









SERMONS

PREACHED ON PLANTATIONS

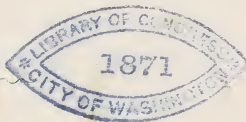
TO

CONGREGATIONS OF NEGROES.

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER GLENNIE,

Rector of All-Saints Parish, Waccamaw, So. Ca.



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P R E F A C E .

The following Sermons were written for the benefit of the Coloured portion of my flock. As the want of simple Sermons, suited to the capacities of the Negroes is frequently spoken of, I have made this selection from among those which I have been writing for several years past, and publish them in the hope that Catechists and religious Masters may find them of some use.

In conducting the worship of God upon plantations, my habit is, after concluding the service, to question the people assembled upon the Sermon which they have just heard, which enables me to dwell more at large upon matters briefly touched upon in the Sermon.— This practice, and the frequent use of our Church Catechism, is, I need scarcely say, the most important part of the duty of those engaged in the instruction of the Negroes.

A. G.

All-Saints Parsonage, Waccamaw, S. C.

THE PROFITS of the Sales to be applied to the AFRICAN
MISSION of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

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SERMON I.
CHRISTMAS DAY.

1 TIM. i. 15.—This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

WHENEVER we meet together for the worship of God, your attention is directed to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of lost sinners. The prayers which are offered up to God, are offered in the name of the same Jesus Christ. At baptism you were received into Christ's holy Church, and were signed with the sign of the cross, in token that you should always confess the faith of Christ crucified, and should continue his faithful soldiers and servants, unto your lives' end. You are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper, in remembrance of the body of Christ broken for you, and the blood of Christ shed for you ; and also, that you may spiritually feed upon him in your hearts by faith. You are taught to look to him, and him alone: to depend on him, and him alone: to pray in his name only for pardon and grace: to follow the footsteps of his most holy life: if, by the help of the Holy Spirit, you would so live in this world, as to have eternal happiness in the next.

At this time especially, would I direct your attention to Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of sinners, because the Church now keeps in remembrance his coming in the flesh. This is Christmas day: the day on which Jesus Christ was born. What then

can we do better, at this season, than think and speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, for us men and for our salvation coming down from heaven, and being made man? What can we do better, than give such attention to this, that we may live as his followers ought to live, and may become partakers of the salvation which he brought to man?

In my text, from St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, the Apostle tells us, in few words, why we must always be looking to Jesus: he says, "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

"Christ Jesus came into the world." Where did he come from? Every tongue is ready to say, he came down from heaven. He said to his disciples, "I came forth from the Father." We read of him, in the Holy Bible, as the Son of God: the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever: without beginning and without end: the mighty God: he is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost. From this state of glory and majesty did he come, when he came into the world to save sinners. What love ought we sinners to feel towards him! And how ready should we be to shew our love to him by a willing obedience!

But in what condition did he come? Did he appear in the world in a state of great power and glory? No: it is written, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "God was manifest (*i.e.* he was seen) in the flesh." He who was God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. You see how low our Lord Jesus Christ stooped, when he came to save sinners. He that was the Lord, in heaven, took the nature of man

on earth. And he did not appear as a great and rich man, but he took the form of a servant. When born of his virgin mother, he was laid in a manger : he spent all his days in a state of poverty : when going about preaching his gospel, he said of himself, " the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head : " and you know what sorrow of soul, what pain of body, he endured. Is it not amazing, that the Lord from heaven should bring himself down so low as this, that he might save lost sinners ? Oh if you feel this as you ought to do, the love of Christ will constrain you, not only to trust in him as your Saviour, but also to be obedient to him as your Lord and Master.

When our Lord Jesus Christ came from heaven, and humbled himself so greatly, he came " to save sinners. " You know that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were made holy and happy, in the image and likeness of God. When tempted by the devil, they fell from that holy state, and became sinners : they broke the law of God, and their hearts became inclined to evil rather than good : they fell into a state in which they were subject to the anger of God, and to endless punishment in hell. All mankind are descended from them : all are born in sin : and if it were not for the love and mercy and goodness of God, all would live in sin, and would suffer the pains of hell forever. But Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners : to save them from living in sin in this world, and from suffering the pains of hell which their sins deserve. For this purpose he took the body of a man, that he might in that body suffer the punishment which men deserved, set them free from the anger of God, and open a way by which they might again become holy

like God, and fit for heaven. He died upon the cross a sin-offering for the whole world : on him the sin of all people was laid, that all people through him might become clear of the guilt and punishment of sin. And the Bible teaches us, that if any will repent of their sins, and believe in him who so died for them, for his sake their sins shall be forgiven ; for his sake they shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, to make their hearts holy and clean, and to help them to walk obediently in the way of God's commandments.

Thus it was, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; and there is no way in which we can be saved but through him ; it is his blood which cleanseth from all sin : it is his Spirit which makes us new creatures, teaches us to repent of our sins, and to trust in him, and enables us to lead a new life.

That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, is a faithful saying : thanks be to God that it is so. The Bible, the holy word of the God of truth, is full of this matter. Let us thankfully take it home to our hearts, and learn and love the truth as it is in Jesus.

This saying is also worthy of all acceptation : it is worth every one's while to receive it, and live upon it : it is indeed most worthy, for if any are so foolish as not to receive Jesus for their Saviour, they must be lost forever ; there can be no hope for them.

Now do you, all of you, my brethren, receive this saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ! Do you receive this, and live according to it, in the hope of going to heaven ? Do you look upon yourselves as among the sinners that Je-

sus came to save ; and in consequence, are you so repenting of your sins as to forsake them ? Do you kneel down upon your knees every day before the holy God, and confess to him that you are miserable sinners, deserving his anger ; and at the same time look to Jesus who was crucified for you, and pray that for his sake your sins may all be forgiven, that they may all be blotted out in his most precious blood ? Is it your care too to pray, that the Holy Spirit may abide in your hearts, making you faithful followers of Jesus Christ, willing servants of God, obedient to him in all things ?

This is what you ought to be doing, if you would have your souls to be saved. This is what you ought to be doing, if you would have Jesus Christ to save you from living in sin in this world, and from suffering the punishment which your sins deserve in the next. Seriously think of these things, I pray you : and may God bless you, and make you true followers of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners.



SERMON II.
GOOD FRIDAY.

ISAIAH liii. 5.—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.

IN this chapter the Prophet Isaiah speaks of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, dying for our sins. This prophet lived seven hundred years before our blessed Saviour so humbled himself, as to come down from heaven, to be “made in the likeness of men.” But the Holy Ghost taught him to speak, so many years before, of our Lord Jesus Christ. And by this divine teaching, he was enabled to tell of our Saviour’s wonderful birth, and of all he should do, and teach, and suffer, when he should come into the world to save sinners.

In the verse which I just now read to you, the Prophet declares how our Saviour died for our sins, and how we are made clean from sin through his great sufferings and death. I desire now to speak to you upon this subject, because this day is Good Friday, the day on which our Lord gave his life for the life of the world. And in doing this, I cannot do better than go through the account of our Saviour’s sufferings and death, which we have in the New Testament.

The Jews had a feast, called the feast of the Passover, which they kept every year at this season, in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt,

by the hand of God, in the days of Moses. Our Lord Jesus Christ was keeping this feast along with his twelve disciples, for the last time, when, knowing that in a few hours his body would be broken and his blood shed, "he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you : do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper, he took the cup ; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of this : for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins : do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." In this way did our Lord ordain the Sacrament of the Lord's supper : and " the holy Church throughout all the world " is continually, by means of this holy Sacrament, " shewing the Lord's death," and will continue to do so " till he come " again.

After thus instituting the Lord's supper, he went out of Jerusalem along with his disciples, and entered into a garden called Gethsemane. He there said to them " my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death : " and he was withdrawn from them a little way, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, " Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. " He prayed in this way three times, " and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. "

How great were the sorrows of our Lord Jesus Christ, even before he was crucified ! How was his soul pierced through with sorrows ! and do we ask why he thus " began to be sorrowful and very

heavy?" Sin was the cause of his bitter sorrow. "The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all." Oh think of his sorrows, of his agony of soul and bloody sweat, and see the hateful nature of sin. Look to Jesus, suffering so much for you; mourn for your sins, and cry for mercy through him.

After our Lord had prayed thus, and had endured this agony of soul, Judas, the wicked disciple, who had gone away to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, came with a company of men to take him. And what did this wicked traitor do? He acted as if he had been a dear friend; he came to him and said, "hail Master!" and kissed him. Oh what a wretched condition this man was in! He suffered the devil to enter into him; and was then brought to do this most wicked deed. Let us watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation as he did, and betray our Lord and Master.

Jesus Christ permitted his enemies to take him; who bound him, and led him away first to the High Priest, and then to Pontius Pilate, the governor. They set up false witnesses against him, and accused him of many things, wishing to have him crucified. But Jesus answered not a word: as it had been written of him by the Prophet Isaiah, seven hundred years before, "he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

Pilate saw that he had done nothing amiss, and that the Jews were full of malice and envy: and he wished to let him go; but they kept crying out, "let him be crucified;" they also begged Pilate to release to them Barabbas, who was a thief and a

murderer, instead of Jesus. And at last they prevailed upon Pilate to do as they desired, and he gave him up to be crucified. But while they were accusing him, and before they led him away to crucify him, they treated him most shamefully. They spit in his face, and beat him with their hands; they scourged him, making long furrows in his back with the whip; they dressed him up in a purple robe, and mocked him; they put a crown of thorns about his head, and beat him on the head with a reed. How grievous were the sufferings of our dear Lord! But when you think of all the shame he endured, and the pain which he was made to feel: remember that sin was the cause of all his sorrows; be filled with godly sorrow on account of your many sins; and cry for mercy through him, who so loved you as to suffer so much to save you.

After they had mocked the patient Jesus, and had acted towards him so cruelly, they led him away, and made him carry the cross to which they were going to nail him. But we may well suppose that after all their cruel treatment of him, he was not able to carry so great a weight: they therefore made a man that they met take the cross and carry it after Jesus. When they had gone out of Jerusalem, to a place called Golgotha, there they crucified him, nailing him by his hands and his feet to the cross, and leaving him to hang in this most painful state. Oh what a sad sight was that! But remember that "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree:" remember this; and mourn over your many sins.

The Jews, to try and make it appear that he was the chief of sinners, crucified two thieves along

with him, placing Jesus between them. To such a length did the wickedness of their hearts carry them: and so low did our Lord Jesus Christ stoop to save us miserable sinners. But did the holy Jesus complain? Had he any hard feelings against these wicked men? No: he prayed for his murderers: he said "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What an example is this my brethren! you say that you believe he died to save you: see that you follow this example, and from your hearts forgive every one who may offend you; praying to God to forgive them, even as you hope He will forgive you.

After they had nailed him to the cross, do you suppose that the Jews stopped persecuting him? No: it is written that they reviled him, they mocked him, they derided him, as if they took pleasure in his sufferings. But "when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." Oh let us pray much for the Holy Spirit, that we may have the same mind which was in him.

