lord,” inquires one of his disciples, “ Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world ?” Jesus answered him, and said, “ If a man love me ; he will keep my words : and my Father will love him ; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”



These words indicate *the Principle, the Practice, and the Privilege of the Christian believer.*

Let us, then, consider,

### I. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

It is the love of Christ. "If," says Christ, "a man love me."

1. "*Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us.*"

"He loved us, and gave Himself a sacrifice and an offering to God." "He loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." And, "We love Him, because He first loved us." (1 John iii. xvi. ; Eph. v. 2. ; Rev. i. 5. ; 1 John iv. 9, 10.) Christ crucified is the only object of supreme love to the christian believer ; for, Christ Jesus, uniting in His wondrous person all the graces of perfect humanity, and all the glories of eternal divinity, is in Himself the most lovely and desirable Being in the universe. If we consider what Christ has done, what He is now doing, and what He has promised to do for us,—we must confess that it is most reasonable to love Him. He lived and laboured for us on the earth ; He bled and died for us on the cross. He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven to intercede for us at the right hand of God. And is it not reasonable to love Him? When we were without help, He helped us ; when we were perishing, He saved us ; when we were enemies of God, he reconciled us to God by his blood ; when we were exposed to eternal death, He procured for us eternal life, by laying



down his own ; when we were all defiled by sin, He procured the Holy Spirit to sanctify us ; when we deserved nothing but the pains of an eternal hell, He obtained for us all the joys of an eternal heaven. He is gone before to prepare a place for his people ; and he will come again in majesty to receive them to Himself, that they may be for ever with Him in glory. And is it not reasonable to love Him ? Nay, were it not unreasonable, were it not ungrateful, were it not exceedingly sinful, not to love Him ?

2. *The love of Christ is not a natural, but a spiritual principle ;* not in any way acquired, but graciously infused ; not by any means deserved, but freely given. Without it, can be no true piety ; it is the mainspring of “ pure religion ;” it is the soul of devotion, the life of godliness, the root of obedience to God, the source of love to mankind. By nature we are enmity against God, and rebels against His majesty. But, when it pleases God to reveal His Son in our hearts, He destroys this enmity, and subdues this rebellion ; He communicates spiritual life to our souls, and gives a divine turn to our affections ; Jesus is then enthroned in our hearts, “ and we love Him because He first loved us.”

When we see that the whole human race were dead in sin, and liable to eternal death in hell, and that Jesus Christ, the king of glory, descended from His throne, and assumed our nature, and died on the cross, not only to redeem us from everlasting misery, but to restore us to everlasting happiness, our hearts

cannot but adore the riches of His grace ; our tongues cannot but tell the greatness of His love. For this love of Christ, in dying for the sins of the world, not only renders Him “ the magnet of souls, the attraction of hearts, and the wonder of the universe,” but inspires all true believers with fervent gratitude for his mercy, and entire devotedness to His service. “ The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them “ on the cross,” and “ rose again ” from the dead ! Further : When through the power of divine grace we have experienced “ a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,” and are thus made new creatures in Christ Jesus ; or when, through the sprinkling of His blood on our consciences, and the work of His Spirit in our hearts, we are renewed in His image, and conformed to His example ; then shall we have a richer experience of His love, and may say with the Apostle, “ I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

### 3. *The love of Christ is a pure principle.*

It not only constrains us to repent of every sin, but impels us to strive unto blood against it. If we can wilfully commit a sinful action, or speak an evil word, or cherish a wicked thought, the love of

Christ is not in us. "For they that are Christ's," are constrained by the love of Christ; and they that are constrained by the love of Christ, "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Gal. v. 24. Rom. vi. 6.)

Further :

As soon as the love of Christ possesses the heart of the believer, his affections will be raised from things earthly and temporal, and fixed on things heavenly and eternal. He loses all relish for worldly society, and turns from all intercourse with worldly men. The maxims, and pursuits, and pleasures of such men agree neither with the maxims of Christianity, nor with the pursuits of holiness, nor with the joys of the Holy Ghost. He is crucified with Christ; he is dead to the world. Its pomps no longer please his mind; its honours no longer captivate his soul; its riches no longer steal his heart. So that, if he is forced to mingle in worldly society, he either undergoes in his feelings a sort of crucifixion, or he begins to lose the mind of Christ. For, "if a man love the world, the love of Christ is not in him." (1 John ii. 15.) "But, by the love of Him," says the Christian, "who died for me, on the cross, the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

4. *The love of Christ is a prevailing principle.*

It brings every faculty into obedience to Christ, and excites every exertion in his service. It over-

comes every opposer, and extinguishes every rival. Precious as life, and stronger than death, it is invincible in its energies, and ceaseless in its operations. The Christian believer, therefore, under the influence of this love, is unbounded in his desires to glorify the Redeemer, and unwearied in his labours to benefit mankind. Though in the world he may have tribulation, distress, and persecution; yet, says he, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? For in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. And 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."

But, finally :

5. *The love of Christ is a delightful principle.*

"He that loveth Me," says Christ, "shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself unto him." How delightful to have Christ manifested to our minds in all his loveliness as our Saviour! How delightful to experience in our hearts, the love of the Father, and to feel in our souls the love of the Son! For the Spirit having manifested to our souls the love of Christ towards us, will kindle in our hearts a kindred love towards Christ; and this love of Christ will fill us with peace, and joy, and hope, and heaven. O, how delightful is the love of Christ! And, "may God,

my brethren, according to the riches of his glory, strengthen you with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye with all saints may be able to comprehend the love of Christ, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 16—19.)

We proceed to consider,

## II. THE PRACTICE OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

His practice is obedience. "He will keep my word," says Christ; "he will do my commandments."

The end of the law, as well as the end of the Gospel, is the same; it is obedience to the Word of the Lord. "For circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." (1 Cor. vii. 19. Gal. v. 6; vi. 15. John xv. 14. 1 John ii. 3.) "If, therefore, ye love Me, ye will keep my commandments." (John xiv. 15.) For, "He that loveth Me not, keepeth not my sayings;" (xiv. 24;) "but he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." The preparation of Christians for heaven, is "through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and the sanctification of the Spirit of God unto obedience." (1 Pet. i. 2.) Obedience is the great design of the Gospel of Christ; and obedience is the great effect of the Spirit of God in renewing the hearts of mankind. "The Gospel is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith;" and when it is received into the heart, it brings the whole mind, and will, and affections under



obedience to Christ. (1 Pet. i. 14. Rom. vi. 16 ; xvi. 26. 2 Cor. x. 5.)

True Christians are practical Christians, and their practice is obedience “to the Word of the Lord.” They are “the obedient children” of the Most Holy God; “and their obedience is ever unto righteousness.”

The obedience of the true Christian is *penitent*. The foundation of obedience is laid in repentance. The first sign of obedience is godly sorrow for sin; the first act of obedience is a penitent return to God by Christ crucified. A consciousness of his native corruption, and a sense of indwelling sin ever keep the true Christian repentant towards God; and his soul is ever distressed, because his love to Christ is so cold, and his obedience to Christ so imperfect.

The obedience of the true Christian is *believing*. Obedience to the commands of God can proceed only from faith in his Son. “Without Christ we can do nothing;” without faith in Christ, we can neither please God nor perform good works; but with faith in Christ, we can keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight. This obedience to God, springing from faith in Christ, displays the glory of the Father, and contributes to the benefit of mankind; it adorns the doctrines of the Gospel, and recommends the religion of Jesus; it is the surest source of consolation to the heart, and the strongest evidence of acceptance in heaven. But it makes no expiation of past guilt; it forms no title to eternal life; so that after



“ we have done all the things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants,” and can enter into the glory of heaven only through the merits of Christ.

The obedience of the true Christian is *cordial*. It is not reluctant, nor mercenary, but voluntary and grateful. It is not lip-service, nor eye-service, but the service of the heart. It springs from a heart of gratitude, from a heart filled with the love of Christ. The true Christian desires nothing more fervently, and prays for nothing more earnestly, than that he may love Christ with all his heart, and serve Him with all his strength. And because he cannot in this body, and in this world, love and obey Christ as he would, he longs for that pure body and better world, in which his love will be supreme, and his obedience perfect. O that there were in me such a heart, that I could supremely love thee, O Christ, and keep all thy commandments always !

The obedience of the true Christian is *universal*. *It embraces the whole man*. For the Holy Ghost with the word of truth sanctifies the true Christian, body, soul, and spirit; and he desires to be holy as God is holy, and pure as Christ is pure. For Christ, when enthroned in the affections of the heart, allows no desire of evil, no parley with temptation, no truce with sin ; but constrains Christians to grow in grace and knowledge, that they may be filled with the fruits of righteousness through faith in Him, to the glory and praise of God. *It honours the whole law*. The true Christian keeps all the words of

Christ; he obeys all his commandments, whether they refer to himself, to his neighbour, or to his Maker; "he lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world;" "he does justice, loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God." *It extends through his whole life.* He keeps the word of Christ at all times, in public and in private, in prosperity and in adversity, on the Sabbath day, and on all the days of the week. He obeys the commands of Christ, not only when obedience is easy and honourable, but when obedience involves in difficulties, and exposes to shame. He is never ashamed of Christ, or of His Cross, of His cause, or of His people. While his heart beats, it beats for Christ; while his tongue speaks, it speaks for Christ; while his hand labours, it labours for Christ. While he lives, he lives to Christ; and when he dies, he dies to Christ. Nor will death terminate, but complete his love and his obedience to Christ; it will introduce him into that higher state, and brighter world, where his love and his obedience will be perfect and eternal.

For, finally :

The obedience of the true Christian is *blessed*. "Whoever is not a forgetful hearer, but a grateful doer of the word of Christ, this man shall be *blessed in his doing*." For, "*blessed are they who do his commandments*, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" of God. The true Christian is blessed now; he is blessed in doing the word of Christ; he receives rich *blessings* into his soul; for, "If a man

keep my words," says Christ, "my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

But this leads us to consider,

### III. THE PRIVILEGE OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

"My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." The eternal Father will love the true Christian; the Father and the Son will both of them come to him; and with manifest tokens of the divine presence will dwell with him. What a privilege!

#### 1. *My Father will love him.*"

Who will love the true Christian? "My Father," says Christ, "My Father will love him." And who is the Father? He is the greatest and the best being in the universe. He is the Creator of all worlds, the Maker of all mankind, the Author of all good, the Father of mercies, "the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; He is the Father, who so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." And why does God the Father manifest His love to the true Christian? Because, as we have seen, the true Christian loves Jesus Christ, and shows his love to Christ by "keeping his commandments." "My Father will love him." Our Lord does not say, "My Father will *guide* him, will *protect* him, will *honour* him, will *comfort* him, or will *bless* him; but, He says, "My Father will **LOVE** him!" For the love of God

includes all guidance, and protection, and honour, and comfort, and blessing; it includes every act of kindness, which God can do for his people, and every boon of mercy, which He can give them in time or in eternity. The Eternal Father commands all the treasures, and distributes all the joys of the universe; with these treasures and joys He is able to enrich and gladden the souls whom He loves; and He will, for the sake of His Son, enrich and gladden their souls for ever. For, as his power to enrich and to gladden is infinite and almighty; so His love to His people is unchangeable, and eternal. He will never leave nor forsake the souls, whom He loves. To be loved of God the Father, and to feel His love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is the greatest and the purest happiness which man can enjoy on earth, or expect in heaven. O what a privilege "to be loved of the Father!" "My Father will love him."

Again:

2. "*We will come unto him.*" "*My Father and I, will come unto him.*"

What condescension, what mercy, what love is this! The Eternal Father, whose presence pervades the universe, and brightens the heaven of heavens; the Eternal Son, whom angels in light serve and adore; the Father and the Son, whose equal dominion and glory are without beginning and without end, will stoop from the throne of heaven, and visit a worm of the dust. And will, "in very deed," the Father and the Son come down to sinful man to

comfort him by the *pardon of his sins*, and to cheer him with the *hope of heaven*? Yes, verily! They will come to give him pardon and peace out of the riches of divine grace; and to entitle him through the merits of Christ to all the riches of divine glory. And they will not only give him a title to eternal life in heaven, in the blood of Christ; but through the work of the Spirit in his heart and life, they will “make him meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” O, what a privilege to be visited by “the Prince of peace,” “and the King of glory!” “We,” says Christ, “even I and my Father, we will come unto him!”

Further :

3. “*We will make our abode with him.*”

“The abiding” of the Father and the Son in the heart of the true Christian intimates that his heart has been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and thus made a fit abode for the Eternal Three. For God, the most holy God, cannot abide in an unholy temple, or dwell in an unclean heart. It further intimates that the true Christian, in whom alone God resides, keeps his heart in purity, and his life in holiness. Only while his heart is pure, and his life holy, will the Father and the Son make their abode with him. For “God cannot live in us,” if we live in sin. But “if a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.”

The Father and the Son dwell in true Christians by the Spirit. The Spirit is the great Agent in the



work of salvation. He enlightens the mind, and convinces of sin; He enables to repent with godly sorrow, and gives faith in Christ crucified. He renews and sanctifies and comforts believers. He is the other Comforter, who having applied the blood of Christ to the conscience, and communicated spiritual life to the soul, abides with true Christians for ever. In this manner true Christians are the palaces of the Divine Majesty, the abodes of the glorious Godhead, the temples of the Eternal Trinity. "For," says the apostle, "ye are the temples of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God; and they shall be my people." What a privilege to be the temples of the Eternal Trinity—the abodes of the divine Majesty! "We will make our abode with him."

Finally :

4. *True religion is an actual intercourse between the soul of the true Christian and the Trinity in Unity.*

The Father and the Son will, by the Spirit, come into the true Christian, and dwell with him. "We will come to him, and make our abode with him." True Christians are the saints of God; and the saints of God are saints, "because," says Bishop Pearson,\* "they are sanctified by the Holy Ghost." The saints of God in the church of Christ have communion with the Holy Spirit. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and

\* On Creed, vol. i. p. 535—541.



the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." This communion with the Father and the Son is wrought by the communication of the Spirit: for, hereby we become sons of God, in that we have received the Spirit of adoption. This is the communion which the saints enjoy with the Three Persons of the blessed Trinity: for our Saviour, in our text, hath made us this most precious promise, "If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Here the soul of man is made the habitation of God the Father, and of God the Son; and the presence of God the Spirit cannot be wanting, where God the Father and God the Son abide: "for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's." The Spirit, therefore, with the Father and the Son, inhabits in the saints; for "know ye not," saith the apostle, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

May we, in conclusion, be allowed to inquire,

1. *What is your principle?* Is it the love of Christ? Does this principle prevail in you over every other principle? Does the love of Christ induce you to live entirely to Him, who freely died for you? But, "If ye love me," says Christ, "keep my commandments."

We, therefore, inquire again,

2. *What is your practice?* Do you keep the words, or obey the commandments of Christ? Does the love of Christ constrain you to obedience? Is

your obedience believing? Does it grow from faith? Is your obedience cordial? Does it proceed from the heart? Is your obedience universal? Does it embrace the whole man, honour the whole law, and extend through the whole life?

3. *What is your privilege?* Does God the Father love you? Is his love shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit? Can you join in the language of the apostle, "Unto Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,—be dominion and glory for ever and ever?" Have the Father and the Son come to you? Do the Father and the Son dwell in you? Do ye "hereby know that the Father and the Son abide in you by the Spirit which they have given you?"

What, then, my brethren, do you know of these things? *What do you know of the principle, the practice, and the privilege of true Christians?*

If you do not keep the commandments of Christ, you do not love Him; and if you do not love Him, He will not by His Spirit come to you, nor make His abode with you. And "if ye have not the Spirit of Christ, ye are none of His."

But, finally, true Christians, *You love the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved you, and died for you.* You keep his commands; you have them in your hearts; you obey them in your lives. Especially, as true Christians, do you obey his dying command, "Do this in remembrance of Me." Then, my brethren, God the Father loves you, and God the Son loves you; and through God the Holy Spirit, the Father

and the Son will come to you, and manifest themselves to you, and make their abode with you. For, "he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in God, and God in him." And, while you daily search the Holy Scriptures, and daily pray to God in secret; while you worship God in your families, and delight in the house of prayer; while you hear the preaching of the Gospel, and receive the supper of the Lord,—may the Father and the Son through the Spirit manifest themselves to your souls as they do not to the world. May they shed abroad the love of God in your hearts, give you the spirit of adoption, and enable you to cry, "Abba, Father!" may they witness with your Spirit, that ye are sons of God, give you an earnest of heaven, and seal you to the day of redemption. Amen.

## SERMON X.

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD, AND THE  
CHRISTIAN IN CHRIST.

JOHN xvi. 33.

*These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

THE name of Christ was foretold as “ the King of peace :” his person was typified by the king of Salem, or the “ king of peace ;” and his kingdom was announced as “ the kingdom of peace.” (Psa. lxxii. ; Isa. ii. 4, &c.) When He was born into the world, angels sung “ the hymn of peace ;” and when He left the world, his legacy was “ peace.” His Gospel is “ the Gospel of peace ;” and the purport of all his own personal preaching was peace. “ These things,” says Christ, “ have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Let us from these words contemplate,

1st. *The state of Christians in the world*; and,  
2ndly, *The state of Christians in Christ*.

We are to contemplate,

#### I. THE STATE OF CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD.

*It is a state of trouble.* “In the world ye shall have tribulation.”

We are born to trouble; as fallen creatures, trouble is our natural inheritance. Our entrance into life is pain, the course of life is grief, the end of life is agony. Every step we take in our mortal pilgrimage, we tread on thorns; disappointment, and vexation, and anxiety, and restlessness, and weariness, and doubt, and danger, and fear, and loss, and sorrow, and sickness, cover all the path of life. “Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.”

Besides, as social creatures, we are liable to constant troubles; we must suffer in the sufferings, and weep in the distresses, of our relatives. We must live a sort of multiplied life in the lives of our friends; we must share in their misfortunes, grieve in their griefs, tremble in their sicknesses, and mourn over their graves.

But these natural and social ills of life do not form the tribulation of the text. The tribulation of the text is peculiar to the people of God; it befalls us only because we belong to Jesus Christ. If we are only *nominal believers* in Christ we shall escape this tribulation; but if we are *practical Christians* we



shall be "hated and troubled" by the world. "Marvel not, my brethren," saith our Lord, "if the world hate you." The world would love you, if ye were of the world ; but because Christ has chosen you out of the world, and you are separate from the world, therefore the world hates and troubles you.

When a man, through the grace of the Spirit, becomes a child of God, his first troublers are commonly those of his own household. Conceiving that he carries religion too far, and that he will injure his worldly prospects by his religion, they labour with cruel tenderness to extinguish his religious earnestness ; and while they profess anxiety for his temporal welfare, are doing those things which may cause his everlasting ruin. But, when they cannot tempt him back to the amusements of the world, nor terrify him from following Christ, they begin to hate and to trouble him. Their looks are scorn to his face ; their words are reproaches in his ears ; their actions are thorns in his side. Ishmael persecuted his brother Isaac, and Cain slew his brother Abel, "because he was righteous."

The world, the men of the world, ungodly men, will assuredly trouble the practical and consistent Christian.

The temper or spirit of the practical Christian is humble, meek, forbearing, forgiving, gentle, generous, devotional, divine. His language is modest, pure, gracious, spiritual, heavenly, instructive, edifying. His conduct is sober, chaste, temperate, beneficent, devout, righteous. His first care



is to save his soul; his first desire is to please God; his first duty is to practise holiness; his first pleasure is to commune with the Father and the Son through the Spirit. He maintains family prayer in his household, and searches the Scriptures daily. He hallows the day, attends the house, hears the Gospel, and celebrates the Supper of the Lord. His conduct shines as light before ungodly men, and exposes their evil conduct. His conduct is a practical sermon, which condemns them. It is an external conscience, which reproves them. And thus condemned and reproved by his conduct, they hate and trouble him. They insinuate the insincerity of his motives, intimate the selfishness of his objects, and misrepresent the tenor of his conduct. They would hinder all his projects for doing good among men, and prevent the diffusion of the Gospel through the world. And when the Christian sees ungodly men, not only rejecting the Gospel themselves, but causing others to reject it; he feels something of that trouble, which our Saviour felt, when He wept over Jerusalem. From the time of Abel to the present time, every righteous man in the world has for righteousness' sake been troubled. "For, whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution." "It is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom of God." "All those who having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, now stand before the throne of God in glory, came out of great tribulation."

Such, then, my brethren, is *the state of Christians in the world*; it is a state of trouble.

We proceed to contemplate,

## II. THE STATE OF CHRISTIANS IN CHRIST.

*It is a state of peace and triumph.* “These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

1. *The state of Christians in Christ is a state of peace.*

“In Christ they have peace.” Christ Jesus is the Author and Giver of peace. He bought it with His blood; He bestows it of His grace. “My peace,” says Christ, “I give unto you.” He is our peace and our peace-maker; and He made peace “by the blood of the Cross.” “Peace be unto you from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” But this peace is communicated to the soul by the Spirit of God. “The fruit of the Spirit is peace. The kingdom of God is peace in the Holy Ghost.”

As penitent and perishing sinners, Christians rest their souls on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; and in Christ Jesus they find peace. The Holy Spirit first convinces us of our sinful and helpless state; He next enables us to believe on Christ for salvation; and then He gives us peace in believing. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *For this peace is peace with God.* “We were reconciled to God by

the death of His Son ;” “ we, sometimes afar off, are made nigh “ to God by the blood of Christ.” *This peace is peace in our own conscience.* The Spirit of God sprinkles the blood of Jesus on the troubled conscience, which calms its troubles, and fills it with peace. *This peace is peace with all the world.* It is a spirit of peace breathed into the soul by the Holy Ghost, constraining us to “ live peaceably with all mankind.”

The nature and worth of this peace are beyond the comprehension of angels ; yet it may be enjoyed by the humblest believers. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. “ For the Lord will bless His people with peace, and He will keep them in perfect peace, whose minds are stayed on Him.” Neither seduced by error, nor conquered by temptation, nor distressed by guilt, nor alarmed by danger, nor corroded by care, nor torn by anxiety, they possess that sunshine of the breast, which nothing earthly can darken, that serenity of soul, which nothing earthly can disturb, that peace of God, which nothing earthly can give or take away. This peace is independent of all earthly things ; it is enjoyed in the midst of worldly troubles ; it abides in more than mortal sweetness, when every mortal help gives way. Christians may be deprived of every temporal blessing, and lose every earthly friend ; they may pine in sickness and agonize in death ; but still they shall have peace in Christ. “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the

upright, for the end of such men is peace." They enter at death into the peace of heaven. For this peace of Christ is an earnest and pledge of that perfect peace, which delights the inhabitants of heaven. And may "God of His mercy fill you all, my brethren, with this peace in believing on Christ through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Again :

2. *The state of Christians in Christ is a state of triumph.*

"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." For Himself, and for all who believe in Him, He has achieved this victory, and the least of His followers may be confident of sharing in its benefits and its glories. For in the case of the most feeble and faint of His people, "He will bring forth judgment unto victory." He ensured for His people victory over the world by His own victory on the cross. For the sake of His people He is invested with almighty power, and is filled with infinite grace. Almighty power is their help; infinite grace is their consolation; and sooner shall ten thousand worlds pass away, than the feeblest soldier of Christ shall be overcome; sooner shall the thrones of angels be overthrown, than the weakest believer shall perish.

Jesus has in our nature and in our stead overcome the world; and He will enable His people to overcome it, so that, through His aid, its smiles shall not captivate them, nor its temptations seduce them, nor its terrors subdue them. He has deprived His

enemies and ours of all power to injure the welfare of our souls, or to prevent the spread of His Gospel. Our blessed Lord, who makes all things work together for the good of His people, will make tribulation itself conduce to their spiritual welfare, and eternal triumph. Tribulation will be sanctified to their profit, and purify them, as fire purifies gold. It will make them more dead to the world, and more alive to God; more conformable to Christ, and more meet for heaven. "They can, therefore, rejoice in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope," the hope of glory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the Christian warfare, the power and grace of Christ will be ever afforded, and be abundantly sufficient for His people; "and as their day is, so shall their strength and consolation be." Clad in the armour of God, holding the shield of faith, wielding the sword of the Spirit, and breathing the spirit of prayer, Christians will, under the banner of the Cross, fight against the world. They will never cease to fight, and while they fight, they will never cease to pray; and while they thus fight and pray, Jesus will strengthen them when weak; cheer them when desponding; raise them when fallen, and heal them when wounded. He will give them the victory in every conflict, and in every victory will make them more than conquerors. He will not only make them victors over the world, but He will enable them to secure the rewards, and to triumph



in the glories of victory for ever and ever. "Thanks therefore, be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph" through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Be then of good cheer," says Christ to His people, "I have, for you, overcome the world!" "Be of good cheer;" be of good courage! Take courage! Show courage! "Jesus has overcome the world!"

"Be of good cheer!" Take courage! Be confident in the Captain of your salvation! Be courageous in your conflict with the world. Put on the whole armour of God, and grasp the sword of the Spirit; wear this armour, and wield this sword with unceasing prayer to your heavenly Father: then strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, "be of good courage!"

Again:

"Be of good cheer." Show courage! Entangle not yourselves with earthly affairs. Be willing to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Strive always to please Him, who has called you to be soldiers. "Quit yourselves like men" of God. Be strong. Act courageously; act incessantly; constantly oppose evil; constantly do good. Be ready at any time to endure any labour, or to suffer any trouble, or to engage in any conflict, to which your Lord will lead you! "And to you, who 'contend and overcome' in this conflict, will I grant," says our Lord, "to sit with Me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on His throne! Be then of good cheer; I have overcome the world!"



We remark, in conclusion,

1. *That we can have peace only in Christ.*

“In Me,” says He, “ye may have peace.” In Christ only can peace be found; only with the help of His grace can it be enjoyed. “In Me!” These little words contain a world of meaning. “In Me!” In Christ! “For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature!” He is born of the Spirit of God; he is renewed in the spirit of His mind; he is conformed to the example of Christ! But, if you be thus in Christ, you will have tribulation in the world; if you be Christians in deed, Christians in heart, and in life; if you come out of the world, and if your godly conduct condemns the ungodly conduct of the world, the world will revile and persecute—it will hate and trouble you! But, if ye have tribulation in the world, ye shall have peace in Christ! “In Me,” says He, “ye shall have peace!” In Christ are all things to procure peace, and give you peace. Are you guilty? His blood is your atonement. Are you corrupt? His Spirit is your sanctifier. Are you weak? His grace is your strength. Are you worthless? His merits purchase heaven for your souls. Are you troubled by the world? His blessing will cheer your hearts. “Blessed are ye,” says Christ, “when the men of the world revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” “Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.” “In the world ye must have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!”

“ Let not your heart be troubled ; neither let it be afraid ; for my peace I give unto you : my peace I leave with you : and in Me ye shall have peace ! ”

We finally remark,

2. *That Christians, even in tribulation, may rejoice in Christ Jesus !*

A man may possess all the riches which the world contains, and taste all the pleasures which the world affords, and yet be miserable ! But, such a man is not a Christian ; such a man is not in Christ ; and, therefore, such a man has no peace !

Again :

A man may be deprived of every thing which the world can take away, and feel every tribulation which the world can inflict, and yet be happy. But, such a man is a Christian ; such a man is in Christ ; and, therefore, such a man has peace. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps his heart and mind, through Christ Jesus !

For, in Christ are treasured up all things which can enable Christians to rejoice in the times of tribulation. In Christ, ye are complete. Christ is your wisdom, your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption, your all in all. In Christ, ye are renewed in the image of God, and conformed to the example of His Son. In Christ, the guilt of sin is pardoned, the sting of death extracted, the dread of the grave dispelled. In Christ, ye have the love of the Father, the grace of Jesus, and the communion of the Spirit. In Christ, the witness of the Spirit is communicated, the earnest of heaven bestowed, and

the hope of glory enkindled. In Christ, a meetness for heaven by His Spirit is imparted, and a title to glory through His blood is inherited. In Christ, ye shall die in peace with God ; and after death, enter into perfect peace. In Christ, ye shall rise from the dead in his own likeness, ascend with Him to his own kingdom, and reign with Him in His own glory for ever and ever !

O ye troubled Christians ; O ye, who in trouble are in Christ ; ye, my brethren, may “rejoice in tribulation !” “For your light affliction, which is but for a moment, works out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory !” “Be then of good cheer !” Be of good courage ! Take courage ! Show courage ! Forget the things behind. Press forward. Look to Jesus. The night of sorrow will soon end ; the morning of joy will soon dawn ; the sun of heaven will soon arise ; and the day of glory for ever surround you !

## SERMON XI.

## SANCTIFICATION.

JOHN xvii. 17.

*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.*

ALL men are in nature corrupt, and in practice sinful. “The heart of man is full of wickedness; its imaginations are only and always evil!” The life of man is full of sin: “there is not a man that sinneth not; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God!” As corrupt and sinful creatures, we have no inclination to please God, nor power to keep his commandments,—we have no title to eternal life, nor meetness for a holy heaven. We must, therefore, be made holy, or we shall never enter the kingdom of God! We must be sanctified, or we shall be lost!

Among the many and glorious blessings which our Lord, in His last discourse, desired for His disciples, none was more precious, none was more necessary, than sanctification! “O Father!” He prays, “sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth!”

From these words, let us contemplate *the nature and the means of sanctification.*

Let us contemplate,

### I. THE NATURE OF SANCTIFICATION.

“O Father! Sanctify them!”

#### 1. *Justification is not sanctification.*

By one sacrifice of Himself once offered on the cross, Jesus Christ has made an atonement for the sins of the world. Through faith in the sacrifice of Christ, we are accounted righteous, or justified in the sight of God. By faith we are united to Christ, or made one with Christ, so that the righteousness of Christ becomes our righteousness; and God accepts us in His Son as perfectly righteous—even as righteous as Christ Himself is righteous! “For God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Cor. v. 21.) Believing, therefore, as perishing sinners, on Christ crucified, we are justified by faith; and being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Christ; and through Christ, we rejoice in hope of glory. For, being made, by faith in His blood and righteousness, one with Christ, we obtain a full title to an eternal heaven with all its joys and glories. Justification is a work without us; sanctification is a work within us. In justification, the righteousness of Christ is, through faith, imputed to our souls; in sanctification, the grace of righteousness is, by the Spirit, imparted to our hearts—and so imparted, that we are enabled to “do righteous-

ness." Sanctification is that work of the Spirit in which corrupt and sinful creatures are made holy in heart and life; in which weak and worthless creatures are made meet for the kingdom of heaven. Justification and sanctification, though quite distinct, are quite inseparable. For whoever by faith in Christ is freely justified, will by the Spirit of God be entirely sanctified.

2. *God is the Author of sanctification.*

Sanctification is not the work of man, but of God. "O Father, sanctify them." No man can quicken his own heart, or sanctify his own soul. Only He, who made the heart at first, can, now it is wicked, make it anew. Only He, who breathed into man at first a living soul, can, now it is dead in sin, quicken and sanctify it for Himself. Sanctification is the communication of spiritual life to the penitent believer; it is the opening of a fountain in his heart, which springs up to life eternal; it is the writing of the divine law on his mind, the forming of the divine image in his soul, the enlightening of his understanding to know and to love spiritual things. And only He, who "commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ." Sanctification is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; it is a resurrection from the death of sin; it is a new creation in Christ Jesus! It is a work which can be effected neither "by might nor by power; but only by my Spirit, saith the Lord." God only by His Spirit can sprinkle clean water upon us, and



make us clean; He only can create in us clean hearts, and renew right spirits within us; He only can sanctify us wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and enable us to stand unblamable in holiness, at the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Further :

3. *Regeneration is the commencement of sanctification.*

When heavenly light is poured into the understanding, when the incorruptible seed is sown in the heart, when spiritual life is imparted to the soul, when a divine nature is communicated to the mind, then we begin to be sanctified. This time, often a time of great sorrow to the penitent, is always a time of great joy in heaven. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The spiritual birth of the soul through the power of the Holy Spirit is regeneration; regeneration is the commencement of sanctification; without sanctification we cannot be saved. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Again :

4. *Sanctification is a progressive work.*

Though the beginning of sanctification may be unknown, yet whenever it begins in the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Spirit, its progress is sure, and its effects manifest. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it

goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Beginning in a conviction of sin, and a desire to be saved, it proceeds to deep repentance towards God, to steadfast faith in Christ, and to universal holiness of life. The further progress of sanctification will be further evidenced by a deeper sense of the evil of sin, and by a clearer view of the atonement of Christ ; by greater deadness to the things of the world, and by stronger desires for communion with God ; by greater delight in acts of devotion, and by greater diligence in the performance of good works. The believer will give " all diligence to add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity." Grace in the heart springs up first the blade ; then the ear ; and after that the full corn in the ear. " The path of the just is like the morning light, which increaseth in brightness to the perfect day." The true Christian is first a babe ; then a young man ; and, lastly, a father in Christ. He desires at first, as a new-born babe, the sincere milk of the word, but as he grows in grace, and as the work of sanctification advances in his soul, he partakes of the richer provisions of the Gospel, until, as a perfect man of full age, he comes to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. But yet the language of his heart, and the labour of his life will be, " Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect ; but this one thing I do, forgetting those

things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Finally :

5. *The effects of sanctification are holiness and devotion.*

Being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, the believer in Christ forsakes all sin, comes out of the world, and has no needless intercourse with the wicked. He is entirely converted to God ; and to God he cleaves with purpose of heart. He joins himself to those, who fear God and do righteousness. His temper is meek and lowly ; his language pure and edifying ; his pursuits lawful and right ; his conduct just and holy. He is kind and tender hearted ; he is forbearing and forgiving. He returns good for evil ; he returns blessing for cursing, and prayer for persecution. He is self-denying and frugal, that he may be beneficent and bountiful. He is ever active in the service, and ever liberal in the cause, of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is heavenly-minded, his affections are not set on things below, but placed on things above.

The believer in Christ, the true Christian, is a “ holy temple ;” he is filled with the Holy Spirit ; he is favoured with the divine presence ; he is consecrated to the divine service. He is a “ holy priest,” one of the holy and royal priesthood, a priest and a king unto God, set apart to offer living and spiritual sacrifices. He is a “ holy sacrifice ;” and he offers

himself, body and soul, a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ. He is a man of prayer—he prays in secret, and in his family; he prays always, or is always in the spirit of prayer. He searches the Scriptures daily, and daily supplicates the aid of the Spirit, “that he may understand the Scriptures.” His heart is comforted in the house of prayer; his mind is instructed by the preaching of the Gospel; his soul is strengthened and refreshed at the table of the Lord.

We proceed to contemplate,

## II. THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.

The means, or the instrument of sanctification, is *the truth, or the word of God*. “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is worth.”

1. *Nothing but truth can sanctify*: “Sanctify through THE TRUTH.”

Where there is no truth, there can be no holiness; where error darkens the mind, wickedness will disgrace the conduct. St. Paul informs us, that God wills all men to be saved, but at the same time intimates that no man can be saved but by coming to the knowledge of the truth. For, truth is light; and while men are unacquainted with the truth, they are in darkness, in error, and in sin. Error cannot sanctify; false doctrines cannot make holy. The greatest part of mankind are unholy in heart, and ungodly in conduct, because they have not the light of revelation; or because they are unacquainted with the truth. Why burns the Australian with in-

extinguishable fury against his enemies, and desires to eat their flesh and drink their blood? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why sells the African his fellow-man into worse than slavery? Why trusts he in charms, and worships devils? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why does the Hindoo torture or destroy himself? why does he burn widows, drown children, or murder parents? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why does the Mahomedan indulge every fleshly lust, and cherish every vindictive feeling, and all the while dream of paradise? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why does the Jew sink below the level of his species, and become a bye-word on the earth? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why does the Papist expect assistance from images, pardon from priests, and salvation from works? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. Why does the nominal Protestant—the educational churchman, or the educational dissenter—expect to enter the kingdom of holiness without being sanctified? Because he is unacquainted with the truth. What millions of mankind, unacquainted with thy truth, O Lord, are now dwelling in darkness, and perishing in their sins! Lord God of mercy! send forth the light of thy truth to those who are dwelling in darkness, and perishing in sin; that they may all be, by thy Word, sanctified and saved through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Again :

2. *Nothing but divine truth, the truth of God, can*

*sanctify men.* “ O God ! sanctify them THROUGH THY TRUTH.”

Not every kind of truth can sanctify the soul. A system of morals may contain many essential truths ; but a system of morals, however truly framed, or wisely applied, will never convert or sanctify the heart. The fitness of things may be displayed as founded in nature and agreeable to truth ; but the fitness of things, however displayed, or however employed, will never sanctify man, or make him fit for heaven. The inductions of philosophy may be full of truth and wisdom ; but the truths of philosophy, however they may expand or elevate the mind of man, can never save his soul. The discoveries of science may all be natural or physical truths : but the discoveries of science, however they may evince the intellect, or manifest the genius of man, can never make him wise to salvation, or meet for glory. Sanctification can be effected only by divine truth, or by the word of God.

For, further :

3. “ *The Truth,*” or *divine Truth, is the Word of God.* “ Sanctify them, O God, through thy truth ; THY WORD IS TRUTH.”

The Scriptures are proved to be the revelation of God by every *external evidence*, by which any writings can be proved to be true. They have, also, an *internal evidence* of their divine original—convincing and irresistible. Besides, the *analogical evidence*, the harmony between the words of revelation, and the works of creation, shows that the Author of crea-



tion and of revelation is the same Author, the one true and eternal God. The Scriptures, then, are the word of God; and the word of God is THE TRUTH. "The Scriptures have God for their Author, salvation for their end, and truth without any mixture of error for their matter." This holy word, first spoken by the God of truth, reveals *the truth* to man: it reveals the only *true God*, the Maker and Judge of the world; it reveals the only *true Saviour*, the Redeemer of mankind; it reveals the only *true Spirit*, the Sanctifier of souls. This divine Word alone teaches the *true state* of mankind as fallen and perishing sinners; and it alone offers to all men the "*true record* which God has given of his Son," "the true and faithful saying worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This word states the *true duty* of man; and requires from every man repentance towards God, faith in Christ Jesus, and the performance of all good works.

Finally :

4. *The word of God is the instrument of sanctification.* "Sanctify them, O God, through thy word!"

"The promises" of the word of God are "exceeding great and precious;" and, by these "promises," are we made partakers of a divine nature. For the word of God is the divinely-appointed means of regeneration and sanctification; and when employed by the Spirit, it renews and sanctifies the soul. For, the word of God, as contained in the Scriptures,

can of itself impart neither instruction, nor life, nor holiness ; it is only when applied by the Spirit of God to the soul of man that it teaches, and quickens, and sanctifies. God says in His word, “ I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your sins and wickedness will I cleanse you !” And Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross to procure the Holy Spirit thus to cleanse us. He gave Himself a sacrifice for us, “ that He might sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of His Spirit by the word.”