But now a most wonderful thing happened. Although it was the middle of the day, there was darkness over all the land, which lasted for three hours: there was also an earthquake, and the rocks were broken, and the vail of the temple was rent in two. Thus the sun in the heavens withdrew its light, and the earth was moved, when the Son of God was hanging upon the cross. And shall we hear of these things without being moved in our hearts? Let us rather pray that our hearts may be pierced with sorrow for our sins, as our sins added so much to his sorrows.

After enduring the pain of the cross for three hours, Jesus cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Surely the sin of the world, and God's anger against sin, was grievously oppressing him, when the bitter sorrow of his soul made him cry out thus! After this, Jesus said, I thirst: and one standing by, filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and put it to his mouth: and when he had received the vinegar, he said, "it is finished:" every thing is done to take away the sin of the world, and reconcile man to God. "It is finished;" my body is broken for the sin of man, my blood is shed to wash away man's guilt, and now "the kingdom of heaven is open to all believers." When our Lord had cried again with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:" and having said thus, he bowed his head, and died.

Such, my brethren, is a short account of what our Saviour suffered, when he came into the world to save sinners. And in thinking of his sufferings as you all ought to do continually, think of the love of Christ in coming from heaven and giving himself to so many sorrows for sinful man. God so loved the world, as to send his own dear Son to be the Saviour of the world. The Son of God so loved us, as to come and take our nature upon him, and die the painful death which I have been describing to you. Think of this, and adore him, who so loved us.

Again. You know that it was for sin our Saviour died. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities." You say that you believe this. But will he save one of you, unless you so repent of your sins, as to for-

sake them and lead a new life ? He surely will not. And if you are not careful to keep the solemn promises which you made at your baptism, praying always for the gift of the Holy Spirit to help you, your belief in the death of Jesus Christ for the sin of the world, instead of doing you good, would only increase your condemnation in the day of judgment. As then you know what great sufferings Jesus Christ endured to save you from living in sin, and from going to hell : Oh shew your love to him by giving up whatever is sinful, and walking daily in the way of God's commandments. Watch and pray that you may do so, and then you will surely find that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin : that he is your strength, and comfort, and hope now ; and will be hereafter your exceeding great reward.



SERMON III.

EASTER SUNDAY.

MATTHEW xxviii. 5, 6.—The angel answered and said unto the woman, fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

AT this season every year, we keep in remembrance the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As last Friday was the day on which he died for the sin of the world, we call that day Good Friday. You know that on the third day after he died, our Saviour rose up again. This great event happened on Sunday morning, the first day of the week; therefore in the services of our Church on this day, which we call Easter Sunday, we keep in remembrance the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I wish now to place before you what the Bible tells us about him, after he had died upon the cross.

About the time that Jesus died, the Jews, desiring that the bodies might not be hanging on the cross on the next day, which was their Sabbath day, begged Pilate “that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.” It was common to do this to those who were crucified.—“Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: but one of

the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water." God had foretold of him, in the time of Moses, fifteen hundred years before, that a bone of him should not be broken; and he had taught his Prophet Zechariah to say, six hundred years before, "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn." How wonderful is God, to have foretold these things so long a time before, and then to have made them happen exactly according to his word! Let us praise and adore him always. And when we think of our blessed Saviour hanging upon the cross, let us, by faith, look upon him who was pierced for our sins, and mourn for our many sins, which added so much to his grievous sorrows.

After our blessed Saviour had died, and had been thus pierced with the spear, a rich man, named Joseph, of the town of Arimathea, went to Pontius Pilate, and begged him to let him take away the body of Jesus, that he might bury it. Pilate, as soon as he knew that he was dead, gave him leave to do so, and commanded that the body of Jesus should be given to him. Joseph, when he had bought some fine linen, took the body down from the cross, and wrapped it in the fine linen, together with a quantity of spices: for that was the way in which the Jews prepared the bodies of their dead for burial. After this, Joseph placed the body in a new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: it was a kind of cave, cut into solid stone; and when he had placed the body there, he came out and rolled a large stone against the mouth or door of the cave. All this was done on Friday afternoon, and thus did God provide, that the body

which our Lord had taken, in order to redeem lost man, should be taken care of in death, and be decently buried; he had foretold by his Prophet Isaiah that he should be "with the rich in his death."

The next day was the Sabbath day among the Jews: and the Chief Priests and Pharisees, who had been so anxious to put Jesus to death, came together unto Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that, that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." You see here, my brethren, to what lengths the love of sin made these Jews go: they were so blinded by unbelief, their hearts were so hardened, that they called our blessed Saviour, that deceiver. O take care how you live: if you do not watch continually and pray for grace to strengthen and guide you, you will surely fall away from God. If you begin to grow careless about your souls, it is so easy to become worse and worse, that you cannot tell where you will stop, but will be in danger of perishing. Let this then often be your prayer,—
"from hardness of heart and contempt of thee, good Lord deliver us."

The Jews went on to say to Pilate, "command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people he is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first." Pilate said unto them, "ye have a watch, go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch." These Jews, by fastening the stone upon the mouth of the sepulchre, and by placing a guard of soldiers to prevent any one coming to it, intended to put a stop to the

religion of Jesus Christ at once: but God turned all their malicious doings to the advancement of his glory; and by this great care which the Jewish rulers took to prevent any thing like deceit, we are made the more sure that Jesus rose again by the mighty power of God. And the Lord will always bring to nothing the plans of the wicked. They think themselves very wise; they think that they can do this or that, just as they please; but they forget that there is a God in heaven, "who ordereth all things according to his will;" and sooner or later they are made to feel, that their wisdom is indeed foolishness. Learn then, my brethren, to live in the fear of God: if you seek and serve Him as you are taught in the Bible, he will surely save your souls alive; but if you disobey Him, he has power to destroy you, both body and soul in hell.

This sealing of the stone, and setting a guard of soldiers to watch that no one came to the grave, was done on Saturday, the second day on which the body of our Saviour was in the tomb. Very early the next morning, [Sunday,] the first day of the week, a number of good women came to the sepulchre. They had followed Jesus to the cross, and had witnessed his great sufferings there: they had seen where Joseph of Arimathea had laid his body; and their love to him had been such, that they determined to show still greater respect to his body, by getting some more spices and anointing it again. So, very early on Sunday morning, having prepared the spices, they set out to go to the sepulchre. On their way, "they said among themselves, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for it was very great." But before they got there, a very wonderful thing had

happened. "There was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it:" and then it was that the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead. But what became of the guard of soldiers who were set to watch the tomb? Could they prevent the earth shaking?— Could they keep the angel from coming down from heaven? Could they stop him while rolling away the stone? Could they keep Jesus in the grave?— No: the Bible says, "the countenance of the angel was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him, the keepers did shake and became as dead men." And what can man do against God? Oh that all the wicked would think of this, and would turn without delay to Him with all their heart, and seek his mercy and grace through Jesus Christ.

But though the angel appeared so terrible to this guard of soldiers, he said to these pious women,— "fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." And as they were going, "behold Jesus met them, saying, all hail! And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." We are told also, in the Bible, that he remained upon the earth, after he rose from the dead, for forty days; during which time he shewed himself to his disciples very often, and taught them many things concerning his religion, charging them to go into all the world to preach his gospel, and to baptize all people, and to establish his holy

Church, which shall continue to the end of the world.

Now, my brethren, this doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is one of the greatest importance. He came, as we are taught, to die for the sin of the world. When he hung upon the cross, he bore in his body the sins of all people. But if we were not sure that he rose up again, we might fear that he had not been able to save us ; that death still had power over him, and that we could not escape the pains of hell. Now, however, as he rose from the dead on the third day, we feel sure that all that he did and suffered while he was upon earth, was quite sufficient to make peace between God and man. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we feel sure that he destroyed the power of the devil ; that he gained the victory over hell, and death, and the grave. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we know that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and that whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Oh what a comfortable hope you may have in you, if you will only be true followers of him who died for us, and was buried, and rose again.

We are also taught, that as Jesus Christ rose up from the dead, so shall all mankind rise up again in the last day. You, my brethren, who are here met together, must, in a very short time, die : your bodies will, in the grave, turn again to dust, and your souls will go into the place of departed spirits ; but on the day of judgment, at the end of the world, your bodies shall be raised from the dead, and be joined again to your souls ; and how will you appear in that day ? Shall you then inherit a blessing or a curse ? Shall you then be found fit for

heaven, or be condemned to the pains of hell? This is what you should now be anxiously considering. You should often seriously ask yourselves, 'where shall I be after the day of judgment?' Such a question is always important, but especially so at this time, when we remember the resurrection of our Saviour. You are taught, that if, through his merits, you would rise up to glory at the last day, you must here, in this world, die to sin, and rise again unto righteousness. How often have you heard these words of the baptismal service: "remembering always that baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him: that as he died and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." You, who by baptism have been made members of Christ's Church on earth, and have been dedicated to the service of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are here very plainly taught how you must be living, if you would be also members of the Church in heaven. You must "follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and be made like unto him." And how is this to be done? You are here told, as Christ died for your sins, so you must die from sin—even as you promised to do; when you promised to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh. As Christ rose again for you, so you must rise up from the death of sin to a life of righteousness—even as you promised "to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life." You must mortify, that

is, put to death, all your evil and corrupt affections, all the bad desires of your hearts; and must daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living; must daily live more to the glory of our great God and Saviour. But you know, that of yourselves, you cannot do this. Such is the weakness and corruption of your nature, that you cannot, without the grace of God, renounce sin, and lead a godly life. And when you are asked how you can believe and do as you ought to, you answer, "by God's help, so I will."

Seek then His help—seek in diligent prayer the gift of the Holy Spirit, looking, with believing hearts, to the one Mediator between God and man, even to Jesus, "who died and was buried, and rose again for us;" and by the grace given to you, you will learn to forsake all sin, and to follow the example of Christ: you will learn to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: you will learn to set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.



SERMON IV.

EPH. vi. 7.—With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.

IN this part of the word of God, servants are taught with what mind they ought to do their service. They are told to do what is required of them “with good will:” and to do it, “as to the Lord, and not to men.”

What a blessed book the Bible is, my brethren ! It speaks comfort to all people in every station of life : it shows how every one must live here, so as to please our heavenly Father. He, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, has in his word forgotten none of the children of men. All may learn, from that holy book, how their souls may be saved, through the merits of the death of Christ.—And in addition to this, every one, in whatever condition he may be, will find in that holy book what his peculiar duties are. Thus, ministers are taught in the Bible, how they ought to preach the gospel, and how they ought to live, so as to glorify their Saviour Jesus Christ. The rich are taught in the Bible, how they must do good with their riches ; and the poor, how they must be contented with the portion that God has given them : and both rich and poor are taught how to lay up treasure in heaven. Parents are told in the Bible, how they must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; and children, how they must obey their parents. Masters are taught in the Bible, how they

must rule their servants, and servants how they must obey their masters. Truly this holy word of God is a blessed gift indeed: and how greatly blessed shall we all be, if we diligently seek the help of the Holy Spirit, that we may be "doers of the word and not hearers only!" I will now read to you the whole of this passage out of God's holy word, which is written especially for your instruction. "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ: not with eye service as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart: with good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." This passage from the Bible shews to you, what God requires from you as servants; and there are many other passages which teach the same things. You should try and remember these parts of the Bible, that you may be able "to do your duty in that state of life, unto which it has pleased God to call you." For although a bad servant may not wish to know what God requires of him, yet a Christian servant will desire to know this, and to do his will in every thing.

Our Heavenly Father commands that you, who are servants, should "be obedient to your masters according to the flesh;" that is, to your earthly master, the master that you serve here while in the body. Here is a very plain command: "servants be obedient:" be obedient to your masters. A bad servant will not try and obey this command. A worldly minded servant, who is not living in the

fear of God, will neglect this command. But you, who call yourselves children of God, will do his will and be obedient to your earthly master. You can every day give proof that you wish to serve God, by your ready, your cheerful obedience.

You are here directed to be obedient to your master "with fear and trembling:" that is, you ought to feel so anxious to discharge your duty faithfully, as to feel afraid of giving offence by any conduct that looks like disobedience; for, by disobedience, you not only offend your earthly master, but you sin against God, and of this every Christian servant will be afraid. A bad servant will be afraid only of the punishment which he will receive, if his disobedience should be found out. But a Christian servant must look up always to his heavenly Master. Therefore, if you love God, whose children you were made at your baptism, you will do every day all that you have to do, with fear and trembling; that is, in the fear of God, knowing that he would be angry with you if you neglected your duty. If you love the Lord Jesus Christ, who shed his blood for you, you will do your daily work with fear and trembling; lest, by any act of disobedience, you bring reproach on him whose name you bear. If you desire that the Holy Spirit should abide in your hearts, you will not willingly be disobedient, being afraid that this Comforter and Sanctifier would forsake you, if you paid so little attention to the plain word of God.

You are here commanded to be obedient, "in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ:" that is, do not be double-minded, professing to be one thing, but really being another; but in your duty to your master, have a single heart; an honest, upright, and true heart, as unto Christ; knowing that he

sees your heart, and will not be pleased with double dealing. A bad servant does not follow this word of God at all. Instead of a single heart, he has a double heart. He is one thing before his master's face, but another thing behind his back. A bad servant, too, never thinks of living "as unto Christ." He does not desire or try to be a follower of Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross for his sins. He turns his back upon the love of Christ, and will not seek him that his soul may be saved. You, however, who call yourselves servants of Jesus Christ, who have been baptized in his name, who often "shew his death" in the Lord's supper, will, if you are indeed his, do all your duty as to him—having a single heart, having this one desire, to be obedient in all things: and you should make it a part of your daily prayers, that by the help of the Holy Spirit you may glorify our God and Saviour by a simple obedience.

This part of the Bible goes on speaking of the same matter in different words; it gives "line upon line and precept upon precept;" because it is what all of us ought to keep in mind, that we must engage in our several duties, with a desire to please God, and with a fear of sinning against him. It says, "not with eye service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." Do not attend to your work only while your earthly master's eye is upon you; but remember that the eye of your heavenly Master is always upon you: do your work as serving Christ, look upon your daily tasks as "the will of God," and do them "from the heart," with a hearty desire to please God. A bad servant is an eye servant, doing the work required of him, so long as his

master's eye is upon him: he has no regard to Christ our Saviour; and, instead of the will of God, he thinks only of his own will, and the desires of his own evil heart. But you, who profess to be "the servants of Jesus Christ," will, if you are indeed his, do all your duty faithfully, whether the eye of man is upon you or not; you will feel that such is the will of God; and you will daily watch and pray, that by the help of the Holy Spirit you may "do the will of God from the heart."

The word of God goes on teaching you the same thing. It says, "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." A bad servant will very often do his service with a very bad will; he will try many ways to deceive his master, and will do as little for him as he can. You, however, who call yourselves the servants of Christ," will, if you indeed belong to him, aim at doing your service "with good will;" you will pray that your will may be subject to the will of God, so that you may "do service" cheerfully, "as to the Lord, and not to men."

This passage of Scripture ends by telling you to remember, that the day of judgment is coming, when every one, in every condition of life, shall receive according to what he has done in the body. It says, "knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." We are here told, that in the day of judgment, the inquiry will be: What have we done in this world; how did we live in this world? It matters not, we see, in what condition we have been here: it matters not whether we be bond-servants or free men: it matters not whether we be among the high and the rich, or

among the low and the poor : we shall in that day receive according as we now live. If we now live as obedient followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we shall, through him who loved us, inherit everlasting life. But if we are not true believers in him, if we are disobedient to his word, we can inherit only everlasting misery. With regard to you ; the disobedient servants amongst you, the unfaithful, the deceitful, the ungodly servants, unless they repent and turn from the service of the devil to the service of God, shall surely “ be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” Whilst the obedient servants amongst you, the faithful, the true, the godly servants, who are living “ as the servants of Christ,” “ doing service as to the Lord and not to men,” shall, if they continue steadfast unto the end, be blessed forever.

As you ought to understand well what is the will of God respecting you, I will read to you again this part of the Bible. “ Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ ; not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart : with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men ; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”

The great duty, my brethren, which all of us have to attend to, is, to keep the Lord always before us ; to live as in his sight—to act as his servants—to remember the account which we shall all have to give before his judgment seat. Try and live in this way. Pray to God to teach you

by his Spirit to look always to Him; and think much of those blessed mansions of peace, which our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ is preparing for all who truly love and serve him. In this way you will learn to live happily, you will do all your service with good will, and "will run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."



SERMON V.

ACTS v. ii.—And great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things.

WHAT things could these have been, which brought great fear on all the Church, and upon as many as heard them? Perhaps if we have these things told us, some of us may learn to fear the Lord God more than we do. The things here spoken of are, the awful and sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, for telling a lie. The story, as it is told in the Bible, is enough to fill our hearts with fear, before that great Being, “who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.” I beg of you, therefore, to give close attention to what I now say, and see how much God hates a lie, and how surely he will punish those who love a lie.

Soon after our Lord Jesus Christ had gone up to heaven, he sent down the Holy Spirit upon his Apostles, and his other disciples. After they had received the Holy Spirit, the Apostles began to preach the gospel, and to do many wonderful works in the name of the Lord Jesus. Many people were converted by their preaching, and the Church of Christ grew larger and larger every day. But many of these first Christians were very poor, and all of them were hated by the Jews and the heathen people, and were often persecuted, and treated very shamefully by them. Therefore, that the poor Christians might have food to eat and clothes to put on, and that they might be able to help one

another in times of persecution ; it became a common practice, for those who had any property, to sell it all, and to bring the money to the Apostles : and the Apostles gave to those Christians who were in want.

At the time that many were helping their poor brethren in this way, and were giving up every thing that they had, so that they might preach the gospel continually, without being hindered by the cares of this world, we are told, that "a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price; his wife also being privy to it; and brought a certain part, and laid it at the Apostles' feet." You see how deceitfully they acted : Ananias sold his land, and then he and his wife agreed together to keep back a part of the price of it : and they brought the other part, and gave it to the Apostles, as the whole price of the land. Oh how much sin there is in the heart of man ! As the Bible indeed says, "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." What could have made these people tell such a wilful lie ? Perhaps they wanted the praise of men, they wanted men to talk of them, as giving up every thing that they had to Christ : or perhaps they were covetous, and wanted to get something every day from the common stock, while they had something of their own too : however it was, they knowingly and willingly told a lie, and brought ruin upon their souls.

We must suppose that they thought, that nobody knew it : it may be, that no man did know it. But does religion teach us to think only of the good will of man ? Far from it : it teaches us to keep the Lord always before us : it teaches us to drive

temptation from us, by saying, "how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" And if Ananias and Sapphira thought that they could deceive man, could they deceive God? No: to him "all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from him no secrets are hid." He knew that they had agreed together to tell this lie.

O how foolishly, as well as sinfully, wicked people act. They forget that the all-seeing eye of God is upon them, and that their sin will surely find them out. And on this occasion, the Lord taught his Apostle Peter, to see through the deceitful conduct of this man and his wife. For when Ananias brought him the money, "Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

What a word is this, my brethren! "Why hath Satan filled thine heart?" This wretched man, when tempted to keep back part of the price of the land, did not resist the temptation, and the devil entered into him, as he did into the heart of the traitor Judas: he took full possession of him, and brought him to tell this lie to the Apostles, to men who were full of the Holy Ghost: and therefore, he lied, not unto men but unto God. Oh what a miserable condition wicked people are in! Satan fills their hearts: the devil has possession of them: they give themselves to serve him. Are there any of you in this sad condition? Is there one here, who is willing to live and die a child of the devil?

Oh let it not be! Think of the great love of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who came to destroy the works of the devil, who came and died to save us poor sinners out of his hand. Repent of your past sins: look to Jesus with believing hearts; pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you to Jesus, that you may be turned from the power of Satan unto God.

Those of you that will live without religion, that will commit any kind of sin, whenever your hearts tempt you to do so; do you ever think who it is that you are wilfully sinning against? What did St. Peter say to Ananias? "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Think of this, you that love the ways of sin. You have been fearlessly opposing the great and holy God. Ought not this thought to fill you with fear and shame and sorrow! And when you remember how good he has been to you, how he has borne with you, how he still lets you live, ought not his goodness to you, to bring you to repentance? It ought indeed. Oh let not his goodness be thrown away upon you, but rather turn to him and live.

What happened to this wretched man Ananias, when St. Peter charged him with lying, not unto men but unto God? We read, "and Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost." While the words of the Apostle Peter, were still in his ears, he fell down before all that were present, and died: died with deceit in his heart: died with a lie in his mouth: died a willing servant of the devil, the father of lies. What a heavy judgment was this, my brethren! Does it not shew you how God hates a lie? Does it not tell you that lying lips are an abomination unto him? Does it not convince you, that those how

continue to live guilty of this sin, shall be punished forever? What says the Bible about it? It is written, "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

After Ananias had fallen down dead, we are told, that "great fear came on all them that heard these things." Well might people fear at witnessing such a judgment as this! And ought not you to try and keep the fear of God always before your eyes? Do not be tempted to say, as too many wicked people do, oh nobody will know it: nobody will see it: remember that God is always looking at you. He sees all that you do; he hears every word that you say; he knows all that you think about; and he can in a moment strike you dead: he is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. Knowing these things, fear him, so as not willingly to offend him, and seek his mercy and grace and love always, through his Son Jesus Christ, who died to make your peace with him.

Ananias having died so awfully, "the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him." What a blessing it would have been, if the shocking sin of lying had been buried in his grave; but too many persons follow his wicked example, instead of being warned by his miserable death.

We are next told about his wife Sapphira. "It was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in." She came in, not knowing that the lie, which they had agreed to tell, had been found out, and that her husband had been struck dead so suddenly. "And Peter answered unto her, tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, yea, for so

much !” Poor wretched creature, she little thought that God, the searcher of hearts, had made known to Peter the lie that they had agreed to tell. As I have already said, the wicked always seem to forget that the eye of God is upon them. “Peter said unto her, how is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.”