For, through the word of God, the light of truth enters and instructs the mind ; “ The entrance of thy word, O God, giveth understanding.” (Psal. cxix. 130.) “ Through the word of God, we are born again of the Spirit ; with the word of truth hast Thou, O God, regenerated us ;” “ Thy word hath quickened us ;” we are born again of incorruptible seed, of the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. “ For, the testimony of the Lord is sure, and makes wise the simple. The commandment of the Lord is pure, and enlightens the eyes. The statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart. The law of the Lord is perfect, and converts the soul.” And, when, through the grace of the Spirit of life, we have experienced the power of the word of God in our own souls, we shall say, “ I shall never forget thy word, O Lord ; for with it Thou hast quickened me.” (Psal. cxix. 50, &c.) And having felt its renewing power in our hearts, we shall make it the guiding rule of our lives : we shall

“hide the word of God in our hearts, that we may not sin against Him.” (Psal. cxix. 11.) For, “our way can be cleansed, our steps can be ordered, our life can be sanctified,—only by taking heed to His word !”

For, by nature we are adverse to the holiness of God, and complain of the strictness of His law : nor, of ourselves, should we ever keep His commandment, or seek His righteousness. But “God puts His Spirit within us, and causes us to walk in His statutes.” His Spirit writes His law in our hearts, and we “after the inner man delight in His law.” The influence of the Spirit overcomes the reluctance of our wills, and purifies the pollution of our hearts, and we become the willing and obedient servants of the Lord. The word of God, through his Spirit, reveals the gracious Saviour to our minds, in all His sufficiency and loveliness ; and the Spirit of God, through His word, generates in our hearts, the grateful love of “Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood !” The love of Christ prevailing in the heart constrains always to acts of devotion, and to deeds of righteousness. The Spirit continually strengthens this love in our breasts, and works his own work in our hearts ; and we, under His influence, in body, soul, and spirit, are sanctified ! and, O Spirit of the Living God ! thus sanctify us, through thy truth ; thy word is truth !

But, in conclusion,

1. *How important is the Prayer of our Lord !*

It is the prayer of the Eternal Son to the Eternal

Father, that the Eternal Spirit would, through the truth of God, sanctify His people! "O righteous Father! Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth!"

Again :

2. *How precious is the Word of God.*

It is the instrument by which sinful men are sanctified. Nothing can change the heart but the Gospel of Christ; nothing can sanctify the soul but the word of truth! The history of our race does not furnish an instance of a heart changed, or of a soul sanctified without the instrumentality of the word of God. O precious Bible! Holy Scripture! Divine Word! Eternal Truth; the Truth of God! "Sanctify us, O God, through thy truth; thy word is truth!"

Further :

3. *How necessary is the sanctification of the Soul.*

The last and great request, which Jesus made to His Father, was for the sanctification of His people! Sanctification is the great work of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of Christians; it is the work in which the soul is renewed in the image of God, and the conduct is conformed to the example of Christ; it is the work in which the believer becomes a partaker of spiritual life, and is made meet for eternal blessedness. For, sanctification is ever joined both with justification and with glory. If we are freely justified, we shall be graciously sanctified; and if we are graciously sanctified, we shall be eternally

glorified ; but, we repeat, unless we are sanctified, we cannot be saved !

4. *What, then, do you know of sanctification, my brethren ? What do you know of the Scriptures, as the Instrument—of the Spirit, as the Agent—and of Holiness, as the effect of Sanctification ?*

Having been justified freely through faith in the blood of Jesus, have you been graciously sanctified through the truth “ by the Spirit of our God ? ” Is the work of sanctification begun in your souls ? Do its fruits of holiness appear in your lives ? Are you “ separated from the course of the world ? ” Are you “ cleansed from the pollutions of sin ? ” Are you “ set apart to the service of the Lord ? ” In daily searching of the Scriptures, and under the constant influence of the Spirit, do you desire to be holy as God is holy ; and strive to be pure, as Christ is pure ? For again we say, “ Unless ye are regenerated, ye cannot be sanctified ; unless ye are sanctified, ye cannot be holy ; and unless ye be holy, ye cannot see the Lord ! ”

Finally :

5. *If the word of God has, by the Spirit, been made the means of your sanctification, this blessed word will become the study of your heart, and the guide of your life.*

You will press it daily to your breasts ; you will search it daily ; and daily will you pray for the Spirit, that you may understand it, and feel it, and practise it. The Spirit of God will then bless the perusal of His own word, and complete in your

souls His own work. The prayer of Christ will, in your case, be graciously fulfilled; and ye shall be “wholly sanctified through the truth!” In every need, “ye will, out of the fulness of Christ, receive grace upon grace;” and even in all your afflictions, ye shall be changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord! Nor will the Spirit cease, by His word, to work in you, until, having transformed you into the perfect likeness of Christ, He presents you, faultless, before the throne of glory, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord!



## SERMON XII.

## MARY AT THE SEPULCHRE OF JESUS.

JOHN xx. 11, 12, 13.

*But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping ; and as she wept, she stooped down into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.*

Our blessed Lord came into the world to suffer and to die for sinners ; but His disciples dreamed that He came to reign and prosper in the earth. While, therefore, He wrought His glorious miracles, they eagerly followed Him ; but they hastily forsook Him in His dangerous sufferings. “ The Friend of sinners,” in the time of trial, was forsaken by all His chosen friends. “ Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.” But though all men showed such unmanly and cowardly fear, a few women

manifested a manly and heroic courage. They forsook Him neither at His trial, nor after His condemnation; neither on the cross, nor in the tomb! Among this little band of heroic women, Mary Magdeline is particularly distinguished. "The first day of the week she cometh early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and saith to Simon Peter, and to the disciple, whom Jesus loved, "They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him." Peter, therefore, and John ran to the sepulchre, and found, as Mary had said, that the body of Jesus was taken away. "Then the disciples went away again to their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself and saith unto Him,

Rabboni! which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her."

Let us, in the following discourse, *contemplate the conduct, the temper, and the consolation of Mary on the death of our Lord.*

Let us contemplate,

#### I. THE CONDUCT OF MARY.

Her conduct was very *diligent, earnest, and persevering*. The shameful death of Christ did not cool the ardent love of Mary. Her love, though strongly-trying, overcame all obstacles in seeking her Lord. Sadly thinking that she had lost her Lord for ever, and deeply sensible of her loss, she sighed and wept indeed, but left no means untried, again to find Him.

##### 1. *Her conduct was very diligent.*

Our Lord was crucified on the evening before the Jewish sabbath-day; on which day the Jews were all required to rest. And Mary, also, who had surely rested on the sabbath day, "according to the commandment," yet had, doubtless, passed a sorrowful sabbath day, and a sleepless sabbath night. For on the first day of the week she arose very early in the morning, even while it was yet dark, and

hastened to the tomb, where her Lord was laid. She arose from the bed, which she had watered with her tears, and hastened to weep at the sepulchre of Jesus. So early, so active, so diligent was she in seeking her crucified Lord.

Again :

2. *Her conduct was very earnest.*

She hastened early to the sepulchre of Christ, and when she found it empty, she ran to tell His disciples, "They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre, and I know not where they have laid Him." When she had communicated the mysterious tidings, she returned hastily to the sepulchre. How eagerly did she run backwards and forwards to the tomb of her Lord ! Her whole heart was fixed on Christ, her whole soul was inflamed with His love ; and her body, like her soul, on wings of love, flew to His tomb.

Further :

3. *Her conduct was very persevering.*

The two disciples, Peter and John, who really loved Christ, ran, indeed, with marvellous surprise to the sepulchre. They examined it, and found it empty ; they silently wondered, and sadly went home. " But Mary stood without weeping at the sepulchre." Peter and John soon went home ; but Mary long staid at the sepulchre weeping ! She had hoped in sadness of soul to perform the last offices of love to the body of our crucified Lord, but her heart was disappointed, and she wept. Faithful, affectionate, constant woman ! She seems

willing rather to lie down and die in the tomb of Jesus, than to go away without finding Him. She could not find her Lord ; she could not leave His tomb ! What could she do ? She stopped and wept. “ And Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping.”

But further, let us contemplate,

## II. THE TEMPER OF MARY.

Her temper was very affectionate, very respectful, very sad.

### 1. *Her temper was very affectionate.*

Her deep grief indicated her strong affection ; and her affection was pure, generous, and disinterested. She expected no return for her trouble, or for her tears. It were at that time disgraceful and dangerous to be in any way related to the crucified Nazarene ; but the love of Mary smiled at disgrace and danger for His sake. “ We often deem the disgrace or danger of doing some good to be great, because our love for it is but small. But Mary looked on disgrace and danger as nothing, because she counted it both joy and gain to lose everything in seeking Him, whom she loved.”

### 2. *Her temper was very respectful.*

It was neither familiar, nor bold, nor irreverent ; but courteous, tender, and reverential. “ Sir,” says she to him, whom she supposed to be the gardener ; “ Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.” She honoured the lifeless body of the despised Nazarene.

Though Jesus had been crucified as a malefactor between two thieves, yet she reverently called Him "Lord!" "They have taken away my Lord out of the sepulchre, and I know not where they have laid Him."

But,

3. *Her temper was very sad.*

Grieved in spirit at not finding her Lord in the sepulchre; disappointed in heart in not being able to embalm His body, she leaned her drooping head against the broken tomb, and relieved the sadness of her heart in a flood of tears. "She stood at the sepulchre weeping." Here she stood thinking sadly on the joys and the days which were passed,— "Never man spake like this man! How sweet were His words to my soul! But I shall no more sit at His feet—no more hear His words—no more share His kindness. But, I cannot go away; I cannot leave His tomb; I will stay and weep yet longer." "And she stood without at the sepulchre weeping."

Did you ever lose a friend, whom you loved as your own soul? Did you ever visit the sod which covers his body, and drop your tears on his grave? Or, did you ever enter the sepulchre, where he lies entombed, and lay your trembling hand on his mouldering coffin; while, not your quivering lips, but your bleeding heart, has said, "This coffin contains the ashes of him, whom in life I loved?" Then may you conceive, better than we can describe, the sorrows of Mary at the tomb of Jesus. But what sculptor, or what painter, could fitly describe her weeping at the



sepulchre? What poet or what prophet could fully express the sorrows of her heart?

But, lastly, let us contemplate,

### III. THE CONSOLATION OF MARY.

She is addressed by angels, comforted by Jesus, and adopted into the family of God.

#### 1. *She is addressed by angels.*

Some persons, who call themselves Christians, deny the divine glory of Christ; but holy angels, who had worshipped Him in His mortal life, and succoured Him in His shameful death, descended from their thrones to sit in the sepulchre, where the body of their Lord had lain. As Mary stood and wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre; and saw two angels in white sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." If anything merely human could be interesting to angels, surely it must be the conduct of Mary at the tomb of our Lord. And it was kind in the angels to inquire the cause of her tears, and to sympathize with her sorrows. And their shining appearance in the tomb, and their manifest respect to her Lord, would somewhat brighten the gloom of her breast, and lighten the burden of her distress. But her affections were entirely fixed on her Lord; and nothing but the sight of her Lord could satisfy the desires of her soul. In-

flamed herself with the love of Christ, she turned her eyes on every side to find the object of her love. And, filled herself with thoughts of Christ, she supposed that all persons thought of Christ as she thought of Him.

Again :

2. *She is comforted by Jesus.*

Scarcely had Mary replied to the inquiry of the angels, than she turned round, and saw Jesus Himself, but did not know that it was Jesus. "And Jesus said, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, and thinking that he might have removed the body, made no reply to his inquiries, but eagerly, asked, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus, pleased with this fresh evidence of her affection, determined at once to remove her error, her anxiety, and her woe. He, therefore, spoke to her in a tone which she could not but remember, but which no mortal can imitate, and called her by her name, "Mary!" That word was with power; that word went through her heart; that word revealed her Lord; and she instantly exclaimed "Rabboni!" "My great, my excellent Master!" For Christ was now become, in a new manner, not only the Master and Lord of Mary, but the Master and Lord of all, whom He had redeemed by His blood. Mary thus found Jesus at the sepulchre, not dead, but alive; not only alive again, but full of unutterable love, and willing to bestow immortal blessings on her soul.

For,

3. *She is adopted into the family of God.*

She first received the blessing and the grace of adoption from the lips and Spirit of Jesus Christ. She might, after Jesus had revealed Himself to her soul, fall down and attempt to kiss His feet; and then He said to her, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father; and to my God, and to your God." Thus was Mary adopted into the family of heaven, and commissioned to bear the glad tidings of adoption to the mourning disciples of our Lord. "Go, tell my brethren." What consolation was it to Mary in her sadness to be assured by Him, whom her soul loved, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ was her God and Father; and that the inheritance, which Christ had bought with His blood, was her eternal inheritance.

Such, then, was the conduct, the temper, and the consolation of Mary on the death of our Lord. We may now regard her, first, as *the happy herald* of His "glorious resurrection;" and, 2ndly, contemplate her as an *encouraging example* to inquirers after His "great salvation."

1. *We may regard her as the happy herald of His "glorious resurrection."*

When Jesus was crucified on Mount Calvary, "Mary stood afar off," and saw Him crucified. When Jesus, on the eve of His death, was buried in

the rich man's tomb, Mary "sat over against the sepulchre," "and saw where His body was laid." When Jesus, on the first day of the week, rose early from the dead, He appeared first to Mary, as she stood and wept over His broken sepulchre. At the command of Jesus, Mary went, as a perfect evidence of the resurrection, and told the disciples that "He was risen from the dead." And, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

Is Jesus risen? Then His word is fulfilled; His mission is divine; His gospel is true; His salvation is complete! Is Jesus risen? Then immortal life is brought to light by His gospel; then death and hell are for ever conquered! "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" Is Jesus risen? Then the law of God is satisfied, and the debt of man is paid! Then His blood is a sufficient atonement for the sin of the world, and a sufficient price for the kingdom of heaven! Is Jesus risen? Then His resurrection is a pledge and pattern of our resurrection; and all, who believe in Him, shall arise immortal and glorious from the grave? Is Jesus risen? Then, as He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, so must we die to sin, and rise again to righteousness; "as He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also must walk in newness of life!" Is Jesus risen? Then we must rise with Him, and with Him seek those things which are above, where He sitteth on the right hand of God; we must, with Him, in heart

and mind, ever ascend “to His Father, and our Father—to His God, and our God!”

Again :

2. *We may contemplate Mary as an encouraging example to inquirers after His great salvation.*

Mary was *diligent* in seeking the body of Jesus. She hastened early to His tomb. The penitent inquirer is diligent in seeking Christ. Convinced of his perishing state by nature, he seeks diligently for eternal salvation through Christ crucified. He would “work out his salvation with fear and trembling;” and would “give all diligence to make his calling and election sure.” Mary was in *earnest*. She ran eagerly backwards and forwards to the tomb of Christ. The penitent inquirer is in *earnest* to save his soul. He would flee from the wrath to come, and would flee to the refuge set before him in Christ. He turns from the way of sin, and would run in the way of holiness. Mary was *persevering*. Though she could not for a long time find her Lord, yet she would not give over the search; and when her hope of finding Him was nearly extinct, she still stopt and wept at the sepulchre. The penitent inquirer does not cease to seek, though he does not soon find his Saviour. If he cannot find, he will stop and weep at the cross. If he must perish, he will perish seeking Christ crucified!

The penitent inquirer, like Mary, in inquiring after Christ, is *very affectionate, and reverential, and sad*. To the inquirer, Jesus is now altogether lovely; and he would love Jesus with all his soul. The



name of Jesus is music in his ear, and makes the tear of love to glisten in his eye ! Yet the inquirer regards Christ not as a creature, but as the Creator —“as God over all, blessed for ever !” For, he feels that if Jesus is not truly God, He cannot be the Saviour of sinners. But the penitent inquirer is, like Mary, very sad. He weeps with godly sorrow, because he has sinned against his heavenly Father. He weeps because his sins have resisted and grieved the Holy Spirit. He weeps, especially, because his sins have pierced and crucified his blessed Lord. But still, bitter though his sorrows may be, he would not exchange his bitterest sorrows at the cross of Christ, for the brightest joys of the world. The whole employment of Mary is expressed in two words ;—“ weepst ” and “ seekest .” And the whole employment of a penitent inquirer is, to weep and to seek—to weep before God, on account of his sins ; and to seek for salvation, through the blood of the Lamb. And our Lord, we just remark, sometimes suffers those whom He loves, and by whom He is beloved, to seek awhile in sadness for the Saviour, or to weep awhile before God for their sins ; because He knows that nothing is better for their souls than a contrite heart, or spiritual affliction. For affliction of soul or sorrow for sin well prepares the way for the receiving of Jesus, and for the joys of salvation. For the penitent inquirer, who, like Mary, as he seeks, weeps for the death of Christ, shall, like Mary, be comforted with the joy of His resurrection. He shall, in due time, through



grace believe on Christ crucified ; and shall find peace and joy in believing. Angels on earth, indeed, will not inquire of him, why he weeps ; but angels in heaven will rejoice over his repentance. He will not, indeed, find Christ in the flesh to comfort his heart ; but he will feel Christ alive in the Spirit, to give spiritual joy to his soul. He will be adopted into the family of God, not by Christ in person, but by God Himself ; for, he shall receive from heaven the spirit of adoption, and cry, “ Abba, Father ! ” “ And the Spirit will bear witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God,” and an heir of glory.

1. *Ye inquirers after salvation through the crucified Saviour ;* ye feel the corruption of your nature, and pray for the renewal of your hearts ; ye feel the sinfulness of your life, and pray for the pardon of your sins ; ye know from the Scriptures that the blood of Jesus alone can wash away your sins, and that the Spirit of Jesus alone can renew your heart. Convinced, therefore, of your lost state, ye seek for salvation only through Christ crucified. For Him you seek and weep ; and like Mary at the empty tomb of Christ, ye fear that ye shall never find Him ! But, Mary soon found more than she had sought, and obtained more than she had desired. Angels soon soothed her sorrows, and Jesus soon wiped away her tears. Be encouraged, ye inquirers after Christ crucified ! Angels now rejoice over your repentance : Jesus sees your tears : God hears your prayers. Continue to seek and weep like Mary,

and like Mary you shall find. Avoid all sin ; come out of the world ; have no fellowship with wicked men ; use diligently all the means of grace ; be earnest in saving your soul ; and if you do not soon find the Saviour, continue to seek and weep at His cross. Thus seek, and you will find your difficulties less than you might fear,—your joys nearer than you could hope,—and your reward greater than you can conceive. For Jesus will, by His Spirit, reveal Himself to your soul, and impart to your heart the joys of His salvation. “ He will give you beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the tears of mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” He will pardon your sins, and justify your soul ; He will renew your heart, and sanctify your life ; He will adopt you into the family of God, and make you inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

Finally :

2. *Christian believers, children of the living God.*

Christ Jesus, who died for your sins and rose again for your justification, is now “ ascended to His Father and your Father, to His God and your God !” Ye, my brethren, have been conformed to His death and resurrection ; ye have, through the Spirit, died to sin and risen again to righteousness. Being thus risen with Christ, you “ set not your affections on things below ;” but “ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God !” By faith you lay hold of the rising Saviour, and He carries your affections with Him to heaven. While ye live, ye will live in the Lord,

and when ye die, ye will die in the Lord ; at death ye will sleep in Him, and in death will by Him be blessed. For, when the last trumpet shall sound, and all the dead shall rise, you shall awake in His likeness from the dust of the grave to reign in His glory for ever !”

## SERMON XIII.

## NOVELTY.

ACTS xvii. 21.

*For all the Athenians and strangers, which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.*

VARIOUS principles or motives impel mankind to action. Hard necessity impels the poor to toil for daily bread. The love of money excites millions to seek for wealth in mercantile pursuits. The love of pleasure induces other millions to seek for happiness in worldly amusements. The spirit of ambition rouses multitudes to seek for distinction in the paths of enterprise, or in “the fields of glory;” while the spirit of science constrains the curious and the studious to endure privations of body and exertions of mind, which neither the man of enterprise, nor the aspirant for glory, can know. Some of these principles of action are so contrary to each other, that if we are actuated by one of them, we shall be little influenced by the rest. There is, however, one

principle, which seems compatible with all other principles—a principle, which suits itself to every temper, and fits itself for every pursuit—a principle which prevails in all ages of time, and in all stages of life—a principle which reigns in all ranks of men, and all climes of the earth—a principle which is more general and active than all other principles together. What is this principle? It is the love of novelty; or a fondness “for some new thing!” Our text is a description of mankind. We are all, in one view, Athenians. “And all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.”

These words furnish some facts for observation, and afford some grounds for illustration.

On these words, we are

#### I. TO MAKE SOME OBSERVATIONS.

1. Greece was, we observe first, the most refined nation in the world, and Athens was the most refined city of Greece. The Greeks regarded the inhabitants of other nations as barbarians; and the Athenians regarded other Greeks, as barbarians compared with themselves. Thus Greece was the eye or light of the nations; and Athens was the eye or light of Greece. Athens was the unrivalled seat of learning and politeness, of wisdom and wit, of science and art. It was unrivalled for the purity of its language, for the eloquence of its oratory, for the refinement and profundity of its philosophy. The mind was here stretched to the most exquisite degree of inge-

nity, and polished to the most dazzling degree of brightness. Athens was the university of the world, and was visited by lovers of wisdom from all nations. Not only scholars or learners, but the first of teachers, and the sons of kings, came to be instructed at Athens.

2. The Athenians, we observe again, were lively, acute, inquisitive, ingenious, learned, eloquent. They were nearly all artists, orators, critics, or philosophers. The very women in the market-place would discuss the systems of their philosophers, or analyze the language of their orators. But Athens, though the university of the world, was full of idolatry; the Athenians, though they regarded other men as barbarians, were gross idolaters; for in Athens, the works of men's hands were exalted into gods, and the most polished of mankind worshipped idols.

3. Such was Athens; and such were the Athenians, we observe again, when St. Paul in his missionary travels visited the first city of Greece. "Now while Paul tarried at Athens, his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the whole city full of idols, and all the inhabitants given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them who met him." The conduct of St. Paul was well calculated to excite the attention of the Athenians. His disputations in the market, or forum, was not only a tribute of respect to their ability and intelligence, but a sort of chal-



lenge to their philosophers and orators. His doctrines were *new*, his eloquence was *great*, his zeal was *ardent*, his labour *unwearied*. "He disputed *daily* in the market." These novel doctrines, delivered with unquestioned eloquence, excited the attention, and probably the envy of the philosophic teachers, who abounded in Athens. "Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him." Some of these philosophers, proud of their superiority, or jealous of his eloquence, treated him with great contempt, and cried, "What will this vain babbler say?" "What will this retailer of scraps prate to us?" "What will this base and beggarly prater babble?" Others, of greater courtesy, or of greater curiosity, to whom he seemed a setter forth of strange gods, treated him with more respect. They said to him, "Thou bringest strange things to our ears; we would therefore know what these things mean." And they brought him, as a remarkable teacher, to Areopagus, the supreme court or senate in Athens. Before this celebrated body, with a number of philosophers, both citizens and strangers, they requested him to explain the new doctrine which he taught. "May we know *what is this new doctrine* of which thou speakest?" This request, though made with seeming earnestness, sprung from the mere curiosity of his hearers. For they had leisure for nothing but to devise and to divulge some new speculation. It was their taste and their practice to reject every subject as soon as it became vulgar, and to substitute a newer subject in its

place. If, therefore, the apostle could devise some philological theory, or invent some philosophical speculation, *newer than the newest*, he would, at least for a little while, engage their vagrant attention, and amuse their volatile minds. “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.” Then St. Paul stood up, and with the most wonderful address, and the most fearless fidelity, preached the Gospel of Christ to the assembled Athenians.

4. The hearers of St. Paul on this occasion, we again observe, formed the most learned, the most ingenious, the most polished, and the most celebrated assembly in the world. Their motive, in hearing the apostle, was neither a desire to know their duty, nor to obtain wisdom; neither to adore their Maker, nor to save their souls; but sheer curiosity, or a restless eagerness to learn something new. But St. Paul was never afraid to preach the Gospel of God; he was never ashamed of the Cross of Christ; and ever observing the prejudices, the circumstances, and the temper of his hearers, he never failed to adapt his discourses to their case and to their conscience.

He did not abruptly obtrude upon them the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, nor fiercely attack the abominations of idolatry; but with striking address recited an inscription from one of their own altars, and repeated a sentence from one of their own poets. “As I passed by and beheld the objects of

your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Then arguing with consummate wisdom from their own concession in their own inscription, he adds, "whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." "That God, whom ye worship, without knowing Him, I now declare unto you, as the God who made the world, and all things therein; the God by whose power we were all created; the God, by whose goodness we are all supported; the God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being." "As certain of your own poets have said, *For we are all His offspring.*" Hence, again, with equal delicacy and skill, he argues irresistibly against idolatry. "Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Father, and Creator of all, is like anything which his offspring and creature can make; or that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art or man's device." If, at the beginning of his discourse, St. Paul had thus spoken of the meanness of their idols, and of the guilt of their idolatry, the Athenians, deeming him a defamer of their gods, would certainly have refused to hear another word from his lips, and probably would have put him to death. But now, having prudently disarmed their prejudice, and skilfully gained their attention, he preached to them, as he was wont, the doctrines of the Gospel. "The times of ignorance," says he, "God has winked at; but now commandeth *all men everywhere to repent*; because He hath appointed a day

in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Thus St. Paul plainly preached to the polished Athenians, as he would preach to you, repentance towards God, and faith in His incarnate Son. He preached to them as he would preach to you, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. He preached to them, as he would preach to you, the resurrection of all the dead, and the future and righteous judgment of all mankind. Nor did he preach in vain. For though some of his Athenian hearers, in the conceit of their own goodness, or in the pride of their own philosophy, mocked at his preaching; yet certain men of the assembly clave to him, and believed in the Lord: among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite, or member of the Athenian senate, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

5. We may observe, lastly, from the example of St. Paul, that preachers on peculiar occasions should suit their discourses to their hearers, and study to disarm prejudice and to excite attention; but that neither before scoffers, nor senators, nor philosophers, nor kings, should they be ashamed of the Cross of Christ, nor withhold the whole counsel of God. We may also learn from the effects of St. Paul's preaching, that men may from mere curiosity come to hear the Gospel; and yet, when the Gospel is faithfully preached, their curiosity may be overruled to the salvation of their souls. Having made

some observations on the remarkable words of the text, we now proceed, as we hinted, of the same words—

## II. TO OFFER SOME ILLUSTRATION.

The character of the Athenians, as described in the text, will generally suit all nations; but particularly those nations which, like our own nation, are inquisitive, and wealthy, and refined. How many among ourselves “spend their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing?”

1. *Does a bursting cloud inundate a country, and flood the rivers, and carry corn and cattle suddenly away?* Though it is more wonderful that, through the providence of God, such floods do not happen every day; yet all wish to tell and hear the ravages of the flood. Why are we so unwilling to hear and tell of divine goodness in giving temperate seasons and gentle rains; but so eager to hear of storms and floods? Why is this? Because, like the Athenians, we desire to hear and tell some new thing. Is a total eclipse of the sun or moon foretold? All prepare for the great occultation before it happens, and talk of it when it is past. Whereas the fruitful sun brightens our days, and the friendly moon lightens our nights for years together; and yet we seldom hear or tell of the goodness of Him who so regularly gives us the light of sun and moon. Why is this? Because, like the Athenians, “we love to hear and tell some new thing.” Does a comet, a bright and blazing star, appear in the heavens?

Every eye, every night, is directed to the sky, to explore the portentous luminary. But, we scarcely deign at other times to view the bespangled firmament, which every night is resplendent with wondrous worlds of light. Why is this? Because, like the Athenians, “we love to hear and tell some new thing.” Does a new disease alarm the land? All are desirous to know its nature, to detail its progress, and to guard against its approach; while we never hear and never tell of that kind providence, which for centuries has kept plague and pestilence far from our shores. Why is this? Partly, through fear and selfishness, but chiefly because, like the Athenians, “we love to hear and tell some new thing.”

Again;

2. *Is a new book, especially a new romance, published?* All desire to procure and read it. Is a new amusement devised? All wish to learn and enjoy it. Is a new performer imported? All pant to see and hear him. Is a new fashion introduced? All strive to obtain and wear it. The new book, the new amusement, the new performer, the new fashion, are all eagerly desired; but better books and healthier exercises,—more rational recreations, and more useful customs, are neglected or forgotten. Why is this? Because, like the Athenians, we prefer “to hear and tell some new thing.”

Further:

3. *Is a new king enthroned, a new administration formed,*—a new parliament assembled, a new law enacted? All wish to know the nature of the new



law, the character of the new parliament, the persons of the new administration, the measures of the new king. But, all the while we remain contentedly, or culpably, ignorant of older laws, and parliaments, of former administrations and kings! But why is this? Because, like the Athenians, we delight “to tell and hear some new thing.”

Finally :

4. *Is a new place of worship erected?* All desire to attend it. *Is a new preacher arrived?* All are eager to hear him. *Is a new, but false doctrine of religion discovered?* All wish to know it. *Is a wild, but new interpretation of Scripture announced?* All are anxious to understand it. The new place of worship, and the new preacher, are early visited; but a “church built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;” and ministers of God, who, for half a century, have preached Christ crucified, are unvisited or forsaken. And the new, but false doctrine—the new, but the wild or delusive interpretation of Scripture, are eagerly discussed; but the doctrines of religion, as plain to the understanding as they are needful to salvation—interpretations of Scripture, as clear to the mind as they are profitable to the soul, are despised, or rejected, or forgotten. And why is this? Because, like the Athenians, we rejoice “to hear and tell some new thing.”

But, to conclude :

1. *Were any person among you, my brethren, to inquire, “Who will show me something good?”*

We could reply, "God has shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" This instruction is as true as the word of God, and precious as the salvation of the soul. But, it is not new. Nor, my brethren, have we anything new to tell you. And, what if we could fill our discourse with new and curious things for you to "hear and tell," what would it profit your souls if we left out of it "Jesus Christ and Him crucified?" Could we show you something stupendously great, and marvellously new—could we show you a peopled and blooming continent sinking beneath the waters of the wondering deep, or a bright and burning island emerging from the bottom of the ocean, spreading wide and rising high above the level of the astonished waters—could we show you rocks of fire casting columns of flame to the heavens, or mountains of fire moving from their everlasting seats into the sea, and turning its waves into waves of blood—could we show you unnumbered stars, starting from their secret orbs, "and wandering lawless through the sky"—could we show you the moon, "the queen of night," forgetting her silvery brightness, and dropping, red as crimson, from her azure throne—could we show you the sun, "the golden eye of day," dashed to pieces by the hand of omnipotence, and the flaming fragments whirled wildly through the air—could we show you a comet, liberated from its mystic course, and, with its flames, setting the world on fire—could we show

you the whole world in flames, or point to the glowing embers of a dissolving world,—could we show you these things, your ears would tingle as you listened, but your souls would not be profited! Now, my brethren, we will show you something more magnificent and astonishing than all these wonders together,—something more awful than blooming continents buried in the ocean,—than burning islands rising from the sea,—than rocks of fire or seas of blood,—than stars wandering through the air, or the moon falling from her place,—than the sun dashed to pieces, or a comet setting the world on fire,—than a world in flames, or an universe in ruins! But, you ask, “What is this?” It is, perhaps, yourself—it is a sinner neglecting his soul! A soul neglected, and lying in the ruins of its fallen state, is a more awful spectacle than a thousand worlds in ruins. But, alas! a sinner neglecting his soul is so common a thing—a soul lying in all the ruins of its fallen state, is so common a spectacle, that it neither excites curiosity nor creates alarm. Why is this? Because it is common; because it is old; because it is nothing new.

But what do we hear? It is the voice of the Eternal God, speaking in His word. Listen! “Thus saith the Lord! Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths; where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (Jer. vi. 16.) My brethren, God commands you to inquire, not for the *new paths*, but for the *old paths*; not for the *new way*, but for the *good way*. Where,

then, are the *old* paths ; and what is the *good* way ? The *old* paths and the *good* way you will find in St. Paul's sermon before the Athenians. He preached repentance towards God, and faith in His Son ; He preached the death and resurrection of Christ ; the resurrection of all the dead, and the day of eternal judgment. *In these old paths, in this good way, would we now stand and preach to you.*

We would now, like St. Paul, preach *repentance towards God*. Repentance is deep and godly sorrow for sin ; it is the gift of His Son, and the work of His Spirit ; it is a change of mind followed by a change of conduct ; it is a conviction of sin in our nature and in our practice ; it is a contrition for sin, as committed against God, and a confession of sin, as deserving eternal punishment ; it is a turning with the whole heart from all sin to all righteousness ; it is an humble, earnest, ceaseless seeking of the pardon of sin through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We must, my brethren, seek for repentance from Jesus Christ, who is exalted to heaven to give it. We must pray that God would grant us that "repentance which is unto life, and is never to be repented of." We must repent with godly sorrow, confessing our sins unto God. We must repent, and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." We must repent of every sin, and be converted unto God, that our sins may be blotted out in the blood of the Lamb. "God commands *all men everywhere to repent* ; and "except we repent, we must perish."

Again :

We would now, like St. Paul, preach *faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*. Christ crucified is the object of faith to perishing and penitent sinners. His blood cleanses from all sin ; His righteousness justifies the soul ; His Spirit renews the heart ; His merits open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. We believe in Christ, not by human power, but through divine grace. For faith, like repentance, is the gift of God. By this faith we believe in Christ crucified, as the all-sufficient and only Saviour ; through believing on Him, we are justified from sin, and reconciled to God. This faith in Christ is lively, active, holy. It purifies the heart ; crucifies the flesh ; resists the devil ; overcomes the world ; brings forth the fruits of righteousness. The great work, my brethren, which God commands us to do, is to believe on His Son, whom He hath sent to save us. We must believe on Him, or we cannot be saved. " He that believeth on the Son," says the beloved Apostle, " hath everlasting life ; but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." " He that believeth, and is baptized," says the Son Himself, " shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Again :

We would, like St. Paul, preach the *death and the resurrection of Jesus*. For He died on the cross for our offences, and rose from the dead for our justification. Jesus was man, that He might die for our sins ; He was God, that by His own power He

might rise from the dead. By His death, He made atonement for the sins of the world ; by His resurrection, He proved that His atonement was accepted of God, and sufficient for our salvation.

We, my brethren, must be conformed to the death and resurrection of Christ ; we must die to sin, and rise again to righteousness ; we must be “ crucified with Christ, yet must we live ; and the life, which we live in the flesh, must be by faith in Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.”

Finally :

We would, like St. Paul, preach the *resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment*. “ The hour is coming, in which all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and shall arise.” “ For the trumpet shall sound, the dead be raised, the living be changed,” and all mankind stand before Him. “ Behold ! He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him.” “ Behold,” says Christ, “ Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me to give to every man as his work shall be.” (Rev. xxii. 12.) “ When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory ; and all nations shall be gathered before Him. He shall then separate the righteous from the wicked, and place the righteous on His right hand, and the wicked on His left. Then shall He say to the righteous, “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” But to the wicked He will say, “ Depart,



ye cursed ; depart from Me, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The wicked will then go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal." We must all, my brethren, be raised from the dead ; all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ; all be judged according to our works ; and all, as we are found righteous or wicked in the last day, rise to heaven or sink to hell.

And now, my brethren, let me intreat you, in the words of the Almighty, " to stand in the ways and to ask," not for some new thing, but " for the old paths, where is the good way, that ye may walk therein and find rest to your souls." " Ask God for the old paths." " Ask for the good way." Have you, then, repented of every sin, and turned from every wicked way ? Have you believed in Christ crucified, and found peace in believing ? Have you been conformed to the death of Jesus, and felt the power of His resurrection in your hearts ? Have you been raised " by the Spirit of the Lord " from the death of sin to the life of righteousness ; and are you now living in holiness to the glory of God ? If you walk in the way of sin,—if you continue impenitent, unbelieving, unholy, you will die in darkness and misery, and then sink into the bottomless pit to endure the bitter pains of eternal death. But if you walk in " the good old way,"—if you repent of sin and believe in Christ, and live in holiness, you will die in peace, and after death enter into the joy of your Lord.

## SERMON XIV.

## THE WAGES OF SIN AND THE GIFT OF GOD.

ROM. vi. 23.

*The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

THE ruin of mankind by the sin of Adam, and the redemption of mankind by the blood of Christ, are the two great doctrines of the Gospel. These two doctrines are, as in our text, commonly mentioned together. “ The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Let us now consider, first, *the wages of sin*, and secondly, *the gift of God*.

We are to consider,

## I. THE WAGES OF SIN.

“ The wages of sin is death ;” death temporal, or the death of the body ; death spiritual, or the death of the soul ; death eternal, or the eternal punishment of body and soul in hell!

1. *The wages of sin is temporal death.*

Life and death were set before Adam in paradise; life, as the reward of obedience; death, as the punishment of sin. "In the day that thou eatest of the forbidden tree, thou shalt surely die." Man broke the divine command, and soon heard the awful sentence, "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return!" As soon as Adam sinned, his body became subject to innumerable "diseases, and to sundry kinds of death." Adam having sinned, and incurred the penalty of sin, his children were born in his likeness, and, like him, "must return to dust." "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed on all men; for in him all have sinned." Sin hath reigned, and will reign unto death over all mankind. The deathly sentence of "dust to dust" has been executed in all times since the days of Adam on all his offspring; and it will continue to be executed till the last man expires. Every man that dies is a proof that the wages of sin is death; and we too must soon be a proof that the wages of sin is death, for we all must shortly "return to dust!" The wages of sin is temporal death, the death of the body.

Again :

2. *The wages of sin is spiritual death.*

When Adam had sinned, he hid himself from the presence of his Maker. Sin made a separation between God and his soul. God withdrew His presence from the soul of Adam; and the soul of Adam departed from God. He then suffered

spiritual death ; he then died to God. The image of God was obliterated from His heart, and the life of God was extinguished in his soul. His mind was then deprived of spiritual knowledge, his nature of true holiness, and his heart of pure joy. His understanding was darkened ; his will was perverted ; his affections were corrupted ; his conscience was seared ; “and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

The natural man, that is, every child of Adam born into this world, is spiritually dead. He has neither spiritual knowledge, nor inherent holiness, nor heavenly affections, nor good desires. He has no desire to commune with God ; no wish to please God. He is not upright, as God made Adam, but fallen, as he destroyed himself ; he has neither rectitude of judgment, nor purity of mind, but he has blindness in his understanding, and wickedness in his heart. For he is not only empty of all good, but he is full of all evil ; he dislikes holiness, and loves sin. In nature he is enmity, and in practice he is rebellion against God. “The world, the flesh, and the devil,” engross all his heart, occupy all his time, and employ all his labour. He lives for the body, as if he had no soul ; he lives to himself as if there were no God ; he lives for the things of earth, as if there were no glories in heaven. For he neither strives to save his soul, nor to please God, nor to secure eternal life. Nay ; he not only never strives to save his soul, but does everything to lose it. He not only never strives to please God, but

does everything to offend Him. He not only never strives to secure heaven, but does everything to deserve hell. The natural man is spiritually dead. For the wages of sin is spiritual death, the death of the soul.

Further :

3. *The wages of sin is eternal death.*

Sin is the wilful *transgression of the law of God*; and His law is holy, just, and good. Sin is a provocation of the justice, and a defiance of the power of God; it is rebellion against His infinite Majesty, and ingratitude to His infinite goodness; sin, therefore, involves a crime of infinite guilt, and deserves a punishment of infinite vengeance. Every sin incurs a forfeiture of life, and this forfeiture is everlasting; for the life which every sin rejects is everlasting life, and the death which every sin deserves is everlasting death. For God, we repeat, whom every sin offends and defies, is infinite in holiness and majesty; the guilt, therefore, of every sin is infinite, and deserves infinite punishment. This infinite punishment is eternal death; and this eternal death is the loss of the everlasting joys of heaven, and the endurance of the everlasting pains of hell.

This eternal death is "*the wages,*" *the just hire, the righteous desert,* "*of sin.*" As the diligent labourer earns the hire of his labours, and as the hardy soldier deserves the wages of his services, so sin, the diligent labourer of the devil, and the hardened soldier of hell, earns its hire, and deserves its wages—

the pains of eternal death. These eternal pains are the just recompense of the moral evils of sin. They are the pay, the hire, the reward, the wages, for which sin laboured, and which sin deserves. "The wages of sin is eternal death."

"Eternal death" implies *the loss of all happiness for ever*. It implies the loss of the communion of saints, and the company of angels. It implies the loss of the favour of God, of the love of Christ, and of the joy of the Holy Ghost. It implies the loss of perfect holiness and perfect peace in heaven. It implies the loss, the everlasting loss, of all conceivable and all inconceivable bliss.

Further :

Eternal death implies the *suffering of all misery for ever* ; it implies everlasting life in everlasting torment. For eternal death is "to have a part in the lake, which for ever burns with fire and brimstone. This is the second death!" This is death eternal. The body of the impenitent sinner will be raised immortal from the grave, and will be re-united to its immortal soul ; both will appear before the judgment seat of Christ ; both will be sentenced to destruction ; and both will then depart from the presence of Christ into everlasting fires, prepared for the devil and his angels. The wicked will share in the torments of fallen spirits ; they will torment each other ; and devils will delight to torment them. Confined in the bottomless pit, they will with the devil and the damned be for ever consumed, but never destroyed in its inextinguishable fires. "For



in hell," saith our Lord, "the worm never dies, the fire never goes out," the torment never ends. Eternal death, therefore, is everlasting banishment from the presence of God, together with the ceaseless torment of body and soul for ever. "The wages of sin is death," temporal, spiritual, and eternal—the death of the body, the death of the soul, the death of the body and soul in hell. This death is the wages, which every sin deserves, and which every impenitent sinner will receive.

Having considered the wages of sin, we proceed, as we proposed, to notice,

## II. THE GIFT OF GOD.

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." In its *source*, in its *communication*, and in its *completion*, eternal life is the gift of God.

### 1. *Eternal life is in its source the gift of God.*

It is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is Himself the gift of God. "This is the record of the Father, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." But that we might have eternal life through the Son of God, it was necessary that He should die for our sins on the cross. For, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish, but have eternal life." The blessing of the death

of Christ extends as far as the curse of Adam's sin ; " for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Adam by his sin exposed us all to death ; Christ by His death restores us all to life. Through the sin of Adam all mankind must die ; through the death of Christ all mankind will rise again from the dead. For, Jesus is not only " the resurrection but the life ;" He not only by His Gospel brought immortal life to light, but by His Word will raise all the dead. " Marvel not at this," says our Lord, " for the hour is coming when all who are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."

Jesus Christ is truly and eternally God. But He assumed our nature that in the nature which had sinned, He might atone for our sins. " The Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all," and " He bore all our sins on His body on the tree." He obeyed in our nature ; He suffered in our stead ; He died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. " He died for our sins ; He rose again for our justification." By His death on the cross, He destroyed the power of death ; and by His resurrection from the dead, He showed that all the dead should rise.

By His death on the cross, Jesus atoned for the sin which we had committed, and endured the punishment which our sin had deserved. By his resurrection from the dead, He showed that in heaven the atonement of His blood was accepted, and the justice of God was satisfied. " The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin." By His intercession with the

Father, Jesus procured the Holy Spirit to renew the divine image in the heart, and to communicate divine life to the soul : and the Spirit can form the likeness of God in every soul, and write the law of God in every mind. We can, on earth, be advanced from grace to grace ; we shall, in heaven, be changed from glory to glory, only by the Spirit of the Lord. By the power of His Spirit, Jesus can purify every heart, christianize every temper, sanctify every tongue, and reform every life. The grace of Christ is, in all duties, efficient to holiness ; and, in all things, sufficient for believers. By the merits of His righteousness, by His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, Jesus has “ obtained to us everlasting life,” and purchased for us the kingdom of glory. The merits of Christ entitle all believers to everlasting happiness, or bring them to eternal life in heaven.

Again :

2. *Eternal life is in its communication the gift of God.*

“ This is life eternal, to know Thee, O Father, the true God, and Jesus Christ, thine only Son, whom Thou hast sent.” “ He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” “ He that believeth on Me,” says Christ, “ hath everlasting life ;” “ for I am the living bread, the bread of life, which came down from heaven ; and this bread is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world.” “ Whosoever eateth of my flesh hath eternal life : and I will raise him

up at the last day." Jesus is the well of life to all who thirst for salvation ; " and the water, which He gives them, shall be in them a well of water springing up to everlasting life."

To " know Christ," to " receive Christ," to " have Christ," or to " feed on Christ," is " to believe in Christ" as the only Saviour. Believing in Christ as the only Saviour, we obtain from Him spiritual life for our souls ; and spiritual life in the soul is the beginning and earnest of eternal life in heaven. For " he that believeth on the Son of God," even now " hath everlasting life ;" and " these things are written to you, who believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have everlasting life. For, we show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

But we obtain spiritual life, or our souls are made alive to God only by the Spirit of the Lord. " By" the " grace" of the Spirit " we are saved through faith" in Christ ; " and that not of ourselves ; it is the gift of God." Believers in Christ are quickened to a new life ; they are born again of the Spirit ; they are new creatures in Christ Jesus. Believing thus in the atonement of Jesus, they receive in regeneration spiritual life into their souls ; and by feeding on Christ by faith, their spiritual life is supported. They are by the Spirit made conformable to Christ in His death and in His life ; they can say with the apostle, " I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ;

and the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

A divine and holy change is effected in the hearts and tempers and lives of all, who rightly believe in Christ. Believers, in their regeneration, are brought out of darkness into light ; they are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life. This divine change in all true believers begins in a deep conviction of the evil and guilt of sin, instantly evinced by a scriptural and godly appearance. The Holy Spirit makes them feel the corruption of their nature, and shows them the sinfulness of their conduct : the Spirit causes them to confess their sins to God, and to turn from every wicked way : the Spirit teaches them to pray for the pardon of their sins, and to seek for the salvation of their souls through faith in Christ Jesus : the Spirit constrains them, as penitent inquirers, to wait in patience and prayer at the foot of the cross, until all the proud mind being humbled, all the stony heart being softened, and all self-righteousness being removed, He enables them as perishing sinners to believe in Christ crucified. " Believing through grace " in Christ, " they are justified by faith ; " and not only " have peace with God, " but " are made heirs of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. "

Spiritual life in believers is first communicated in regeneration, when the incorruptible seed is sown in the heart—when the living water is poured into the soul. Regeneration is the beginning of sanctification ; and sanctification is the gradual work of the

Spirit in the hearts and lives of all those, who are justified by faith in Christ. In this work, the Spirit wholly sanctifies believers, so that, "being made free from sin and become servants unto God, they have their fruit unto holiness, and their end everlasting life." As living stones they are built on Christ, the ever-living foundation, and "become a habitation of God through the Spirit." As living branches, they are grafted into Christ, the True Vine, and, through the Spirit, bring forth fruit unto God. Not only do they, through the Spirit, mortify the flesh, and resist the devil, and overcome the world; but, through the same Spirit, they follow after righteousness, devotion, and charity. The Bible is their study, prayer is their consolation, and holiness is their practice; divine worship is their delight, glorious hope is their companion, and eternal life is their reward, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Washed in His blood, they are cleansed from sin; sanctified by His Spirit, they are prepared for heaven; clothed in His righteousness, they are entitled to eternal life. They walk in Christ, while they live; they sleep in Christ, when they die; they awake in the likeness of Christ, when they rise from the dead; and they dwell in the presence of Christ, when they are crowned with glory in heaven! "For their life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then they shall appear with Him in glory!" Eternal life, then, is, in its communication, the gift of God. For, spiritual life is freely given, and graciously communicated, by the Spirit



of God, to the souls of all who believe in Christ; and spiritual life thus given to believers, is the beginning and the earnest of eternal life in heaven.

Further :

3. *Eternal life is, in its completion, the gift of God.*

After the last judgment, the righteous will go into eternal life; they will possess eternal happiness in heaven! Eternal life, or eternal happiness, implies the absence of all evil, and the presence of all good for ever.

(1.) In the heaven of heavens, where eternal life is revealed, *the former things of earth and time are all passed away.* God in heaven will remove all corruption from the nature, expel all sorrow from the heart, and wipe all tears from the eyes of His people. They shall no more hunger, nor thirst, nor labour; they shall sigh, and weep, and part no more! The flesh will no more trouble, the devil will no more tempt, and sinners will no more persecute them. They are beyond the reach of sin and pain, of danger and death. Having kept the faith, and finished the course, and fought the fight, they rise from all the troubles and conflicts of time to all the joys and triumphs of eternity. In heaven there will be nothing present that can distress—nothing absent that could delight them.

(2.) The *bodies* of the righteous will be spiritual and incorruptible bodies. For Christ will, by His almighty power, change our vile bodies, that they may be like His glorious body. The *souls* of the

righteous will be divinely exalted and entirely glorified. Their understandings will be enlarged to know God, even as they are known ; their wills will be in perfect unison with the divine will, and they will do it like the angels in heaven ; their affections will be perfectly purified, and entirely fixed on God in Christ Jesus. Glorified in body and soul, they will mingle with the spirits of the just, and shine among the angels in light. Unutterable love will fill their hearts ; inconceivable joy will tune their tongues. They will drink of the fountain of living waters ; they will feast at the marriage supper of the Lamb ! They will possess the riches of Christ ; they will wear crowns of life ; they will sit on thrones of glory ; they will reign in the kingdom of heaven !

(3.) The happiness of the righteous is *eternal* ; it is "eternal life." Their happiness has an eternal abode—it has an eternal house, a continuing city, an everlasting kingdom : their happiness possesses an eternal nature—it is an eternal rest, an eternal inheritance, an eternal salvation, an exceedingly exceeding and eternal weight of glory ! When millions of millions of ages have rolled in happiness away, the happiness of the righteous will be as fresh as it was at the first ; and their life will be as far from its end as it was at its beginning ! Thus the righteous in heaven have eternal life ; thus are they filled with all conceivable and inconceivable bliss ; and thus are they confirmed in the eternal enjoyment of this bliss, by the Life and Promise of Jesus Christ our Lord : "Because I live," He says, "ye shall

live also ; and where I am, there shall my people be !” The gift of God is life—spiritual and eternal life ; it is the life of grace in the soul, the life of glory in heaven. But, this life is not the wages of righteousness, but “ the gift of God ” to all, who are washed from their sins in the blood of atonement, and renewed in the divine image by the Spirit of “ Jesus Christ our Lord !”

To conclude :

1. *Eternal death, we learn from this subject, is the deserved wages of sin ; but eternal life is not the deserved wages of righteousness.*

Evil works *do* merit the wages of death ; but, good works do *not* merit the reward of life. For evil works demand earned wages ; good works receive a free gift. The punishment of the ungodly is the recompense of their evil deeds ; *the reward of the godly is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Our ruin is owing to ourselves ; our salvation to Christ. If we perish in our sins, we receive our wages ; if we are saved in heaven, we obtain salvation through the blood of the Lamb ! Against every sin, the curse of God is denounced ; by every sin, the vengeance of God is deserved. Through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, all sins may be forgiven ; but every sin, which is not washed away in the blood of Christ, will be punished with eternal death ! And this punishment, be it remembered, is not the penalty of many sins, or of great sins, but of sin, and of every sin, whether it be great or small ! How tremendous, then, is the guilt of every sin ;

how terrible is the desert of every sinner; how universal is the desert of endless punishment; for all have sinned, and become guilty in the sight of God!

2. And now, my brethren, *what do you know of these great things?* What do you know of *the wages of sin* which is death? and what do you know of *the gift of God*, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord?

(1.) *O ye unrenewed and impenitent sinners*, who are living in known and wilful sin, why will ye die? Why will you commit sin and incur the penalty of death? Why will you ruin your body? why will you destroy your soul? why will you cast both body and soul into hell for ever? "The wages of sin is death!" In your present state, every work of your hands, every word of your lips, every thought of your hearts, is sin. You are earning the wages of sin every day, every hour, every moment: and if the wages of one sin be death, what must be the wages of your sins, which are more numerous than the sands of the sea? But, sinners, why will you so vilely commit sin? Why will you labour so hard for the devil? Why will you so diligently earn the wages of damnation? For the devil is your master, and sin is his work; and his work ye do. But, remember, sinners, remember, that the great reckoning day will shortly come, and then your master, the devil, will pay you your wages; and your wages will then be, as our Lord speaks, "the damnation of hell." But, sinners, "why will ye die?" Through

Christ ye may obtain life spiritual and eternal. Through the blood of Christ ye may be pardoned, and reconciled to God ; through the Spirit of Christ ye may be renewed and sanctified ; and through the righteousness or merits of Christ ye may receive sufficient grace, and inherit eternal glory ! Sinners, turn then ; “ why will you die ? ”

(2.) But, *ye mourners for sin, ye inquirers for heaven !* God is not willing that any man should perish ; He is desirous that all men should repent and live. You know that you have sinned, and ye feel that the wages of sin is death. But, be encouraged, for eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Your sins, however numerous ; your guilt, however aggravated, will be no bar to your salvation, if, as perishing sinners, ye receive eternal life as a free gift. Go, then, to the Father through the Son ; plead the merits of the Son with the Father ; and the Father will give you eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ !

Finally :

(3.) *Ye humble and holy believers,* rejoice ye in the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ. From His Spirit, your souls, when dead in sin, received the grace of life ; and from His hand your souls, when glorified, will receive a crown of life. For ye know the cleansing virtue of His blood, the sanctifying power of His Spirit, and the infinite value of His merits. Ye are renewed in His image ; ye are partakers of His nature ; ye are heirs of His kingdom. The spiritual life in your

souls is, we repeat, the earnest of eternal life in heaven. You have passed through Him from death unto life; and you are now through Him passing from grace to glory. Consider, then, my brethren, the greatness of the sins, which God has forgiven you; the riches of grace, which He has conferred upon you; and the eternity of glory, which He has promised to give you;—consider these immortal blessings, and you cannot but be grateful to Him from whom these blessings flow; they flow to you from Jesus Christ; “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!” “Render, therefore, unto God, according to His benefits; and glorify God in your bodies and in your souls, which are God’s.” Then, having redeemed you by His blood, and sanctified you by His Spirit, He will in heaven glorify you with Himself, in His own glory, for ever and ever!



## SERMON XV.

## THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT.'

ROMANS viii. 9.

*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*

THE meaning of these words is as important, as their application is extensive. Their meaning involves the character of all Christians—their application extends to all mankind. To be Christians is to have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us; and no man is a Christian, who has not the Spirit of Christ. “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you.” “Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”

In the following discourse, we shall endeavour to *establish and to illustrate the great doctrine in the text.*

We are first,

I. TO ESTABLISH THIS DOCTRINE.

“ If any man have not the Spirit of Christ ”— Who is the Spirit of Christ ? The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God is evidently the same Spirit ; the Spirit of Christ, therefore, is truly God, and is the Third Person of the blessed Trinity. The Spirit of Christ wears all the names which God the Father wears ; possesses all the attributes which God the Father possesses ; performs all the works which God the Father performs ; and receives all the honours which God the Father receives. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of truth and holiness ; the Spirit of power and wisdom ; the Eternal Spirit the Comforter. The Spirit of Christ is the great Agent in renewing the hearts of men, and in sanctifying them for the kingdom of heaven.

2. The Spirit of Christ is given to all who ask, and dwells in the hearts of all who believe. “ Ask, and it shall be given you,” says our Lord, “ for God will give the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him.” “ For I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever. He shall be in you, and dwell with you.” (John xiv. 16, 17.) The Spirit of Christ, as St. Paul teaches, is enshrined in the bodies, and enthroned in the hearts, of believers. “ What ! know ye not that ye are the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom ye have of God.” “ For ye are the temple of the living God ; ye are the habitation of God through the Spirit ;” ye are the dwell-

ing-place of the Most High ! (Eph. ii. 22 ; 1 Cor. iii. 16 ; vi. 19 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16.) The dwelling of the Spirit in the heart of believers is, as St. John writes, the source of our obedience to God, and the spring of our love to man. “ *If we keep his commandments,*” it is because “ we dwell in God, and God in us. And hereby we know that God abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us.” “ *If we love one another,*” it is because God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. And hereby we know that we dwell in God, and that God dwelleth in us, because God hath given us His Spirit.” (1 John iii. 24 ; iv. 13, 14, &c.) If we have the Spirit of Christ, then the Spirit of God dwells in us ; and if the Spirit of God dwell in us, then we walk in the Spirit, and are led by the Spirit. If we walk in the Spirit, and are led by the Spirit, then are we the sons of God, and have received the spirit of adoption. “ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God ; and because we are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son unto our hearts, crying, Abba, Father ; and the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God ; and if children, then heirs ;—heirs of God, and with Christ, joint heirs of glory !” This spirit of adoption in believers is not, however, essential to saving faith, but it is necessary to solid comfort. Though few Christians possess it, no Christian should be satisfied without it : all Christians should seek it ; and all Christians may obtain it, for it is offered to all. Were we to teach that the spirit of

adoption is essential to saving faith, we should distress some of the humblest “followers of the Lamb;” were we to teach that you are quite safe without it, we might not only deprive you of the purest consolations, but endanger your eternal salvation. Seek, then, the spirit of adoption! Pray for the witness of the Spirit! And may the Spirit of Christ give you an earnest of the eternal inheritance, and seal you to the day of redemption! This doctrine, therefore, of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in the hearts of Christians, as a spirit of wisdom, and holiness, and comfort, is established on the surest foundation; it is established on the word of God, which endureth for ever and ever!

We proceed,

## II. TO ILLUSTRATE THIS DOCTRINE.

We know not the manner in which the Spirit of Christ works in our souls, and dwells in our hearts. The great Inhabitant is invisible—the great Worker is inscrutable; but His residence is manifest, His work is seen. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” But, if *no one* can tell whence the wind cometh, nor whither it goeth, *every one* may feel its motion, and hear its sound; and if *no one* can tell how the Spirit of Christ works in the soul, or dwells in the heart of man, *every one* may see the effects of His working, and the evidence of His dwelling in the life and temper of believers.

But, more particularly,

1. *The Spirit of Christ dwells in believers as a*  
SPIRIT OF WISDOM.

No outward teaching of others, nor inward reasoning of our own; no wisdom of men, nor tongue of angels, can of themselves, effectively convey the truths of salvation to the soul. The real knowledge of ourselves as perishing sinners, and the spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour, is the teaching of the Holy Spirit; "for no man can," experimentally, "say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 3; 1 John iv. 2.) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "For the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "And we," says the Apostle, "have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things of God." The spiritual knowledge of the things of God is revealed "not by flesh and blood," but by God Himself; and it is "revealed, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) "The Holy Ghost," says our Lord, "shall teach you all things, and shall lead you into all truth." "Ye have an unction," says the apostle, "from the Holy One; and know all things." "For the anointing, or unction, which ye have received of Him, abideth in you; and, as the same anointing hath taught you all things, ye shall abide in Him." (John xiv. 26; xvi. 13; 1 John ii. 20—27.)

The Holy Spirit, which dwells in believers, enlightens their minds to scriptural truths, and gives them an understanding of spiritual things. He teaches them the vanity of the world, the worth of the soul, and the importance of eternity. He teaches them the spirituality of the law, the sinfulness of sin, the corruption of their nature, and the wickedness of their practice. He teaches them their great guilt, and utter helplessness; and makes them feel that they are both ready and deserving to perish. He teaches them that, though the whole law must be obeyed, and the whole heart given to God, and the whole life spent in His service, yet they can have no merit in themselves. But, He further teaches them the plan of salvation by Christ crucified. He teaches them that Christ Jesus has, on the cross, made an atonement for their sins, and purchased heaven for their inheritance. He teaches them that they must be justified through faith in His atonement, and obtain heaven only through the merits of His righteousness. He teaches them the all-sufficiency of Christ to save, and takes the things of Christ and applies them to their souls. The "Holy Spirit," says Christ, "shall testify of me; He shall receive of mine; and show it unto you!" (John xv. 26; xvi. 13, 14.)

Again:

2. *The Spirit of Christ dwells in believers as a*  
SPIRIT OF HOLINESS.

God has chosen them from the beginning to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and the



belief of the truth. Through the Spirit their souls are justified by faith in Christ, and their hearts renewed in the image of God. Through the Spirit they cease from the practice of sin, mortify the deeds of the body, and overcome the love of the world. Through the Spirit their temper, their conversation, and their conduct are sanctified. Through the Spirit they ever strive to be holy as God is holy; and pure as Christ is pure. "They are washed; they are sanctified; they are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Through the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, they are filled with fruits of righteousness, and delighted with acts of devotion. Under His influence they know it to be their great duty to do good to man, and they feel it to be their great happiness to walk with God. "They live in the Spirit;" "they walk in the Spirit;" "they are led by the Spirit;" "they sing in the Spirit;" "they pray in the Spirit." Even in those times of doubt and affliction, when they know not what to pray for as they ought, the Spirit of Christ Himself, who dwells in them, "helps their infirmities, and intercedes for them according to the will of God." The Spirit enables them to be patient in every tribulation, and teaches them to be content in every state. From the Spirit they learn that the loss of all things may be the richest acquisition, that contempt may be the brightest honour, affliction the happiest state, and death the greatest gain.

Further :

3. *The Spirit of Christ dwells in believers as a SPIRIT OF COMFORT.*

“I will not,” says our Lord, “leave you comfortless; I will come again to you. For I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter who shall abide with you for ever.” The humble penitent obtains peace with God in believing on His Son through the Spirit. “Now the peace of God fill you with all peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the Holy Ghost. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; and this love of God in the heart is to believers not only the spring of holy action, but the source of heavenly comfort. “The kingdom of God is not of this world;” it is neither of worldly origin, nor of earthly nature; it is “neither meat nor drink;” it is superior to all carnal delights or sensual pleasures; “it is righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.”

Being born again of the Spirit, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, believers are become the sons of God; and “because they are sons, God sends the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father!” The Spirit of Christ dwells in believers as the Spirit of adoption; and “His witness,” “His sealing,” “His earnest,”—comfort their hearts, and assure them of heaven. “The Spirit himself bears witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that they suffer with Him, they may also be glorified together.” (Rom. viii. 16, 17.)

Believers, however, will not escape affliction, because the Spirit of Christ dwells in them; but, if they “receive the word of God in much affliction, they will receive it also with much joy of the Holy Ghost.” If the enemy rush on them in a flood of doubts and fears, the Spirit of God will lift up a standard against him. If Satan cast around them his fiery darts or fierce temptations, the sword of the Spirit will drive him away. If they be reproached for the name of Christ, or be persecuted for His sake, happy are they; for the Spirit of God and of glory will rest upon them. They must, like other men, suffer pain and sickness; but through the supply of the Spirit of Jesus, their consolation shall be superior to their sorrows, “and their strength be equal to their day.” They must, like other men, feel the stroke of death; but “blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.” They must be buried in the grave, and mingle with the dust: but, “He who raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead, will also quicken their mortal bodies by His Spirit, which dwelleth in them.” (Rom. viii. 11.)

But, in conclusion:

Many persons in this land “know not whether there be any Holy Ghost;” others, who have heard of his name, deny his divinity, and disbelieve his operations; while some, who profess to believe in Him as the sanctifier of his people, contend that his indwelling cannot be known, nor his operations be perceived. But, notwithstanding the ignorance of

the careless, the opposition of the heretical, and the contradiction of the formal, we strongly assert from the Scriptures of God, that the Spirit of Christ must dwell in our hearts, or we cannot be Christians. "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Allow me, then, to inquire,

1. *Have you the Spirit of Christ? Does the Spirit of Christ dwell in you?* Does He dwell in you as a *Spirit of wisdom* teaching your souls, and making you wise to salvation? Does he dwell in you as a *Spirit of holiness*, enabling you to believe in Christ, justifying your souls by faith, renewing your heart, sanctifying your conduct? Does He dwell in you as a *Spirit of comfort*, giving you peace with God, witnessing with your spirit, bringing you an earnest of heaven, sealing you to the day of redemption? But, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in your heart, you will live and walk after the Spirit; you will live in the spirit of devotion, and walk in holiness of life. If you have the Spirit of Christ, then you are Christ's, and Christ is yours. And if Christ is yours, all things are yours. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Have you, we ask again, the Spirit of Christ; and are you walking after the Spirit?

2. *All who will, may have the Spirit of Christ; and all must have the Spirit of Christ, or they must perish.*

For if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you do not belong to Christ ; and if you do not belong to Christ, you cannot be saved. All of you are either in the flesh, or in the Spirit ; either in an unconverted state, or in a converted state. If ye are in the flesh, ye walk in sin after the flesh ; if ye are in the Spirit, ye walk in holiness after the Spirit. “ For they that are after the flesh do mind,” and pursue “ the things of the flesh ; and they that are after the Spirit,” do mind and pursue “ the things of the Spirit ;” “ for the minding of the flesh is death ; but the minding of the Spirit is life and peace.” If you have not the Spirit, you live after the flesh ; if you live after the flesh, ye shall die. Ye will die in sin ; ye will die eternally. Christ will reject you at death, disown you at judgment, and condemn you to everlasting punishment. This is to die eternally ; this is the second death ! O ye, who live in sin, who live after the flesh ; “ Why will you die ?” While the blessed Saviour and the blessed Spirit invite you freely to the waters of life, “ why will you die ?” Often have you rejected the only Saviour ; long have you resisted the Holy Spirit. And yet the Saviour is again offered to your acceptance ; the Spirit still strives with your hearts. But no more reject the only Saviour ; no longer resist the Holy Spirit ; for the Spirit may now cease to strive with you ; and the Saviour may now leave you to perish.

3. *But, Christians, the Spirit of Christ dwells in your hearts ; and your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost.*

Let no evil temper defile the temple of God ; let no sinful act grieve the Comforter of souls ; let no worldly-mindedness quench the Spirit of heaven ! But stir up the gift which is in you ; cherish the motions of the Spirit in your hearts ; fan the flame within, till it entirely consumes your iniquity, and entirely purifies your soul.

But forget not, my brethren, that the comfort of the Holy Spirit is bestowed on believers while they use the means of grace, and abound in works of righteousness—while they pray to God and search the Scriptures, while they hear the Gospel and receive the supper of the Lord, while they exercise charity, and practise holiness. Walk, therefore, blameless in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord ; “ and ye will walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”

Faithful Christians ! *remember your great consolation* ; you have the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of God dwells in you. In all your journey to heaven you will often be in doubt, in distress, in danger, and in want ; but you have the Spirit of Christ, and in every doubt the Spirit of wisdom will guide your way, in every distress the Spirit of love will comfort your heart, in every danger the Spirit of power will protect your soul, in every want the Spirit of grace will supply your need.

Holy Christians ! *remember your great dignity* ; you are the temples of the living God, and habitations of God through the Spirit. Remember that God dwells in you and walks in you ; and forget not



to walk worthy of your high calling; forget not that you must dwell in God, and walk with God.

Finally :

Humble Christians! *Remember your great privilege*; you have the Spirit of Christ, and belong to Christ. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is yours." You can joyfully say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." In heaven itself you cannot say more than this, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." But in heaven you will see more, and enjoy more of your beloved Saviour; for in heaven you will see Him as He is in all His loveliness, and be with Him where He is in all His glory.

## SERMON XVI.

THE MATTER AND THE MANNER OF THE  
APOSTLES' PREACHING.

1 COR. i. 23.

*But we preach Christ crucified.*

WHAT is the Gospel? How is the Gospel to be preached? The Gospel is not profound speculations on unrevealed matters, nor splendid displays of biblical learning; it is neither the observance of ceremonies, nor the efficacy of sacraments; it is neither the competency of morality, nor the beauty of virtue; neither the sufficiency of reason, nor the fitness of things; neither the goodness of the heart, nor the dignity of man. Nor do we preach the Gospel when we require an union of nature and grace, and mix the merits of man with the merits of Christ. Nor do we preach the Gospel, though we preach the truth, if we do not preach the whole truth; and though we preach the whole truth, yet we do not preach the Gospel if we accommodate it to the tastes, or warp it to the

prejudices of our hearers. What then is the Gospel? And how is the Gospel to be preached? The Gospel is glad tidings of salvation through faith in the blood of Jesus; and to preach the Gospel is to "PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED."

Let us now consider *the matter and the manner of the Apostle's preaching.*

### I. THE MATTER OF THE APOSTLE'S PREACHING.

The Apostle preached CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

#### 1. *He preached* CHRIST.

And who is Christ? He is the Son of God—so the Son, as to be the equal of God. He is the First and the Last. He is our Creator and Preserver, our Redeemer and Judge. He is the Lord of lords, the Lord of hosts, the Lord of all. He is the King of kings, the King of saints, the King of glory. He is the wisdom of God, the power of God, the righteousness of God, the holy one of God; "and of God He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." For He is Immanuel, God incarnate, God with us, God our Saviour. For He stooped from His throne, assumed our nature, and in mortal guise came into our world. Begotten from eternity, yet born in time; seated on the throne of the universe, yet lying in the manger of a stable; adored by the angels of heaven, yet gazed on by the beasts of the stall; the God of joy, yet the man of sorrows; the Maker of all creatures, yet without a friend in His need; the King of all worlds, yet without a place

for His head ; the Prince of life, yet dying on the cross ; the ever-living Lord, yet buried in the tomb. " I am," says Jesus, " He that liveth and was dead ; and behold ! I am alive for evermore." " For thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead."

Further :

Christ is Messiah, the great anointed, the divine prophet, priest and king of His Church. He is our *divine prophet* anointed with the Holy Spirit to preach good tidings, to reveal the will of God, to open the understanding, to make wise to salvation, to teach the soul. Taught by Him, we are taught of God, and great will be our peace. He is our *divine priest*, anointed with the Spirit of grace to atone for our sins, and to intercede for our souls. At once the victim and the priest, the Lamb of God, and our Advocate with the Father, He not only offered Himself a sacrifice for our sins, but with His own blood entered heaven to make intercession for us. He is our *divine king*, anointed with the spirit of power to subdue our hearts to His sway, and to bruise our enemies under His feet. Having conquered the world, and sin, and death, and hell, He fixes His throne in the hearts of His people, and gives them the victory over their enemies. Thus the Apostle preached CHRIST.

But, further :

2. *He preached* CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

" Every high priest," says the Apostle, " is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices ; it was neces-

sary, therefore, that Christ, our high priest, should have somewhat to offer." "Wherefore when He came into the world, He said, the sacrifice and offering" of beasts, "thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Through the offering of this body on the cross, through the crucifixion of Christ for our sins, can we be pardoned and justified, sanctified and saved. Christ assumed our nature, assumed a body like our own, in which He might suffer and be crucified. He was both God and man; as man, He suffered in our place; as God, He atoned for our sins. As man, He was liable to all the sinless infirmities of our nature. He laboured, and was weary; He fasted, and was faint. When persecuted, He grieved; when rejected, He wept. When in an agony, He prayed, "Let this cup pass from Me!" when deserted, He complained, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken Me?" After His agony, He was betrayed by a friend, and sold to His enemies. He was seized as a malefactor, bound as a thief, mocked as an impostor, reckoned worse than a murderer, deemed unfit to live. He was blindfolded, beaten, derided. "He hid not His face from spitting, nor turned His cheek from those who plucked off the hair." His temples were pierced with thorns; His back was ploughed with scourges. He was sentenced to be crucified, though pronounced innocent by His judge; and though trembling through weakness, compelled to bear the cross. When He was come to Calvary, rough spikes were driven through His hands and feet, as He lay

stretched on the cross; and He was then lifted up between two thieves, a spectacle to angels, and to men. His murderers marked the writhings of His body, and rejoiced at the agonies of His soul; they exasperated His burning thirst with vinegar and gall, and disturbed His dying prayers with mockeries and blasphemies. "The assembly of the wicked," the dying Saviour sighs, "have inclosed Me. They stand and stare upon Me. They gape upon Me, as roaring lions, with their mouths; they deride me, as cruel mockers, with their tongues. They have pierced my hands and my feet. They have lifted me up on the cross. All my bones are out of joint. My heart is melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd. My tongue cleaveth to my jaws. I am brought to the dust of death. But, It is finished. Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." And He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Thus Christ was crucified. He was crucified for the sins of the world; and for the salvation of sinners, "WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED."

Such was the MATTER of St. Paul's preaching, "Christ crucified."

We proceed to consider,

## II. THE MANNER OF THE APOSTLES' PREACHING.

When St. Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified," he did not mean that the Apostles preached nothing except the sorrows and the sufferings of our dying Saviour; but that they *connected* ALL *essential*



*doctrines, and ALL necessary duties, with the crucifixion and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1. *The Apostles joined all ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES with Christ crucified.*

When they teach men *to repent of their sins, and to be reconciled to God*, they preach Christ crucified. “Him have ye taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain. Repent, therefore, and be baptized in His name.” “For He has made peace for you through the blood of the Cross.” “He has reconciled you to God by His death.” “And ye, who some time were afar off, are now made nigh by His blood.” But being redeemed from sin, and reconciled to God by the blood of Christ, to commit sin will be to trample on His blood, or to crucify Him afresh. (1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Col. i. 20—22. Eph. ii. 13.)

When they teach men *how sin may be forgiven, how the soul may be justified, and peace may be obtained*, they preach Christ crucified. “We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of His grace.” “For God hath set forth His Son Jesus Christ to be the propitiation for our sins through faith in His blood, that we may be justified freely by His grace.” “And being justified freely through faith in His blood, we have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of glory.” (Rom. v. 1; iii. 24, 25.)

Further :

When they teach men *how the conscience may be cleansed, how the heart and the life may be sancti-*

*fied*, they preach Christ crucified. “The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself on the cross without spot unto God, purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” For the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus is ever through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus; we are sanctified through the sprinkling of His blood by the eternal Spirit; for His blood cleanseth from all sin.”

Finally :

When they teach what is the *eternal bliss of heaven*, and how that *eternal bliss is obtained*, they preach Christ crucified. For the kingdom of heaven was purchased by the precious blood of the Lamb without spot; and the happiness of heaven is the eternal worship “of the Lamb that was slain.” The saints before the throne of glory have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The saints in glory ever sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by His blood.” “Unto Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, be dominion and glory for ever and ever.” Thus, my brethren, in repenting of sin, in justification of the sinner, in sanctification of the soul, in securing the happiness of heaven, man is nothing, but Christ crucified is all is all. For repentance unto life, justification before God, sanctification by the Holy Spirit, a meetness for the holiness of heaven, and a

title to joys of eternity, are all obtained by Christ crucified.

Christ crucified, my brethren, has been preached unto you ; but, has the preaching of Christ crucified been made to you the power of God unto salvation ? Have you looked on Him whom your sins have pierced, and repented of your sins ? Have you relied for pardon on the atoning blood of Jesus ; and been justified through faith in His righteousness ? Have your hearts and lives been sanctified by the Holy Spirit through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ ? Are you now living in holiness through faith in Him who loved you, and died for you ? And, after all, do you expect eternal life in heaven, not as the reward of your services, but as the gift of God through Christ crucified ?

Again :

2. *The Apostles founded all NECESSARY DUTIES on Christ crucified.*

When they teach men *to pray* to God, they preach Christ crucified. “ Christ has entered heaven with his own blood, to appear in the presence of God for us ; having, therefore, liberty to enter into the holiest by “ the blood of Jesus, let us come boldly to the throne of grace.” When they teach men *to search the Scriptures*, they preach Christ crucified. “ The angels desire to look into the Scriptures, which foretel the sufferings of Christ ;” how, then, can men neglect to search the Scriptures ? (1 Pet. i. 11, 12.) When they teach *humbleness of mind, and patience in suffering*, they preach Christ crucified.

“ Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, who, being equal with God, yet being in the likeness of man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” “ If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Christ.” “ Run, then, with patience, the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, and despised the shame.” When they teach *husbands to love their wives, and children to obey their parents*, they preach Christ crucified. “ Husbands, love your wives ; as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it.” (Eph. v. 25.) “ Children, obey your parents in the Lord ;” for though Christ were a Son, yet was He obedient to His Father, even unto death. When they teach *Christians to love as brethren, and to do good one to another*, they preach Christ crucified. “ Walk in love as Christ also has loved us, and given Himself a sacrifice for us.” “ And because He laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John iii. 16.) When they teach *the motive of Christian obedience, and the practice of all good works*, they preach Christ crucified. “ The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and He died for us, that we should live to Him.” (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) For, “ we are bought with a price, with the blood of Christ ; let us, therefore, glorify God in our bodies and in our souls, which are God’s.” When they teach, in fine, *the nature and the glory of the Christian’s life*, they preach Christ crucified. “ God for-

bid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." "For, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

Thus, my brethren, in prayer to God, in the searching of the Scriptures, in humbleness of mind, in patience of suffering, in love of the brethren, in the performance of all good works, man of himself can do nothing, but Christ crucified is the motive and the end, the all in all. For the Spirit of prayer, the understanding of the Scriptures, the humility of the heart, the patience of suffering, the love of the brethren, the power and the grace to do good works, are all derived from Christ crucified.