This, my brethren, is a most sad account. Here were a man and his wife, who by baptism had been brought into the Church of Christ: who professed to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ: and we find them yielding so readily to the temptation of the devil, and agreeing together to tell a lie, when they ought to have been helping each other to live as servants of Christ, of whose Church they had been made members. And how awfully did they die with a lie in their mouths.

Let their sad history be a continued warning to each of you. “Satan filled their hearts to lie to the Holy Ghost.” What can save you from his power, but the grace of God? Watch then, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Jesus has died for you, and promises to help you. His word is, “my grace is sufficient for you.” While therefore you strive to speak the truth always, and to resist the devil in every way, look to Jesus, look to him for the forgiveness of your past sins: look to him for the grace and strength which you want; without him you can do nothing, but you may do all things

through him who gives spiritual strength to all who call upon him.

Again: I have already supposed that Ananias and Sapphira thought that nobody would find out their lie. Do any of you indulge in secret sins, or tell lies, deceiving your hearts, by thinking that no one will know it? Do not go on living so: you can hide nothing from God, and if you are not found out in this world, a day is coming, the day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known; and how full of horror will that day be to you, if you go on in this world telling lies, or living in any kind of sin.

My Brethren, the time is very short; you do not know how soon your life may end. As long then as God, in his goodness, permits you to live, make the best use of your time. Repent every day of all your sins past; every day seek pardon and mercy, and grace from God, through the merits of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: give yourselves, through the help of the Spirit, to walk always in the way of God's commandments, and you may then hope, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to meet your death in peace.



SERMON VI.

JAMES III. 5.—“The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.”

WHAT the Apostle St. James speaks of in this chapter of the Bible, is a great matter indeed.—Attend to me while I go through it verse by verse; and pray God to give you his Holy Spirit, so that your ears may be open to hear what he says about the sins of the tongue.

The passage begins with this saying, “in many things we offend all.” This, we must know, is most true: “there is no man that sinneth not:” “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” And you will be in a fair way to grow better, if with sorrowful hearts you can make this confession, and can cry to God in the name of Jesus Christ, “Lord have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.” But after saying that we all offend in many things, St. James goes on to speak about one kind of sins; sins which are very abominable, and hard to be gotten rid of; not too hard, however, if we diligently seek the grace of God. I mean the sins of the tongue. He says,—“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” You see how important a thing it is to rule the tongue: he that does not offend in word; he that, by the help of the Spirit, keeps his tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering, and from all

foolish talking, has gone on so far in the way of holiness, as even to be called a perfect man; one who is able, through the same Holy Spirit, to serve God in every right way. If then you would have God to love you, as his dear children in Jesus Christ, watch against the sins of the tongue: pray without ceasing in the words of David, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips."

St. James next speaks of the tongue, being so small a thing, and yet doing so much mischief.— He compares it to a bridle and a rudder. A bridle is a small thing; yet, when put into a horse's mouth, the largest animal may be held with it, and we turn him about just as we please. So with a ship, the rudder is one of the smallest parts of it, yet, he that steers the ship has it in perfect command, and can turn it one way or another, just as he pleases. "Even so, the tongue is a little member:" it is, indeed, a little member, one of the smallest in the body; but small as it is, "it boasteth great things:" it makes a loud noise, and has the power of doing either a great deal of good, or a world of mischief. Surely then a Christian ought to keep constant watch over that little member, the tongue.

St. James then speaks of the tongue, as a fire, and says, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." Put a little spark of fire to any thing that will burn, and what a great blaze is soon made! "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity." It is, indeed, like a fire in this wicked world: the mischief done by one evil tongue runs like wildfire; there is no knowing where it will stop. "So is the tongue among our members,

that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature ; and is set on fire of hell.”— What an account of the tongue is this, my brethren : but it is too true—the evil tongue “ is set on fire of hell : ” the devil entering into the heart, fills it with every bad passion, and the tongue gives vent to the wickedness conceived there. The heart is filled with deceit, and the tongue gives utterance to lies : the heart is filled with lust, and from the tongue is heard lewd and filthy speaking : the heart is filled with malice, and envy, and hatred, and the tongue shews it in quarrellings, and backbiting, and setting people one against another. Is it not so, my brethren ? You know it is. Perhaps you have suffered from the evil speaking of others ; perhaps you have, yourselves, been keeping alive this mischievous fire in the world, with that little member, the tongue. If you would be clear of these monstrous sins ; look to your hearts ; out of the heart of man, says our Saviour, comes every kind of wickedness : and if your hearts are changed by the Spirit of God, your tongues will cease to speak evil : if the love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, given to you in answer to your prayers, out of the abundance of the heart your mouth will speak his praise. Learn then to use another prayer of David, “ make me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

St. James goes on : “ for every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind : but the tongue can no man tame ; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” Does not this cry shame upon us, my brethren, that we can take any fierce and

wild animal, and tame or subdue it; but we cannot tame the tongue of man? That we cannot tame and correct the tongue of the liar, of the blasphemer, of the evil speaker, of the angry and quarrelsome? Yes, and does it not prove how exceedingly corrupt man is, that even one who is trying to be a good follower of Jesus Christ, does not always rule his tongue, but at times speaks hastily and unadvisedly! Oh how deeply is sin rooted in us: but he who is indeed looking to his only Saviour Jesus Christ, will endeavor to watch and pray always, that the words of his mouth may be only good.—With too many, however, the tongue is an unruly evil, an evil hard to be governed, and full of deadly poison: like a poisonous snake hurting all within its reach: by its wicked and foul speaking injuring the souls of others, and occasioning their eternal ruin. It is a little member, but how much misery it will bring about, unless it is bridled by the word and spirit of God. Take heed how you give the loose rein to your tongue: it would be better to speak nothing, rather than by evil speaking injure your neighbor's character, and be the occasion of enmities and quarrellings. It would be better to speak nothing, rather than, by blasphemous and foul speaking, ruin your own souls, and endanger the souls of others. O take heed how you speak; and give yourselves to prayer, that your words may be seasoned with the salt of the gospel of Christ.

St. James next says, "therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."—What a shame it is that this can be said: with the

tongue we bless God, and with the tongue we curse man. It ought not so to be, but the shameful truth stands written against us in the Bible : out of the very same mouth, there come at one time prayers and praises to God ; at another, cursings, and lying and every abominable kind of speech. Can this heavy charge be brought against any of you ? If so, repent of this your grievous sin, and learn in future to use your tongues to the glory of God, and the good of each other. St. James then asks these questions, “ doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter ? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries ? or a vine figs ? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.”— And if this is so, what a shocking thing it is, to have it said of any of you, that sometimes words of goodness and piety come from your mouths, at other times, words of hatred, and bitterness, and filthiness. And shall we not all have to give account for all the words of our lips ? Most assuredly.— Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who once came to die for our sins, will come again to judge all mankind : and he tells us, “ that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment : for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Think of this, you that love to be evil speakers ; think of the day of judgment, you that love to curse and swear, to tell lies, and to use your tongues for any thing but good. Remember all of you these words of our Saviour, “ every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” And O let the love of God, in teaching you the way to heaven through Jesus Christ, lead you to repentance, and to the serving

of him with all your heart. Especially, keep a watch upon your tongues. As I have already said, pray continually in the name of Jesus: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips." Pray always for the gift of the Holy Spirit: and if after the example of our Saviour, you are trying to do the will of God, the Holy Spirit will abide in your hearts, teaching you how to live in every way, to the glory of him who loved you, and gave himself for you.



SERMON VII.

ROMANS VI. 28.—For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE apostle St. Paul speaks in this text about death, and also about eternal life. He speaks of death as the wages of sin: he speaks of eternal life as the gift of God. He speaks of death as being earned by the sinner; it is the wages, the pay which he receives for living in sin: he speaks of eternal life, the gift of God, as being obtained through Jesus Christ our Lord. These are indeed great matters: we have here life and death; eternal life and eternal death set before us. No subjects can be of such importance to us. I pray you to give serious attention while I speak to you about them.

The apostle first mentions death as the wages of sin. You know that when God created Adam and Eve, he made them in his own likeness, after his own image: that is, he made them holy and happy, in a state in which they might have lived happily forever. When he placed them in the garden of Eden, he gave them permission to eat of the fruit of every tree, except of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. With regard to that, he said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." When tempted by the serpent, the devil, they did eat of this forbidden fruit, and then God said to Adam, "dust thou art, and unto

dust shalt thou return." This is what he gained by his disobedience: death was the sad wages which he received for his sin. And must not all people die? Do not all, after remaining a little time on the earth, return to the dust from whence their bodies are taken? Yes, we know that this is so: as all are born in sin, and commit much sin all their days, they must die, "for the wages of sin is death."

But does death here mean only the leaving this world? Does it mean only the soul leaving the body, and the body being committed to the grave? No: it means much more than this: the Bible speaks of another death: the second death; which is a state of endless punishment: this miserable condition is the wages of those who will not serve God as the Bible teaches, but who live in sin, and die impenitent, unpardoned sinners: these will all find that the wages, the pay for which they have spent their life, is death, eternal woe in hell.

You know that on the day of judgment, when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to judge the world, he will separate the righteous from the wicked, placing the righteous on his right hand, and the wicked on his left. What will he say to those wicked on his left hand? He will say to them,— "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The death, which is the wages of sin, is this everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. It is a fire which shall last forever; and the devil and his angels, and all people who will not love and serve God, shall there be punished forever. The Bible says, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever:" the fire is not quenched: it

never goes out: "their worm dieth not:" their punishment is spoken of as a worm, always feeding upon them, but never consuming them: it never can stop. And this is the wages of sin: this is the pay which wilful sinners must receive: this is the reward which all must have who will not serve God, as the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us.— And is it worth your while to live for such an end as this? You will all say, it is not. But how are you all living? Are you indeed serving God? Are you indeed trusting in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners? Are you indeed his followers, having his Spirit abiding in you? If any of you are not, what can you expect, but to receive, as your wages, this second death, the pains of hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched? Think of this, my brethren, I pray you, and while you have time, seek the saving of your souls.

There is a gift of God, a most precious gift, about which this text also speaks. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." How delightful it is to turn away from the consideration of the endless misery of hell, and to speak of the eternal happiness of heaven. In the great day of judgment, the Lord shall say to those on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These blessed children of God shall ascend into heaven with the Lord whom they love: they shall be ever with him, in true joy and happiness; they shall be forever removed from sorrow, pain, trouble, and sin, and shall enjoy the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore.

This blessed state is "the gift of God." Surely "God is love;" he is the "Father of mercies," to

bestow so great a gift upon such unworthy objects. But it comes "through Jesus Christ our Lord."—"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." We are unworthy of God's favor: we, on account of sin, deserve only punishment from God; and we never could have had this gift of eternal life offered to us, if Jesus Christ had not died for our sins, and reconciled us to God.—As the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did come down from heaven, and take upon him our nature; as he did die for our sins, and rise up again from the dead; as he did ascend into heaven, and ever liveth making intercession for us; therefore the kingdom of heaven is open to all who believe in him: for his sake, God bestows the gift of eternal life upon all who repent of their sins and seek his mercy, and favor, and grace through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Do you desire this gift of God, this eternal life, my brethren? Are you seeking this gift? Are you living for heaven? If you are, you have indeed reason to be called blessed: only go on to the end of your life, getting ready for the holiness of heaven by faith in Jesus Christ. Go on repenting of your sins: go on confessing your sins to God with sorrow of heart, and asking forgiveness through Christ: go on praying for the Holy Spirit to dwell in your hearts, making you altogether children of God. But if any of you are not seeking this gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, let me ask, what are you living for? and what will you gain? You are told here, "the wages of sin is death." Oh turn, turn from your evil ways, for why will you die? The Lord God, against whom

you have been sinning so long, offers to you eternal life through Jesus Christ. Oh let the goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering of God, lead you to repentance. Jesus is the true living way to the Father of mercies: believe in him—look to him—obey him—that through him you may have life instead of death.



SERMON VIII.

MATTHEW XII. 46 to 50.—While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

Then one said unto him, behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

But he answered and said unto him that told him, who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, behold my mother and my brethren!

For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

IN this passage from the Bible, our divine Saviour is set before us, acting and speaking in such a manner, as should make us love him with our whole heart, and serve him with all our power. He shews us who it is that he loves, with the love that any one has for a mother, or sister, or brother. Now, if we think for a moment what kind of creatures we are, we may well wonder that so great and holy a Being as the Lord Jesus Christ should even be mindful of us; but the Bible shews us his wonderful love to man. We are but dust and ashes; but he is the Lord of glory; who always was, and always will be: yet, he pities us, he loves us, and would win us to him with love, rather than drive us from him in anger. We are most miserable sinners; but he is the holy God, who hates sin, and cannot look upon iniquity: yet, such is his love, he came and died for sinners, his love made him take a man's body, and shed his blood that man might be saved. Oh who can tell the height, and depth, and length,

and breadth of the love of Christ ! it is far greater than any of us can tell. But does the view of the love of Christ which the Bible gives us, my brethren, make you love him and serve him ? When you see that love to you made him die for your sins, will any of you still hate him, and love your sins ? When you hear his words of love and kindness calling to you to turn from the way that leads to hell, and to follow him in the path that leads to heaven, will any of you stop your ears, and turn your back upon such love and mercy ? Surely, if any here have been hating and denying the Lord Jesus, who is so full of love to man, he has reason to hang his head with shame and confusion of face, and to turn at once from his sins to that Saviour who is always ready to receive and bless every repenting sinner. This portion of the Bible which I have read, shews that our Lord Jesus Christ loves those who do the will of God, with the love that any one has for a mother, or sister, or brother. Let us see what this passage of scripture says. “ While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother, and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.” His mother, the Virgin Mary, came along with some of his relations, and wanted to speak with him ; but there was so great a crowd of people round him, hearing his word, that they could not get near him. Then one of the people in the crowd, who was near enough to speak to him, said, behold, “ thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.” Now, when our Lord was told that his mother and his brethren were standing outside the crowd of people, and wished to talk with him, what did he do ? “ He answered and said unto him that told him ; who is my mother, and who are

my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples and said, behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall *do* the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." In reading in the Bible the history of our Lord, while he was living upon earth as a man, we see that he always made use of whatever happened near him, in order to teach the people some doctrine, or to give them some good lessons in religion. Here was a good opportunity to shew those that were listening to him, what kind of people he loved, and what they must do, if they would have him feel for them, as persons very near and dear to him. His mother and his brethren desired to speak to him. He immediately put the question, who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Who is it, that I, the Saviour of the world, can love as my mother and my brethren? What kind of people are they, that can have my best regard and my love? He then shewed who were most dear to him, by pointing to his disciples, and saying, behold my mother and my brethren: these, these my disciples, who believe in me, who learn of me, who follow me, who obey me, these I regard as very near and dear to me: these I love: these I will take care of in this world, and they shall in the next world be with me in happiness for ever. But our Lord did not mean only those few disciples who saw him in the flesh, and heard him preach: he meant that all, even to the end of the world, who should ever become his disciples, and should be obedient to his word, should enjoy the very great happiness of being loved by him. For he added, "whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the

same is my brother, and sister, and mother." It matters not when the people shall live, or where they shall live : it matters not what their occupation in the world may be, or what may be their condition : it matters not whether they be among the high and the rich, or among the low and the poor ; if they are indeed disciples of Jesus Christ, trusting in him who died for the saving of their souls, learning of him, seeking grace through him, walking steadfastly in the way of God's commandments ; he, who is now sitting on the right hand of God, will always love such, will care for them, will be with them, will put his Spirit into their hearts, and will guide them in the right way ; will comfort them here, and receive them into glory hereafter.

Can there be any blessedness equal to this ! to have our Saviour, who came from heaven to die for us, to love us ? to have the Lord of glory to be our dearest friend ? a friend who has power to help us always ? a friend who will never forsake those who trust in him ? Can any blessedness equal this, to have him for our best friend, who will come at the last day to judge the world ; who will punish them that hate him with never ending punishment, but will bless them that love him in his own bright presence for ever ? No : blessed Jesus, nothing can equal the happiness of being thine.

And, my brethren, may this chief happiness be yours ? Is it possible that the Lord Jesus Christ may say of all here present, behold my mother, and my brethren ? He, in the greatness of his mercy, has placed this blessing within the reach of every one. And are there any here, so deep in sin, that they do not desire the love of our Saviour ?

If you would indeed enjoy this blessing, you see that you must be actively engaged in doing the will of God. "Whosoever shall *do* the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

It is the will of God that you should be depending upon the meritorious death and passion of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and the saving of your souls. Are you doing the will of God in this? regarding yourselves as nothing, as miserably lost sinners, and looking only to Jesus, believing that he died upon the cross to save you and all mankind? It is the will of God that you should be repenting of your sins, and forsaking them. Are you doing the will of God in this? Do you try and think of your many sins every day? Do you confess them to God with sorrow of heart, and cry to him for mercy in the name of Jesus? It is the will of God that you should be getting rid of the bad desires of your hearts, and be coming to him daily for new and clean hearts? Are you doing the will of God in this? Do you watch against the sins which do so easily beset you, and pray to God in the name of Jesus, "make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me?" It is the will of God that you should be continually praying to him, in the name of Christ, for the Holy Spirit to sanctify you, to comfort you, to enlighten your minds, to help you against the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. Are you doing the will of God in this? Is it your chief desire that the Holy Spirit may abide in your hearts, making you temples of the living God? And do you pray every day for this precious gift? It is the will of God that you make his commandments the rule

that you live by every day. Are you doing the will of God in this? Oh learn, my brethren, to live according to God's holy will and commandments: pray from your hearts, "thy will be done," not mine, but thine, thy holy will, O God.

Follow Jesus in doing the will of God as he did, and you will then know how to gain much comfort from this text, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."



SERMON IX.

MATTHEW xiii. 3.—And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, behold, a sower went forth to sow.

IN the parable of the sower, our Saviour Jesus Christ teaches us, in a simple manner, that his word does not always do those good who hear it. He shews us, that some persons hear his word, but care nothing at all about it: that others hear it, and pay some attention to it for a little time, and then fall away: while others again, who hear his word, and receive it, do not yield the good fruit of a good life, because they love this world too much. He tells us also, that although the good seed of his word does fall upon many hard and barren hearts, yet that there are some with honest and good hearts, who, when they hear the word of God, keep it, and do it; shewing by their godly lives, that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them.

I will read to you what our Lord says in this parable. “Behold, a sower went forth to sow: and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away: and some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth

fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Our Saviour, himself, explained what he meant by this parable. He said, "the seed is the word of God." This precious seed, the word of God, our Saviour sowed when he was in the world.—Wherever he went he preached his gospel. This good seed has now for a long time been sown amongst you. You have heard a great deal of the Bible read and explained to you. You know from that holy book, how Adam disobeyed God, and brought sin and death into the world. You have been taught much about the love of God in sending his son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. You have been told all our Saviour said, and did, and suffered, when he was in the flesh. But how have you heard, and obeyed this holy word of God? If you have received the word gladly, and have been praying as it teaches you, have been doing what it commands, have been believing its life-giving doctrines, you may hope to enjoy its great and precious promises. But if the word read to you, and preached to you, is neglected by you, surely this same word shall rise up against you in the day of judgment and condemn you. Take heed then how you hear: and pray to God for his grace, that your ears may be opened to hear his word, and your hearts be prepared to keep it.

Our Saviour said in this parable, "when he sowed some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured them up." This you easily understand. If any seed, which you are going to sow, falls in the path, or by the road-side, the birds and fowls will soon eat it up, and you need not look for any thing to grow from it. How

did our Saviour explain this? He said, "when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.— This is he which received seed by the way-side." Now I am afraid, that there are many hearers of this kind: they come to church and hear the word of God; but, they do not understand it; they do not come with a desire to understand it; they do not pray to God for his Holy Spirit to enlighten their minds, so that they may understand it. And why are so many unwilling to understand the word of God? The reason is, they do not hunger and thirst after righteousness: they love their sins too well, and do not care about learning what they must do and believe that their souls may be saved. Therefore, when they go away from the Church, the devil takes away from them all that they have heard; they think of it no more, and from them nothing good can come.

How is it with you, my brethren? Are any of you like these foolish and careless hearers? Oh take heed how you hear: and whenever you come together to worship God, and to hear his word read to you, pray to him to give you understanding hearts, and to make you love his word and keep it: so that instead of the devil catching away from you what you hear, the word of the gospel may take root in your hearts, making you look always to Jesus, through whom alone you can be saved.

Our Saviour, in the parable, says, "and some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no

root they withered away." This again you can understand perfectly well. If you sow seed upon stony ground, where the plant cannot strike its root deep into the earth, it must be dried up in the scorching heat of summer. How did our Lord explain this? He said, "he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." I am afraid that there are many of these stony hearted hearers. They may for a little time hear the word of God with some attention, and seem to love it: they may for a little time, think it good to be called God's children, and to be hearers of the word along with them: but they have no root in themselves, they have no real sorrow for sin, no desire to become pure and holy; no real love to God, or to his Son Jesus Christ, who came and died for our sins: they do not cry to God for mercy from a broken and contrite heart; they do not really pray that their sins may be washed away in the blood of Jesus, and that the Holy Spirit may sanctify them, and guide them into all truth; and therefore their attention to religion lasts only for a little time; at the first appearance of trials and difficulties in serving God, they fall away, they get tired, and turn back to serve the world and the devil, and nothing good can come from them.

How is it with you, my brethren? Are there any of these stony hearted hearers here? Oh pray earnestly to God, and ask him again and again to take out of you the heart of stone, and to give you

a heart of flesh : a heart prepared by his Spirit to receive the good seed of his word ; a heart in which this good seed may take deep root, bringing forth in you the good fruit of “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Our Saviour said again in the parable, “and some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up, and choaked them.” You know full well that if the ground is not well cleared, and kept free from weeds and thorns, you can reap nothing from the seed which you sow. How does our Lord explain this ? He says, “he also that received seed among thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.” There are, I am afraid, a great many hearers of this kind.—They try to love heaven and this world too, and this is impossible. They try to serve God, and to follow their own ways too ; and this cannot be done. They call themselves followers of Jesus ; but they love this world which hated him, and they desire the things of this world more than the riches of Christ. This love of the world, and care about worldly things, are like weeds and thorns in the heart ; and if allowed to grow there, will choke and destroy the good seed of the word of God.