Christ crucified, my brethren, has been preached to you; and, may we ask, Do you pray to God through Him, who once was crucified, but is now our Advocate with the Father? Do you, like the angels, study the Scriptures, because they testify of Christ crucified? Has the cross of Christ clothed your soul with humility, and given it patience in suffering? Do you love, and do good to the brethren, because Christ loved you, and laid down His life for you? Does the love of Christ crucified constrain you to obedience? Bought, as you are, with a price, with the precious blood of Christ, do you by a holy life glorify God? Are you crucified with Christ to self, to sin, and to the world? Are you



alive to God, because Christ liveth in you? Do you glory only, and do you glory always, in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to you, and you to the world?

To conclude :

1. *The manifold wisdom and boundless love of God will be eternally unrolling to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, through the salvation of the Church by Christ crucified.*

For the redemption of sinners by the blood of Jesus fills heaven with wonder, and will be an everlasting song to saints and angels. Mankind are in a sinful and perishing state ; and sin can be pardoned, the soul be justified, the heart be renewed, the life be sanctified, the sinner be saved, only by faith in Christ crucified : no preaching, therefore, but the preaching of Christ crucified is suitable to the state of mankind. Besides, no preaching will be profitable to the souls of men, without the blessing of God ; and God will bless no preaching but the preaching of Christ crucified. The apostles, therefore, divinely determined to know nothing, and to preach nothing, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. “ We preach Christ crucified.”

2. *Christ, who is the King of glory, was crucified for the sins of the world.*

Angels, who excel in might and mind, desire with eagerness to look into the sorrows of our crucified Lord. Apostles, who were filled with the Holy Ghost, determined to preach nothing but Christ crucified. Christ crucified, my brethren, has been



preached to you ! and, may I ask, " Are any of you neglecting Christ crucified ? Can you despise what angels adore ? Can you neglect what Apostles preach ? Can you reject what alone can save ? When you see Christ suffering death on the cross, for our sins, and made a perfect Saviour through His sufferings on the cross, how can you escape if you neglect His great salvation ? While you live in sin and neglect His salvation, you cannot escape eternal destruction ! But, still to you, who have hitherto neglected His salvation, the crucified Saviour cries, " Look unto Me, and be saved !"

3. *And ye penitents ; ye inquirers after salvation ; " Look ye to Christ crucified !"*

He was crucified " to save sinners ; and He can save to the uttermost !" You cannot doubt His power, for He is " God our Saviour." You cannot question His willingness, for He died to save. In Him is everything which your souls can need ; and whatever your souls need, He is willing to bestow. You feel yourselves to be corrupt, and sinful, and helpless, and perishing ; you want pardon, and peace, and holiness, and salvation ; look, then, to the blood, and righteousness, and Spirit, and merits, of Christ crucified, and you shall be pardoned, and justified, and sanctified, and saved !

Finally :

4. *Believers in the Lord Jesus ! Christ crucified is more precious to your souls than the treasures and glories of all worlds.*

Through time, and through eternity, it will be

your duty and your delight to look to Christ crucified ! Through *life*, then, look to Christ crucified ; and through life, Christ crucified will be your strength and your peace ! At *death*, look to Christ crucified ; and at death, Christ crucified will be your support and consolation ! At *judgment*, look to Christ crucified ; and at judgment, Christ crucified will be your advocate and friend ! In *heaven*, look to Christ crucified ; and in heaven, Christ crucified will be your joy and your glory throughout eternity !

## SERMON XVII.

## THE MERCY OF GOD TOWARDS HIS PEOPLE.

2 COR. i. 21, 22.

*Now He, who stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

THE doctrine of a Trinity in Unity is a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Scriptures clearly teach that in One Eternal Godhead are Three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. These Three Divine Persons are *distinct* in name and in office, but are *united* in nature, in counsel, and in work. The great work of the Eternal Trinity is the salvation of mankind by Jesus Christ. God, and Christ, and the Spirit are, in the text, distinctly named, as contributing to our salvation. "Christ" is named as the only foundation for eternal life; "God" is named as the builder of His people on the only foundation; and "the Spirit" is named as the sanctifier and sealer of believers "unto the day

of redemption." "Now He, who stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

From these words *we may contemplate the mercy of God as manifested towards His people.*

The mercy of God, we observe first, is manifested,

#### I. IN BUILDING THEM ON CHRIST.

"He, who stablisheth us in Christ, is God." "For all the promises of God in Christ are yea; and in Christ amen, to the glory of God by us." We are by nature in a fallen state, corrupt, sinful, helpless, perishing. We have lost all fitness for the happiness of heaven, and are exposed to all the misery of hell. But Jesus Christ, by His sufferings in our nature, and in our place, has not only made atonement for our sins, but purchased heaven for our souls. He has made satisfaction to the justice of God for our transgressions, and obtained for our souls a title to eternal life. Jesus Christ, therefore, is the only foundation, on which our souls can be built for life eternal; "for other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, even Jesus Christ." "But it is God alone," who can stablish us in Christ; "it is God alone, who can take us out of the quarry of corruption, and build us on Him. It is God alone, who after He has built us on Christ, can make us, "as lively stones, grow into a holy temple in the Lord." It is God alone, who by His Spirit makes us feel the guilt and helplessness of our perishing

state, and then shews us the fitness and sufficiency of the Almighty Saviour. It is God alone, who by His Spirit plants living faith in our penitent hearts, and communicates spiritual life to our believing souls. Being thus established by God in the faith of Christ, our sins are pardoned, and our souls are justified; our meetness for eternal happiness is secured, and our title to eternal glory is won.

Again :

The mercy of God towards His people is manifested,

## II. IN ANOINTING THEM WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

“ He, who anoints us with His Spirit, is God.” The prophets, priests, and kings of the Jews were anointed with holy oil to their high offices. This anointing with holy oil was a figure of the anointing of the Lord Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. For “ God hath anointed Him with the Holy Ghost, and with power;” and hath thus “ anointed Him to preach the Gospel to the poor.” (Acts x. 28.) And as God anointed His Son to His high office, so does He anoint His people; He anoints them with His Spirit to *enlighten* their minds, to *renew* their hearts, and to *sanctify* their lives.

1. *The anointing of the Spirit enlightens their minds.*

The eyes of their minds being naturally blinded, they were ignorant of spiritual things, and sat in the shadow of death. But “ God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone into

their minds, and given them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ." The day spring from on high has visited their minds, and guided their feet into the way of peace. They have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things; for this anointing, which they have of God, abides with them, and guides them into all truth. (1 John ii. 20.) The Saviour now appears altogether lovely, and His salvation altogether desirable.

2. *The anointing of the Spirit renews their hearts.*

Their conscience is naturally defiled and unfeeling; their imagination polluted and perverted; their affections earthly and sensual; their wills perverse and unsubdued. But God, by the anointing of His Spirit, purifies and softens the conscience; hallows and directs the imagination; spiritualizes and exalts the affections; subdues and controls the will. He takes away the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh. He overcomes the natural enmity of the human mind, and implants in it a spiritual love of the Holy God. In fine; He makes them "new creatures in Christ Jesus; old things pass away; all things become new."

3. *The anointing of the Spirit reforms their lives.*

They once lived in sin and without God in the world; they once served divers fleshly lusts, and pursued various sinful pleasures; they once were careless of their souls, and unmindful of eternity. But God, by the anointing of the Spirit, sanctified them in body and soul; and they denied ungodli-



ness and worldly lusts, and began to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world. "They ceased to do evil; they learnt to do well;" and "by patient continuance in well-doing, they seek for honour, glory, and immortality." They consecrate all their heart and life—all their time and talents, to the service of the Lord. They would ever live in the spirit of prayer and charity; and would ever delight in acts of holiness and devotion.

Further :

The mercy of God towards His people is manifested,

### III. IN SEALING THEM TO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION.

For "God also hath sealed us." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.) What is the sealing of the Spirit? In this mystic sealing, *the hand* which holds the seal, is *the Spirit of holiness*; the *seal itself* is the *word of God*; the *subject* sealed is the *heart* of man; the *impression* made on the heart by this sealing, is the *image of Christ*; and the *object* attained by it, is an *assurance* of eternal salvation in heaven. As in earthly sealing the wax is melted before the impression can be made, so in this spiritual sealing, the heart must be melted, before it can be impressed. And the Holy Spirit melts the heart into godly penitence, impresses on it the divine Word, leaves in it the divine image; and this image is visible in the cha-

racter and legible in the life ; it is “ known and read of all men.”

This sealing is,

1. *A mark of appropriation.*

“ Him hath God the Father sealed ;” that is, “ God, the Father, hath marked Jesus Christ for His own Son, and designated Him for His high office.” Sealing among men is an act of appropriation, ascertaining a right to some property or conveying a title to some inheritance. Sealing is by an act to declare, “ This property is mine ;” or, “ this inheritance shall be yours.” When God, therefore, seals believers by His Spirit, He claims them for His own people, and assures them of their eternal inheritance.

For,

This sealing is.

2. *A ground of assurance.*

If we have the word of an honest man, we believe him ; if we have his signature and his seal, our belief grows into assurance ; what assurance of heaven, then, do believers obtain, to whom God, who cannot lie, not only gives the promise of His word, but the signing of His hand and the sealing of His Spirit? For, in this sealing, “ the Spirit bears witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God,” and the heirs of His kingdom.

Finally :

The mercy of God towards His people is manifested,

## IV. IN GIVING THEM THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.

“God hath given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” When the Spirit seals believers, He becomes to them emphatically a Spirit of holiness and consolation, sanctifying their souls, and comforting their hearts. “After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory.” (Eph. i. 13, 14.) In sealing the souls of believers, the Holy Spirit gives them the earnest of the day of redemption by sanctifying them for its perfect holiness, and by causing them to thirst for its perfect pleasures. The earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, is a proof of divine affection, and a foretaste of eternal bliss.

1. *It is a proof of divine affection.*

It is not only intellectual, but cordial; not only wisdom and knowledge in the head, but grace and love in the heart. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost: it is the spirit of adoption, the spirit of the sons of God, whereby they cry, “Abba, Father!” The earnest of the Spirit is the gift of God, which He bestows on His people according to the good pleasure of His will. For “He, who has wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit.” “Behold! what manner of love is this, wherewith the Father hath loved us, not only that we should be called the sons of God;” but have a sense of His paternal love sealed on our hearts by

the Holy Spirit! "He hath given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

Again :

2. *It is a foretaste of eternal bliss.*

The first fruits are a pledge of the harvest ; the beginnings of grace are a foretaste of glory ; for, an earnest is a part of payment ; or a pledge for the payment of the whole. The knowledge, and holiness, and joy, which believers have obtained from the Holy Spirit is a pledge that they shall hereafter obtain perfect knowledge, and holiness, and joy. The earnest of the Spirit is a pledge and foretaste of their eternal inheritance in heaven. It is heaven brought to the soul ; it is heaven below, leading to heaven above. And, "Now," will every child of God say, "Now thanks be unto God, who hath established us in His Son, and anointed us with His Spirit ;—who hath also sealed us to the day of redemption, and given the earnest of heaven in our hearts !"

1. *Who, then, my brethren, is the true Christian ?*

Who is the true follower of Jesus Christ ? The true Christian is described in our text.

To be taken as a dead stone out of the quarry of human corruption ; to be hewn, shapen, and polished, and then built, as a lively stone, in its right place, on the only foundation, Jesus Christ : to be "anointed and sealed" by the Holy Ghost ; to be changed in nature, and renewed in mind ; to be transformed into the divine likeness, and made partakers of the everlasting covenant ; to have the earnest of the

Spirit, and the earnest of heaven, in the heart; to prove this earnest of the Spirit, to manifest this earnest of heaven, by a heavenly temper, and a godly life. This is to be a true Christian: this is to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. Where, then, are true Christians to be found? Are you, my brethren, such Christians?

2. *Has God, then, allow me to inquire, taken you out of the quarry of corruption, and built you on Christ?*

Has He anointed you and sealed you with His Holy Spirit? Has He enlightened and sanctified your mind? Has He softened and renewed your heart? Has He transformed you into the divine likeness, and made you partakers of the everlasting covenant? Has He given you the earnest of the Spirit in your heart, not only as an assurance of faith and a witness of adoption, but as an evidence of divine love, and as a pledge and foretaste of heavenly happiness? Has He enabled you by His grace to prove this earnest of the Spirit in your heart, by a heavenly temper and a godly life? For, we repeat, that religion is not merely scriptural truth and knowledge in the head; but divine life and grace in the heart; and where divine life and grace are in the heart, the affections will be in heaven, and the conduct will be in holiness! Do you, then, live in universal holiness, and place your affections on things above? Do you delight in the worship of God, and in doing good to men? Then, happy are you, my brethren; for God has built you

on Christ, given you the earnest of the Spirit, and sealed you to the day of redemption. But, unhappy are you, who are ignorant of these things; for you have neither meetness for heaven, nor hope of glory. You are not built on Christ; you are not sanctified by the Spirit; you have not the earnest of heaven in your heart; you are not sealed to the day of redemption. You live in sin; you love the world; you mingle with the ungodly; you neglect the supper of the Lord. You are not ready for death; nor prepared for judgment! But, you may die any moment. And if you die in your present state, you will perish for ever. But, why you will die? O that ye would cease to do evil, and learn to do well! O that ye would come out of the world, and return to God by Christ Jesus! O that ye would begin to search the Scriptures, and to pray for the Spirit to understand them! "O let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon!"

3. *But, finally, ye children of God, rejoice in Christ your Saviour!*

Though no better than others, God, of His sovereign mercy, took you out of the quarry of human corruption, where all mankind lay dead in sin, formed you into living stones for His spiritual temple, and built you on Christ the only foundation! He anointed you with His Spirit, enlightening your mind, renewing your heart, sanctifying your life:



He sealed you with His Spirit, marking you for His own people, and assuring you of His great salvation : He gave the earnest of the Spirit in your heart, as a proof of His unfailing love, and as a pledge of His eternal favour ! Consider, my beloved brethren, how great things God has already done for you ; and consider what greater things He will do for you hereafter. He, who has anointed you with his Spirit on earth, will crown you with life in heaven. He, who has already given you the earnest of grace, will hereafter give you the fulness of glory. Be, then, thankful, holy, zealous. “ Look well to yourselves that ye lose not what ye have gained ; but strive to receive a full reward.” “ Hold fast that which ye have, that no man take your crown !”

## SERMON XVIII.

## THE EPISTLES OF CHRIST.

2 COR. iii. 2, 3.

*Ye are our Epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.*

ST. PAUL has just been speaking of his sincerity and success in preaching the Gospel. "Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place." "For we are not as many, who corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity; but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we of Christ." This language might seem to some persons like boasting; St. Paul, therefore, corrects himself, and inquires, "Do we begin to commend ourselves, or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or epistles of commendation from you?" No. We have already all the epistles

which we desire or need. For “ ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.”

The apostle here speaks of a Letter, or Epistle, “ *Our Epistle* ;” and “ *the Epistle of Christ.*”

Let us, first, *investigate the meaning* ; and, 2ndly, *examine the writing of this Epistle.*

#### I. THE MEANING OF THIS EPISTLE.

“ Ye are our Epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men,—manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ.”

Let us investigate,

##### 1. *Its nature.*

“ Ye are our Epistle ;”—ye are our letter of commendation. The apostle here alludes to something which was well known at Corinth, but was only implied in our text ;—to something which had the nature and produced the effect of an epistle or letter of commendation ; a letter, written in characters so large and bright, that all who saw could read it ; expressed in language so plain and easy, that all who read could understand it. To what, then, does the apostle allude ? He alludes to the wonderful conversion, and to the subsequent conduct, of the Corinthians. They had been turned from the power of Satan to the love of God ; from the darkest commission of sin to the brightest practice of holiness ;

from the filthiest pleasures of the world to the purest joys of heaven. The apostle calls this conversion and conduct of the Corinthians an Epistle, or letter of commendation; and this conversion and conduct of the Corinthians were, indeed, a letter of commendation, not merely of the apostle, but chiefly of the Gospel, which the apostle preached. For the holy conduct of his people is the minister's commendation. The conversion of his people is the minister's joy: "Ye are our Epistle written *in our heart.*" "The people's practice is the preacher's praise." "Ye are our Epistle—*known and read of all men.*" The conversion and conduct of the Corinthians were, we repeat, the Epistle of our apostle; and this is the key of our text.

"Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, nor liars, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such, O ye Corinthians, *such were some of you*; BUT YE ARE WASHED, BUT YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, AND BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD." (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11.)

The Corinthians had been most flagitious sinners, detestably, unutterably unclean: they had been idolatrous, unjust, extortionate, dishonest, covetous, drunken, reviling, contentious. But the unclean had become chaste; the filthy had become pure; the thief had become honest; the covetous had become liberal; the extortionate had become conscientious;

the drunkard had become sober; the reviler had become meek; the contentious had become peaceable; the liar had become true; the idolater had become active and bold for the worship and glory of the one true God. A great and visible change had taken place in their temper and conduct; a change which all could see, and all might understand. "They had ceased to do evil, and learnt to do well." They had "cast away the works of darkness, and had put on the armour of light." They had been the wilful and miserable children of wrath; they were become the willing and happy children of grace. They had been the bond-slaves of the devil; they were become the freemen of Jesus Christ. They had been the greedy drudges of iniquity; they were become zealous workers of righteousness. They had been turned from the broad way of sin and hell, and were now treading in the narrow path of holiness and heaven. Their former abominable sins, their remarkable conversion to God, and their present holy conduct, were well known; and thus these converted Corinthians became an Epistle of Christ, which, we repeat, all might read and understand. *Such is the nature of this Epistle.* Let us consider,

2. *Its legibility.*

"Ye are our Epistle—*known and read of all men.*"

The Corinthians had been converted by the Spirit of God; and the effects of their conversion instantly appeared. Holy obedience was stamped on

all their conduct, and it was legible in all their actions. Their Christian life was seen, and known, and read of all men.

There have been men so absurd and unjust, that they would not teach the poor to read, lest, as they said, the poor should read what was evil and injurious. But there is one sort of book which you cannot hinder them from reading, or one kind of reading from which you cannot prevent them; you cannot prevent them from reading the lives and actions of men. The most poor and illiterate of mankind, though he cannot distinguish the letters of the alphabet, can yet easily read the different conduct of the wicked and righteous. A wicked, or a holy life, is a lesson which all can read. Who could not read the conduct of the Corinthians *before their conversion*, when they were "idolatrous, unjust, extortionate, dishonest, covetous, drunken, reviling, contentious, unclean?" Who could not read the conduct of the same Corinthians *after their conversion*, when the unclean had become chaste; the filthy, pure; the thief, honest; the covetous, liberal; the extortionate, conscientious; the drunken, sober; the reviler, meek; the contentious, peaceable; the liar, true; and the idolatrous, bold for the worship of the true God? Who cannot read the conduct of true Christians? For they are set on a hill. They are the lights of the world; they cannot be hid, they must be seen. They are "known and read of all men." For Christians are in Christ by faith; and in Christ they live, and walk, and shine before men.



Their conduct, written in bright characters of righteousness, shines on all around. "They live soberly, righteously, and godly;" "They do justly, they love mercy, they walk humbly with their God."

*Such is the legibility of this Epistle.*

Let us now consider,

### 3. *Its excellency.*

They are "manifest, as the epistle of Christ."

They were made *manifest* to the world, as copies of the example of Christ. The image of Christ was not only formed in their hearts, but expressed in their lives. It was manifest from their Christian conduct, that "they had been with Christ;" that "they had learned Christ;" that "they had put on Christ;" that "they lived and walked in Christ."

Christ was meek and lowly in heart: He was patient and gentle in spirit: He was merciful and forgiving to men: He was submissive and thankful to God. The same mind is in Christians, which was in Christ. They have learnt of Him to be meek and lowly in heart; to be patient and gentle in spirit; to be merciful and forgiving to men; to be, in all things, submissive and thankful to God. *In temper, Christians are Epistles of Christ.*

"Never man spake like Christ!" In ever gracious words, He ever spake of heavenly things. He spake truth, reproved sin, recommended holiness. Christians have learnt of Christ to speak of heavenly things, and their conversation ministers grace to their hearers. They speak truth; they confess Christ; they reprove sin; they recommend holiness.

But, in speaking truth, in confessing Christ, in reproving sin, and in recommending holiness, they would ever speak in a spirit of prayer, humility, and charity. *In conversation, Christians are Epistles of Christ.*

Again :

Christ did no sin ; neither was guile found in His mouth. He was holy, harmless, separate from sinners. Christians are separate from sinners ; they come out of the world ; they live in holiness. Christ prayed in private ; He prayed with His disciples ; He prayed in the temple. Christians pray in secret ; they pray in their families ; they pray in the house of God. Christ delighted in the word of God ; He celebrated the Jewish passover ; He went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men. Christians search the Scriptures ; they remember the death of Christ at His table, and labour to promote the present and future welfare of mankind. Christ returned not reviling for reviling, but good for evil. He died for His enemies ; He prayed for His murderers. Christians are not overcome with evil ; but, like their Lord, returning blessing for cursing, prayer for persecution, and kindness for hatred, they evermore strive to overcome evil with good. *In conduct, Christians are Epistles of Christ.*

Christianity is legible in their temper, in their conversation, and in their conduct ; so that in temper, and conversation, and conduct, they are “ the Epistles of Christ, known and read of all men.”

Having noticed the MEANING of this Epistle, its

*nature, its legibility, and its excellency, we proceed, as we promised, to examine,*

## II. THE WRITING OF THIS EPISTLE.

It is “an Epistle ministered by us, yet *written* not with ink, but *with the Spirit of the living God*; not on tables of stone, but in *fleshly tables of the heart*.”

We may here notice,

1. *The instrument*, by which this Epistle was written;—it was by the preaching or *ministry of the Gospel*, “The Epistle *ministered by us*.”

(1.) *The preacher* was St. Paul. He was sent by the Spirit of God to preach at Corinth; and at Corinth, he preached in a house hard by the Jewish synagogue, and not only the ruler of the synagogue believed on the Lord with all his house, but many of the Corinthians, having heard the preaching of St. Paul, believed, and were baptized. “Then the Lord spake to Paul by a vision in the night, I am with thee; and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I have much people in this city.” (Acts xviii. 1—11.) By the ministry of St. Paul, the Corinthians, who had been an Epistle of Satan, became an Epistle of Christ; “ye are an Epistle of Christ *ministered by us*.”

(2.) But, *what did Paul minister? what did he preach?* He preached the Gospel. “Christ,” writes Paul to the Corinthians, “Christ sent me to you, not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; and it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them

that believe ; for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness ; but to us who believe, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God." "We, therefore, preach the Gospel ;" "we preach the cross of Christ ;" "we preach Christ crucified." "Christ crucified" is the Hope of sinners, the consolation of saints, the triumph of apostles, the victory of martyrs, the study of angels, the glory of heaven, and the wonder of eternity ; no marvel, therefore, if St. Paul "determined to know nothing, to preach nothing, to glory in nothing, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified !" It was by the preaching of Christ crucified, that the Corinthians were made "an epistle of Christ."

(3.) God, in His manifold wisdom, can employ various means for the conversion of souls ; but it is *chiefly by the preaching of the Gospel that souls are converted to God.* The preaching of this gospel by St. Paul was wonderfully effective at Corinth. In this most flagitious city, multitudes of Corinthians were, by the ministry of St. Paul, converted to God ; and being converted to God, they became "Epistles of Christ, known and read of all men." If men are to be drawn to Christ crucified, Christ crucified must be elevated in their sight. If sinners are to be turned from Satan, from sin, and from the world, to God, to holiness, and to heaven, it must be by the preaching of Christ crucified ! This is the doctrine which God has promised to bless, and which He has hitherto blessed ; this is the doctrine which He now blesses, and which He will not

fail to bless, till all, whom His blood redeems, and His Spirit sanctifies, are saved and crowned in heaven.

We may further notice,

2. *The agent*, by whom this Epistle was written.

It was "written, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God."

By the writing of the Spirit, the Corinthians had become an Epistle of Christ. Their blackest sins had been washed away in the blood of Jesus, and their vilest conduct had been made holy by the Spirit of the Lord. "They were washed, they were justified, and they were sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The eternal Spirit, who, at creation, moved on the dark face of chaos, and formed it into a beautiful world, can alone move on the darker chaos of the soul, and form in it the image of Christ. The Spirit of God in the new birth or regeneration of men, pours divine light into their minds, and imparts spiritual life to their souls, and then they live in holiness unto God. For true Christians "are born again;" "they are born of God;" "they are born of the Spirit." They are taught and quickened,—they are sanctified and comforted by the Spirit of the Lord. They thus become "the Epistles of Christ, written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God." There are, indeed, epistles of Christ written not by the Spirit, but only with ink: there are professors of Christianity, whose profession is only a mortal writing, or a human work. For, we may pray to



God, and search the Scriptures,—we may attend the house of God, and kneel at the table of the Lord,—we may hear the Gospel gladly, and do many commendable things,—we may thus obtain a name that we live, and all the while be dead in the sight of the Lord. For, true Christianity is not a dead form, but a living power,—not a moral reformation, but a “spiritual regeneration,”—not a human work, but a divine creation; and true Christians are not self-righteous formalists, but “new creatures in Christ Jesus.” “They are the Epistles of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.”

For, we may finally notice,

3. *The tables* on which this epistle was written. It was “written not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart.”

Here is a manifest allusion to the moral law, which was written on tables of stone by the finger of God. In its origin and manifestation it was divine; in its nature and effects it is holy, just, and good. The characters in which it was written were distinct and beautiful; but the stone on which it was inscribed, was hard, and cold, and dead. But the Gospel of Christ, “the law of the Spirit of life,” is written, not “on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart,”—a heart, which the Holy Spirit creates anew, and to which He communicates warmth, and feeling, and life. For “the Spirit of the living God takes away the stony out of the



heart, and gives a heart of flesh; and then on the fleshly tables of this heart He writes the laws of God, and in it forms the image of Christ. When the laws of God are written in the heart, they will be loved and obeyed; and when the image of Christ is formed in our minds, the example of Christ will be copied in our lives; we shall then be "epistles of Christ known and read of all men."

"Epistles of Christ, written in fleshly tables of the heart." This language intimates the feeling and the fervor, and the life of Christians; it intimates their sincerity, their affection, and their tenderness; it intimates the sincerity of their profession, the constancy of their affection, and the tenderness of their consciences.

We may know the strictness and demands of the law of God, but we shall not love it and keep it until it is written by God in our hearts. We may know all the facts and doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, but we shall not be Christians, until Christ by the Spirit is formed in our hearts and copied in our lives. For neither gifts, though we had the gift of prophecy; nor miracles, though we could move mountains; nor wisdom, though we could understand mysteries; nor eloquence, though we could speak with the tongues of angels, will avail to our salvation, unless, through the writing of the Spirit of God on the fleshly tables of our hearts, we become "the epistles of Christ known and read of all men."

But, in conclusion :

1. *This subject teaches that Christianity is not a mere form, nor a name, nor a profession ; but a power, a reality, a life.*

The Christian is a new creature in Christ Jesus, and lives a new life to the advantage of man, and to the glory of God. It teaches that *Christianity is not produced by human power, but by divine agency.* The Christian is an epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with grace, not by the finger of man, but by the Spirit of God ; not on perishable tables of stone, but on the imperishable tablets of the soul. It teaches that *Christianity is visible goodness, legible holiness, practical and active godliness.* The Christian, having, like the Corinthians, been converted to God, having been washed, and justified, and sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the power of His Spirit ; the Christian is become an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. Christ has, by the Spirit, been formed in his heart, and he has, through the Spirit, put on Christ. He is made like to Christ. He breathes the temper of Christ. He speaks the words of Christ. He copies the example of Christ. With Christ he is crucified to sin and to the world ; with Christ he is risen to holiness and righteousness of life ; with Christ in heart and mind, he continually ascends to his Father and God in heaven. Thus, we repeat, is “ the Christian become an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men.”

2. *May we now solemnly inquire, whether you,*

*brethren, like the Corinthians, have been converted to God, and become the epistles of Christ?*

Has the Holy Spirit written the laws, and formed the image of Christ in your hearts? Have you been renewed by the Spirit of Christ? Have you put on Christ? Do you walk in Christ? Do you imitate Christ? Do you live to Christ? Are you thus become epistles of Christ, known and read of all men?

If God has written His laws in your minds, you will obey His laws in your conduct; if the Holy Spirit has formed the image of Christ in your hearts, you will follow the example of Christ in your lives. Ye will be the epistles of Christ. *But as Christians are the epistle of Christ, so sinners, the openly wicked, are the epistle of the devil.* Who cannot read the life of a wicked man? Who cannot read the sabbath-breaker, the swearer, the liar, the neglecter of divine worship, the open despiser of religion? Who cannot read such men; and who will deny that such men are epistles of Satan?

Let now, every one among you, make the inquiry in the silent chamber of his own breast: Has the Spirit of God written the image of Christ in my heart? Is it manifest to all around me, that Christ is in all my temper and conduct? Am I an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men?

3. *Conscious that the image of Christ is not formed in your heart, nor His example copied in*

*your life, do any of you secretly ask, "How can we become the epistles of Christ?"*

We answer—you can become the epistles of Christ only through the ministry of the Word, and by the influence of the Spirit of God. The word of God is ever nigh you; and the Spirit of God ever waits to be gracious to you; He ever waits for your prayers. Pray, then, for the Spirit of God to teach and to renew you; and while you read the Scriptures, and attend the preaching of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit will take the dark out of your mind, and the stony out of your heart; He will give you a mind of light and a heart of flesh; in this mind He will write the laws of God, in this heart He will form the image of the Redeemer, and make you the epistles of Christ.

Finally:

4. *Believers in the Lord Jesus.*

How divine as Christians is your *origin!* "Ye are the work of the Spirit of the living God." How exalted as Christians is your *character!* "Ye are the epistles of Christ;" the followers and the representatives of the Redeemer of the world. How important is your *duty!* It is your duty in all your temper, and conversation, and conduct, to show Christ for the glory of God and the instruction of mankind. How great will be your *reward!* The Spirit of God, who has written the image of Christ on the fleshly tables of your hearts, has also written your names in the Lamb's book of life. And the same Spirit who has made you, as epistles of Christ,

to be known and read of men on earth for a while, will bring you soon to the heaven of heavens, where you will, as the saints of God, be known and read by angels for ever and ever.

## SERMON XIX.

THE PRESENT CONDITION AND FUTURE  
REWARD OF CHRISTIANS.

2 COR. iv. 17.

*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

THE text is one of the most vigorous passages in the writings of St. Paul, and very far excels all the expressions of heathen poets and orators. It is so wonderfully emphatical, that it cannot be conceived by any mind, nor expressed by any language. It is in force and eloquence unrivalled, and inapproachable. It shows that all language falls so short of describing the bliss of heaven, that after employing hyperbole upon hyperbole, you will still be infinitely below an eternal weight of glory. This glory exceedingly exceeds the conception or expression of men and angels. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

From these words we may contemplate,



*The present condition, and the future reward of Christians.*

We are to contemplate,

## I. THE PRESENT CONDITION OF CHRISTIANS.

*It is a condition of affliction.* “Our light affliction is but for a moment.”

1. Christians, like other men, are liable to “suffer in body, mind, and estate;” for “man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards.” But apart from afflictions common to all men, *Christians have afflictions peculiar to themselves*; they have peculiar afflictions “in their conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil.” The flesh never ceases to grieve, nor the devil to tempt, nor the world to persecute them. They cannot pass as pilgrims through this earthly wilderness to the heavenly Canaan, without crossing the deep streams of affliction. The people of God in every age are an afflicted and a praying people; “I will leave,” saith the Lord, “in the midst of thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall call on the name of the Lord.” But, affliction is not sent to Christians without design, nor continued without measure; for, if it were not necessary, it would not be sent; if it were not profitable, it would not be continued; divine wisdom ordains it; divine love directs it; divine grace sanctifies it. “Whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; and chastiseth every son whom He receiveth.” Affliction is the medicine of the soul, the school of piety, the teacher of righteousness.

“ It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.” Affliction begets reflection and proves faith; it excites prayer and promotes holiness. “ Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.” Affliction causes Christians to distrust themselves, and to trust in God; it turns their affections from the world, and fixes their hearts on heaven. “ In their affliction,” saith the Lord, “ they will seek Me early.” “ For I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.” But, Lord, when will my heart be delivered from all earthly sorrows, and my soul find perfect rest with thee?

Thus Christians are afflicted; but,

2. *Their affliction is light*; “ our light affliction.”

(1.) *Our affliction is light compared with our desert.*

Were we bereft of every sympathy of friendship, of every sort of property, and of every morsel of bread; yet, as we have no claim to these mercies, we have not, when deprived of them, any reason to repine. Were our bodies racked with every kind of pain, and our minds troubled with every kind of distress; were our persecutors to cast us into prison, and our enemies to triumph in our misery; yet while life is spared, we have no ground to complain. For, “ why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?” As sinners we deserve not only temporal, but eternal punishment. “ For the soul that sinneth shall die.” “ The wages of sin is death.” Is not, therefore,

any temporal affliction light compared with our desert; compared with death eternal; compared with punishment in that place, "where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched?"

Again :

(2.) *Our affliction is light compared with the affliction of our Lord.*

The sins of the world oppressed Him; the powers of darkness assailed Him; the wrath of God terrified Him. He was greatly amazed, exceedingly sorrowful—sorrowful even unto death. "Being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as great drops of blood falling to the ground." Forsaken by every friend, and abandoned to every enemy, He was betrayed and bound,—mocked and reviled,—beaten and bruised,—crowned with thorns and torn with scourges: pierced, nailed to the cross, and crucified between two thieves, a spectacle to angels and to men. Oh! how trifling are our afflictions, compared with the afflictions of our Lord! Suffer whatever we may, we suffer justly, for we have sinned; but the Son of God suffered unjustly, for He sinned not; He suffered in our place and for our sins. Light is our cross, whatever our cross may be, compared with that cross, which for us our Redeemer bore. And, if we rightly remember His affliction for us, we shall almost forget our own.

Christians are afflicted, but

3. *Their affliction is short*: "Our affliction is but for a moment.

(1.) *Our affliction is short compared with the affliction of our Lord.*

He was emphatically a man of sorrows. His whole life was affliction ; it began in the manger and ended on the cross. But our cup is not all bitterness ; nor our life all sorrow ; nor our day all darkness. Some light brightens our darkest day ; some mercy mingles in our bitterest cup ; some gladness cheers our saddest hours. “ Our sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” But the cup of Christ was all bitterness ; His day all darkness ; His life all sorrow.

Again :

(2.) *Our affliction is short compared with eternal affliction.*

When placed against eternity, the whole of human life is less than a moment. What, then, are the longest afflictions of time to the ceaseless afflictions of eternity ? Were our life equal to the whole course of time, and were the whole course of time one continued stream of affliction, yet would this affliction be short, or only for a moment, compared with that affliction which our sins deserve ;—that affliction, which is intolerable, incessant, everlasting.

The state of Christians is a state of affliction ; but, whatever be their sufferings, they should in patience possess their souls. They should never say to God, “ Why dost Thou afflict me thus ?” but ever cry, “ It is the Lord ; let Him do what seemeth Him good !” My afflictions are nothing to the unutterable afflictions which Christ for me endured ; nor to the eter-

nal punishment, which my sins deserved. O Lord! keep my heart from discontent, and my tongue from complaining. Enable me in patience to possess my soul, and strengthen me in faith to wait on Thee, until that day shall dawn, when Thou wilt not only wipe away all my tears, but give me the fulness of joy. "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This is my arithmetic, so I reckon; this is my logic, so I reason; and I reckon and reason rightly; for the sufferings of a moment are not to be compared with the glory of eternity. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Affliction worketh glory for us;" rather affliction worketh us for glory, or maketh us meet for heaven. For the righteous believers in Christ, however afflicted here, will hereafter be not the mere spectators, but the actual possessors of glory. They will not merely see its excessive splendours, and hear of its surpassing riches, but will possess it with all its riches and splendours for ever and ever.

We proceed to contemplate,

## II. THE FUTURE REWARD OF CHRISTIANS.

Their reward is "a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

The great Apostle, in endeavouring to describe this reward, heaps words on words, as high as heaven, to express its nature and its fulness, but after all his



efforts, he finds it still to be an exceedingly exceeding glory! Hyperbolic language commonly expresses more than the truth; but he here employs language redundantly hyperbolic to teach us that even such language falls inconceivably short of the truth in describing the Christian's reward. The subject, indeed, was too vast for his comprehension, too lofty for his imagination, and having striven to the utmost of his powers to comprehend it, his mind is overwhelmed, and sinks, as well it might, beneath "an exceedingly exceeding, and eternal weight of glory." He speaks of the lightness of affliction, and of the weight of glory; and tells us that the lightness of affliction is but for a moment, while the weight of glory is for ever. He thus contrasts things present with things future; lightness with weight, affliction with glory, a moment with eternity. Nor is he satisfied with this stupendous contrast, but adds another word, and doubles it, and after all says, "It is a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

But, more particularly:

1. *The reward of Christians in heaven is glory; it is a weight of glory.*

But, what, you ask, is glory? "God is the Father of glory." Of glory God is the source and the substance, and from Him all glory proceeds. The glory of Mount Sinai was no glory compared with the glory of Mount Calvary:—the glory of the Law was no glory compared with the glory of the Gospel; and even the glory of the Gospel below is no glory



compared with the perfect glory of heaven. The voice, which gave glory to the incarnate Saviour on the mount, came from the more excellent glory—it came from a glory yet to be revealed—it came from the exceedingly exceeding glory! The name of God is His glory. His name is the collection of His attributes; His glory is the constellation of His perfections; His name and His glory is Himself; He is, we repeat, “The Father of glory;” He is “The I am; The Eternal.”

But, you ask again, what *is* glory? It is purity, excellency, goodness, greatness, honour, felicity unmingled, infinite, inconceivable, everlasting. It is heaven, and the third heaven, and the heaven of heavens. It is the open vision of the glorified Redeemer, the full fruition of the eternal God. “Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” “For the glory,” says Christ to the Father, “which thou gavest me, I have given to my people. And, when Christ, who is their Lord and their life, shall appear, then shall they appear with Christ in glory.”

Again:

2. *The measure of the reward given to Christians in heaven is not only sufficient, but superabundant.* It is “an exceedingly exceeding weight of glory.”

It is a brightness, which no mortal eye can bear, and a station to which no human understanding can reach; it is a bliss which no angelic tongue can express, and a dignity which no created mind can conceive. Angels may bask in glory, but angels cannot

describe it. After all attempts in earth or heaven to express it, it is still “exceedingly exceeding.” But though neither men nor angels can describe or conceive this glorious reward, it is not more than the humblest believers in Christ shall possess for ever. For they shall have glorified bodies to sustain, and glorified souls to enjoy, “an exceedingly exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

For, finally :

3. *The duration of this reward is its surpassing excellency ; it is eternal ; “an eternal weight of glory.”*

The crown of Christians or saints in heaven will be unfading ; their throne will be immovable ; their kingdom will be boundless ; their reign will be without interruption ; their joy will be without measure ; their triumph will be without end. God in Christ, and Christ in God, will be the object of their adoration, and the source of their felicity ; the fountain of their joy, and the crown of their glory through eternity. What, then, is our light and momentary affliction compared with the exceedingly exceeding and eternal weight of glory ? And what lively Christian does not rejoice in the thought of exchanging momentary toil for eternal repose—the sorrows of a day for the joys of eternity ? What lively Christian does not rejoice in the expectation of exchanging this corrupt, and sinful, and miserable life below, for a holy, and happy, and glorious life of eternal communion with God ?

To conclude :

1. *Without sorrow for sin, and without suffering for Christ, we cannot obtain eternal life.*

Our Lord Himself was a man of sorrows ; and we must be like our Lord. For He has told us in His word, that if we “ live godly in Christ Jesus, we must suffer persecution,”—“ and through much tribulation must enter the kingdom of God.” The path to the crown of glory passes close by the cross of suffering ; the way to the mount of God lies through the vale of affliction ; “ and our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” But under the affliction, whatever it be, “ we must look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen ; for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are unseen are eternal.”

2. *But, be it remembered, brethren, that whether ye be Christians or not, ye must suffer affliction ; for ye can neither escape the sorrows of life nor the pains of death. And unless ye become scriptural Christians, or new creatures in Christ Jesus, in sorrow ye will have no comfort, in death ye will have no hope. Forsake, then, your sins, and turn in penitence and prayer to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But, turn instantly,—turn now ; “ for now is the accepted time ; now is the day of salvation.” O live no longer in the practice of sin, and in the pleasures of the world ; for, if ye live in sinful pleasures, and die impenitent sinners, your sinful pleasures, which are but for a moment, will work for you an exceedingly exceeding, and eternal weight of woe.*

3. *Are any of you convinced of sin, and afflicted in soul before God?* Be not cast down. Conviction of sin leads to conversion to God; the sorrow of repentance to the joy of pardon; the humbling of the soul to the glory of eternity. Be, then, comforted! For Jesus “gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the tears of mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” He was afflicted, that you might be comforted; He suffered a shameful death, that you, through Him, might gain eternal life. His blood is an all-sufficient atonement for sin; His Spirit is the all-sufficient Comforter of souls; His grace is the all-sufficient preparation for heaven. Believe, then, in the Lord Jesus; then will His blood wash away your sins, His Spirit will comfort your hearts, His grace will prepare your souls for glory.

Finally :

4. *Afflicted Christians! Remember the afflictions of Christ for you, and you will not repine at your own.* Through sufferings He was made a perfect Saviour, and ascended in glory to His throne; and if you suffer with Him on earth, you shall be made perfect in holiness, and reign with Him for ever in heaven. Be, then, comforted,—be encouraged, ye afflicted Christians! Your light affliction will not weigh you down; your momentary sorrow must soon be past; and then you shall share in the joy, and shine in the glory of your Lord. For “your light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for you an exceedingly exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.”

## SERMON XX.

THE FOUNDATION AND THE BUILDING OF THE  
CHURCH.

EPHES. ii. 20, 21.

*And are 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 unto an holy temple in the Lord.*

IN this chapter St. Paul describes the great change which fallen man undergoes, when he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Ye were," says he to the Ephesians, "dead in trespasses and sins; and were by nature children of wrath, even as others: ye walked according to the course of this world; ye lived according to the prince of the power of the air; and ye fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Ye were afar off from God, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise; ye had no hope of heaven; "and were atheists in the world."

But, God of His great love hath quickened you

together with Christ, and having raised you up together with Him made you sit with Him in heavenly places. By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. For, ye are made nigh to God by the blood of Christ; and through Him ye have access by One Spirit to the Father! Ye are His workmanship in Christ Jesus unto all good works. "And now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God, and are 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 unto an holy temple in the Lord."

The whole body of Christians are here spoken of as a "Holy Temple;" and of this temple we shall now notice, first, *The Foundation*; and secondly, *The Building*.

We are to notice,

## I. THE FOUNDATION.

### 1. *What is the nature of this Foundation?*

We must not understand either *the persons*, or *the doctrines* of apostles and prophets to be the foundation; though prophets and apostles with wonderful harmony, preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. For, believers are built neither on the apostles and prophets, as agents in laying the true foundation; nor on the doctrines, which, as preachers of Christ, they proclaimed; but on Christ Himself. Christ is the foundation, on which, not only



apostles and prophets, but the whole Church of God is built. The doctrines of all apostles and prophets, the hopes and souls of all believers in all ages, are built on Christ, as the only foundation. Other foundation is not laid; "and other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. iii. 9—11.)

"Behold," cries the prophet, "I lay in Zion for a sure foundation a precious stone, a tried stone, a chief corner-stone." (Isa. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6.) A building is most liable to injury at its corners; and its stability consists mainly in the strength of its corner-stone. It is the stone in the building which binds the lowest corners of its foundation, and the highest corners of its towers together. "The corner-stone," therefore, is pre-eminent not only for its strength, but its station. "Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone." He is the lowest, and the highest corner-stone; the most solid and beautiful stone of the whole building. He is the Foundation, the Union, the Ornament of "the Temple of the Lord." He is "the Rock," on which the Church of God is built; He is the strength, by which it is supported; the head in which it is united; the beauty with which it is adorned. He is "the strong, and chief, and precious corner-stone!"

But, further:

2. *What is the excellency of this foundation?*

(1.) This foundation is a *suitable foundation*. Jesus is "a Rock," "the Rock of ages;" "the Rock of salvation." Solid, immovable, omnipotently

strong. He is as truly man, as He is truly God. He is God and man united in one person, that He might be a suitable foundation for perishing sinners. As man He is accessible to man, and invites sinful men to Himself; as God, He is our Advocate with the Father, and can save to the uttermost. As man He suffered for sin in the flesh; as God His sufferings avail to our salvation. He assumed our nature on earth, that we might partake a divine nature in heaven. He became a "Living Stone," having life in Himself, and communicating life to believers, that we might derive life from His Spirit, and be built as "lively stones on Him." The "lively stones," and the "Living Foundation" are suitable to each other: they unite; they assimilate; they "grow into a holy temple in the Lord." Jesus is a suitable foundation for all mankind. He unites Jews and Gentiles into one spiritual house; He builds all believers into one sacred structure; He establishes, enriches, adorns the whole church of God. All believers, of all ages and of all climes, are built on Christ as the only foundation; and are united in Him, as the chief corner-stone. They are all One in Him; and they glory in Him alone.

Again:

(2.) This foundation is a *sufficient foundation*.

Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom and love, appointed Jesus Christ to be the foundation of His Church. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone—a tried stone!" "Behold, I lay,"—who can displace? I have tried,

and approved,—who can disallow, or disprove? I have fixed the foundation,—who can hesitate to build? Jesus is almighty to uphold the church amid all the convulsions of the world—omnipotent to defend her against “the gates of hell.” Let mountains shake, and waters roar, and tempests blow; let “kings conspire,” and “peoples rage,” and “devils storm” against “The Church,” yet built on Christ, she is perfectly safe. “God is in the midst of her, and she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early!”

Jesus, as man, is a suitable foundation; as God He is a strong foundation; as God and man He is an all-sufficient foundation. He is a “tried stone, elect, precious!” He is tried and approved by the Father; He is tried and approved by the saints. The Father from all eternity tried and proved Him, and chose Him for the foundation of His Church; the saints in all ages have tried and proved Him, and chosen Him for their Saviour! Jesus is “the head corner-stone;” He is the “Prince of life,—the Lord of angels,—the King of glory,—the Head over all things to His Church?” He is “a precious stone;” precious to Almighty God, and precious to perishing man; of inconceivable dignity and beauty in the sight of wondering angels,—of unutterable value and desirableness in the eyes of penitent sinners. “To them that believe He is preciousness itself,”—full of unsearchable riches, loveliness, and grace.

“Tried, and chosen, and precious,” Christ cruci-

fied is a foundation sufficient for our salvation. His blood is sufficient for our pardon; His righteousness is sufficient for our justification; His Spirit is sufficient for our sanctification; His merits are sufficient for our title to heaven. More blessings than these we cannot want in time or in eternity; all these blessings are in Christ crucified; and built on Him, all these blessings are ours. "In Him we are complete."

Finally :

(3.) This foundation is an *everlasting foundation*.

When God from all eternity designed to erect out of the ruins of humanity a temple for Himself, He well knew what the structure would cost, and what a foundation it would require. He therefore, according to His eternal counsels, gave up His beloved Son, "who is the Lord Jehovah, and has everlasting strength," to be the everlasting foundation of His Church. Christ, therefore, is the foundation, which stands sure, and stands fast, for ever. He will never fail the souls, nor disappoint the hopes, which are built on Him. "The rock of ages" will never decay: "The stone fixed in Zion" will never be moved; "the foundation laid in the counsels of the Holy Trinity," and cemented by "the blood of the everlasting covenant," is strong as the pillars of heaven, and lasting as eternity.

Such, then, is the FOUNDATION of the Church.

We proceed to notice,

## II. THE BUILDING.

“Ye are built on the foundation, Jesus Christ; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.”

We may here notice,

1. *The union of the Building with the Foundation.*

Christ Jesus is the foundation, believers in Him are the stones of the building. “The whole building is in Christ.” On Him, as on its sole foundation, the whole structure rests. “On this Rock the Church is built.”

The stones of this building are singly hewn out of the quarry of human corruption; they are individually brought to Christ, that “they may have life;” and then, having received life from Him, “they are built on Him as living stones.” For, believers are by faith united to Christ, the ever-living foundation; and He through this union imparts spiritual life to their souls, and they become “living stones” with Him in this spiritual building. Convinced of their sinfulness by the Spirit, they repent before God; and drawn from sin, from the world, and from themselves, by the Father, they come to Christ for salvation. They build on Him as the only foundation; they trust in Him alone as the only Saviour. The same hand, however, which laid the foundation, must build every stone upon it. The same God, who, “of His great love,” appointed the only Saviour, must, “of His good pleasure,” enable every penitent sinner to believe. To build on Christ as the only foundation, is to believe in

Him as the only Saviour ; and we can believe only “ through the grace ” of His Spirit. A clearer knowledge of Christ crucified ; a purer apprehension of His suitableness and excellency ; a holier experience of His love and mercy, attend this act of living faith ; and then follows a hallowed and delightful recumbency of the whole soul on Him for life and salvation.

There must be a deep and spiritual conviction of our corrupt, and guilty, and perishing state ; there must, also, be a clear, and spiritual, and divine discovery of the all-sufficiency of Christ to save, before sinful men will build on Him as the only foundation for eternal life. Helpless and hopeless in themselves,—ready, and, in their own sight, deserving to perish, they build on Christ, and through faith in His blood they *are pardoned*. Worthless, depraved, and “ desperately wicked,”—all odious in their own eyes and all-polluted in the sight of heaven, they build on Christ ; and through faith in His righteousness they *are justified*. Corrupt in body, and defiled in mind,—in themselves prone to every evil, and of themselves incapable of every good, they build on Christ, and through the influence of His Spirit they *are sanctified*. Though their lives abound in all good works, and their light shines before men ; yet, deeming themselves unprofitable servants, and feeling themselves miserable sinners, they build on Christ, and through faith in his merits they hope to *be glorified*. God, then, has laid a “ strong ” foundation for the weak and weary ;—a “ precious ” foun-



dation for the worthless and vile ;—a “ sure ” foundation for the doubtful and distressed ;—why should not I, who am weak and weary, worthless and vile, doubtful and distressed ;—why should not I rest my troubled soul on Christ ? God has laid an all-sufficient foundation for the greatest sinners ;—an everlasting foundation for those who deserve everlastingly to perish ;—why, then, should not I, though I am the chief of sinners, and deserve to perish for ever ;—why should not I rest my perishing soul on Christ ?

But we proceed to notice,

2. *The order and harmony of the whole building.*

“ In Christ Jesus all the building is fitly framed together.” When a whole building entirely rests on its foundation ; when all its stones exactly suit and strengthen each other ; when all its parts aptly unite and harmonize ;—then is “ the Building fitly framed together.” For Jesus Christ is not only “ the chief foundation-stone,” which supports the whole church, but “ the chief corner-stone,” which unites all the stones of the Building in one glorious temple. For He so “ fitly ” shapes and places the stones in this Building, that they not only bind and strengthen and adorn each other, but divinely unite to consolidate and beautify the whole. This spiritual Building raised on Christ, the true foundation, consists altogether of “ living stones ;” they are all selected by sovereign grace ; they are all shaped by divine power ; they are all with unerring wisdom fitly framed together in the temple of the Lord. For Christian believers are all separately chosen, as stones from the

quarry ; they are all, as stones, individually hewn into shape ; they are all, as stones, singly fitted into their proper place in the Church of God. The lower stones in this Building do not aspire to higher stations of activity and honour ; the higher stones do not shrink from greater labour and danger into lower stations of privacy and quietness ; but all, in their respective stations, conspire together for the increase and glory of the whole Church. A divine Hand builds all believers on the true foundation ; divine love unites them in Christian affection to each other ; and divine grace, by virtue of union with Christ, makes them “ grow into an holy temple in the Lord.”

“ The tabernacle of Israel,” described in the Old Testament, is a figure of the Church of Christ described in the New. This tabernacle, by divine command, was “ fitly framed together.” “ See,” says God to Moses, “ see that thou make it according to the pattern shewn to thee in the mount.” On the mount Moses had a vision of God in His temple. “ He saw the God of Israel ; and there was under His feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire-stone, and as it were, the body of heaven in His clearness.” (Exod. xxiv. 9, 10.) A resemblance of heaven was in this vision of the Divine-Glory ; the pavement on which the Almighty trod was of sapphire stones, shaped and polished and fitly framed together, and of bright celestial hue. In this vision there is much obscurity ; but enough is displayed to teach us that the Church of Christ combines order and harmony ;

and that it unites knowledge and purity; and that, while the Divine presence pervades every part, the Divine glory presides over the whole.

The religion of Christ alone, as the ministration of the Spirit, and as the source of holiness, can fitly frame the hearts, or rightly order the conduct of mankind. Nothing but His religion can bring order and holiness and peace into the soul, into families, into congregations, into kingdoms, into all the world. When does a soul become a holy temple in the Lord? When it is built on Christ, and all its powers and passions, as one building, are fitly framed in Him. When does a family become a holy temple in the Lord? When it is built on Christ, and all its inmates, as one building, are fitly framed in Him. When does a worshipping congregation become a holy temple in the Lord? When it is built on Christ, and all its worshippers, as one building, are fitly framed in Him. When does a kingdom become a holy temple in the Lord? When it is built on Christ, and all its subjects, with their king, as one building, are fitly framed in Him. And, when will all the world become a holy temple in the Lord? When all its kingdoms are built on Christ; and all mankind, as one building, are fitly framed in Him. Lord God of mercy! Build every soul before Thee on Christ Jesus as the only foundation for eternal life. Build all souls, all families, all congregations, all kingdoms, on Christ, that all mankind in all the world, as one building fitly framed together in Him, may grow unto an holy temple in the Lord.

But this leads us to notice, lastly,

3. *The increase of the whole building unto a holy temple.*

“All the building groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” All the building grows, and grows unto a holy temple; and that temple is in the Lord. This bold and expressive language implies life and increase and holiness and glory.

From union with Christ, “the ever-living cornerstone,” believers derive life to their souls, and become themselves *living stones* in the building of God. And having become living stones, they become also growing stones; and they grow from living stones unto living pillars; and from living pillars unto living temples, or “habitations of God through the Spirit.”

“All the building grows:”—believers in Christ are often compared to something which *grows or increases*. They are compared to “trees,” which grow by the water side;—to “the morning light,” which grows to the perfect day;—to “babes new born,” which grow to perfect men;—and, by the boldest figure of all in our text, to “living stones” which grow into a perfect temple. It is the *presence of God* which makes a *temple*. Heaven is a temple, because the presence of God brightens it. The building of Solomon was a temple, because the presence of God filled it. The body of Christ was a temple, because in Him the Godhead resided. Believers in Christ are temples, because they are habitations of God through the Spirit. The Spirit prepares their

hearts to be habitations for God ; and then God inhabits their hearts by His Spirit. The Church of Christ is a temple, because in it God fixes His throne, and fills it with His glory. " He holds in His hand the seven bright stars, and walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." " All the building grows unto a temple." It grows ; it is now growing ; it will grow to the end ; it will grow to perfection. To establish, to enlarge, and to perfect this building, the Divine Builder is continually laying living stones on the ever-living foundation ; He is daily adding to the Church such as shall be saved. O that He would this day lay some living stones on the true foundation ! O that He would this day add to the Church some that would be saved for ever !

But,

" All the building grows unto a *holy* temple." Holiness is the riches and beauty of the house of the Lord ; " Holiness becomes His house for ever." Unrivalled were the earthly riches and beauty of the temple of the Jews ; but holiness and heavenly-mindedness are the better riches and brighter beauty of the Church of Christ.

But, further :

" The building grows unto a holy temple *in the Lord.*" All increase in the Church in number, in holiness, in heavenly-mindedness ; is through the Lord Jesus Christ. *On Him* all believers are built ; *from Him* they derive life, and become living stones ; *in Him* they grow, as living stones, unto a holy



temple. He is their Foundation, their life, their support, their crown, their all. For,

Jesus, in fine, is the Mystic “Stone cut out without hands,” which will grow; and His temple, built on Him, will grow with Him until His grace shall rule, and His glory fill the world. Then the Church of God, the building fitly framed together,—the holy temple of the ever-living Lord,—will be translated from earth to heaven; and this vain world will pass away. For this world, as holy Leighton tells, is but the scaffolding for the erection of the Church of God. When, therefore, this building is completed, the scaffolding will be taken down, and the Church will be displayed in all the beauty and brightness of Her Lord. Palaces and temples will fall to dust; rocks and mountains will be dissolved; the earth and skies will melt away; but the Church of God, built on His Son Jesus Christ, strong in His might, and beautiful in His loveliness,—rejoicing in His presence, and resplendent in His glory,—will stand for ever, and for ever thunder with his praise. Alleluia! Salvation to Him who sits on the throne! Salvation to God and the Lamb!

And now, my brethren, may we, in conclusion, ask—

1. “*Are you built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone?*”

Are you as “living stones” laid on Him, as the foundation, and built up as “lively stones” in His



spiritual house? Are you growing from “living stones unto holy temples in the Lord?” Are you “habitations of God through the Spirit?” Does “the Spirit of God dwell in you?” “Do you live and walk in the Spirit?” Having felt your sinful and perishing state by nature, have you built on the atonement of Christ as the only foundation for eternal life? Are you living by faith, delighting in devotion, abounding in good works? Do you rely on the grace of Christ for support through life, for comfort at death, and for salvation in heaven? Here would we pause, and give you time to ask yourselves in the sight of God—“Am I built on Christ the sure foundation? Am I a living stone in His spiritual house? Am I growing unto an holy temple in the Lord?”

2. *Mere professors of Christianity, or merely nominal Christians, are not laid as “living stones” on the everliving foundation; but lie, as holy Leighton says, “as loose stones around the building.”*

And you, who live in sin, and love the world, are neither relying on His atonement, nor living by faith in His name. Your conduct shows that Christ has been to you, not a “precious foundation,” but a “stumbling stone;”—not a “rock of salvation,” but a “rock of offence.” You may despise Him now as “a man of sorrows;” or you may deny Him now as “the king of glory;” but, remember that “The Stone, which the builders disallowed, is made the Head of the corner!” And “whoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but

on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder !”\*

Whether ye build on Christ or not, as the only foundation for eternal life, ye must sicken ; ye must die ; ye must be judged. And if ye do not build on Christ as the only foundation ; or if ye do not believe in Him as the only Saviour, who will support you in sickness, or comfort you at death, or redeem you in judgment ?

O how wretched, how pitiable, but how common is this case ;—to be in sickness, and have no supporter ;—to die, and have no comforter ;—to be judged, and have no redeemer ! O my brethren, come to Christ, as to “ The Living Stone ;” build on Christ, as on “ The Sure Foundation ;” believe in Christ, as in “ The Only Saviour.” Then He will support you in the time of sorrow, comfort you in the hour of death, and redeem you in the day of judgment.

3. But, are any among you, who mourn for sin, despair of salvation, and refuse to be comforted ? *Consider, ye penitents, consider what a comforter God has sent,—what a foundation He has laid,—what a Saviour He has provided,—in Christ crucified.*

“ O thou afflicted ” with guilt, “ and tossed ” with temptation, “ and not yet comforted ;—behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours ; I will lay thy

\* If Christ were not “ The Foundation Stone,” we could not fall on Him ; were He not the “ Head Corner Stone,” He could not fall on us. He is “ Lapis imus et summus angularis.”

foundation with sapphires !” (Isa. liv. 11.) Millions of penitents have tried Christ crucified, and found Him “a precious foundation,” divinely suited to their state. Millions have relied on Christ crucified, and found Him a “strong foundation,” almighty, and all-willing to save !

Come, then, as perishing sinners, to Christ crucified, and He will accept you ; build on Him, and He will support you ; live in Him, and He will bless you. “He will bring you out of the horrible pit, and out of the mire and clay ; He will set your feet on a rock, and establish your goings.” He will enable you to believe ; He will give you peace in believing ; He will put His Spirit within you ; He will make you “grow unto holy temples in the Lord.”

4. *But, Christian believers, where there is building on Christ there is union with Christ ; and where there is union with Christ there is spiritual life ; and where there is spiritual life there is growth in grace.*

“Examine yourselves, therefore, whether ye be in the faith. Prove your own selves.” Examine whether ye are built on Christ ; prove whether ye are “growing unto holy temples in the Lord.” Examine whether there be anything between the foundation and the building, whether the union between Christ and your souls be close and complete : for, unless the union be complete, the blessings of the union cannot be expected. This close and complete union with Christ will not only afford you at all times hope and joy, but, in times of trial, support and consola-

tion. Like other men, ye are liable to poverty and reproach, to pain and sorrow, to sickness and death ; and, like other men, ye must, in the last day, stand in judgment before the Lord. But, in reproach and poverty, Christ will be “ a precious foundation,” ennobling and enriching your souls. In pain and sorrow, Christ will be “ a sure foundation,” affording patience and peace. In sickness and death, Christ will be “ a strong foundation,” supporting your failing heart, and cheering your fainting soul. And, in the last day, when ye appear before the Judge of all, then, having built on Christ, “ the Everlasting Foundation,” ye will not only be undismayed amid the terrors of final judgment, and unhurt amid the ruins of a dissolving world ; but, ye will be welcomed to the House of God on high,—“ the House not made with hands eternal in the heavens.”

But, finally,

Ye Christian believers, never for one moment forget, that it was not through any agency, or wisdom, or goodness of your own, but entirely through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, that ye were taken out of the quarry of human corruption, and built as living stones in the House of the Lord ! Look back, then, to the rock, whence ye were hewn ; and to the hole of the pit, whence ye were digged, and be ever thankful to that sovereign grace, which renewed you in the image of Christ, and fitted you for the kingdom of heaven. Look upwards, also, and ever pray that God would carry on and complete his work in your souls till the

day of the Lord. And, lastly, look forward to the end of your faith, and, for your encouragement, ever view your destined stations in the Temple of heaven, where ye will be habitations of God through the Spirit to all eternity !

## SERMON XXI.

(MISSIONARY.)

A PREACHER, A SERMON, AND A CONGREGATION.

EPHES. iii. 8.

*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

THE children of Israel were the peculiar people of God. As his peculiar people, they enjoyed peculiar privileges. They were peculiarly adopted into the family of Jehovah, who in a peculiar manner became THEIR FATHER AND THEIR KING. With them His holy covenants were established, and to them His lively oracles were committed. In their sight His perfect law was given ; and in their hearing His gracious promises were repeated. For their use his divine service was appointed ; and in their temple the divine glory was displayed. From them descended in successive ages the great Fathers of the Church, and the great Lights of the world. And above all, from them, in the fulness of time, ac-



ording to the promise, Christ came, who, though He came in our flesh, is God over all, blessed for ever.

But the Israelites were not to be for ever the peculiar people of God. The Gentiles were to be equal partakers with them of the blessings of the Gospel. The same Messiah, who was the Glory of Israel, was also to be the Light of the Gentiles. The same Christ, who was born a Saviour in Bethlehem of Judea, was to be for salvation to the ends of the earth. But, though the call of the Gentiles was foretold, it was a mystery hid for ages from the Israelites; and only after the ascension of Christ, was it fully revealed by the Spirit to the apostles. Then it was clearly revealed "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel;" "of which Gospel," says St. Paul, "I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of His power. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*"

In these words of singular emphasis and surpassing energy, we have a *Preacher*, a *Sermon*, and a *Congregation*: For a *Preacher*, we have an APOSTLE, commissioned, and qualified from heaven; for a *Sermon*, we have THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST; for a *Congregation*, we have THE WHOLE GENTILE WORLD!

The subjects of the following discourse are,

- I. THE HEAVENLINESS OF THE PREACHER ;
- II. THE SUBLIMITY OF THE SERMON ; and,
- III. THE VASTNESS OF THE CONGREGATION.

Let us admire,

I. THE HEAVENLINESS OF THE PREACHER.

The Preacher is St. Paul ; and St. Paul was *commissioned* and *qualified* to preach from heaven. The word “grace,” which, in the text, describes his commission, intimates both the sovereign mercy, in which it originates, and the holy qualification which it conveys. “Unto *me* is this *grace given!*”

1. His *commission* was from heaven. He derived his authority to preach the Gospel, not from man, but from the Lord Jesus Christ. As he was on his way to Damascus, thirsting for the blood of the saints, suddenly there shone a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun ; and out of this overwhelming brightness, “I heard,” says he, “a voice, calling me by name,—Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest ;—and I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister of the Gospel, and to send thee to preach to the Gentiles.” St. Paul, then, received grace and apostleship from heaven to preach the Gospel. “For,” says he, “I am an apostle, not of man, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ.” “For the glorious Gospel of the blessed

God is committed to my trust, and by His commandment I preach the Gospel." (Rom. i. 5 ; Gal. i. 1 ; Titus i. 3 ; 1 Tim. i. 1—11 ; Acts ix. 2 ; xxii. 6 ; xxvi. 12.)

Again :

2. His *qualification* was from heaven. "The Gospel, which I preach," he writes, "is not after man, for I neither received it nor learnt it of man ; but by the revelation of Jesus Christ ;—who out of His abundant grace, counted me faithful, and put me into the ministry." "And grace is given to me that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God ; and, according to the grace given unto me, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 10 ; Gal. i. 11, 12 ; 1 Tim. i. 12, 13 ; Rom. xii. 3, 5 ; Rom. xv. 15, 16.) Both the commission and the qualification of St. Paul were freely bestowed. Without respect of merit, or desert, or goodness, they were bestowed on "an evil doer, a persecutor, and a blasphemer ;" "but," says he, "I obtained mercy ;" and "I was allowed to be put in trust with the Gospel. To me is this grace given." (Gal. i. 11, 12 ; 1 Thess. ii. 4.)

But, as *proofs* of his qualification, we notice his *holiness* and his *humility*.

(1.) We notice his *holiness*.

The "saints" are "holy ones ;" they have been sanctified or made holy by the Holy Spirit. "But," writes the apostle to the Corinthians, "ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord

Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." "The saints," as St. Peter writes, "are chosen to salvation, through sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and sanctification of the Spirit." (1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 13.) St. Paul was himself justified by faith in the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the grace of the Spirit of God. Though he deemed himself of all saints the least, yet he placed himself among the saints. But more especially was He "separated" from the world, "set apart" to God, sanctified for the work of the ministry by the Holy Spirit. When he was converted to God, and commissioned to preach the Gospel, Jesus Christ sent Ananias to him, "that he might receive the Holy Ghost." For it is the Holy Ghost alone who can make men overseers of the flock of Christ, and qualify them to feed the church of God. "It pleased God," says he, "who called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, and to give me the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ." "Immediately," therefore, "I conferred not with flesh and blood; but what things were given to me I counted them loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord." "Nor do I count even life itself dear to me, so that I may finish my course with joy; and fulfil the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." (Acts xx. 24.) "For the love of Christ constraineth me; (2 Cor. v. 14.) "And I am determined to know nothing and to preach nothing" among the Gentiles, "save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Further :

2. We notice his *humility*.

St. Paul shared equally with the other apostles the dignity of the apostleship ; and, in one respect, he was peculiarly distinguished, as the chosen apostle of the Gentiles ; but, in noticing this distinction, he prevents the charge of boasting, and avoids the odiousness of comparison, by confessing himself to be, not only less than the least of the apostles, but “ less than the least of all saints.” From the inmost convictions of his soul, he confesses his nothingness in his own sight, and his vileness in the sight of God ; but still he shows that his vileness and nothingness did not hinder the mighty grace of God from making him the apostle of the Gentiles. Hence, while he could not speak *too highly* of his *office*, he could not speak *too humbly* of *himself*. “ In nothing,” says he, “ am I,” with respect to office, “ behind the *chiefest* apostles ; though” in person “ I am *nothing*.” (2 Cor. xii. 11.) In the same humble spirit, in which he speaks of his *person*, he speaks of his *labours*. “ I have laboured more abundantly than all the apostles ; yet not *I*, but the *grace* of God, which was with me.” (1 Cor. xv. 10 ; 2 Cor. xi. 23—28.) We must not, therefore, regard what, in time past, *he had done* ; for God, that His *sovereignty* might be seen, bestowed the apostleship entirely of grace ; nor must we regard what in time past *he had been*, for God, that the *glory* might be all His own, chose to work by the most unlikely instrument.



The deep knowledge which the apostle had of himself, of his defects, and of his infirmities; his acquaintance with the spirituality and extent of the divine law; his conviction of the unutterable corruption of his nature; and of the exceeding sinfulness of his sin; his aggravated sins before he was converted; and the miraculous manner in which his conversion was effected; his divine commission, and his heavenly qualification to preach the Gospel; his unequalled success in turning sinners to God, and his unrivalled power to labour in the service, and to suffer for the sake of his Saviour;—all these things filled his soul with the most profound humility. “Unto *me*, who am *less than the least* of all saints, is *this* grace given.”

Less than the least of all saints. “Less than the least.” An unusual word is here used, a word made on purpose, a word of unutterable force and emphasis—“Less than the least!” How *little* he makes, and how *low* he lays, himself; *less* he could not be made; *lower* he could not lie! He was a worthless creature; “a nothing.” He was “an evil doer,” an inveterate enemy of Christianity;—a furious persecutor of Christians, a bold blasphemer of the Son of God;—he was the greatest, the chiefest, the worst of sinners. (Phil. ii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 9; 1 Tim. i. 3, 5, 15.) Yet, unto me, who am less than the least of all saints; the greatest and the chiefest of sinners;—“unto me is this grace given, that I, before all, and above all the apostles, should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”



“ I am,” says our apostle, “ less than the least of all saints.” “ In proportion to my *obligations to Jesus Christ*, my Saviour, I have, of all saints, made the *least return*;—in proportion to *the love* with which He has loved me, I have, of all believers, *loved Him the least*;—in proportion to *the gifts* which He has bestowed upon me, I have, of all the apostles, *laboured the least in His service*. For what love, what zeal, what restless activity, what burning devotion, what a life of labour, and what a death of suffering, DO I OWE TO HIM, WHO HAS BESTOWED SUCH GRACE ON ME ?” Oppressed with a conviction of his own unworthiness, and overwhelmed with a feeling of Christ’s love to his soul, he exclaims in language beyond measure energetic and sublime, “ Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Such is the HEAVENLINESS of the preacher. We proceed now to contemplate,

## II. THE SUBLIMITY OF THE SERMON.

“ The unsearchable riches of Christ.” What beauty in the language ; what grandeur in the sentiment ; what sublimity in the sermon ! I preach CHRIST ! I preach THE RICHES OF CHRIST !! I preach the UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST !!!

### 1. *I preach* CHRIST.

Christ is the promised Seed, who should bruise the serpent’s head ; and in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. Christ is the great

and glorious Shiloh, who should be sent to reconcile God and man ; to whom, in earth and heaven, the gathering and the ruling of the peoples should be. Christ is the everlasting Redeemer, whose goings forth have been from everlasting ; who, in the latter day, should go down from heaven, and in mortal guise should stand on the earth. Christ is the only “*holy child to be born ; the only beloved son to be given ; the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*” Christ is the holy virgin’s son,—the Son and the Lord of David. He is Immanuel ; He is Jesus ; He is God incarnate ; God and man united ; God our Saviour. He is the Christ, the Messiah, the great Anointed,—the Prophet, the Priest, and the King, of His church. He is “*the Christ, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*” In teaching us, in pardoning us, in justifying us, in sanctifying us, in redeeming us, in purchasing heaven for our souls, Christ is divine, Christ is omnipotent, Christ is gracious, Christ is all in all. We preach Christ ; we preach the gospel of Christ ; we preach Christ crucified !

Again :

2. *I preach* THE RICHES OF CHRIST.

The riches of time consist in an abundance of earthly things, useful for the wants of the body, and precious to the men of the world ; but the riches of Christ consist in an abundance of spiritual things, needful to the wants of the soul, precious in the sight of God, enduring through the round of eternity.

What, then, are the riches of Christ? His incomprehensible love; His eternal mercy; His boundless grace; His infallible truth; His unfailing promises; His perfect holiness; His immense condescension; His mysterious incarnation; His low estate; His marvellous temptation; His wonderful labours; His perfect obedience; His incessant prayers; His abundant tears; His inconceivable sorrows; His tremendous agony; His vicarious sufferings; His precious blood; His dying complaint; His voluntary death; His prophetic burial; His glorious resurrection; His triumphant ascension; His prevailing intercession; His complete atonement; His infinite merits; His divine and eternal glory;—these are “the *true riches*”; these are “the *riches of Christ!*” “We have redemption through His blood according to the riches of His grace.” We can know His love in dying for our sins, only by “being strengthened by the Spirit of God according to the riches of His glory.” “The riches of divine grace; the riches of divine mercy; the riches of divine goodness; the riches of divine glory; the eternal riches of the eternal God, are all employed in the redemption of sinners by the blood of Jesus!” (Eph. iii. 16.)

But more particularly, let us consider,

(1.) The riches of *His wisdom*.

“O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” But the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God are all in Christ Jesus; for with Him are hid all the

treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead!" Christ is the wisdom of God; Christ is the only wise God; Christ of God is made unto us wisdom." He is the great Teacher of the Church; for on Him rested the Spirit of Jehovah, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, the Spirit of counsel and understanding. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me," says He, "that I may preach good tidings to the meek." Christ is the only instructor of the soul; and if we have an unction from Him, "we shall know all things." For He employs all the stores of His wisdom in teaching His people; and all, who are taught of Him, are "taught of God!"

Consider again,

(2.) The riches of *His blood*.

"We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 19.) How deeply did His blood crimson His body in Gethsemane, and how fast did it drop to the ground! How did it run from His wounded temples! How did it flow from His scourged loins! How did it stream from His pierced hands and feet! How did it gush from His riven side and broken heart! God in Christ laid down His life for us; the blood of Christ is, therefore, the blood of God. Who can tell the riches, or the virtues of His blood? It is the blood of "the everlasting covenant;"—"the blood of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world." It is "the blood of atonement;" "the blood shed for the remission



of sins," even the sins of the whole world. It is the blood which brings nigh those who were afar off; the blood which makes peace, and reconciles God and man. It is the blood which washes away the stains of guilt, which cleanses from all sin; which "purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." (Matt. xxvi. 28; 1 Cor. xi. 25; Eph. i. 7; ii. 13; Col. i. 14, 20; Heb. ix. 14; x. 29; xiii. 20; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5.)

Consider next,

(3.) The riches of *His righteousness*.

In person He is the Holy One and the Just; Jesus Christ the righteous. He had no corruption in His nature; no guile in His lips; no sin in His life. By His perfect obedience He magnified the divine law, and fulfilled all righteousness. By His death on the cross, He made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness "for sinners." His righteousness is the righteousness of God:—"He is the Lord our righteousness;" "of God He is made unto us righteousness." "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "If ye, therefore," as the Apostle writes, "put on the Lord Jesus;" or if you believe in Christ crucified; you will be clothed with His righteousness; you will not only be justified from all your sins, but you will be as perfect and righteous, as pure and resplendent, in the sight of God the Father, as the Son of God Himself. "For God hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be

sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Consider further,

(4.) The riches of *His Spirit*.

His Spirit is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of prayer, the Spirit of holiness, the Eternal Spirit. "Christ of God is made unto us sanctification," and He is made unto us "sanctification through the Spirit." To Him the Spirit is given without measure; and He distributes all the riches of the Spirit at His will. He gives the Holy Spirit to penitent sinners, renewing them in the image of God, and making them heirs of heaven. By the influence of the Spirit, He sanctifies their hearts, their tempers, their language, their conduct, qualifying them for His service, and making them meet for His glory. "By the Spirit they mortify the deeds of the body;" and "through the Spirit they purify themselves in obeying the truth." With the Spirit they are filled; by the Spirit they are led; they live in the light, they pray in the strength, they walk in the comfort of the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is the finger of God, the water of life, the fire of heaven;—and, by His Spirit, He refreshes the troubled minds, warms the chilling hearts, and strengthens the fainting souls of His people. He enriches and adorns them with the treasures of His kingdom, and they abound and shine in righteousness, and peace, and hope, and joy, in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xv. 13.)



Consider again,

(5.) The riches of *His merits*.

The merits of Christ consist in all that He does and suffers, from His first coming in the flesh to His last intercession in glory. His infinite condescension, and His infinite dignity, give infinite value to all His doings and to all His sufferings for us men, and for our salvation. Here are the *merits* of Christ; here are the *riches* of His merits; here are the *mines* of His riches! Here are riches which abundantly secure for all believers in Christ complete redemption from the pains of hell, sufficient grace for the trials of time, a holy meetness for the service of a heaven, and a perfect title to the glories of eternity. Jesus Christ not only purchased the Church with His own blood, but with His own blood purchased heaven for the Church. The saints, therefore, being bought with a price, will enter the heaven of heavens, as a purchased possession, and through eternity will sing in glory, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and redeemed us to God by His blood."