How is it with you, my brethren ? Where are you laying up your treasure ? On what are your affections placed ? Has the love of this present evil world so taken possession of any of your hearts that it is choking your love to God ? Oh take heed how you hear his word : watch over the desires of your hearts, lest the love of earthly things draw them away from God : pray for grace, pray for strength, pray for a heavenly mind, that your hearts

may be weaned from all covetous desires of the world, and may be set on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Our Saviour having shewn that the good seed of the word of God is lost upon three bad kind of hearers, said, "but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold:" which is easily understood as he explained it; "he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold." Although the word of God is lost upon some, it is delightful to think that it is not lost upon all. Some hear the word and do it. They understand it; they pray that they may understand it, and God opens their hearts, so that they receive it gladly and keep it. They also bear fruit: they repent of their sins, and forsake them: they look to Jesus, crucified for the sin of the world, believing, that for his sake, their sins shall be forgiven them: they pray much; they love to wait upon God in prayer, seeking his mercy, his love, his grace, through the one Mediator Jesus Christ: and through the grace given to them, they become obedient children, walking in the way of God's commandments. This good fruit which they bear shews that the word of God has indeed taken root in their hearts.

How is it with you, my brethren? Can it be said of all of you that you receive the word of God into an honest and good heart? And are you also bringing forth the fruit of a good life? Oh attend to this: take heed how you hear, and think often of what our Saviour says in this parable of the sower.

You see, that hearing the word of God, is not enough. You must do according to what you hear ; you must live as the Bible teaches you, or you will have heard to no good purpose. Your advantages are indeed great ; and as you are shewn the love of God in sending his Son to die for you : as you are taught all that Jesus said, and did, and suffered when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us ; as you know that the Holy Spirit sanctifies the heart ; oh make full use of your privileges, and shew that you thank God by serving him : shew that you love your Saviour by following him ; shew that you have the Holy Spirit in your hearts, by hating sin, and by your hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Our Saviour says, “blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it.”



SERMON X.

MATTHEW xiii. 36.—His disciples came unto him, saying, declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

IN the parable of the tares of the field, our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of both good and bad people being members of his visible Church upon earth. That this is so is a very sad thing: and the good followers of Jesus Christ are often very much grieved, when they see some professing to know him, but in works denying him. Such false Christians bring reproach upon our Saviour, and make his religion to be evil spoken of. But in this same parable our Lord shews to us the end of all things: the great day of judgment; when his true servants shall be separated from those that are Christians only in name, and from all the workers of iniquity; he tells us that these last shall be burnt with fire that never shall be quenched, but that his true disciples shall be blessed forever.

Our Lord said, “the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he

said, nay; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." The disciples of our Lord asked him to explain to them what he meant by this parable: let us now attend to what he said, and may God give us grace to improve by it.

The kingdom of heaven, that is, the Church of Christ in this world, is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. He that sowed the good seed is the Son of Man—our Lord Jesus Christ; who to save us came down from heaven, and was made man: therefore, he is called the Son of Man, as well as the Son of God. The field in which he sowed the good seed is the world. Yes, our Lord came to save the whole world: he died for the sins of the whole world: he, himself, began to preach his gospel, and to call upon men to repent and come to him, that they might be saved; and ever since his gospel has been preached in the world. And has not this gospel of Jesus Christ come to you? Have you not by baptism been made members of his Church upon earth? Are not you taught to be repenting always of your sins, to be believing always in Jesus Christ, to be praying always for the Holy Spirit, that you may live obedient children of God? But how do you hear the word of Jesus Christ? Pray to him to open your ears, and to give you believing and obedient hearts.

The good seed are the children of the kingdom: those pious Christians, who are indeed mem-

Christ, and children of God. These are plants of our Saviour's planting : they have his spirit in their hearts ; they watch themselves, that they fall not into sin : they pray diligently that, that good spirit may not be taken from them : they shew that they put their trust in Jesus, who died for them, by obeying him ; and if they continue his true servants till they die, they shall be with him forever in his kingdom of glory. Are you, my brethren, shewing that you really belong to him, by your humble and penitent, and obedient lives ? The Bible tells us, "hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected : hereby know we that we are in him." While then you are looking only to the blood of Jesus, for the forgiveness of your sins, be very much in prayer for the Holy Spirit to abide in your hearts, making you "followers of God, as dear children."

In the parable, we read of tares growing up among the wheat ; and also when the servants went to their master, saying, "didst not thou sow good seed in thy field ? whence then hath it tares ?" he said, "an enemy hath done this !" And our Lord explained this, by saying, "the tares are the children of the wicked one : the enemy that sowed them is the devil." Yes, this is a sad truth : there are tares among the wheat : deceitful and wicked people amongst the followers of Jesus. The enemy that sowed them is the devil : he, the Bible tells us, the roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour. And what numbers has he destroyed and kept in the ways of sin : yes, and some

of his children creep into the Church and wear religion like a cloak, seeming and pretending to be good, but having hearts full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Or, he deceives some that are in the Church; leads them to grow careless and cold in religion, and to attend only to the outward worship of God, while they neglect the religion of the heart. How is it with all of you that are here? Can it be said of all of you, that you are anxious to be the children of the kingdom? or are there some here, who are the children of the wicked one? I cannot tell; for man can look only at the outward appearance. But there is one that can tell; yes, God looks at the heart. Remember that: try and examine yourselves, and turn to him with all your heart.—The gospel shews him to you as a God of love: seek him by repentance and faith in Jesus: pray always for grace to serve him, and he will turn you from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.

When the servants in the parable asked their master, if they should root up the tares, he said, “nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up with them the wheat also. Let both grow together until the harvest.” “The harvest is the end of the world:” there will remain until then, both good and bad in the Church of Christ. But then a separation shall be made. Jesus Christ, whose word is now read to you, whose gospel is now preached to you, shall come again in great glory, at the end of the world. He shall then say to the angels, the reapers, who shall reap his great harvest of humanity, “gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.” “Gather out of my kingdom, out of my Church, all that offend and th

which do iniquity: separate the wicked from among the righteous: and what do with them? cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Are there any here, who are like tares among the wheat? who pretend only to follow Jesus? You see what will be the sad end of such. "Cast them into a furnace of fire:" the fire of hell. Are there any here, who love the ways of sin; who will not come to Jesus, that their sins may be forgiven, and that they may have grace to lead a new life? You see here what will be the end of all such. "Cast them into a furnace of fire." Oh think of the dreadful end of the wicked. Think of the great value of your souls. Let not the mercy of God, and the love of God, be thrown away upon you. He calls to you; "turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" He gave his own Son to die for you. Repent therefore, seek his mercy and grace, that you may meet him with joy in the day of judgment.

But what shall our Lord do with the wheat in that day? "Gather the wheat into my barn."—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." The Lord shall say to them, "come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And they shall be forever with the Lord whom they love. Now may this happiness be yours? It may, if you will take Jesus for youraviour, and be entirely obedient to him. I hope there are some here, who do repent of their sins who do determine to lead a new life, who do without ceasing, that they may, through the Spirit, lead this new life of obedience. I hope that there are some here, who do have a live-

ly faith in God's mercy through Christ, that precious Saviour who shed his blood for us. Go on, my brethren, steadfast in the faith and obedience of the gospel; watch and pray always, lest ye fall into temptation: give yourselves unto prayer, that the Holy Spirit may guide you into all truth, and may keep you in the same all the days of your life. Our Saviour says, "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." May he mercifully give us all grace to be thus faithful.



SERMON XI.

MATTHEW XV. 23.—Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

IN this part of the Bible, we have the very interesting account of a woman coming to Jesus, and asking him to heal her daughter, who was in a very wretched state: and from it we learn the importance of persevering prayer, and the necessity of having a steadfast faith in the love and power of our Saviour. I pray you to give close attention to what I say, and may the Spirit of God so bless us, that we may cry continually for help to Jesus, who alone is “the way, and the truth, and the life.”

As our Saviour was going along with his disciples, a woman, who did not belong to God’s chosen people of Israel, “cried unto him, saying, have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David! my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.” Her daughter was, indeed, in a very sad state; and it may be that our great enemy, the devil, had greater liberty at that time, that the power of Jesus over him might be better seen; for as the Bible says, “for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

This woman, seeing her daughter in so grievous a state, was in great distress; but she did what every child of God ought to do; she came to Jesus “and cried unto him, saying, have mercy on me,

O Lord, thou son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

This, my brethren, is an example which you, as Christians, ought to follow. If you, or your families, or friends are in any kind of trouble or affliction, you should, with the confidence of little children, seek your heavenly Father, lay open all your heart to him, and cry, have mercy on me, O Lord. We are taught in the Bible "to cast all our care upon him, because he careth for us." And where this is done with "a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ," there such a blessing will follow as God sees to be best for us. He will either remove the trial, or will, in answer to prayer, give grace to bear it patiently, and to improve under it. But ought you not every day to cry to the Lord for mercy? Yes, surely you ought, for there is not one of you who does not offend God continually by his sins; and if you feel that the sinfulness of your nature is a grief and burden to you; if you feel sad at the remembrance of your daily transgressions, you will every day make a full confession of your sins to God, and will cry to him in the name of Jesus for mercy, and for grace to lead a new life; being very thankful to God that he "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When this woman had thus cried to Jesus,— "Lord have mercy on me," we are told that he answered her not a word. His conduct here was very different from what it usually was: but we may suppose, that as he knows the heart, he saw the strength of her faith, and therefore tried her, as Abraham was formerly tried, that "the trial of her

faith might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory." And if any of you, when in distress of any kind, cry unto the Lord for help, if you do not at once obtain relief, be not discouraged; do as this woman did, and continue waiting upon your God in prayer. He knows what is best for us, and which is the best time to send relief. Our duty is to wait upon Him in constant prayer.

This woman was too full of sorrow on account of her daughter, and was too well convinced of the love and power of Jesus, to give up asking. "She cried after him:" she wanted help, and cried more and more for mercy. And are not you and all men, as sinners, in a miserable condition? And is there not forgiveness in Jesus, through his blood? Never cease then crying to him for mercy. Happy, indeed, will you be if you feel distressed on account of your sins, and desire more than any thing to have a clean heart, and to do the will of God: for you will then seek and find your Saviour, who loved you and gave himself for you.

We are next told that "his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away;" send her away by healing her daughter, "for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Jesus came into the world to die for the sins of all men; he is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." But while he was upon earth, it pleased him to do his mighty works only amongst the Jews, and to confine his teaching to them; and therefore, when his disciples asked him to help this Gentile woman, he said, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This answer would have been enough to have caused one of

little faith to have turned away in despair. But as the distress of this woman was great, so was her faith great: "She came and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me." She would not doubt the good will of our Saviour towards her; but as if thinking that she was herself in fault, she became more humble and more in earnest: "she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me." Her manner and her prayer shewed the distress of her mind, and her unshaken confidence in the Lord.

You are taught by this to continue instant in prayer; to pray always, and not to faint. If, whilst in the path of duty, difficulties increase around you, do not cease praying for patience and guidance. If the knowledge of your weakness and your many sins is a burden upon your souls; if you continue thus sad, even while you seek God daily in his appointed way, still do not faint; do not think of giving up and saying, there is no mercy for me: this would show you to be of little faith; this would make you guilty of the sin of doubting the word of God, who declares that he is unwilling that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," that all should believe in Jesus, and follow him, and so be saved. Instead of doubting the good will of your God and Saviour, look into yourselves: see whether you are humble and truly sorry for all your sins past; see whether you are trying to do, in every thing, the will of God; whether you really desire to be released from sin, and to become holy like God; whether you are trusting altogether in the merits and intercession of Jesus, your Saviour. Examine yourselves upon these, and in humble faith, from the depths of a broken and a contrite heart, throw yourselves upon

the mercy of God, and cry, "Lord help me." And as we read in the Bible, "the Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered."

As this woman continued asking our Saviour to help her, he spoke as if it would not be fit and proper for him to do so, because she was not of the nation of the Jews: he said, "it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs:" that is, it is not fit that the Gentiles, who are not God's people, should be benefited by that word, and by those miracles, which, for the present, are intended only for the Jews. Now did this saying of Jesus drive the woman away from him? No, she would let nothing turn her away from him who alone could help her. And we see how very humble she was, and how much she felt her unworthiness. She answered "truth Lord." As much as to say, I cannot deny it, I am even as a dog, and have no right to the children's bread. Now do you feel thus humble: do you feel your unworthiness as she did? You must feel in this manner before you can value your Saviour and his grace as you ought to do, and you will then be able heartily to join in the prayer in our communion service. "We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies: we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table."

"Truth Lord," said this woman; "I am even as a dog, altogether unworthy of thy favour:" but she added, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which

fall from their master's table ;" by which she meant that the little favour which she asked, was but as a crumb compared with the great blessings bestowed upon the Jews, and might therefore be granted. You see how very anxious she was to obtain the smallest favor from the Lord ; you observe how earnest and how persevering she was in asking for the blessing which she wanted. The same anxiety, the same earnestness and perseverance in prayer you ought to shew. And what will prevent your doing as this woman did ? An indifference about your souls will prevent you, or a love for this present evil world, or an unwillingness to give up some sin which you love ; these will prevent your seeking pardon and grace through Jesus, and will keep you in bondage to the devil. But if you feel what unworthy creatures you naturally are, if you are anxious to be saved from the eternal pains of hell, if you wish to be prepared for the perfect holiness of heaven, you will imitate this woman, and will every day come boldly in the name of Jesus " to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need." If you feel that your necessities are great, you will be thankful for the least of God's mercies, and this humble disposition will prepare you for receiving and enjoying the fulness of the blessings which are promised in scripture to the believer in Jesus Christ.

This woman having shewn how much she believed in the goodness and power of our Saviour, " he answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith ; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Our Saviour, you see, spoke of her faith

as being great: it was her faith which made her so humble, so meek, so patient, so persevering. Her firm belief, that Jesus was able and willing to help her, supported her through all her trial, and the Lord blessed her.

Have you such a faith as this? It is very important that you should "examine yourselves, whether you have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ," for if you go wrong in this, you may lose your souls: for the Bible says, "without faith it is impossible to please God;" it says again, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." A firm belief that through Jesus Christ alone, who died for the sins of the world, forgiveness will be granted to the truly penitent, is the ground-work on which you must build your hope of heaven.— And if this faith is alive in you, you will feel what sinners you naturally are, and how much you need pardon and grace: you will pray very diligently for the Spirit of God to guide you, and to make you better and better; you will try and be contented in your station, doing your duty quietly, desiring in all things to be obedient to the will of God: you will endeavour to be conformed to the image of Christ our Saviour, becoming mild, and meek, and patient and forgiving like him, loving your neighbors as you love yourselves. Watch, and pray, my brethren, that these fruits of a living faith may grow and increase in you, and you may trust that Jesus, who loved you and gave himself for you, will bless you now and through eternity.



SERMON XII.

MATTHEW xviii. 1.—At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? This very much concerns us, for we belong to this kingdom. We, at our baptism, were made “members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.” We, therefore, ought to know what kind of persons our Lord will account great in his kingdom, that is, in his Church, lest, from our inattention to this, he say to us in the day of judgment, “I never knew you.” For he declares that he will say so to some that professed to belong to him, and that some of the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness.

They were the twelve disciples who asked our Lord this question. They had now been a long time with our Saviour; they had seen the many mighty works which he was always doing; they had heard the gracious words which day after day proceeded out of his mouth; but yet they did not understand until after his death and resurrection, what the real nature of his religion was. They heard him speaking about his kingdom, and they did not think at first that this kingdom was spiritual in its nature, and that Jesus would reign in the hearts of his followers, and make them ready and fit for heaven. Instead of seeing this, they were thinking only of this world, expecting to have a great deal of the riches, and honor, and power of

this world. And we cannot wonder that they felt and thought thus, for we find that we are all too much given to the love of this present world : it is one grievous fault of our fallen nature. We know that we ought to wean our *hearts* from the love of earthly things, and through Jesus seek for the happiness of heaven ; but yet so foolish and corrupt are we, we are continually setting our hearts upon things here below. Let the knowledge of this make you more humble and penitent, more watchful over yourselves, more frequent and earnest in prayer to God for his mercy and grace.

The disciples, full of the thought of being great in this world, came to Jesus, saying, " who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ? " Which of us is to be the greatest man in this kingdom, about which you so often speak ? Now, how did our Saviour correct this great mistake which they had made ? He reproved them in a very simple way ; in a way from which we may gain much useful instruction. He " called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as a little child, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." In this very plain but forcible way, did our Lord rebuke them, and shew to them the only way in which they could become truly great in his kingdom ; which is, by humility, by meekness, by lowliness of mind, by being like a little child, willing to be taught, having no high notions about himself, and being indifferent to the things of the world.

All men are apt to fall into the sin of thinking too much of themselves, and I dare say that you all have often run into this common error. Your heads have sometimes been filled with high and proud notions. You have looked upon yourselves as better than other people, and have despised them: you have been anxious to keep others down, and exalt yourselves above them; when others have been praised and rewarded, you have been filled with a spirit of envy and jealousy; you have not been contented with such a portion, as the Lord in his providence has given to you; nor has it been your chief care to do, every day, his will. I dare say that you have all, sometimes, felt and done in this way. But you see how contrary such a state of the heart is to what you learn in the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if any of you like to indulge in these high and proud notions, if you wish to hold your own heads high, and to keep others down; if you want to be esteemed great in this world; if you are in love with the things of the world, you are in a very wretched state: for our Saviour says, except ye be converted, unless you be changed, and give up those foolish thoughts and wicked desires, and become as little children, thinking nothing of yourselves, and willing to be taught by the word of God, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven—into the eternal mansions of peace. If you wish only to exalt yourselves, you cannot be followers of Jesus Christ now, nor have any good hope that he will bless you hereafter. For the first step which you and every one must take in becoming a Christian, is to *humble yourselves*, and receive the truth as it is in Jesus, with the simplicity and willingness of a little child.

This is so important a matter, that I will continue to speak about it. Only think, for a little, of what you are. When born, you are a helpless little child; as long as you live, you are liable to sickness and disease of every kind; you cannot live one moment without the care of God, and after a few years you must die, and turn again to dust. What then have any of you to be proud of? Surely you ought to humble yourselves very much before the eternal God, and confessing that you are but dust and ashes, cry to him continually to have mercy upon you.

Think again of your souls; you were all born in sin, and are by nature children that God is angry with; as long as you live you are inclined to go wrong; if left to yourselves, you would follow your own perverse wills, rather than the will of God; you would do the works of the devil rather than walk in the way of God's commandments; preparing for the everlasting punishment of hell, rather than the pure joys of heaven. How greatly then should you humble yourselves under a sense of your unworthiness and sinfulness, crying out as we read in the Bible, some good servants of God did, "I am unclean, I am unclean;" "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Abase yourselves in this manner before the holy God, praying that your sins may be blotted out through Jesus, who died to save you, and that your hearts may be made new and clean by the Holy Spirit abiding in you.

Think again how much Jesus Christ our Saviour humbled himself when he came into the world to save sinners. He was in the beginning with God, and was God; but for our sakes, and for our salva-

tion, he came down from heaven and took upon him the body of a man; he knew no sin, but he knew the sorrows, and pains, and temptations of human nature; and after enduring these, he permitted wicked men to take him most shamefully, and to nail him to the cross. And all this was to save us miserable sinners. And along with love, here is a wonderful example of patience, of meekness, of lowliness, of humility. You call yourselves followers of Jesus: Oh learn to follow him in his humility. He, the Lord from heaven, thus humbled himself to save you; while you try to follow his perfect example, remember your sinful condition, and regard yourselves as nothing in the sight of God. You say that you believe that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. If you or any people are saved, it will be only through faith in that atoning blood. Remember that that blood was shed for others, as well as for you, and do not despise a brother or a sister for whom Christ died: do not lift up yourselves above others, since you are sinners equally with them, and require pardon and grace as much as they do. Come then willingly and thankfully to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. Come heavy laden with the burden of your sins, and he promises to give you rest. Learn humility of him, and you may comfort your hearts with this word of God: "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones."

SERMON XIII.

MATTHEW xviii. 21, 22.—Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven.

I HAVE often told you, my brethren, that the disciples of Jesus Christ are known by the love that they have one to another; and that they will always be ready freely to forgive any one who does them any harm. The duty of having a forgiving temper is so great, that our Lord has taught us to pray to God to forgive us, “as we forgive those who trespass against us.” This great Christian virtue is set before us in a plain and affecting manner in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew: we read, “then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” By this question, Peter evidently thought, that it was our duty to forgive an offending brother only a few times, and that if he continued to sin against us, we were not bound to forgive him. “Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven.” By which we learn, that this duty of forgiving our brother can never be set aside: it matters not how often he may offend, we are never to grow weary of forgiving him. Our Saviour in another place teaches us the same duty: he says, “if thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and

seven times in a day turn again to thee, and say I repent ; thou shalt forgive him."

Does this seem to any of you to be a hard saying? do any of you like to keep in your hearts revengeful feelings? When any one injures you, do you determine to seize the first opportunity of hurting him? of returning evil for evil? If so, your heart is in a bad state, and you have need of much prayer to God to change that wretched heart of yours, and give you a forgiving temper; to put his Spirit into you, and give you a new heart, full of love to every body. Did not Jesus pray to God to forgive those who had nailed him to the cross? And will you dare to call yourselves his followers, if you are unwilling to forgive an injury? Are not you sinning against God continually? And can you expect him to have mercy upon you, if you refuse to shew mercy to a fellow-sinner?— These questions plainly teach us, that as followers of Christ, expecting mercy of God through him, we must drive feelings of hatred and revenge from our hearts, and keep in their room feelings of love and forgiveness.