But, further:

3. *I preach the UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.*

(1.) These riches are unsearchable in *origin and nature*.

God so loved the world that He gave His beloved Son to die for sinners on the cross. We owe the death of Christ for sinners to the eternal love of God. That God should die for man could never enter the mind of a creature; but it did enter the

mind of the Creator ; and, in the fulness of time, God incarnate died for man ! Here is the mine of unfathomable love ! Here are the riches of Christ ! Here are riches, free, spiritual, infinite, divine, eternal, unsearchable ! The riches of Christ, then, are a mine so deep, that it cannot, by man or angel, be fathomed ; they are a treasure so excellent, that it cannot, by tongue or pen, be described ; they are a store so vast, that it cannot, in time or eternity, be expended. In origin and nature, they are unsearchable.

Again :

(2.) They are unsearchable *in application and effect.*

They are applied, not to holy creatures, but to sinful men. They are mysteriously but really applied, to redeem perishing sinners, to pay their ransom, to atone for their transgressions, to purify their hearts, to adorn their lives, to enrich and to glorify their souls for ever. The blessed gospel is, we know, a treasure, because it contains the unsearchable riches of Christ. "We have this treasure," says St. Paul, "in earthen vessels ; that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us ;" though, therefore, we, in ourselves, are poor, yet out of this treasure "we make many rich." (2 Cor. vi. 10.)

We know not, indeed, *how* the Holy Spirit applies these riches to the souls of believers in hearing the Gospel ; but we do know that, when they are applied, they make the poorest receivers perfectly and eter-

nally rich,—on earth, rich in grace ; in heaven, rich in glory ! Adorned with these riches of Christ, replenished with these graces of the Spirit, the saints are prepared to shine among the brightest, and to sing among the happiest, of the angels of heaven !

The riches of divine glory are graciously made known to the vessels of mercy in Christ Jesus ; and they are abundantly granted to believers in the blood of the Lamb. Nor let any penitent and holy believer doubt of sufficient grace, or of eternal glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. “ For of His fulness all may receive, and grace for grace.” (Rom. ix. 23 ; Eph. iii. 16, 17 ; John i. 16.) “ And my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. iv. 19.) The riches of Christ, though so long applied, and so abundantly expended, are as abundant, and as precious as ever ; and we, as confidently as St. Paul, invite you to partake of these riches. Though for ever used, they will be for ever undiminished ; though they continually enrich millions for ever, they never lose their value. Sufficient have they been for millions in ages past ; sufficient will they be for millions in ages yet to come ; and after they have enriched countless millions with all the treasures of eternal life in heaven, they will still be undiminished, still unsearchable.

Further :

(3.) They are unsearchable *in sum and in worth*.

A thousand worlds could not redeem one soul

from eternal pain, nor purchase eternal joy for one soul. But the riches of Christ have not only redeemed unnumbered souls from an eternal hell, but purchased an eternal heaven for unnumbered souls. The magnitude of His mercy, the benignity of His kindness, the strength of His love in the redemption of sinners, can neither be calculated nor conceived. No mortal tongue can express; no created mind can comprehend, the riches of His grace! In every attempt to calculate the *sum*, or to imagine the *worth* of these riches, the utmost powers of calculation will be baffled, and the utmost efforts of imagination be confounded. Though angels were the students of redeeming love, and eternity the duration of their study; yet the riches of Christ would ever disclose new treasures, and display new glories,—unutterable and inconceivable.

No one, in earth or heaven, can separately count the riches of His wisdom; or the riches of His atonement; or the riches of righteousness; or the riches of His Spirit; or the riches of His merits; or the riches of His glory; who then can count the sum of all these riches together? O it is a sum, all sum exceeding—a sum for ever *telling*, but never *told*; a sum incalculable, and unsearchable!

In ages to come, God will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to perishing sinners through Jesus Christ our Lord. Future generations of penitent sinners shall abundantly partake the riches of His grace. All created intelligences in all future worlds shall see these riches



for ever manifested, but never measured ; for ever enjoyed, but never exhausted. For, as before the coming of Christ angels of glorious might, with an intensity of study to men unknown, looked into the prophecies of the sufferings of their Lord ; so will the same angels, as the volume of redeeming love unrolls in heaven, with increasing eagerness study through eternity the riches of His grace in the redemption of sinners. And as new wonders rise before their studious minds, they will with new raptures join the new song, “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and power, and riches, and blessing.” (Eph. ii. 7 ; Col. i. 23.)

Such is the **SUBLIMITY OF THE SERMON** ; “ the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

We now hasten to review,

### III. THE VASTNESS OF THE CONGREGATION.

“ It was the whole Gentile world.”

1. Our blessed Lord, appearing in overwhelming glory, said to St. Paul, “ I now send thee to the Gentiles to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.” Again, appearing in heavenly vision, Christ said to him, “ I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles.” (Acts xxii. 21 ; xxvi. 27.) “ For when,” writes he, “ it pleased God to call me by His grace, He sent me to preach Christ to the heathen.” (Gal. i. 16.) “ I am ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ ; I am appointed a preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles.” (2 Tim. i. 11 ; 1 Tim. i. 11, 12.) “ A dispensation of the

grace of God is given unto me by the effectual working of His power, that I should," as the minister of Jesus Christ, preach "the Gospel to the Gentiles, that the offering up of the Gentiles, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, might be acceptable to God." (Rom. xv. 16; Eph. iii. 2—7.) "Forasmuch," therefore, "as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office." (Rom. xi. 13.) My apostleship and commission are immediately from heaven; my apostleship extends to all nations; my commission includes the whole world. (Rom. i. 5.) How vast was the congregation of St. Paul! It spread over the face of the whole globe; it comprehended nearly the whole race of mankind. The population of the world in his time was probably as great as in our time, or nearly one thousand millions of souls. The wide extent, and the uncounted multitudes of his congregation, were enough to appal any mind; but appalling as might be the extent and multitudes of his charge, it was still more appalling to know that all this charge of one thousand millions of souls were perishing in their sins.

2. St. Paul himself proclaims the perishing state of the Gentiles. "Ye Gentiles," he writes, "were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

"*They were without Christ.*" No revelation of Christ had ever delighted their ears; no prophet of heaven had ever instructed their minds; no promise of salvation had ever cheered their souls. They



were utterly separated from Christ. They knew not of access to God by the blood of Jesus; nor of meetness for heaven by the sanctification of His Spirit. Being without Christ, "*they were also without hope.*" The resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, and an eternity of joy in heaven, are brought to light by the Gospel of Christ; but the Gentiles having never heard the glad sound of the Gospel, could have no hope of the resurrection of the body, of the immortality of the soul, of an eternity of blessedness. "*They were without God, or atheists in the world.*" They were without the one true God; but they were not without many false gods, or abominable idols. They worshipped images of carved wood or sculptured stone, of chased silver or graven gold; and they often sacrificed to the fabled demons of poets, or to the departed spirits of men; but in such worship they worshipped only Satan himself; and in such sacrificing "*they sacrificed not to God, but to devils.*"

The worship of their idols was often splendidly seductive, sometimes tremendously cruel, always unutterably unclean. Their temples were the recesses of unspeakable debaucheries; their priests and their priestesses were the shame and disgrace of human nature. Darkened in mind and hardened in heart—past understanding and past feeling, they gave themselves over to lasciviousness, and to work all uncleanness with greediness. "*But it is a shame even to speak of those things, which are done of them in secret.*"

What was the common practice of the heathen nations in their best estate, we may learn from St. Paul's own account of the Romans, when imperial Rome gloried in her civilisation, and ruled the world. "They were given up to a reprobate mind, to abominable idolatries, and unutterable crimes: Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things; disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." (Rom. i. 28—31.) If then, as the same apostle reasons, all who sin without law, must perish without law, the heathen nations are in a perishing state. And who can think, without tears and trembling, of one thousand millions of souls perishing in their sins? St. Paul had a full view and a right feeling of the perishing state of the Gentiles, and laboured to the utmost to save them. His travels and his toils, his pains and his perils in preaching to them the unsearchable riches of Christ, were beyond conception wonderful. "In labours abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft. Thrice, says he, was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in

the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness ; in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." (2 Cor. xi. 23—28.) From travels and toils, from pains and perils like these, human nature must have shrunk, if divine grace had not triumphed over human nature, and enabled St. Paul to reckon the preaching of Christ not only an unspeakable privilege, but an inconceivable delight. Chiefly by his means, the Gospel flew, as on the wings of an eagle, "into all the world," and was preached, as with a tongue of fire, "to every creature under heaven." Everywhere "the preaching of Christ was riches to the Gentiles." "Now thanks be unto God," he exclaims, "who always causeth us to triumph in Christ in every place." (2 Cor. ii. 14 ; Col. i. 6, and ii. 3 ; Rom. xv. 19, 24, 26 ; Gal. i. 17—21.) O, what an example is St. Paul to all Christian ministers, and Christian missionaries ; to all who feel, as he felt, the love of Christ ; who prize, as he prized, the blood of atonement ; who knew, as he knew, the worth of souls, how incalculably important, how inexpressibly delightful, is it to preach Christ to the heathen ! "Unto Me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

To conclude :

We British Christians, are Gentiles ; and it is be-

lieved by many learned men, that 1780 years ago, St. Paul himself, who wrote our text, first preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles of Britain. However this may be, our country Britain, in the time of St. Paul, was deemed the extremity of the habitable globe, and was inhabited by the most ignorant and savage race of Gentiles. And certainly in the time of St. Paul, in the first century of Christianity, some holy Evangelist, some heroic missionary, crossed the British Channel, and preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to British Gentiles. Commissioned by the Son, and qualified by the Spirit of God, with the love of Christ in his heart, and the word of Christ in his hand, he sounded the trumpet of salvation to the perishing Gentiles of this beautiful island. From that time to the present day, the unsearchable riches of Christ have dwelt in our borders; and the tidings of salvation have been heard in our land. And through the dispersion of the Scriptures and the preaching of the Gospel, the unsearchable riches of Christ have in our land, at the present time, been more abundantly displayed than in ages past. Our country at the present time is in every respect superior to every other country under heaven; and our country owes this distinguished superiority to the Gospel of our Lord. For our country is superior to other countries, because, through the kindness of God, she has possessed, for a longer period, and in greater abundance, the unsearchable riches of Christ. But, my brethren, let us not forget, that seven hundred millions of Gentiles,



such Gentiles as were your British fathers eighteen hundred years ago, have never heard the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour. They are perishing in their ignorance and their sins; they are passing every moment unsanctified and unsaved into an eternal world. We bask in the full blaze of spiritual light; we abound in the boundless stores of spiritual riches; but they, hapless Gentiles, are wrapt in the thickest glooms of spiritual darkness; they are dying in the utmost wretchedness of spiritual poverty. Nor will you, by giving them light, diminish your own; nor will you, by sending them riches, impoverish yourselves. Rather, by giving them light, your own light will be brightened; and by sending them riches, your own riches will be improved. Will you, then, suffer the ignorant Gentiles to sit in spiritual darkness? Will you permit the poor heathen to die in spiritual poverty? Will you keep the riches of eternal life entirely to yourselves? Will you keep the light of eternal salvation from those who, by millions, are perishing in their sins? No, my brethren, no! You cannot do this, if you be Christians. If the light of salvation has shone into your minds, you cannot but afford that light to the benighted Gentiles. If the life of God has been breathed into your souls, you cannot but endeavour to communicate that life to the perishing heathen. If the love of Christ be shed in your hearts, there is nothing which you will not do, nothing which you will not suffer, nothing which you will not give for His sake. All Christians, how-

ever, are not required to go out themselves as missionaries ; but every Christian, who has himself partaken of the riches of Christ, is required, on peril of salvation, to pray, and labour, and contribute to send out missionaries to preach the Gospel to the heathen. Remember then, my brethren, that Christ, who was enthroned on the treasures of the universe, made Himself poor to enrich you. Remember the riches which He has given you, and then give to the Gentiles for His sake ; give to the Gentiles for the sake of Him, who gave Himself for you. Remember the seven hundred millions of poor Gentiles, who are perishing in their sins ; and remember also, that He who redeemed you with His own blood, commands you to send the Gospel of salvation to the perishing Gentiles. May the Spirit of God now incline your hearts to obey the command of your Redeemer. May the grace of heaven now descend on your souls, that you may contribute, as you ought, to send out missionaries to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles.



## SERMON XXII.

## AN EXHORTATION TO CARELESS SINNERS.

EPH. v. 14.

*Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,  
and Christ shall give thee light.*

JONAH, you know, was the most wayward prophet of God ; and Nineveh was, we believe, the most wicked city in the world : and God commanded His prophet to denounce His vengeance against this city. Jonah, instead of obeying the divine command, fled to Joppa, on the seaside, took ship, and sailed to Tarshish. But God raised a mighty tempest in the sea, and the ship in which Jonah sailed was like to be broken. The mariners, in their fright, cast the wares of the ship into the sea, and cried every man to his god. But Jonah was gone down to the side of the ship, and there he lay fast asleep in the storm. The shipmaster, therefore, came to him, and said, " What meanest thou, O sleeper ? arise, and call upon thy God ! " Of what persons, think ye, is the sleeping Jonah a picture ? What sort of persons does the sleeping Jonah resemble ?

Perhaps some of ourselves. Jonah sleeping in the midst of the storm is the resemblance or the picture of those persons, who, though exposed to the storms of divine vengeance, are yet fast asleep in their sins. To such persons our text is addressed: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

On these words we may ground three inquiries:

I. *What is the natural state of sinners?*

II. *What is the duty of sinners in their natural state?*

III. *What encouragement God gives to sinners in their natural state to perform their duty?*

Our first inquiry is,

I. **WHAT IS THE NATURAL STATE OF SINNERS?** *It is a state of sleep and death!* "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead."

Sleep and death, in the text, may signify nearly the same thing; yet, death is the stronger term, and deepens and darkens the natural state of sinners. These terms, however, must be understood, not literally or bodily, but figuratively or spiritually; for sinners are wakeful enough with respect to the body, and lively enough with regard to the world; but, they are asleep with respect to the soul and holiness, and dead with regard to God and heaven. To be asleep, and to be dead; or to be spiritually in a state of sleep and death; gives the ideas of security, insensibility, and corruption.

1. *Sinners are in a state of security.*

They are unalarmed and untroubled ; they are at ease and quiet ; they are asleep. Neither convictions of sin, nor reproofs of conscience, nor fears of death, nor terrors of judgment, nor dread of everlasting burnings, disturbs the slumbers of their souls. They are asleep in spiritual darkness. There is no light in their minds ; the eyes of their understanding are closed ; the night of spiritual ignorance wraps their souls ; the shades of eternal night brood over their spirits ; and they sleep on securely in their sins. Though in the midst of enemies, and in themselves perfectly helpless, they feel secure, and will not pray to God for help. Though the robber death waylays them every step ; though the murderer Satan ever seeks to destroy their souls ; though the Eternal Judge stands before their door ; they cry, " Peace and safety," and sleep on securely in their sins !

2. *Sinners are in a state of insensibility.*

As a man asleep is insensible of everything around him ; so sinners are insensible of all spiritual things. As a corpse in the grave is unaffected by the things of earth ; so sinners are unaffected by the things of heaven. With regard to the things of the soul and of God, they are asleep and dead. But, as men asleep, they often dream ; and their dreams, like other dreams, are illusive and wild, inconsistent and incoherent, made up of false objects and pursuits, false hopes and fears, false joys and sorrows. Could the projects and pursuits of men asleep in sin be exactly told, they would appear as wild and as wandering, as

inconsistent and as incoherent as a dream, or vision of the night. One man violates the holy rest of the sabbath, and neglects the public worship of God; yet, asleep in sin, he dreams of worshipping God through an eternal sabbath. Another man, who is guilty of idleness or drunkenness, of lying or dishonesty, yet, asleep in sin, he dreams of future happiness in a state of holiness. The man of business, who neglects the care of his soul, and desires only prosperity in this world, yet, asleep in sin, dreams of prosperity in the world to come. The man of science, who contemns the knowledge of Christ crucified, and seeks only for earthly wisdom, yet, asleep in sin, dreams of knowing Christ in glory. The lover of money, who despises the riches of Christ, and covets only the riches of time, yet, asleep in sin, dreams of the riches of eternity. The lover of fame, who pants only for the honours of the world, yet, asleep in sin, dreams of the honours and glories of heaven. The lover of pleasure, who hungers only for the gratification of the body, yet, asleep in sin, dreams of happiness for his soul hereafter. But sinners, like men asleep or dead, are insensible of spiritual things. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. "Present the most finished picture before the eyes of a person asleep; he perceives none of its beauty; he sees none of its perfections. Present the picture of our natural deformity, or of our merciful Redeemer, before the eyes of those who are asleep in sin; and they see neither the deformity of their

nature, nor the loveliness of Christ. Relate to a man in deep sleep the most interesting intelligence, or play to him on the finest instrument ; but he is not affected ; he hears nothing at all. To as little purpose does the preacher proclaim the tidings of salvation, or thunder the terrors of judgment, to obdurate worldlings, or to men asleep in sin. Cast on a man, who is wrapped in his shroud and laid in his coffin, the sweetest flowers, and cover him with the richest spices ; but, to the dead man the spices have no sweetness, the flowers no fragrance. To as little purpose does the preacher offer to those, who are dead in sin, the blessings of the Gospel, or the consolations of the Spirit.\* Until they are quickened by “ the Spirit of life,” they are insensible of spiritual things,—incompetent to spiritual perceptions, incapable of spiritual actions.

### 3. *Sinners are in a state of corruption.*

They are like bodies turning to corruption in the grave. They are corrupt in all their mental faculties ; debased in all their natural affections ; depraved in all their bodily powers. They are corrupt in nature, and dead in sin. They are degraded in understanding ; “ they receive not the things of the Spirit of God.” They are perverse in will ; they will not submit to the will of God, “ nor will they come to Christ for life.” They rely on their own judgment and choose their own way. They uniformly reject things spiritual ; and uniformly prefer temporal things. In their words they may admit the

\* Bishop Horne.



authority of God, but in their conduct they cry, "Who is the Lord, that I should serve Him? Or, Who is the Almighty, that I should obey Him?" They are carnal in their affections; they set their hearts not on things above, but on things below; and indulge, without restraint, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." They are, as the apostle writes, "earthly, sensual, devilish." They are sinful in their practice; they love sin and hate holiness; they neglect duty, and practise unrighteousness; they neglect prayer, and the Scriptures, and the worship of God; but, pursue the pleasures, the riches, and the honours of the world. They care for the body as if they had no soul, and live to themselves and the world, as if there were neither God nor heaven.

*Their nature is corrupt.* "Their heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil continually. "Out of the heart all evil proceeds; for the heart of the sons of men is full of evil."

*Their conversation is corrupt.* "Corrupt communication proceeds out of their mouth." "Their throat is an open sepulchre." The poison of asps is under their lips." "Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." "With their tongues they use deceit and falsehood." "*Their doings are corrupt*; in conduct "they are become filthy." "They have done abominable iniquity." "They are altogether become unprofitable." "To every good work they are reprobate." "There is none that doeth good,



no, not one." "Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."\*

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" as if sinners in their natural state can hear their own state described, and their own danger proclaimed, and yet be as insensible and unmoved, as those who are asleep, or dead. O that there were no cause to fear that some of you, who have heard your state described, and your danger proclaimed, would not this morning go away as you came, asleep in your sins, and dead to your God!

We proceed to inquire,

## II. WHAT IS THE DUTY OF SINNERS IN THEIR NATURAL STATE?

1. *It is their duty to awake from sleep, and to arise from the dead.*

"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." This command is given not to others, but to ourselves; not to ourselves as a body, but to ourselves as individuals, and to every individual among us. "Awake *thou* that sleepest, and Christ will give *thee* light." When God gives a command, He also gives power to obey it. The man with the

\* See Article ix. Homily xxviii., p. 430, and 372—392. .

withered hand was unable of himself to obey the command of Christ, or to stretch out his hand ; but in attempting to obey the command, his hand was restored as the other. When God sends the Gospel of His Son to any persons, it is a proof that He wishes those persons to be saved. For, wherever the Gospel of His Son is preached, the aid of His Spirit is promised ; and to all, who, while they hear the Gospel of Christ, pray for the aid of His Spirit, this aid is afforded ; and thus the preaching of the Gospel is made effectual to salvation. When the Gospel, therefore, has been heard and received in the heart, the Holy Spirit has been sought and cherished ; but when the Gospel has been heard and rejected, the Holy Spirit has been neglected and resisted. You, therefore, who have heard and rejected the Gospel of Christ, continue asleep in your sins, and regardless of the danger of your souls. But your security in sin, and your insensibility of danger, so far from excusing your disobedience to God, involve you in the deepest guilt. You “ love darkness rather than light, because your deeds are evil.” Your commission of sin, and your love of the world, harden your heart, and disable you from duty. Your conduct defies the authority of your God, and deserves the vengeance of His punishment. For God is not deprived of His right to command, because you have lost the power to obey. But still he commands you to repent and believe ; still He calls you to holiness and glory. Obey the

divine command. Comply with the heavenly call. Listen to His Gospel. Pray for His Spirit. "Do His will, and thou shalt know of the doctrine whether it be of God." "Awake, thou that sleepest. Arise thou that art dead. Awake, arise! and Christ will give thee light and life."

2. "*Awake,*" sinner, "*awake.*"

Sleep no longer in thy sins. Canst thou be at ease in the midst of thine offences? Canst thou be secure on the brink of destruction? Canst thou dream in the night of ignorance, when the day of salvation has dawned? Canst thou slumber in the darkness of wickedness, when the sun of righteousness has risen? Awake, sinner, awake! Awake, and open thine eyes. Look upon thy life, and look into thine heart. Look backward to thine original, and look forward to thy doom. Look upward to heaven, and look downward to hell. Look on every side, and see the broad way of destruction crowded with sinners, while "the narrow path of holiness has only here and there a passenger." Awake, then, and consider thy ways, thy state, and thy danger. Consider the evil of sin, and the vanity of the world. Consider the frailty of thy body, and the uncertainty of thy life. Consider the nearness of death, and the severity of judgment. Consider the majesty of God, and the strictness of His law. Consider the worth of thy soul, and the vastness of eternity.

3. "*Arise,*" sinner, "*arise!*"

Shake off the death-like lethargy of thy soul. Disperse the delusive dreamings of thy mind. Spring

from the bed of wickedness, turn from the road of destruction. No longer live in sin; no longer follow the world; no longer walk with the ungodly; no longer have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; no longer go to places, or engage in employments, which are temptations and snares to thy soul. "Arise," sinner, and repent of thy sins. "Arise, penitent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. "Arise," and read the Scriptures. "Arise," and listen to the Gospel. "Arise," and be holy in all thy conduct. Above all, "Arise," and call upon thy God. Call upon Him for mercy through Christ Jesus. Confess thy sins at His footstool, and beg for pardon through the blood of His Son. Confess thy corruption, and pray for His Spirit to renew thy heart. Thus thy soul will be justified, and thy life will be reformed; thus wilt thou be adopted into the family of God, and be made an heir of the kingdom of heaven. Be sincere, and God will hear thee. Be in earnest, and He will approve thee. Exert thyself, and He will Help thee. Look to Christ, and Christ will save thee. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

But, we hasten to inquire,

### III. WHAT ENCOURAGEMENT GOD GIVES TO SINNERS IN THEIR NATURAL STATE TO PERFORM THEIR DUTY?

"Christ shall give them light." This promise is their encouragement to awake out of sleep. Light, in Scripture, signifies knowledge, holiness, joy, and

glory ; and to every one, who wakes from the sleep, and arises from the death of sin, will knowledge and holiness and joy and glory by Christ be given. “ He will give grace and glory ; and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

1. *Christ will give the light of knowledge.*

Ignorant and erroneous as thou art by nature, wandering and wayward as thou art in practice, Christ will, by His Spirit, lead thee into all truth ; and by His word will make thee wise unto salvation. He will open thine understanding to study and to understand the scriptures, and dispose thy heart to love and obey them. He will teach thee thy ruin by sin, and thy need of salvation. He will teach thee thine utter helplessness, and the utter inability of every creature to help thee. He will teach thee that He came into the world to save sinners, and that He shed His blood to save thee. He will direct the opened eyes of thy mind to look to Christ crucified ; and will, through faith in His blood, give thee the knowledge of salvation by the remission of thy sins. He will shine like the sun into thy heart, and will give thee the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person and work of Christ, and thou with all thy soul wilt sing, “ Yea, doubtless ; and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord !”

Again :

2. *Christ will give the light of holiness.*

Corrupt and sinful by nature as thou art ; Christ,



who is not only our wisdom, but our sanctification, will, by His Spirit, not only enlighten thy mind, but “sanctify thee wholly, body, soul, and spirit.” He will create in thee a new heart, and renew a right spirit within thee. He will purify thy nature, thy temper, and thy conduct. He will cover thee with the armour of light, and, by doing justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, thy holiness shall shine before men. He will make thee a child of light, and by walking before Him in the light of righteousness, thy good works shall glorify thy heavenly Father.

Further :

3. *Christ will give the light of joy.*

“Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards ; and there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” Sorrowful and miserable, therefore, as thou art by nature, Christ will give thee the light of joy. As thou goest forth weeping for sin, sowing precious seed, Jesus looks on thee with love and pity, knowing that, having sown in tears, thou shalt reap in joy. For, as with a broken heart, thou mournest for sin, and as with a contrite spirit, thou confessest thy guilt, Christ will give thee “beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the tears of mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” He will justify thy soul by faith in His blood, and thou shalt have peace with God : He will seal thee to the day of redemption by His Spirit, and thou shalt rejoice in hope of glory. As thou treadest in the path of holi-



ness, He will lift upon thee the light of His countenance, and thou shalt go on thy way to heaven rejoicing.

For, finally :

4. *Christ will give the light of glory.*

Deserving nothing but the punishment of thy sins, and fit only in thyself for destruction, Christ will not only redeem thee from the darkness of hell, but give thee the light of heaven. His merits will entitle thee to the crown of life ; His Spirit will fit thee for the inheritance in light ; His grace will bring thee into that city, which needs neither sun nor moon ; for the glory of God does enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. In that eternal city, the Lord Jesus will be thy light, and thy God will be thy glory. (Rev. iii. 21 ; Rom. viii. 17 ; Isa. lx. 19, 20.)

To conclude :

1. *What do you know of this subject ? What do you know of yourselves ? What do you know of Jesus Christ ?*

Have you discovered that, naturally, you are asleep in sin, and dead towards God ? Have you discovered that, through the corruption of your nature and the sinfulness of your life, your mind did not acknowledge God, nor your will obey Him, nor your heart love Him, nor your tongue confess Him, nor your conduct honour Him ? Have you discovered yourselves to be in darkness, and have you prayed to Christ for light ? Have you discovered your ignorance, and prayed for the light of know-

ledge? Have you felt the corruption of your nature, and prayed for the light of holiness? Have you mourned for the sins of your life, and prayed for the light of joy? Have you seen yourselves exposed to the darkness of hell, and prayed for the light of heaven? Has Christ given you light? Has He by His Spirit enlightened your mind and renewed your heart? In believing on His name, has He filled you with the joy of pardon, and by His work of grace in your heart, has He cheered you with the hope of glory? Have you awoke out of sleep? Have you risen from the dead? Have you awoke from the sleep of sin? Have you risen to the life of righteousness? Have you risen to prayer and repentance? Have you risen to faith in Christ, and to holiness of life?

2. *The Gospel of Christ, which is never preached in vain, has been preached to you. The Gospel of Christ will be to all who hear it, a savour of life, or a savour of death: it will be a savour of life or death to you.*

The voice of Christ, who never calls in vain, has called on you. His call, in our text, is made to you; it is pointed at every individual; it is directed to every sinner. O sinner, whoever thou art, it speaks to thee. "Awake, *thou* that sleepest, and Christ shall give *thee* light!" If thou obey this call, Christ will give the light of His Spirit; if thou disobey it, He will withdraw His Spirit, and leave thee to perish! Why wilt thou shut thine ear to the call of Christ? Why wilt thou steel thine

heart against the striving of His Spirit? Why wilt thou die? O that thou wouldest hearken to His voice, and accept His salvation! O that in this thy day, thou wouldest know the things of thy peace, before they are hid from thy eyes!

But finally:

3. *Blessed are you, who, through divine help, have heard and obeyed the call of Christ.*

You have risen from the darkness of death, and Christ has given you the light of life. Once darkness, ye are now light in the Lord. Once asleep in wickedness, ye are now awake to righteousness. Once dead in sin, ye are now alive to God. Once ignorant of the work of the Spirit, ye now "walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." Once quite careless of the joys of heaven, ye now rejoice in hope of glory. The morning star of heaven has shone on your souls. The day star of glory has risen in your hearts. "Arise! shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" "The night is far spent—the day is at hand." "The morning, which is without clouds," will soon dawn; the sun, which never sets, will soon arise; the day, which never ends, will soon begin. And, then, my brethren, Jesus Christ, who is the Light of heaven and the Joy of angels, will be your Light and your Joy for ever and ever!

## SERMON XXIII.

## THE FAITHFUL SAYING.

1 TIM. i. 15.

*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

ALL mankind are in a fallen, corrupt, and perishing state. "All are born in sin;" "all have sinned" against God, and all deserve eternal punishment; for, "the soul that sinneth shall die; the wages of sin is death." But, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." For "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Let us now from these words consider,  
*The nature and excellency of the Gospel Message.*  
 We are to consider,

## I. THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL-MESSAGE.

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

1. *The Son of God is called Christ Jesus.*

*He is truly God.* He is the only begotten Son of God; He is so the Son, as to be the equal of God; “He is God over all blessed for ever.” For, as the Son of God, He wears all the names which the Father wears; possesses all the attributes which the Father possesses; performs all the works which the Father performs; and receives all the worship which the Father receives. For, He is Messiah, the Messiah of God. *He is Christ*; He is the Christ; He is the Christ of God. He is “the Anointed,” the Great Anointed; the Prophet, Priest, and King of His people. As Prophet, He is their Teacher, and their Guide; as Priest, He is their sacrifice for sin, and their advocate with God; as King, He reigns by His Spirit in their hearts, and defends them by His power from their enemies. But though He was the Eternal God, *He became truly man.* For He is not only *Christ*, but *Jesus*; not only the Messiah of God, but the Saviour of men. *He is Immanuel*; God incarnate, God with us, God and man united in one wondrous person, Jesus Christ our Lord. For though He was born, He was not begotten, like other men. He was conceived of a pure virgin by the Holy Ghost. He partook of our nature, without partaking of our corruption. He was in all respects a man, like ourselves, sin only excepted. Being sinless and incapable of sinning, He was a perfect and meritorious sacrifice for the sins of mankind. While as “perfect man,”



He was qualified to suffer for our sins ; as truly God, He was able to redeem our souls. Being God and man, He can not only sympathize with our manifold infirmities, but relieve our manifold wants. Being God and man, He can not only teach, atone, intercede, protect, and save ; but His teaching is effectual, His atonement sufficient, His intercession all-prevailing, His protection almighty, His salvation complete. For though He were God and Lord, yet,

2. *“ Christ Jesus, as man, came into the world.”*

His glory was “ the glory of the Father ;” His crown was the crown of heaven ; His throne was “ the throne of God ;” His kingdom was “ the kingdom of joy ;” but He unrobed Himself of His glory ; took off His crown ; descended from His throne ; forsook His kingdom ; assumed our nature in its lowest guise, and in mortal form came into our world. He exchanged the palace of heaven for the shelter of a stable, the bosom of God for the hardness of a manger, the adorations of angels for the gaze of dumb beasts. He came into the world, not as an angel of light, nor as a lord of men, but as a poor, and helpless, and outcast infant. He came into the world in great humility ; and left it in great shame. He was born in lowliness ; He grew up in obscurity ; He laboured in poverty ; He waded in reproach ; He lived in sorrow ; He died in the agonies of the cross. “ Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the



likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 6, &c.) If we contrast His glory in heaven with His abasement on earth, we shall find, that as no mortal mind can reach the glory of His divinity, or comprehend the mystery of His humanity ; so no mortal tongue can tell the greatness of His condescension, or the riches of His grace. Or, if we contemplate at once the dignity of His person, and the depth of His sufferings, we shall feel that no created intelligence can conceive the value of His atonement or the vastness of His love. " His blood cleanseth from all sin ;" " His love passeth all knowledge."

The love of Christ shines out with overwhelming brightness, when we recollect, that before He came to save, He not only knew what wickedness and enmity were in mankind, but what a price their redemption would cost Him. He knew beforehand all our sinfulness, and ingratitude ; He knew all our abuse of His mercy, all our grieving of His Spirit, and all our scorn of His salvation ; yet such was the love, such was the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He came into the world to save sinners, and enemies. " While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." While we were yet enemies, He reconciled us to God by His blood. " And to Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be dominion and glory for ever and ever."

For, again :

3. “ *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*”

He came, not to fallen angels, but to fallen men ; He came to save, not the wise and the noble, not the rich and the mighty, not the moral and the righteous ; but the ignorant and the mean, the poor and the despised, the miserable and the lost. He came to save sinners ; He came to save all sinners ; He came to save the chief of sinners ; He came to save sinners of every number of transgressions, of every degree of guilt, of every rank in life, of every nation and tongue under heaven. The Gospel Message is the most unlimited, and is, therefore, the most encouraging. “ Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” To suppose that there is any sin which Christ cannot pardon, or any sinner whom He cannot save, his insulting to His majesty, and unjust to His mercy. We cannot too highly estimate the riches of His grace, nor too greatly magnify the virtues of His blood ; for, we repeat, “ His blood cleanseth from all sin,” and He is able to save to the uttermost ; He can save all, and He can save for ever. “ He came to save sinners.” He came to save us from the curse of the law and the dominion of sin ; from the pollution of the world and the malice of the devil ; from the damnation of hell and the bitter pains of eternal death. He came to save with an everlasting salvation. He came to pardon our guilt and to justify our souls ; to renew our hearts and to sanctify our lives ; to fit us to

dwell with Himself in glory, and to bestow on us the perfect and endless joys of heaven.

But, how does Christ save? He saves freely; He saves by grace; He saves only those who feel themselves sinners, and with godly sorrow repent of their sins. For as "we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God, we are justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 23, 24; Eph. ii. 8.) "He came to save sinners." He saves not only by pardoning the guilt of sin, but by implanting the love of holiness. He saves not only by destroying the power of spiritual death, but by imparting the grace of spiritual life. He saves not only by redeeming us from the unutterable pains of hell, but by securing for us the inconceivable joys of heaven. He saves from the punishment of sin, by the atonement of His blood; He saves from the love of sin by the renewing of His Spirit; He saves from the practice of sin by the power of His grace; He saves for ever, or He saves with an everlasting salvation in heaven by the merits of His sacrifice.

But, the application or appropriation of salvation, is a work altogether spiritual and divine. The Spirit of God alone can take the blood and righteousness of Christ, and apply them to the hearts of penitent sinners. "And the work of the Spirit of Christ, in the heart, is as necessary to our salvation as the work of Christ Himself." The renewal of the heart in the divine image, or the new birth of the soul by the Spirit of God, is as necessary to our

attainment of eternal life in heaven, as the death of Christ on the cross. By the cleansing of His blood, by the merits of His righteousness, and by the work of His Spirit in our heart and life, the salvation of Christ is completed. By His blood our sins are pardoned, and we are delivered from punishment; by His righteousness our souls are justified, and we are entitled to heaven; by His Spirit our hearts are renewed, and our lives are sanctified, and we are made meet for the kingdom of God. Christ Jesus, therefore, is anointed with the Spirit of God, that He might be the almighty Saviour of sinners. And it is the Eternal Spirit, who, in the regeneration of the believer, sprinkles the blood of Christ on his conscience, puts the righteousness of Christ on his soul, and plants the life of Christ in his heart, so that he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. And as a new creature, he lives a new life; he lives by faith in Christ; and he lives in holiness to the glory of God. This work of the Spirit in the heart is, we repeat, as necessary to our salvation as the work of Christ Himself. For as "it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" so is it a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that "except a man be born again of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

We proceed to consider,

## II. THE EXCELLENCY OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.

"It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation."



1. "*It is a faithful saying,*" and worthy of all credit.

The truth of this "saying" is confirmed by every kind of testimony. No species of evidence is wanting to confirm it. It is confirmed by the testimony of the *types and sacrifices of the Old Testament*. The "paschal lamb" and the "scape-goat" plainly testify of Him, on whom all our iniquities were laid, and who, "in his own body on the tree," took them all away. "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!" It is confirmed by the *predictions of the holy prophets*. "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself." "He shall be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." "And He was bruised for our iniquities, and wounded for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." He came into the world for the express purpose of dying for sinners; and He actually died for sinners on the cross. "He made reconciliation for iniquity;"—"brought in everlasting righteousness;"—and "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." It is confirmed by the *glad tidings of angels*. "We bring you," say the angels of heaven to the shepherds of Bethlehem, "glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day a Saviour,—Christ, the Lord." "He shall be called Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." It is confirmed by the *preaching of the Apostles*. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." "We preach the unsearch-

able riches of Christ." "We preach Christ crucified." "We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins:" "for He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world!" It is confirmed by *the songs of "the saints in light."* "Thou wast slain, O Christ, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood!" "Salvation to God and the Lamb!" It is confirmed by *the declarations of Christ Himself*; "I am come to save that which was lost." "I lay down my life for the sheep." "My blood is shed for many for the remission of sins." "I give my flesh for the life of the world." "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved."

Finally :

It is confirmed by *the experience of Christian believers*. Millions, believing this faithful saying, have come as perishing sinners to Christ Jesus for salvation, and have found salvation in Him. Millions, therefore, could individually say,—“I know that this is a faithful saying; I know that Christ Jesus came to save sinners; for He has saved me. I was ignorant, careless, corrupt, sinful, guilty, miserable, helpless, perishing. As a perishing sinner, I came for salvation to Christ Jesus; and, in His great mercy, He has made me a partaker of His great salvation. He has saved me—He has saved me from the practice of sin, from the love of the world, from the fear of death, and from the power of Satan. He has written His laws in my mind, and



shed His love through my heart. He has renewed me in His image, and conformed me to His example. For, He has taught me by His Spirit, pardoned me by His blood, justified me by His righteousness, sanctified me by His grace, and caused me to rejoice in hope of His glory!" "This saying," therefore, confirmed as it is by such triumphant testimony, "is faithful and true," and worthy of all belief. It is not "a cunningly devised fable" of man, but "the faithful saying" of God. It is an abridgment of the whole Bible, as sure as the Bible is sure. It is a summary of the whole Gospel, as true as the Gospel is true. It is, indeed, so holy in its nature, and so reasonable in its requirements;—it is so suitable to the state of man, and so worthy of the revelation of God;—it is so certain of producing holiness on earth, and so sure of bringing to glory in heaven;—that it contains internal and incontestable marks of truth. "This is a true saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Again :

2. *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.*

It is so inestimably precious, and so universally interesting; it is so wonderfully suited to the state of fallen man, and so freely offered to the acceptance of all mankind, that it is "worthy of all men to be received." Through crediting "this report," myriads of souls are now continually delivered from the deepest distress and anguish, and filled with the purest peace and joy. Through receiving "this

saying," millions of saints have been exalted from the toils and troubles of time, to the rest and felicity of eternity.

For, only through crediting "this report," or receiving this saying, can we enjoy solid comfort on earth, or obtain eternal felicity in heaven. "This saying is worthy of all acceptation." It is our interest, our duty, our privilege, our glory, to accept this faithful saying; it is our best interest, our first duty, our highest privilege, our greatest glory, to accept it. All must accept it, or perish; all may accept it, and live. If we accept it, we believe the truth of God, and secure the salvation of our souls; if we reject it, we disobey the word of God, and lose our souls for ever. This saying is worthy to be entirely and unconditionally received. For, neither merit, nor goodness, nor qualification of any kind is necessary in order to receive Christ Jesus as our Saviour. Nothing is required of us but a deep conviction of our lost state, and a full persuasion of his power to save. If we go to Him with this conviction and persuasion, "He will not cast us out." He will receive us as children into His family, and will make us partakers of His salvation. In receiving this saying into the heart, or in believing on Christ unto salvation, the help of the Holy Spirit is always needed, and this help is always bestowed on every penitent inquirer. To him, "that asketh, will the Spirit be given to make 'the faithful saying' the power of God to salvation." "To accept this faithful saying," is to receive it as the revelation of

heaven; it is to believe it as "the record which God has given of His Son;" it is to trust in Christ crucified alone for pardon and salvation. For, if we accept "this faithful saying," we shall be taught to rely on His blood and righteousness for the pardon of our sins and the justification of our souls, and be enabled to depend on His grace and merits for a meetness for heaven and for acceptance with God. To those, who thus receive Christ Jesus, power from on high is given to become the Sons of God; and, as they receive Christ, so shall they walk in Him. Their acceptance of Christ will be manifest by their temper and conduct; they will breathe His temper, and walk in His steps. For, they will be renewed by the Spirit in His likeness, and will live in holiness to His glory.

Here, then, finally: Here is *the Fountain* of all our spiritual blessings. Here is *the Charter* of all our glorious privileges. Here is *the Foundation* on which we build the salvation of our souls. Here is *the Title* by which we claim the inheritance of heaven. Here is *the Gospel of the Gospel*. Here is "THE FAITHFUL SAYING WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION, THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS."

1. *If, then, in conclusion, it is inquired, "On what ground we preach pardon and life to sinful and perishing men?"* we reply, "*Because Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*" For, the Son of God, though equal with God, assumed our nature, —came in mortal guise into our world, and "stood,

as man on the earth, in the latter days." When He had by his miracles proved his divine mission, and by his life had honoured the divine law, in obedience to his Father and in love to our souls, He offered Himself on the cross a sacrifice for the sins of the world. And now, through faith in His name, we preach salvation to all mankind. For, "the saying," which prophets foretold, which angels sung, and which apostles preached,—“the saying” which is “glad tidings of great joy to a ruined world;” “this saying, this faithful saying, is worthy of all acceptance.” It should be accepted with all the heart; and all mankind should accept it.

2. *Have you accepted this faithful saying? Have you believed this true report? Have you received this divine record, which God has given of his Son,—“That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?” Has the Gospel of Christ, through the work of the Spirit in your heart, become the power of God to your salvation? As helpless and perishing sinners have you received Christ Jesus into your heart as the only Saviour? Has he enlightened your mind, and renewed your heart? Has He saved you from sin, and enabled you to live in holiness? For salvation from sin, and activity in holiness, are the only certain proofs that we are saved by Christ.*

3. *What, then, shall we say to you, who, living as ye are, in sin and worldliness, have not received this faithful saying,—have not believed in Christ Jesus?*

“This saying,” however, is worthy of your acceptance; for it is worthy of all acceptance. It is

worthy of *you* to be received ; for it is “ worthy of *all men* to be received. Why, then, do you not receive it ? Why do you reject it ? Why do you continue in sin ? Why, since Christ came to save,—why will you die ? O harden not your hearts in sin, nor through the love of the world neglect the time of your visitation ; but, while the acceptable time continues,—while it is called “ *TO-DAY*,” listen to the voice of mercy, and receive this faithful saying, “ that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” “ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God ; for He will abundantly pardon.” “ For, this is the faithful saying ; this is the infallible truth ; this is glad tidings to a guilty world ; this is the blessed Gospel of the blessed God, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

But,

4. *Too many persons, boasting of their good hearts, and expecting heaven as a reward for their good deeds, feel no need of a divine Saviour, and receive not the faithful saying.* They fancy that, as they have not been such flagrant sinners as others, they can by their moral duties and religious services conciliate the divine favour, and merit eternal life. But as the *most vile* need not despair of salvation through Christ Jesus ; so the *most virtuous* must be saved by Christ Jesus, and by Christ Jesus alone. For “ there is no other name given under heaven among men, by which they can be saved.” If, therefore,



any of you are saying, in utter ignorance of yourselves, "I am rich, and have need of nothing;" it is our duty from Scripture to tell you, that in the sight of God, "you are wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and poor, and perishing." Whatever you may think of your own goodness, or wisdom, or strength, you can be eternally saved only by sovereign grace through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. For, none can be eternally saved except they be divinely renewed; none can be divinely renewed except they feel themselves perishing sinners; none will ever feel themselves perishing sinners, except the Holy Spirit convince them of sin. Conviction of sin is essential to the attainment of salvation. For, though Christ Jesus is able to save ten thousand ruined worlds, He will save only those who feel themselves perishing sinners. May the Spirit of God convince you of sin; and then lead you in penitence and prayer to Him, "who came into the world to save sinners."

But,

5. *To you, who feel that you are corrupt, and desire to be purified; who feel that you are sinful, and desire to be pardoned; who feel that you are perishing, and desire to be saved: to you we bring good tidings. "For unto you is born a Saviour, Christ Jesus the Lord."* "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Be not afraid to know the corruption of your nature, nor the sinfulness of your life; for you must deeply feel your dis-



ease before you will earnestly seek for the remedy. And the only remedy for your diseased and dying souls is in the blood and righteousness of Him, who died for our sins on the cross. Let neither the number, nor the aggravation of your offences, hinder you from coming to Christ; for He casts out none, but gladly receives all sinners, who come to Him for salvation. Believe, then, my brethren, in Christ Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners; and then, though your sins be as numerous as the sands of the sea, they shall be pardoned; though they be as red as crimson, they shall be as white as snow. For Christ Jesus is a Saviour exactly suited to your state. Are you ignorant? He is your wisdom. Are you guilty? He is your atonement. Are you corrupt? He is your sanctification. Are you weak? He is your strength. Are you lost? He is your salvation. Are you nothing? He is your all in all. He will teach and guide you; He will pardon and strengthen you: He will sanctify and save you for ever.

Finally :

6. *How blessed are you, my Christian brethren, who have accepted "the faithful saying," and have believed in Christ Jesus.*

Be thankful to God, whose grace has inclined your heart to receive his Son. Be careful in all things to adorn the doctrines of your Saviour. Let your light shine before men, that your heavenly Father may be glorified. But, Christians, while you are "in this body, and in this world," you must ever remember

that you are burdened with corruption, encompassed with infirmities, beset with enemies, and utterly unworthy of heaven. But remember, also, that Jesus Christ, "enthroned on the riches of the universe," is all-merciful to pity, and almighty to save. He has as much love for your souls now He is seated on his throne, as when He died for your sins on the cross. He has as much power to save you, presiding, as He now does, over all creatures, and over all worlds, as when He vanquished the might of death, and spoiled the hosts of hell. Look, then, ever look to Christ Jesus. His blood will cleanse your conscience from sin. His Spirit will dwell in your hearts. His grace will help your infirmities. His power will destroy your enemies. His merits will entitle you to heaven. And when He has completed His work in your souls, and made you meet for His glory, He will crown you with joy before His throne, and you will sing the song of salvation for ever and ever.

## SERMON XXIV.

## THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS.

1 JOHN i. 7.

*If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

LIGHT in Scripture signifies knowledge, and holiness, and joy; and darkness in Scripture signifies ignorance, and sin, and misery. In God is there no darkness at all; in Him there is not the least mixture of ignorance, of sin, or of misery. But, "God is light;" God is perfect knowledge, perfect holiness, and perfect joy. "And if we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

From these words we may contemplate two things: *the conduct, and the consolation of practical Christians.*

We are to contemplate,

## I. THE CONDUCT OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANS.

“They walk in the light as God is in the light, and have fellowship one with another.”

1. *They walk in the light, as God is in the light.*

Practical Christians, or believers in Christ Jesus, are “the children of light.” “Ye are all,” says the apostle, “the children of the light;” “ye were sometimes darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light.” “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.” Being thus enlightened from above, and become the lights of the world, they so let the light of their good works shine before men, that their heavenly Father is glorified. “To walk,” therefore, “in the light as God is in the light,” is to strive to “be holy as God is holy;” “and pure as Christ is pure.”

But, more particularly :

(1). *To walk in the light is to walk in knowledge—in the knowledge of ourselves, and in the knowledge of God in Christ.*

We must know ourselves as perishing sinners, and Jesus Christ as the only Saviour; we must know the Holy Spirit as the only Teacher of the soul, and the renewal of the soul, as the work of the Holy Spirit; we must know living faith as the hand which puts on Christ, and good works as the only evidence of living faith. We must know our corruption, our guilt, our helplessness, our desert of

endless punishment ; and with this knowledge we must depend on Christ for the pardon of our sins, for the justification of our souls, for a meetness for heaven, and for a title to eternal life. These doctrines, *as truth*, are written in the Scriptures ; *as knowledge*, they are taught by the Spirit ; and, *as wisdom*, they are through grace reduced to *practice*. To walk in the light, therefore, implies that we have been taught by the Spirit to understand, and enabled by the same Spirit to practise the great doctrines of the Gospel. And who will not pray for the Holy Spirit ? “Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth.”

Again :

(2.) *To walk in the light is to walk in holiness—in holiness of heart and life.*

We must be holy in heart, in temper, in thought, in language, in conduct. No sinful desire must be indulged ; no sinful disposition be allowed ; no evil word must be spoken, no evil action be committed. Recollecting that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, we must “keep them in soberness, temperance, and chastity ;” and taking the Holy Scriptures for our guide, we shall, in all our conduct, “do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.” In diligent prayer, in searching the Scriptures, in self-examination, in divine worship, in hearing the Gospel, and at the table of the Lord, we shall walk in holiness. By purity of intention and by integrity of heart ; by meekness of spirit and by gentleness of carriage ; by patience in



suffering and by forbearance in insult; by returning good for evil and blessing for cursing; by earnestness in our devotions and by heavenliness in our affections; by ceaseless labours of love and by constant deeds of righteousness; by continually "doing good to all men, and especially to the household of faith"—we must walk in holiness. The way to heaven is a holy way; heaven is a holy place; "and without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Further :

(3.) *To walk in the light is to walk in joy—in joy of heart and of the Holy Ghost.*

True it is, that practical Christians must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God; true it is that they who live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution in the world; but though they may be "always sorrowing" on account of sin and the world; yet may they be "always rejoicing" in the grace and salvation of Christ. Through faith in the atonement of Jesus, they are at peace with God; through the sprinkling of His blood on their conscience, they have peace within; and through the spirit of peace shed abroad in their hearts, they live in peace with all men. They may be in poverty, in pain, in trial, in persecution; yet nothing earthly shall deprive them of their joy; their afflictions may, indeed, abound; but their consolations shall superabound; they shall still have the peace of God and the joy of the Holy Ghost. When every earthly joy has vanished and every mortal support has failed, yet, we repeat, there remain for them, who



walk in holiness, the consolations of the Holy Spirit and the joys of eternal salvation. The darkness of sorrow may overshadow their path; yet, "light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart." "In the midst of the sorrows, which they have in their hearts, thy comforts, O Lord, shall delight their souls." God will lift upon them, as they walk in His way, the light of His countenance, and they shall go on their way rejoicing.

Practical Christians walk in the light, as God is in the light; by the guidance of the Scriptures, and through the help of the Spirit, they walk in knowledge, in holiness, and in joy.

Further:

2. "*They have fellowship one with another.*"

They are the body of Christ, and members one of another: for they are all baptized by one Spirit into one body; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

(1.) *Their EXPERIENCE is the same, and, therefore, they have fellowship one with another.*

They have the same conviction of their corruption, and the same sense of their guilt. They have repented with the same godly sorrow, and have believed with the like precious faith. They have been taught by the same holy Spirit, and are supported by the same heavenly grace. They are grafted into the same glorious stock, and derive life from the same immortal root. They ever feel the same disease of sin, and ever look to the same Physician of souls. They are assaulted by the same

enemies, and are liable to the same temptations. They have the same fears, and the same hopes,—the same sorrows, and the same joys,—the same persecutions, and the same encouragements,—the same chastisements, and the same consolations. Having thus the same experience of divine things, they have fellowship one with another.

Again :

(2.) *Their PURSUITS are the same, and, therefore, they have fellowship one with another.*

They delight in prayer to God, in reading the holy Scriptures, in hearing the blessed Gospel, in receiving the supper of the Lord. They not only worship in the same manner, but with the same mind. They worship the same Father, the same Son, and the same Spirit; and the grace of Jesus, and the love of God, and the communion of the Spirit, refresh and cheer their souls. They abound in the same good works, and walk in the same holy way. Fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, fellow-sufferers in the same tribulations, fellow-soldiers in the same warfare, and fellow-travellers in the same journey to the same country, they mutually exhort each other to activity and courage—to patience and perseverance. Supporting one another, and sympathizing with each other, they “rejoice with those who do rejoice, and weep with those who weep.” They are all children in the family of God—all brethren in Christ Jesus—all heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Having, therefore, the same pursuits of eternal things, they have fellowship one with another.

Lastly :

(3.) *Their OBJECTS are the same, and, therefore, they have fellowship one with another.*

It is their object to grow in grace, and to be meet for glory ; it is their object to advance the cause of Christ in the world, and to obtain a crown of life ; it is their object to do good to the souls of men, and to glorify the God of heaven. On these great objects there is, among practical Christians, a communion of consolation and counsel, and a union of labour and encouragement. Depending entirely on the Eternal Spirit, and guided entirely by the Holy Scriptures, they aim in all things at the glory of God, and ever strive to “receive,” through Christ, “a full reward.”

Verily, Christians have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ ; and, because “they have fellowship with the Father and the Son,” “they have,” in their experience, in their pursuits, and in their objects, “communion one with another.” “That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us ; and, truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

We proceed to contemplate,

## II. THE CONSOLATION OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANS.

“The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin.”

1. *Consider WHOSE blood it is that cleanses from sin.*

It is the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son and the Equal of God the Father. It is the blood of God. For God hath redeemed us with His own blood. "And unto Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be honour and glory for ever!"

Again :

2. *Consider WHAT it is that cleanseth us from sin.*

Jesus did not cleanse from sin by His teaching, nor by His miracles, nor by His tears, but by His blood. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin. We are washed from sin only in the blood of Christ; only by His blood are we brought nigh to God; "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of His grace." Nothing but the blood of Christ, the Son of God, could wash our souls from sin, or purchase heaven for our souls.

Further :

(3.) *Consider THE NATURE of cleansing in the blood of Christ.*

It implies the pardon of sin and deliverance from punishment; "we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sin." It implies the purifying of our nature, and the making of our souls meet for heaven. "Ye are washed in the blood," and sanctified by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ; "and having washed your robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," ye shall stand before the throne of God, and serve Him for ever in heaven.

Finally :

4. *Consider* THE EXTENT of *this cleansing in the blood of Jesus.*

“ The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” It cleanses from the love and dominion of sin : it cleanses from sins of nature and practice,—of body and mind,—of temptation and surprise. It cleanses from sins of the longest continuance, and the blackest kind. “ It cleanses ” freely, perfectly, eternally, “ from all sin.” What a commendation of the virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ ; and what a consolation to the heart of the Christian believer is this wondrous declaration, “ The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin ! ” This declaration silences guilt, and scatters doubt, and quiets conscience, and in the worst cases gives hope and peace to the soul. Had not this declaration been made, the best of Christians would sometimes despair of salvation ; and since it has been made, the chief of sinners may hope in Christ Jesus.

1. *What, my brethren, may I now, in conclusion, ask, do you know of these things?* What do you know of the holy conduct, and of the divine consolation of practical Christians? Are you walking in the light as God is in the light? Have you, as Christians, fellowship one with another, because you have fellowship with the Father and with His Son? Does the blood of Jesus cleanse you from all sin? Enlightened from above by the Spirit of God, are you walking in the knowledge of yourselves and of Christ,—in holiness of heart and life, in the comfort



and joy of the Holy Ghost ? With the same experience and pursuits and objects in spiritual and eternal things, have you, as Christians, “fellowship one with another?” Are you “cleansed from all your sin in the blood of Jesus?” Has the application of this blood to your conscience by the Spirit of God removed all guilt and defilement from your soul, and purified all your heart and conduct?—May Thy Spirit, O God, teach us the truth as it is in Jesus, and enable us to walk in His holiness! May He cleanse us from all our sins in His blood, and conform us in all things to His example, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord!

But,

2. *What shall we say to you, who are walking not in the light, but in darkness?* Who are living not in knowledge, in holiness, and in joy, but in ignorance, in sin, and in misery? Ye are living without hope, and without God in the world. “Light is come into the world; but ye love darkness better than light, because your deeds are evil.” You sin, and you know that you sin; you are miserable, and you often feel your misery. But, my brethren, consider your ways; forsake your sins; return to God by Christ crucified. “Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” in the blood of the Lamb, for “His blood cleanseth from all sin.”

But,

3. *Ye lowly penitents, who feel your corruption and your sins, and desire pardon and purity, but fear that your sins and corruption will exclude you*



from the blessings of salvation;—be not afraid, be not cast down, be encouraged. That blessed Spirit, who in wisdom has shown you your perishing state, will in love soon lead you to Christ, the only Saviour. And He is all-willing, and all-mighty to save; He is ever ready with open arms and with open heart to receive you; and His blood cleanseth from all sin.

And as ye would “with hearty repentance and true faith turn to God through Christ, come ye to the table of the Lord. And may God have mercy upon you; may He pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and finally, bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

Lastly :

4. *Christians!* “*Walk in the light as God is in the light, and have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse you from all sin.*”

Study the word of God, and it will “be a lamp to your feet, and a light to your path.” Walk in the light and truth of that word, and you will walk in holiness and joy. Keep at a great distance from worldly temptations. Have no needless intercourse with worldly men.” Be instant in prayer; cherish the Spirit; wash daily in the blood which cleanseth from all sin. Renew daily your dependence on Christ crucified for eternal life. Love the brethren; love all, who in sincerity love the Lord Jesus Christ. Have fellowship one with another

always, and especially at the table of the Lord. For “the cup of blessing, which we bless at the table of the Lord, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread, which we break at the table of the Lord, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” “For in the same night that He was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and said, “Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.” In the same manner he took the cup, and said, “This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye show forth the Lord’s death till He come.” And now, my Christian brethren, may ye all walk in the light as God is in the light, and have fellowship one with another until the Lord shall come in glory to take you to that world which needs not the light of the sun; for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

## SERMON XXV.

## THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

REV. i. 5, 6.

*Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father ; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

ST. JOHN begins his epistles to the seven churches with the usual salutation of grace and peace from the holy and eternal Trinity. "John to the seven churches, which are in Asia ; Grace be unto you, and peace from Him who is, and was, and is to come ; and from the seven spirits, which are before His throne ; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." The Father is here described by His eternity and self-existence, as "He who was, and is, and is to come." The Spirit is described by the dignity of His station, and by the perfection of His gifts, as "the seven spirits before the throne." And the Son is described by

His three-fold office of prophet, priest, and king, as “the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.” But the apostle, having mentioned the name of Jesus, rapidly contrasts the glory of His person with the extremity of His sufferings, and then bursts into a song of praise: “Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

Let us now inquire,

I. *Who is the person who has so loved us?* And

II. *What are the benefits which He has obtained for us?*

We are to inquire,

I. WHO IS THE PERSON THAT HAS SO LOVED US?

1. *The person*, who has so loved us, is variously described in this mystic book; He is described *by symbols and titles,—by attributes and honours,—by acts and gifts.*

*Mark His symbols and titles.* He is like the Son of man, robed down to his feet, and girt with a girdle of gold. His hair is white as snow; His eyes like flames of fire; His feet like fine brass glowing in the heated furnace. His countenance is like the sun shining in his strength; and His voice like the sound of many waters. He is the light and temple of heaven; the root and offspring of David; the bright and morning star. He is the Lamb that

was slain, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He is "Alpha and Omega;" "the first and the last;" "the beginning and the ending." He is "the Word and the Son of God;" He is the King of kings, and the Lord of lords."

Again :

*Mark His attributes and honours.* He is "faithful," "holy," and "true." He knows all things, and tries the heart and reins. He can do all things, and endures through all ages. "He was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty." He is seated on the throne of God, and has on His head many crowns. Elders and angels in light adore Him. Saints on earth contend with His word, conquer through His blood, die in His faith, and in His presence are for ever blest. The new and never-ending song of heaven is, "Salvation to God, and the Lamb."

Further :

*Mark His acts and gifts.* In His hand He holds the seven brilliant stars, and His feet tread among the seven golden candlesticks. He has the keys of hell and death, and rules as King all the invisible world. He opens the Sealed Book, and reveals the will of God. His is the Book of Life, and in it He writes or blots out names. He shuts, and no man opens; He opens, and no man shuts; He kills, and makes alive; He rewards and punishes. "Behold! He comes quickly, and His reward is with Him, to give every man as his work shall be." He feeds the saints with the bread of heaven, and leads them to living fountains. For He grants to them a right to

the tree, and gives them to drink of the river, of life. He gives them the hidden manna, the white stone, the new name, the crown of life, the throne of glory.

Such are the symbols and titles; such are the attributes and honours; such are the acts and gifts of Jesus Christ our Lord.

For,

2. Jesus Christ is He, *who loved us*. The love of Christ is free, disinterested, constraining, incomprehensible, everlasting. God delivered Israel from Egypt, and turned the curses of Balaam into blessings, because God loved Israel. Jesus delivered sinners from hell, and turned the curses of condemnation into the blessings of redemption, *because Jesus loved sinners*. The love of Christ for lost sinners is *eternal*; it is from eternity to eternity; and the plan of redemption is as eternal as His love. This plan springing from the eternal love of God in Christ Jesus, is of perpetual stability and everlasting duration. Jesus was perfectly happy in Himself from all eternity before any creatures or worlds were in being: and He would have been perfectly happy to all eternity, though creatures and worlds had never been; yet Jesus loved us. "*He loved us*." He loved *fallen men*, and not fallen angels; and therefore He took on Him not the nature of angels, but of men. He loved us, though *we loved not Him*; neither was there anything lovely in us. He loved us, who, though perishing without Him, neither sought nor desired Him. He loved us, when we were full of *hatred and enmity against Him*;



and He could receive nothing from us but opposition and rebellion.

In the manifestation of this love to the universe, the Father and the Son equally participate; the Father in sending His Son to die; the Son in being obedient unto death. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." "And this is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And "hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us." For, "God commended His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "And greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:" but such was the love of Christ, that He laid down His life for His enemies. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." "The love of Christ, in length and breadth, and depth and height, passes knowledge." Its source is unsearchable; its extent infinite; its influence invincible; its continuance sure; its effects everlasting. And "to Him, who thus loved us, be glory and dominion for ever and ever!"

Jesus Christ our Lord is the Person who has so loved us. And we now hasten to inquire,

II. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS WHICH HE HAS OBTAINED FOR US ?

He has made an *atonement for our transgressions*, and secured *sanctification for our souls*. “He has washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.” Rivers of tears could not wash away one sin; legions of angels could not redeem one soul; nothing could cleanse and redeem us but the blood of Christ; and Christ has redeemed us to God by His blood.

1. *He has made an atonement for our transgressions*: “He has washed us from our sins in His own blood.”

How defiled must be the nature of sin to need washing in the blood of Christ; and how precious must be the blood of Christ to wash away all the defilement of sin! And “He has washed away our sins in His own blood,” and restored to our souls the joys of salvation. From first to last,—from eternity to eternity, salvation is by the blood of Christ. For His blood is the blood of the everlasting covenant—“the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The blood of unnumbered sacrifices long typified His blood, and the voice of holy prophets long foretold the opening of “the fountain for sin and uncleanness;” and, in the fulness of time, Jesus was slain on the cross, the fountain of love was opened in His heart, and the stream of salvation flowed from His side. “This is

He who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.”—For,

It was not enough that He descended from glory and slept in a manger; it was not enough that He grew up in poverty, and had not a place where to lay His head; it was not enough that He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; it was not enough that He groaned and wept; it was not enough that He was continually persecuted by men, and continually assaulted by Satan. All this was not enough. His blood was required—His blood must be shed. And, He was bruised with rods, crowned with thorns, torn with scourges, spiked to the cross, pierced to the heart, “and forthwith came thereout blood and water.” From His wounded heart and through His pierced side flowed, we repeat, the stream of salvation. “He washed us from our sins in His own blood!” This is more than a golden sentence; it contains more than all uninspired volumes in the world; it contains the sum of the Gospel, “Salvation by the blood of the Lamb.”

“It is the blood which maketh atonement for the soul;” “and without shedding of blood,” there is for the soul “no remission:” the “blood of Christ, therefore, was shed for the remission of sins.” (Lev. xvii. 11; Heb. ix. 22; Mark xiv. 24.) For, “in Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.” (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.) By His blood the church was ransomed, heaven purchased, redemption completed. “We were far off, but His blood

brought us nigh ;” we were enemies, but His blood reconciled us to God ; we were altogether polluted, but His blood cleanses from all sin ; we had lost our title to heaven, but His blood purchases heaven for our souls ! (Eph. ii. 13 ; Col. i. 20.) By *His own will* He laid down His life for us on the cross ; by *His own power* He rose again for our justification ; and by *His own blood* He entered the holy place above, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12 ; i. 3.) By His blood we are saved from the power and pollution and penalty of sin ; by His blood we are saved with an everlasting salvation. “ While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ; that we, being justified by His blood, might be saved from wrath through Him.” (Rom. v. 9 ; iii. 24.) “ For He is a propitiation through faith in His blood for the remission of sins.” (Rom. iii. 25.) “ And if the blood of bulls and of goats with the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, is sufficient for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ suffice to purify the conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?” (Heb. ix. 13.) For the blood of Christ is “ the blood of sprinkling ;” it is the blood which, being applied to penitent believers by the Eternal Spirit, sprinkles their hearts from an evil conscience, and constrains their souls to universal obedience. (Heb. xii. 24 ; x. 22.) “ Through the sanctification of the Spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus,” they engage in the Christian warfare, and fighting manfully “ under His banner,” they overcome by the

blood of the Lamb. (1 Pet. i. 2; Rev. xii. 11.) Heaven is a purchased possession, and the price is the blood of Christ. He purchased the Church with His own blood; and, with His own blood, He makes His Church or people meet for heaven. Having washed their robes, and made them white in His blood, they stand in glory before His throne, and ever sing, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood!" (Acts xx. 28; Rev. vii. 14; v. 9.)

Thus has *Jesus made atonement for our transgressions*; He "has washed us from our sins in His own blood."

And, further:

2. *He has obtained sanctification for our souls*; He "has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father."

The Jews, as a nation, were a type of Christians; they were a nation of priests, a priesthood of kings. Christians, as we learn from the apostle, are also "a nation of priests,—a priesthood of kings,—a royal priesthood." In Christ Jesus, the kingly and priestly offices were united; and believers in Christ Jesus are made like Him,—they are made kings and priests unto God. Joshua, the high priest, as we read in Zechariah, (iii. 1, &c.) clad in filthy garments, stood before the angel of the Lord; and, on the right hand of the angel stood Satan, to accuse and resist him. At the command of Almighty God, the filthy garments of the high priest were exchanged for pure robes, and a fair crown was set on his head. Thus was it symbolically shown that his iniquity was passed away,



and his righteousness restored ; or that he was confirmed as a king and a priest unto God. Thus also does Jesus, when we believe in Him, wash away our iniquity in His own blood, clothe us with His own righteousness, “and make us kings and priests unto God and His Father.”

(1.) *He makes us kings.*

The Jewish kings, on their appointment, were enthroned, crowned, anointed ; they were invested with singular privileges, charged with special duties, armed with sovereign powers. Christians are kings. They are exalted to spiritual dignity, and invested with heavenly privileges ; they are divinely strengthened to control their sinful passions, and to subdue their spiritual foes. For Christ gives them the victory over their corrupt nature, “and they crucify the lusts of the flesh.” He gives them the victory over the world, and they renounce its pomps and vanities. He gives them the victory over the devil, and they detect his devices, quench his darts, and repel his temptations. He gives them the victory in all earthly trials, so that in tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, they are more than conquerors. He gives them the victory over death, so that when life expires, they can sing, “O grave ! where is thy victory ? O death ! where is thy sting ?”

Again :

(2.) *He makes us priests.*

The Jewish priests were washed, enrobed, anointed, and, thus consecrated to their office, they could



enter the Holy of holies, and offer the appointed sacrifices. Christians are priests. They are washed in the blood of Christ; anointed with His Spirit; enrobed in His righteousness. Thus are they always qualified to enter within the veil, and to bend before the mercy-seat; thus are they divinely consecrated to minister in holy services, and to offer spiritual sacrifices. They offer their bodies and souls a living and holy sacrifice to God; they offer to Him daily the gratitude of their hearts, the praises of their lips, and the labours of their lives. They do good to all men, but especially to the household of faith; they relieve the wants of the poor, and they send the Gospel to the heathen. As priests, they pray for their families, and for their country; for the church, and for the world. “They make supplications and intercessions for kings” and for rulers; for all in authority and for all mankind.

Further :

(3.) *He makes us priests and kings unto God and His Father.*

By His blood He has redeemed us to God, and made us priests and kings for His possession, and His service, and His glory. As *priests*, Christians offer to God their sacrifices of holiness and devotion and charity, not as meritorious services, but as living evidences of their faith, acceptable to Him only through Jesus Christ. For, though the offerer is defiled, and the offering defective, yet both are accepted for His sake.—As *kings*, Christians are put in possession of the kingdom of grace, in which they

reign in holiness to God ; and are made heirs of the kingdom of glory, in which they will be enthroned with Christ, and crowned with life. “ Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life ;” for, to him that overcometh, saith Christ, will I give to sit with Me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father on his throne.”

Such, then, is the DIVINE PERSON who has loved us ; and such are the ETERNAL BENEFITS which He has obtained for our souls : to Him, therefore, with every expression of adoration and gratitude ; “ to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

“ To Him be glory ;”—the glory of the Godhead as one with the Father ; and the glory of redemption, as the Saviour of sinners. “ To Him be dominion ;”—to Him be universal sovereignty, as King of all worlds, and everlasting homage as Lord of all creatures. May His kingdom come, and His glory fill the world. Amen ! So may it be ! So shall it be ! So let it be, O Lord, for ever and ever !

But, to conclude :

1. *Some persons, who call themselves Christians, deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

But, if He be not divine, how can He wear divine names, and possess divine attributes, and perform divine works, and receive divine honours ? If He be not divine, how can He atone for sin, or sanctify the church, or obtain the worship of God ? If He be not divine, how could the apostle ascribe “ do-

minion and glory for ever and ever to Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father ?”

Again :

*Other persons, who also call themselves Christians, deny the corruption of human nature, while they talk of the goodness of their heart, and of the innocency of their conduct. But, if we are pure in heart, and innocent in conduct, what is the meaning of our text ? Does the blood of Christ cleanse the pure, who need no cleansing ? and atone for the innocent, who need no atonement ? No, my brethren, we are not pure and innocent, but corrupt and sinful creatures, exposed in our natural state to everlasting punishment.*

2. *Have you, then, discovered the perishing state of your souls, and looked to Christ crucified for salvation ? Have you felt the influence of His love in dying for your souls, and the virtue of His blood in washing away your sins ? Has He “ made you kings and priests unto God ?” Has He “ washed you and sanctified you in His own divine name, and by the Spirit of our God ?” Do you mortify the lusts of the flesh, and overcome the enemies of your souls ? Do you offer to His Father the sacrifices of gratitude and righteousness ? Have you received into your heart the earnest of grace and the hope of glory ? Is He, even Jesus, who is gone to prepare a kingdom for His people, preparing your souls for His kingdom ?*

3. *But you, who live in sin, and idolize the world;—you, who forget your God, and neglect your soul;—you, who resist the Spirit, and deny the Lord, who bought you with His blood—you must be warned!* You are not washed from wickedness, but are wallowing in iniquity :—you are not kings and priests unto God, but slaves and factors of Satan ;—not heirs of glory, but of wrath ; liable every moment to die ; and if you die impenitent, or in your present state, how can you *escape*, or how can you *endure* the wrath of the Lamb ?

4. *But ye, who feel your corruption, and weep for your sins,—who confess your guilt, and pray for pardon, be encouraged to look to Jesus ;* for He loves the prayer of the penitent. You cannot look to Jesus through a better medium than the tears of repentance. Nor should you doubt His willingness to save ; for He died for the ungodly ; nor should you doubt His power to save ; for His blood cleanseth from all sin. Look, then, to Him, and be saved. Look, then, to Him, who loved you ; and He will “ wash away your sins in His own blood ; and make you kings and priests unto God and His Father.”

Finally :

5. *Ye believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, let His love to your souls take from you all conceit of goodness and merit ;* for He loved you when you were sinners, and died for you when you were enemies. Let His love constrain you to all holy obedience and to all brotherly love ; for He died for you that ye should live to Him, and love one another,

as He loved you. (2 Cor. v. 14.) Let His love encourage you in every conflict, and comfort you in every sorrow; for those whom He loves, He loves unto the end. He loves them as the Father loves Him, with an everlasting love. "As the Father hath loved me," says He, "even so have I loved you." For He who "loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood," will not forsake you in your sufferings, nor desert you in your conflicts, nor abandon you at death, nor leave you in the grave; but will raise you in His likeness from the dust, and bring you to His glory in heaven.

Ye may be, O believers in the Lord Jesus; ye may be a hated race and a despised people among men; but ye are "a chosen generation, and a royal priesthood unto God." You cannot too greatly admire the love of Christ, which was stronger than death; nor too highly prize His blood, which cleanses from all sin; nor too diligently cherish His Spirit, who makes you "kings and priests unto God and His Father." Duly value, and daily improve your high privileges. Daily confess your sins to your God and Father; daily pray for the pardon of sin through the blood of His Son; daily advance in holiness of life through the help of His Spirit. Thus daily live by faith in Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you; and thus be faithful and obedient unto death. Then will you after death serve God as priests, and reign with God as kings for ever and ever in heaven.



## SERMON XXVI.

## THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

REV. ii. 17.

*To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.*

THE beloved apostle was commanded to write seven distinct epistles to the seven churches of Asia. These epistles, though peculiarly suited to the churches to which they were first addressed, are yet meant for all the churches of Christ to the end of the world. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Our text is part of one of these epistles, part of the epistle to the church at Pergamos. "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."



In the text we have a *divine Giver, a victorious receiver, and a mysterious gift.*

Let us, then, speak of

### I. THE DIVINE GIVER.

The Speaker is the Giver; and the Giver is the Lord Jesus Christ. "To him," says Christ, "that overcometh, *will I give.*" The Giver is the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the ending; the first and the last. He was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty. He is the beginning of the creation of God. (iii. 14.) He is the Creator of all things; "by Him all things were made." He is the Preserver of all things; "by Him all things consist." (John i. 3.) He is the Holy One and the Just; the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness; the Wisdom and the Word of God. The Spirit of Jehovah was upon Him to preach good tidings to the meek. (i. 5; iii. 14.) He is the Lamb that was slain. (ver. 6.) The sacrifice appointed by God to take away the sin of the world. His blood cleanses from all sin; His blood makes white the robes of the saints in light; His blood purchases the kingdom of heaven. "He is the first begotten of the dead." (i. 5.) "He liveth, though He was dead; and behold, He liveth for evermore." He is the everliving Redeemer, and ever liveth to make intercession. He is the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, (xiv. 1,) "Head over all things to His church." His hands holds the seven stars; His feet walk among the seven golden candlesticks; His presence

abides “with His church even to the end of the world.” “He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne.” (vii. 17.) “To Him all power in earth and heaven is given;” He is “the Prince of the kings of the earth; He is the Lord of the angels in heaven.” “He has the keys of hell and of death;” (i. 18;) principalities, powers, dominions, thrones, all creatures and all worlds are put under His feet. On His head He has many crowns. (xix. 12, 13.) “He is King of kings, and Lord of lords;” “His kingdom is universal and everlasting. (xvii. 14; xix. 16; Dan. vii.) He shall reign for ever and ever.”

Such is the divine Giver; such is He who in our text says, “I will give.”

Let us next speak of,

## II. THE VICTORIOUS RECEIVER.

“To him that overcometh will I give.”

1. *Christ is the Captain of salvation; the Christian is a soldier of Christ; and the victorious receiver is the victorious Christian.*

But no man can be a soldier in the army of Christ, and overcome his spiritual foes, until he is born again of the Spirit. “Whosoever is born of God, he only overcomes the world.” “In our baptism, therefore, which is a sign of regeneration, (Art. xxvii.,) we are signed with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter we shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ’s faithful soldiers unto our life’s end.”

Again :

2. *In this warfare the soldier of Christ is clad in "the armour of God."*

This armour "is the armour of righteousness;" and because it is as beautiful as it is strong, it is also "the armour of light." His loins are girt about with truth; his heart is covered with the breastplate of righteousness; his feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and his head covered with the helmet of salvation.

The doctrines which the Christian soldier *believes*, being derived entirely from the word of truth, are the sole foundation and support of his soul. These doctrines, like a girdle, are bound round his heart. "*He is girt about with truth.*" He *practises* what he believes. He omits no known duty; he commits no wilful sin; he fulfils all righteousness; he has confidence towards God. His heart condemns him not; "*his heart is covered with the breastplate of righteousness.*" Through the shedding of the blood of Christ, he is *at peace with God*; through the sprinkling of that blood on his conscience, he has *peace within*; having imbibed the Spirit of Christ, he desires and labours to be *at peace with all mankind*. Wherever he goes, though a soldier, he goes in the spirit of peace, prepared to communicate "the gospel of peace" to all around. This spirit of peace, like the iron sandals of ancient warriors, qualifying them to tread on roads of flint, and spikes of steel, will enable him to pass unhurt through difficulties and dangers. "*His feet are*

*shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.*" While he believes the whole truth, and practises all righteousness, the hope of eternal salvation will, in his hottest conflicts, strengthen and cheer his soul. "*For a helmet he has a hope of salvation.*" Such is the *armour* of the Christian soldier. His *arms* are the *shield* of faith, the *sword* of the Spirit, and the Spirit of *prayer*. He exercises a lively faith in Christ Jesus, depending on His *blood* for pardon and justification, on His *Spirit* for grace and sanctification, on His *merits* for a title to heaven, on His *word* for the fulfilment of His promises. "*Above all, he takes the shield of faith.*" That he may march in the right way, and be prepared for every adversary, he "*meditates in the law of God day and night.*" He writes it in his understanding; he fixes it in his memory; he lays it up in his heart. With this word he fights; by this word he conquers. "He takes the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." All his strength to contend and to conquer, comes from his Lord in heaven, and is granted in answer to prayer. He is, therefore, "*instant in prayer, praying always, with all prayer, and supplication in the Spirit.*"

Further :

3. *The Christian soldier has need to put on all his armour, and to wield all his arms, for his enemies are numerous, and subtle, and mighty.*

*The world* is the enemy of the Christian. Its prince is the devil; its course is evil; its end is destruction; the Christian, therefore, separates himself from

sinner, and comes out of the world; and because he is not of the world, the world will hate and trouble and oppose and persecute him. But, "believing that Christ is the Son of God," he overcomes the world; "for this is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith."

*Natural corruption*, in Scripture styled *the flesh*, is the enemy of the Christian. "In our flesh dwelleth no good thing." "Our heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." St. Paul, feeling the flesh, or the law of sin, warring against the spirit, or the law of his mind, sadly exclaimed, "Who shall deliver me" from this enemy? But soon he gladly added, "I thank God that through Jesus Christ I may be delivered." And every Christian soldier, who relies on the sacrifice, and prays in the Spirit of his Lord, shall overcome and crucify the lusts of the flesh.

*Satan* is the enemy of the Christian. He is emphatically our adversary the devil. He possesses might and malice and subtilty, unknown. Even the Son of God prayed to be delivered from him in the hour of darkness. (John xii. 27; Luke xxii. 53.) He is the great deceiver of souls; and, in order to deceive, he transforms himself into an angel of light. He is the accuser of the brethren, and strives with fiery darts to be their destroyer. He has artful "wiles," and subtle "devices" to allure us into his hidden "snares," and then to plunge us for ever in his horrible "depths." (Rev. xii. 9, 10, 11; 2 Cor. ii. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 26; Rev. ii. 24; Eph. iv. 27.)



The Christian soldier, however, gives not place to the devil, but resists him stedfast in the faith; and, by faithful resistance, compels him to flee. With the shield of faith the Christian effectually quenches the fiery darts of Satan, and soon will he, as victor, triumphantly "tread him under his feet." (Rev. ii. 24; Eph. iv. 27; Rom. xvi. 20; Jam. iv. 7.) Whatever may be the trials of the time in which the Christian lives, or of the church of which he is a member, he endures hardship and maintains the fight as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Clad in the armour of God, and using the arms of the Spirit, instant in prayer and dependent on grace, inflexible in faith and unblamable in conduct, overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil, the Christian is obedient unto death; and, after death, enters as a conqueror into life in heaven.

We proceed to speak of

### III. THE MYSTERIOUS GIFT.

"I will give him to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

The mysterious Gift is two-fold; it is the "hidden manna, and the white stone."

1. "I will give to eat of the hidden manna."

(1.) The manna of the Israelites was a small and pearly grain, white as the hoar frost, round in shape, in size like coriander seed. *It was well adapted to support life, and was suited to every taste; it was*



*sufficient for the whole nation, and was afforded indiscriminately to the lowest servant, and to the highest prince.* They all partook of angels' food—all ate the bread of heaven. "They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink;" they ate of the manna which fell around their tents, and drank of the stream which followed them; and that manna, and that stream, was Christ. (1 Cor. ii. 3.) Had not the manna typified Christ, it would not have been spiritual food. The manna was the *figurative* bread,—Christ is the *true* bread from heaven.

(2.) Christ is called "the hidden manna," because He was *hidden* under the figure of the *visible* manna of the wilderness. The material manna was a sign and pledge of Jesus Christ, the spiritual and hidden manna. Man by nature can neither desire nor discover this spiritual food. It is "*hidden*," not only from the profane and ungodly, but from the wise and prudent in their own sight. It is "*hidden*" from all self-righteous and unregenerate men. It is "*hidden*" from the bodily eyes of the children of God, and is seen by them only with the eye of faith. It is revealed to them by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and is enjoyed by them only in "the mysterious commerce" of their souls with their Saviour. "It is the secret of the Lord, with them that fear Him." (See John xiv. 23.)

(3.) When the Jews said to our Lord,—“Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness,” He replied, “I am that bread of life—I am the true and living

bread, which was typified by the material and visible manna." "To eat, therefore, of the hidden manna," is to partake of Christ by faith, and through His death to obtain redemption from death eternal. "FOR THE BREAD," says Christ, "WHICH I SHALL GIVE IS MY FLESH, WHICH I SHALL GIVE FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD." To partake of Christ is from Him to derive spiritual life to our souls. "For the bread of God is He, who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." "And except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, *ye have no life in you.*" To partake of Christ is to receive from Him continual support for our spiritual life: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst;" "he that eateth Me shall live by Me." To partake of Christ is, through His Spirit, to live in communion with Him: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." To partake of Christ is to possess, through His death and resurrection, the glorious hope of resurrection to eternal life: "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; for he that eateth of this bread, shall live for ever." "To eat of the hidden manna," is, through faith, to partake of Christ crucified—it is to derive from Him new life to the soul, and constant supplies of grace to support and invigorate this new life—it is to live in communion with Him, and in this communion to enjoy the hope of resurrection to eternal life, together with an earnest and

a pledge of those joys which gladden the saints in heaven. (John vi. 33, 56.)

But, again,

2. "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

(1.) What is meant by the "*white stone*?"

In the courts of justice among the ancient Greeks, two sorts of stones were used in giving judgment. These stones were called "absolving and condemning stones." A white stone cast into an urn was a token of absolution; a black stone, of condemnation. "I will give him," says Christ, the Judge of all,— "I will give him a white stone; I will absolve him, pardon him, justify him." Hence will flow into his heart unspeakable peace with God, and a sure hope of public justification in the last day. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of glory." "I will give him a white stone:" I will not only give him full absolution or justification from all his sins; but I will enable him to know that he is absolved and justified.

For,

(2.) "In the white stone a new name is written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

He that receives the white stone, *knows the new name*, which is written upon it. What is this *new name*? When a man is born of the Spirit, he is brought into a *new state*, and becomes a *new creature* in Christ Jesus. In the heart of "the new creature" the Spirit of God forms the divine image, and writes

a new name ; and this new name is “ *Child, or Son of God.*” “ Upon him that overcometh, will I write my new name.” (Rev. iii. 12.) “ He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and *I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.*” (Rev. xxi. 7.)

*This new name indicates affection.* Christians, believers in Christ, are sons of God, “ the dear children, the beloved of the Father.” With them the Father is well pleased. Not satisfied with saying, “ I will be their God, and they shall be my people,” He tenderly adds, “ and I will be a Father unto them ; and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

Again :

*This new name indicates dignity.* When Abram received his new name, he became “ a father of nations.” When Jacob received his new name, he became “ a prince unto God.” Christian sars “ the sons of God,”—a name more dignified cannot be given to the sons of men.

Further :

The gift of the white stone with the new name implies the assurance of faith, or the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father ! “ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God ; and if sons, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs of Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. viii. 16 ; Gal. v. 6 ; 1 John v. 10.)

Finally :

On this point, the new name written on the white stone, and given to the Christian conqueror, teaches

that holiness of life, and the adoption of sons, are inseparable from justification by faith in Christ Jesus. The white stone is given only to the *conqueror*.

Again :

(3.) The adoption of the believer can be known only by the believer himself; and by him only in the inmost sanctuary of his own conscience. None else can apprehend its nature; none else can prize its excellency; none else can taste its joy. "No man knoweth this name, saving he that receiveth it." When the Spirit of God shines with holy light on His own work in the soul of the believer, the new name, written on his heart, becomes legible, and the believer reads it and knows within, that he is a son or child of God. By comparing the work of the Spirit in renewing sinners in the divine image, as that work is *described* in the Holy Scriptures, with the work of the Spirit, as it is *effected* in his own soul, he has not only an internal consciousness, but the witness of the Spirit in himself, that he is "a son of God." This internal consciousness, this witness of the Spirit, this divine adoption of sonship, this new name on the white stone, "none can know but he that receives it." We must hear music, before we can know its melody. We must taste honey, before we can know its sweetness. We must eat the hidden manna, and receive the white stone with its new name; or, in plain terms, we must believe in Christ, and obtain the assurance of faith; we must receive the adoption of sons, and possess the witness



of the Spirit, before we can fully know the preciousness of Christ. And this knowledge will in our soul enkindle a hope which is full of glory, and afford a joy which cannot be expressed.

In sum, then, the Divine Giver, in the text, is the Lord Jesus Christ; the victorious receiver is the zealous and holy believer of the Gospel; the mysterious gift is the life and assurance of faith,—the hope and the foretaste of glory. “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he who receiveth it.”

To conclude :

1. There can be no reward, where there is no victory; no victory, where there is no battle. We cannot be crowned, unless we conquer; we cannot conquer, unless we fight for Christ; we cannot fight for Christ, unless we are soldiers of Christ; we cannot be soldiers of Christ, unless we are born again of the Spirit. Only by this spiritual birth can we be enrolled in the army, or fight under the banners of Christ. Allow me, then, my brethren, to inquire, Have you been born of the Spirit of God? As good soldiers of Jesus Christ, are you now fighting under His banners against the enemies of your souls? If you are not thus fighting, you are not the soldiers of Christ; if you are not the soldiers of Christ, you are not born of the Spirit; if you are not born of the Spirit, you are in your natural state; if you are in your natural



state, you are lovers of the world, slaves of Satan, children of wrath. In this state you are totally ignorant of the hidden manna, of the white stone, of the new name. In this state you are totally devoid of the peace of God, of the comfort of the Spirit, of the hope of glory. If you continue to live, and die in this state, you cannot but perish. May God in mercy direct your hearts to Christ. And why, brethren, "why will you die?" Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He died on the cross to save you. He is able to save to the uttermost. He will cast out none that comes to Him for salvation. O that ye, who are not born of the Spirit, nor fighting in the army of Christ, would repent and return to God by His Son! O that ye would believe in Christ Jesus, that all the blessings of salvation might be yours!

2. But, *ye Christians, take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* "Soldiers of Christ, arise! and put your armour on." Put on the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of the Gospel, and the helmet of salvation. Grasp the shield of faith, and wield the sword of the Spirit. Pray with all prayer and supplication; pray instantly, pray always; and then, under the banners of Christ, you will, in your spiritual warfare, "go forth conquering and to conquer." "Your enemies, indeed, are powerful, and your conflict is arduous; but mighty is the succour given; high is the reward proposed." Under the Captain

of salvation fight the good fight ; and, through Him who loved us, you will be more than conquerors. You may, in your conflict, seem sometimes deprived of all succour ; but even then “ you shall have bread to eat, which the world knows not of.” Unrighteous men will condemn you, and cast out your names as evil ; but the righteous Judge will acquit you, and give you a name better than the name of sons and daughters. Your corrupt nature will often compel you to exclaim, “ O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from this body of sin ?” But your Saviour, from His throne, will make you strong in faith, and enable you to sing, “ Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory.” Satan will never cease to assault you ; but by the power of faith, and by the sword of the Spirit, you will put him to flight. “ For ye are of God, and shall overcome your enemies ; because, greater is He who is in you, than he who is in” them. (1 John iv. 4.)

The Lord Jesus will “ give you to eat of the hidden manna ;” and you shall “ feed on Him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.” “ He will give you the white stone on which the new name is written ;” and *His Spirit, assuring you of your justification through faith in His blood, will witness with your hearts that you are the sons of God ; and while He makes you meet for heaven, will give you holy earnest of eternal life.* To receive this adoption of sons ; to possess this witness of the Spirit ; to desire and to feel increasing meetness for heaven ; to partake and to improve fresh foretastes of glory ; all

this will, I repeat, “enkindle in your soul a hope which cannot be conceived, and afford to your heart a joy which cannot be expressed.” If such be your joy here, what will be your joy hereafter;—what will be your joy, when you shall shine in all the glory, and share in all the riches of Christ? What will be your joy, when your adoption into the family of heaven is complete, and your resemblance to the image of Christ is perfect? What will be your joy, when Christ justifies you before the assembled universe, and honours you as His own brethren? What will be your joy, when you are seated with your Saviour on His throne, and see Him as He is; when your life is united with His life, and your glory with His glory, for ever and ever?

May God enable you all to be faithful unto death; that, when dying, ye may say, “I have fought the good fight; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, and life.” Amen.

## SERMON XXVII.

## THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED.

REV. v. 12.

*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.*

GREAT and manifold are the names and titles which are given in Scripture to Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the Seed of the woman, and the Promised Seed : He is the Shiloh of Jacob ; the Ruler and Peacemaker from heaven : He is the Angel of the divine presence, and the Angel of the everlasting covenant : He is the Captain of the Lord's host, and the Captain of our salvation : He is Immanuel, God with us : He is Messiah, the Anointed, the divine Prophet, Priest, and King : He is the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace : He is Jehovah, the everliving Lord, the Lord our Righteousness : He is the power and the wisdom of God ; the Son and the equal of the Father : He is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Judge of the world : He is Jesus—the Saviour and Redeemer of sinners : He is the Mediator between God and man ; our Intercessor and Advocate

with God : He is the root and offspring of David ; the bright and morning star : He is the Sun of righteousness, and the Light of heaven : He is the King of kings, and King of glory : He is Lord of lords, Lord of hosts, and Lord of all : He is God over all blessed for ever. Such are some of the names which are given to Jesus Christ.

But,

There is no name in which our Lord so much delighteth ; no name by which He is so much celebrated in glory ; as, “ The Lamb that was slain.” This name tunes every heart and tongue in heaven ; this name is not only the separate song of saints and angels in the Church triumphant ; but it is thundered in harmony as the universal chorus by all creatures in all worlds, “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.”

In the following discourse, let us contemplate,

I. *The Lamb that was slain* ; and,

II. *The Lamb that is worshipped in heaven.*

We are to contemplate,

#### I. THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN.

Here we may notice,

##### 1. *The origin of His name.*

The blood of Jesus Christ is “ the blood of the everlasting covenant :” for He is “ the Lamb slain,” in the divine purpose, from all eternity. (1 Pet. i. 20, 21.) He is “ the Lamb” typically “ slain in sacrifices from the foundation of the world.” Adam was, doubtless, after his fall, divinely taught to offer lambs in sacrifice to God ; and “ Abel” afterwards, “ in

faith," sacrificed to heaven the first and finest lambs of his flock. Abraham, we know, was wont to offer lambs to God in sacrifice: "My father!" eagerly inquires Isaac, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" "My son," Abraham sadly replies, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." The reply of Abraham might, indeed, intimate more than he understood; but how true was this reply, both with respect to himself and to mankind—"God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." Every morning and every evening, under the Mosaic law,—on every sabbath-day, and on the great day of atonement in every year, lambs were offered in sacrifice to God. As types of Christ, "the Lamb of God," all these lambs were slain. But, "the paschal Lamb," the Lamb slain at the Jewish Passover, "the Lamb without blemish and without spot," of which, in offering, "not a bone was to be broken," was especially a type of Christ. For, we know, that when Christ was slain on the cross, this scripture was fulfilled,—"A bone of Him shall not be broken."

We may further notice,

2. *The innocence of His life.*

"He was A LAMB." He was innocent, pure, patient. "He was a Lamb without spot." He was, indeed, born of a woman; but, through the marvellous conception, He was secured from every taint of original corruption. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He was compassionate and kind, forbearing and forgiving. When



reviled, He reviled not again ; when injured, He avenged not Himself. He was mild and gentle in demeanour, meek and lowly in heart, just and devout in conduct. As there was no corruption in His nature, so there was no guile in His lips, and no evil in His actions. He was sinless, and incapable of sinning. He possessed every moral perfection ; He honoured every divine law. He exercised every grace without interruption ; He exhibited every virtue without defect. He went about everywhere, and always doing good. His whole life was one breath of devotion, one labour of righteousness, one lesson of wisdom, one act of beneficence. “ Which of you,” says He, “ convinces me of sin ?” His accusers could prove no charge against Him ; His judge could only pronounce Him faultless ; Satan had no part in Him. “ Doubtless He is a just person ;” “ Certainly this is a righteous man ;” “ Truly this is the Son of God.”

We may, again, notice,

### 3. *The violence of His death.*

“ He was SLAIN.” Christ our Passover—Christ our Paschal Lamb—“ Christ was slain for us.” As a Lamb He was seized and bound, and led away from solitude to slaughter. It had been foretold by the prophet, and it is recorded by the apostle, that “ He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” These words intimate, not only the innocence and patience, but the silent sufferings and violent death of Jesus Christ. As a Lamb, He nei-

ther complained before His judges, nor resisted His enemies. As a Lamb, He was pierced and nailed to the cross. On the cross He prayed for his murderers, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" On the cross He was wounded to the heart, and his life's blood gushed through the wound. Thus Christ was slain; thus was He cut off, not for Himself, but for us; thus was He judicially cut off to make atonement for our sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

We may on this head, lastly, notice,

4. *The efficacy of his sacrifice.*

Jesus, as a sacrifice, is *divinely appointed*. "He is the Lamb of God,"—the Lamb, whom God appointed "to take away the sin of the world." No other sacrifice could vindicate the equity of the divine government, or satisfy the justice of the divine law; no other sacrifice could atone for the guilt of sin, or secure the joys of heaven; God, therefore, so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son to die for sinners. The eternal Father appointed His Son to be a sacrifice for our sins; the eternal Son fully acquiesced in the divine appointment; and in our nature, and in our stead, died on the cross. "He took away our sin, by the sacrifice of Himself;" and "redeemed us to God by His blood." This sacrifice must be suitable, for infinite wisdom ordained it; and it must be sufficient, for divine justice has accepted it. The Son has died a sacrifice for our sins, and risen again for our justification: the Father has accepted the sacrifice,

which the Son has made ; and now, His government being vindicated, His law being honoured, and His justice being satisfied, “ He can be just; and also the justifier of them who believe in Jesus.”

Further :

The sacrifice of Christ is *vicarious*. He died in our place: He died for the sins of mankind. If mankind had suffered for their own sins, their sufferings must have been eternal ; but the temporary sufferings of Christ are more than equivalent to the eternal sufferings of all mankind. For, the dignity of his nature, as He was truly and eternally God, stamped infinite worth on his peculiar sufferings, and made them a sufficient atonement for the sins of a thousand worlds. Perfectly sinless, and altogether divine, yet Jesus suffered as a man, and as a sinner, in our stead. He not only endured our punishment, but bore our iniquity. Our iniquity was laid upon Him, and He bore it in his own body on the tree. “ He was made answerable” for our sin ; and our “ punishment was exacted” from Him. “ For He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us ; that we,” who knew no righteousness, “ might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Our sin was imputed to Him, and He died, as a sinner, in our place. His righteousness is imputed to us, and we, as righteous through Him, shall reign in life eternal.

Again :

The sacrifice of Christ *extends to all the sins of all mankind*. “ Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh

away the sin of the world !” In his wounded heart a fountain for sin and uncleanness was opened, whose streams flow on every side, and purify wherever they flow. From his pierced side streamed “that blood which cleanseth from all sin.” If all the sins of all the world were laid on one soul, that soul need only to wash in the blood of Christ, and he would be whiter than snow. For the blood of Jesus is “not only a propitiation for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.” Through the virtue of his blood, or for the sake of his sacrifice, it now seems fit “to Him, by whom are all things, and for whom are all things,” that every penitent sinner, who through grace believes in Jesus, shall be treated, not only as if he had never sinned, but as if he were perfectly righteous : he shall be pardoned and justified,—sanctified and glorified for ever.—But, the blood of Christ will not prove to any soul of saving efficacy, *unless it is spiritually applied*. Its efficacy is infinite ; but its efficacy is confined to its application. The Spirit of God must take “the blood of the Lamb,” and sprinkle it on our souls. The Spirit must convince our souls of sin, and then enable us, as perishing sinners, to rest for salvation on Christ crucified. When the blood of the Lamb is applied by the Spirit of God to the souls of believers, it saves them from sin and the world—it redeems them from death and hell—it bestows on them pardon and peace—it secures for them salvation and heaven. For, the love of Christ, in shedding his blood for sinners, *induces penitents to believe in his name, and to*

*keep his commandments.* And in those, who believe in the name of Jesus; or in those, who are washed in his blood, God beholds neither imperfection nor iniquity, neither pollution nor guilt. He beholds them in Christ, not only as pure and as perfect as angels, but as pure and as perfect as Christ Himself. For they are complete in Him; but, "being justified by faith in his blood," they live in holiness of life, and rejoice in hope of glory. While, indeed, they are in this body and in this world, believers in Christ must, for his sake and in his cause, be constantly exposed to trouble and warfare; but in all their sorrows and conflicts they shall be more than conquerors; and they shall "conquer through the blood of the Lamb." And, who are these conquerors, standing before the throne of God, and serving Him continually in his temple? Who are these, arrayed in white robes, and with palms in their hands? Who are these? "These are they, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Why," then, do you ask; "Why did the Lord Jesus lay aside his glory, and come into our world? Why did He become "the Lamb of God," and "die as a sacrifice on the cross?" "It was," we reply, "that all penitents on earth might be washed from their sins in his blood; and that all believers in heaven might sing before his throne, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

We now hasten to contemplate,



## II. THE LAMB THAT IS WORSHIPPED IN HEAVEN.

In heaven He fills the throne of God, completes the work of redemption, and receives the adoration of saints and angels. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." "Salvation to God and the Lamb."

*Contemplate, first, the station which in heaven He occupies.* On Mount Zion stands the Lamb that was slain. Mount Zion is a figure, both in earth and heaven, of the Church of God; and both in its militant hardships, and in its triumphant glories, Jesus stands, as its Defender and its King, in the midst of the Church. He shall overcome all who make war upon Him; for He is the King of kings, and the King of saints, the Lord of lords, and the Lord of all. (Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 10.) Or, rather Mount Zion is the city of the living God, the eternal city, "the heavenly Jerusalem." "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion;" and around Him were the hosts of angels, and the myriads of the redeemed. "And I looked again, and lo, in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God." Invested with almighty power, possessed of perfect wisdom, enriched with all the treasures of the eternal Spirit, the Lamb that was slain reigns in heaven on the throne of God, unrivalled King of all creatures and of all worlds.

*Contemplate, next, the office which in heaven He executes.* He only can open the book of the divine



purposes for the redemption of mankind. "Thou, O Lamb of God, art worthy to take the book, and opens its seals; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." (Rev. v. 1, 9; vi. 1.) He only can enable His people to overcome their enemies; and when by His might they have won the victory, He only can teach them to sing: "Now is come the strength of salvation, and the power of Christ; for we overcame by the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. xii. 11.) He only can communicate happiness to the saints in light; He only gives them to eat of the tree, and to drink of the river of life. For, the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them "with the hidden manna, and lead them to living fountains." (Rev. ii. 7, 17, and vii. 17.)

*Contemplate, further, the worship which in heaven He receives.* Angels ever glorious, and saints for ever glorified, worship before His throne. They sing with harp and voice before Him; "they sing the new song," the song ever new, "the song of the Lamb." "And I beheld, and heard ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature in every world, heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And they fell down and worshipped the Lamb." (Rev. v. 11, 13; xv. 3.)

1. *From this subject we learn the DIVINITY OF CHRIST.*

When the Eternal Father brought His first begotten Son into the world, He commanded all the angels of God to worship Him. And were heaven now opened to us, as it was to the beloved apostle, we should see all the angels of God worshipping the Son even as they worship the Father. For, “the four beasts rest not day and night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which is, and which was, and which is to come. And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever. 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.” (Rev. iv. 8—11.) Divine worship is here unquestionably given to God the Father, the Eternal Jehovah, the Creator of all things. Again: “And the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb; and with vials of odours, and with harps of gold, they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” Divine worship is here unquestionably given to God the Son, the Eternal Redeemer, “the Lamb that was slain.” And that, on this great subject, there might be neither doubt nor obscurity, all the angels in

heaven, joining the Father and the Son in the same immortal song, confirm this act of worship to the Son, and with the redeemed loudly sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;" and therefore, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, AND UNTO the LAMB FOR EVER AND EVER."

As, therefore, the same persons, in the same place, in the same posture, and in the same language, worship both the Son and the Father, we infallibly conclude that the Son, as much as the Father, is truly divine; or that the Son, equally with the Father, is "the Creator of all things; and "God over all, blessed for ever." Are all the saints and angels in heaven under a mistake in worshipping the Lamb that was slain? Are they all worshipping a creature? Are they all idolaters? Verily, "if the Scripture be the word of God;" and if "His word be truth;" if there be meaning in language, and understanding in man, then is Jesus Christ truly God, and then may we gladly join with saints and angels, and sing, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." From this subject then, we learn the divinity of Christ; and the divinity of Christ is the life of Scripture, the foundation of redemption, the sun and the glory of heaven.

Further :

2. *From this subject we infer the VASTNESS OF REDEMPTION.*

The scheme of redemption is divine. It never could have entered the mind of a creature, that God should die for sinners ; but it did enter the mind of the Creator, and “ God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Nothing but infinite love could suggest the idea, nothing but infinite wisdom could devise the plan, nothing but infinite power could execute the work of redemption. The great purpose of Jehovah in human redemption, reaches from eternity to eternity, “ according to the faith of God’s elect, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (Tit. i. 1, 2.) “ The eternal Father,” “ in the everlasting covenant,” appointed “ His eternal Son ” to assume our nature and to die in our stead, that by the pardon of our sins through faith in His blood, and by the renewal of our hearts through the power of His Spirit, we might be reconciled to Himself, and fitted for glory. According to this divine purpose, the earth was built to be the theatre of human redemption, and all the course of providence was ordained to prepare the way for its accomplishment. The Redeemer, appointed from eternity, and from the beginning of ages foretold in prophecy and typified in sacrifice, in the fulness of time came into our world, and died for us on the cross. The oblation of Himself, as a sacrifice for our sins, was not “ the effect of a

sudden impulse, but the execution of a deliberate purpose,—a purpose of inconceivable love,—a purpose formed in the depths of the Triune Counsels, in the depths of His own heart, and in the depths of a past eternity.” “ For, Christ gave Himself a sacrifice for our sins,” and a ransom for our souls, “ according to the will of God, and our Father.” (Gal. i. 4.)

Jesus Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Lord of glory; but He assumed our nature, and was crucified for our sins. For, through His incarnation, He became “ our Kinsman,” “ of one flesh and spirit with us,” and was thus exactly fitted for His office. In the same nature, under the same law, encompassed with the same infirmities, He was a substitute, in every way suited to be the Redeemer of lost mankind. And Jesus delights in the redemption of sinners. He delights, not so much in the name of Creator, of Preserver, or of Judge, as in the name of Redeemer. He glories, not so much in the work of creation, of providence, or of judgment, as in the work of redemption. He exults not so much in His attributes of power, of wisdom, or of righteousness, as in His redeeming love towards mankind. For the redemption of mankind excels all the works, and brightens all the attributes of God.

Nowhere does divine power appear so mighty, or divine wisdom so profound, or divine justice so awful, or divine mercy so abounding, as in the redemption of sinners by “ the Lamb that was slain.”



When Christ became incarnate to redeem sinners, God in Christ became visible, accessible, and altogether lovely. Greatly wonderful is the person of the Redeemer. He is both God and man; He is a personage at once the most elevated and the most lowly; the most majestic and the most merciful. Nothing but infinite wisdom and power could unite the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ. This union of the Godhead and manhood in the person of Christ, as the masterpiece of divine power and wisdom, "has no counterpart in earth or in heaven; no parallel in time or in eternity."\* "This union forms the mystic ladder, on which, between two worlds, the wondering angels of God ascend and descend, whose foot is level with the lowest dust of the earth, whose summit rises far above the highest splendors of heaven." Great is the work of redemption. "Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh;" God was crucified on Calvary; "God was seen of angels; preached unto the Gentiles; believed on in the world; received up into glory." "For the joy set before Him," Jesus endured the pain, and despised the shame of the cross; and is now exalted to the highest throne in glory, to be the wonder of heaven, and the adoration of the universe. For every creature in every world will unite in adoring the Lamb.

Greatly wonderful is the Person of the Redeemer; and wonderfully great is the manner of redemption. Man had sinned against God, and forfeited all title

\* R. Hall.



to heaven; the blood of God, therefore, was required to cleanse the immortal soul from sin, and to purchase an eternal heaven for the soul. For oceans of tears could not wash away the guilt of one transgression; nor could the labours of eternity merit one moment's joy in heaven. In the heart of Jesus, therefore, a fountain was opened, whence flows that healing stream, which cleanses from all sin; from the heart of Jesus was poured that precious blood, which purchases the heavenly inheritance. Christ suffered once since the beginning of the world. His suffering unto death on the cross, as the Lamb of God, is "a transaction never before exhibited, never more to be repeated; no similar transaction ever occurred on the theatre of the universe; no similar transaction will again occur in the annals of eternity." "The death of Christ stands," says a great writer, "amidst the lapse of ages, and the waste of worlds, a singular and a solitary monument;" but a monument of the inconceivable love of Jesus Christ to lost mankind.

Great and inexpressible is the price of redemption; it is the blood of the Lamb; it is the blood of God. "Ye are bought with a price; ye are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." (Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 19.) Great and unfailing are the effects of redemption,—deliverance from the eternal miseries of hell, and restoration to the eternal joys of heaven. "We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin;" and "worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has

redeemed us to God by His blood." (Eph. i. 7, 14 ; Col. i. 14 ; Heb. ix. 12—14 ; Rev. v. 9.) Finally : Great and everlasting is the extent of redemption. In the Lamb that was slain, men may see the darkest proof of the evil of sin, and the brightest display of the love of God to sinners. And, when angels saw the Lamb, first slain on the cross as "a sacrifice for sin," and then, in our nature, enthroned in heaven as "the king of glory," they would have new conceptions of the "justice of God" in punishing sin, and would receive new impressions of the "love of God" in redeeming sinners by Christ crucified. For, in the person, the incarnation, and the death of His Son, the Almighty Father made a new revelation of Himself to men and to angels, and exhibited a new spectacle of wonder to the universe. The death of Christ affects every order of being, in every state of existence, in every age of time, in every circle of eternity. It so exhibits the unsearchable treasures of divine grace to the study of angels, "that principalities and powers, in heavenly places, may know, by the 'redemption of' the Church, the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. iii. 10.) For, redemption does not terminate in deliverance from eternal punishment, and restoration to eternal happiness ; but opens to angels a new view of the government of God, and gives them a new song in the temple of heaven.

For, lastly,

3. *From this subject we perceive the* HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN.

The happiness of heaven is the worship of the Lamb. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and glory, and blessing." Jesus will, in heaven, appear with surpassing majesty as "the Lamb of God," but with equal mercy as "the Lamb that was slain." He will appear "as slain in recent slaughter." He will bear on His wondrous person the marks of all the indignities and cruelties, which on earth He endured. He will appear with bruising on His body and piercings in His hands and feet; and these bruising and piercings will be, to the redeemed in heaven, imperishable tokens of His sufferings for their sakes, and everlasting memorials of His love to their souls. For, though Jesus has on His head many crowns; yet the wounds, made in His temples by the crown of thorns, will, in the eyes of the redeemed, outshine every crown He wears!

Cleansed from all sins, and victorious over all enemies, the redeemed will stand in triumphant glory before the throne of God, because they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The praise of the Lamb will form their employment—the presence of the Lamb will make their heaven. "The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them;" for they shall partake the bliss of "sitting down at the marriage supper of the Lamb." "The temple of heaven," "the light of glory," "the throne of God," are "the temple, and the light, and the throne of the Lamb;" (Rev. xxi. 22, 23, and xxii. 1;) what, then, will be the happiness of the redeemed, who will

worship in the temple, and walk in the light, and rejoice before the throne of the Lamb for ever? For, if it be the greatest happiness of the redeemed on earth to see the Redeemer by faith through a glass darkly, what happiness will it be to see Him “without a veil,” “and face to face,” “as He is in heaven?”

The Redeemer will ever stand in the midst of the throne as the Lamb that was slain; the redeemed will ever stand before His throne as saved by His blood. He will ever see, in their salvation, the travail of His soul: they will ever see, in His blood, the price of their redemption. He will ever rejoice in them as His redeemed people, and they will ever rejoice in Him as their everliving Redeemer; and this ceaseless joy between the Redeemer and the redeemed will form the happiness of heaven. The redeemed in glory will ascribe their salvation neither to their own power nor merit; but “to God, and to the Lamb;”—to God, by whose love the Saviour was appointed, and to the Lamb, by whose blood salvation was procured. To the Lamb the redeemed will ever confess their obligations; to the Lamb they will ever sing the song of gratitude, “Thou hast, O Christ, redeemed us to God by thy blood! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.”

Gratitude to a human benefactor is the most delightful feeling below; gratitude to a divine benefactor is the most delightful feeling above. One ceaseless feeling of gratitude, one ceaseless act of gratitude, one ceaseless song of gratitude, will make

the bliss of heaven. Every feeling, every act, every song, of the redeemed in the worship of heaven, is a feeling, and act, and song, of gratitude to the Redeemer. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain ; for He has redeemed us to God by His blood."

To all angels, as well as to all saints, the Lamb that was slain will, through all the eternity of heaven, be an object of wonder, and a song of praise. The song of salvation, begun by the glorified saints and prolonged by the angelic host, will never cease. Saints and angels, through the worship and the happiness of eternity, will ever sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

To conclude :

1. *Those unhappy persons, who call themselves Christians, but deny the divinity of our Lord, may be deists or Mahometans ; but Christians they cannot be, because they cannot, as perishing sinners, rely on the blood of Christ for salvation, nor worship Him, whom all heaven worships, "The Lamb that was slain." Unhappy men ! who "deny the Lord who bought them ;" and trample on the blood, "which cleanseth from all sin !" Unhappy, too, are the men, who have heard of salvation through faith in the blood of the Lamb ; and yet will not, as perishing sinners, look to Him for salvation. They must, if they continue in unbelief, perish for ever ; and they will justly perish. "They will," saith the Lord, "be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the Lamb for ever." They must endure for ever*



“the wrath of the Lamb.” The love of Christ was shown when He was slain for sinners on the cross; His vengeance against sin will be shown when, in the last day, “the great men, and the rich men, and the mighty men, and the bondmen, and the freemen, and all men who rejected His sacrifice, will call to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?”

O ye, who have heard of salvation through the Lamb that was slain, and yet continue in worldliness and sin—linger no longer in the world; live no longer in sin; escape for your life; flee from the wrath to come; flee to Christ crucified. For the storms of wrath are collecting, and the day of wrath is approaching; and in that day, none will be able to stand, but those, “who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

For, on the cross, the Lamb of God was slain, and an atonement made for the sins of the world; the only place, therefore, where God and sinners can be reconciled, and where believing penitents can be justified;—the only place, where holy believers can receive the earnest of redemption, and whence dying saints can enter into the joy of their Lord—is the cross of Christ.

But,

2. *Ye penitents! Ye, who have discovered the corruption of your nature, and felt “the sinfulness*



*of sin ;*” ye confess to God your sins and guilt, and pray for pardon and holiness. Look to the Lamb that was slain on the cross : and look to the Lamb that is glorified in heaven. For whom was He slain on the cross, if not for sinners ? For whom is He now interceding in heaven, if not for penitents ? As the Lamb that was slain, He now appears in the midst of the church above ; but in that church, He sees not a more pleasing object than a penitent sinner. As the Lamb that was slain, He stands on the throne of God, to defend His people ; nor is there any of them, whom He more gladly defends, than the lambs of His flock. As the Lamb that was slain, He ever hears on His throne the song of angels ; but even that song is not more delightful to His ear, than the cries and the sighs of a broken heart. Be, then, penitents, encouraged to look to the Lamb that was slain. “ He is,” says our church, “ the very paschal Lamb, who was offered for us, and has taken away the sins of the world.” Look, then, to Him, and cry, “ O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us ;” and He will have mercy upon you. Angels now rejoice over your repentance, and soon shall you rejoice with angels, and sing “ Salvation to God and the Lamb.”

3. *Christians ! Holy believers in the Lord Jesus Christ ! Look up to the Lamb that was slain.*

By His blood He cleanses from all sin ; by His intercession He saves to the uttermost. Enthroned

in glory as the Lamb that was slain, He shews at once the efficacy of His atonement, and the prevalency of His intercession. For, "who is he that condemneth" you? "It is Christ, who died and rose again, (Rom. viii. 33, 37,) and now, at the right hand of God, maketh intercession" for you. He intercedes for you now with as much love as when He died for you on the cross. He will never forget the eternal purpose for which, in the fulness of time, He came into the world; nor will He ever forsake the souls for whom He died. Having been "wounded for our transgressions" on the cross, and having carried His wounds to heaven, He can never forget the souls for whom He was wounded.

Look, therefore, Christians, to the Lamb that was slain,—“to the Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes,”—the Lamb invested with almighty power, and possessed of perfect wisdom; and He will, in all your ways and warfare, give you grace and victory. Again: Look to “the Lamb that was slain,—to the Lamb that opens the sealed Book,” that “gives the hidden manna,” and “leads to living fountains;” and He will, by His Spirit, reveal His glory to your soul, and ye shall eat the bread of heaven, and drink the water of life. Finally: Look to “the Lamb that was slain;” to the Lamb who, now in glory, receives the adoration and love of saints and angels, and He will enable your hearts to sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive

power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." And "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever !"

THE END.

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