But let us attend to what our Saviour continued to say upon this : he said, "therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved

with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence ; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying ; pay me that thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not : but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me : shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father, do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Now in hearing this read to you, you think that, that servant, who would not forgive the small debt of his fellow-servant, when his lord had just forgiven him so large a debt, was a very hard hearted and cruel man : you are ready to speak against his ingratitude, and his want of charity and mercy, and to say that he well deserved the punishment which his lord inflicted on him : but in condemning him, take heed lest you condemn yourselves ; for we are all of us too apt to do, just as he did. Which of us can say that we are not as guilty as he was ? We are all of us indebted to God, more than ten times ten thousand talents ; as soon as we were born, the

debt began ; for we were born in sin : every day since, the debt has been increasing, for who is there that lives one day without sin ? and most justly might God cast us into the prison of hell.

But could we, as this man did, fall down before him, and say, Lord, have mercy on me, and I will pay thee all ? Can any of us tell how much we have sinned against God ? No : the number of our sins is too great for us to tell ; the weight of our sins is too heavy for us to bear ; all that we can say is, “ who can tell how oft he offendeth ? ” “ If thou Lord shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand ? ” But although we cannot count our many sins, although we deserve punishment on account of them, and cannot make amends to God for all that we have done amiss ; yet it is a great comfort to know, that “ there is forgiveness with him,” for every one who truly repents of his sins, and believes in Jesus Christ who died for sinners. For his sake, if you are truly penitent, God freely forgives you. He speaks most comfortably in his holy Bible : “ though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” “ I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins.”

But after this, after this offer of a full and free pardon of your immense load of sin, through the merits of the death of Christ, will you, as this servant did, go forth, and finding a fellow-servant, who has done you some little harm, lay hands on him, and take him by the throat, saying, pay me that thou owest ? Can you be severe with a fellow-sinner, and refuse to forgive him, when you cry to God every day for mercy ? Can you refuse to for-

give a fellow-sinner, when the blood of Jesus was shed for him as well as for you? If any of you are unwilling to forgive an offending brother, you see here what you will come to. His lord said to this servant, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." And our Saviour then said, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Surely, my brethren, this is a great matter to attend to. If you let your bad tempers get the better of you, if you bear malice or hatred in your hearts, if you are unkind to each other, you are in danger of losing your souls.—Jesus died for you: if you desire him to be your Saviour, try and become like him. Be like him, mild, and meek, and patient, and forgiving. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." Pray to God that you may be of the same mind; pray that you may have his Spirit dwelling in you; that your stony hearts may be softened, and that you may be brought "to love your enemies, to bless them that curse you, and to pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Labor much to get this patient and forgiving temper; pray much to be conformed in this, to the image of Christ; and you will be true children of your heavenly Father, preparing for that place of eternal rest and happiness, in which love, perfect love, will bind all the saints together in a bond never to be broken.

SERMON XIV.

MATTHEW XXV. 13.—Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

OUR Saviour Jesus Christ was speaking a parable to his disciples, and when he had finished it, he charged them to watch; he also told them that they should live in a watchful state, because they knew not either the day or the hour in which he would come again to judge the world. And is not this the case with us? We do not know when the day of judgment shall come: we do not know at what moment we may die; surely then, we too, ought to watch; we ought to be ready for the coming of our Lord; we ought to be so living by faith in him, that at any moment we may die in peace.

The parable which our Lord was speaking was that of the ten virgins; and in it he shows the folly of neglecting to attend to the health of the soul, and the wisdom of being always prepared for the day of our death. He said, “then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom, and five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.” Our Saviour teaches us that the kingdom of heaven, that is, the state of things in his Church in this world, shall, in the day of judgment, appear to be like the case of ten virgins who had been invited to a marriage

feast, and who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom, that they might go in with him to the wedding supper.

Our blessed Lord himself is the bridegroom, and his Church is called in the Bible his bride. By using these names, God, in great mercy to us, shews how closely the Church is united to Jesus Christ. That as those whom he joins together in marriage are said to be no longer two, but one flesh, so is the Church of Christ, which he purchased with his blood, closely joined to him. It is his; it is "his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." But as the Church, in this world, has within it persons of every description; children even of the wicked one among the children of God, so five of these virgins are spoken of as wise, and five as foolish. The wise virgins shewed their wisdom by taking some oil along with them, so that they might keep their lamps burning, and the foolish ones shewed their folly by neglecting to take a supply of oil with them.

Let us now apply this to the members of the Church of Christ. In the holy sacrament of baptism, the sinful children of Adam are made members of Christ's Church, and in his Church there is every provision made for the spiritual growth of all his members, so that they may, at the last day, be found "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." But of all those multitudes who are admitted into Christ's Church at their baptism, it must be said that some only are wise, while the rest are all foolish. The wise Christians shew their wisdom by carefully keeping the oil of divine grace in their hearts. They do not think it enough just to carry their lamps with them, that is, just to

be called disciples of Jesus Christ; but they are diligent in the use of all the means of grace which their Lord has appointed. It is their desire that the oil of divine grace, the Holy Spirit, may be always in their hearts, and they give themselves unto prayer, both in private and in public. In private, at home, it is their habit to come every day to the throne of grace that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help them in every time of need. In public, at Church, they join the people of God in praying for mercy and grace, in hearing the word of God, and especially in partaking of the Lord's supper, in remembrance of the death of our dear Saviour, and through the grace given to them, they endeavour to walk always in the way of God's commandments, and to become holy, as he is holy.

The foolish Christians, too, shew their folly, by thinking that it will do just to take their lamps with them without any oil; that is, just to call themselves Christians, without having divine grace in their hearts, without seeking in diligent prayer for daily supplies of this heavenly grace, and without endeavoring to lead that holy life, which every one who hopes to be saved, by Jesus Christ, must do.

Now, my brethren, you know that a lamp, without oil, is useless: so if any of you are Christians only in name, what good will it do you? It would have been better for you never to have known the way of salvation through Christ crucified, than after knowing this, to turn away from the service of the Holy Jesus to the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Think then often how greatly God has blessed you in taking you into covenant with Him, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: and be very diligent in prayer to Him, that the Holy Spi-

rit may be given to you, and may keep you steadfast in the faith and obedience of the gospel. Be careful also to attend the public service of his Church, with an humble and prayerful spirit, and thus you will be carrying oil with you in your lamps.

Our Lord next says in the parable, "while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Even the wise virgins slept as well as the foolish. This brings to our minds the weakness even of good Christians. They are too apt, through the weakness of their mortal nature, to be off their guard sometimes, and to relax somewhat from that watchfulness and prayerful state which is so necessary for the good of the soul. We should never lose sight of our Saviour's caution: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

"And at midnight there was a cry made, behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, not so: lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves." When the cry was made, "behold the bridegroom cometh;" the wise virgins trimmed their lamps with the oil which they carried with them, and were prepared to meet him. So will it be with wise Christians at the hour of death. When sickness overtakes them, and death is before them, they will find that the grace of their precious Saviour, in whom they have trusted, and whom they followed during their pilgrimage here, is sufficient for them; they will enjoy the comfort of his holy religion, and will look forward with a

good hope to the resurrection at the last day, when they shall be raised up from their graves by the voice of the Son of Man, and by the trumpet of the Archangel; believing that they shall stand amongst those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

But the lamps of the foolish virgins went out—they then saw their folly. The bridegroom was coming—they had no oil. How could they get any? They applied to the wise: the wise had enough only for themselves. What were they to do? At this last moment they thought of going to buy it. So it is with foolish Christians; those who are Christians only in name: they let day after day, month after month, year after year pass away, without truly repenting of their sins, without really loving and obeying their Saviour, who bought them with his blood, without seeking to be made clean from sin by faith in that atoning blood, without praying continually for the grace of the Holy Spirit, without anxiously keeping in the path of holiness, that that Spirit may not be taken away from them: but at last the hand of death lays hold of them, and they see their folly. They are all amazement; they have neglected to follow Jesus, and they know not how to look to him as their Saviour: they have called themselves Christians, but have neglected to seek the anointing of the Holy Spirit through Christ, and cannot know the comfort and consolation of this promised gift.—What is to be done? Is there yet time to seek and obtain the mercy which has for so long a time been despised? Oh it is dangerous: it is the part of madness to put off, until the dying hour, the preparation for eternity. For as our Lord continues

in the parable, "and while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, verily I say unto you, I know you not."

The wise virgins being ready, went in with the bridegroom to the marriage; and all wise Christians will watch and pray always, and will strive to live in a state of readiness for their death, that in the great day their happiness may be made complete by their entering into the joy of their Lord. But against all others, the door will be shut; and as the foolish virgins, coming too late, received the answer "I know you not," so will it be said to all foolish Christians who do not follow Jesus in a good life. So will it be said to all who will not repent of their sins and lead a new life; who will not so believe in Jesus Christ as to follow the footsteps of his most holy life; who will not so pray for the Holy Spirit as to have this precious gift abiding in them, making them new creatures in Christ Jesus.

How does our Saviour end this parable? "watch therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh." Watch, my brethren, you know not what day, what hour, what moment, your life here may end. But is this all your life? No: an eternity is before you. You must be forever either in heaven or in hell. Watch and pray therefore, that you may be ready for your death, ready for the judgment, ready for heaven. Do you wish to be in the condition of the foolish virgins, not ready? There is no condition more unhappy; more dangerous, more to be dreaded.

Do you say that there is yet time? We need not yet begin to serve the Lord? Remember, that while the foolish virgins went to buy, the bridegroom came: those only that were ready entered in, and the door was shut. Do not then foolishly put off attending to the saving of your souls, lest you die in your sins, and be lost forever. The Lord still spares you; let the riches of his goodness, and long suffering, and forbearance lead you all to unfeigned repentance, and faith, and obedience. "Watch and pray always, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."



SERMON XV.

MATTHEW XXV. 31.—When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, here speaks of his coming again in glory to judge the world. As we shall, each of us, be judged in that day according to our works; as each of us shall then begin an eternity either of great joy or of great misery, let us now attend to this important subject, that through the grace of God, we may in that day “be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of Man.”

Our Lord says, “when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:”—The Son of Man, who once came in a state of humiliation, in the form of a servant, to be a man of sorrows, and to suffer and die for all mankind: this same person shall come again, but in a far different manner; he shall come in the clouds of heaven, in great glory, and all the holy angels with him: his glorious voice shall then be heard, and the voice of the archangels, and the trumpet of God. “And before him shall be gathered all nations:” all the living, scattered over the whole world, shall hear those mighty voices, and must obey: all the dead too, wherever they may be, shall hear the same mighty voices, and must obey the call; for it is written, “the sea shall give up the dead which are in it; and the graves shall give up the dead which

are in them." And shall each of you, my brethren, hear the voice of the great Judge, and the sound of the trumpet? Yes; you shall hear, and you must obey the call. So live then the remainder of your days, that you may hear it and obey with joy.

When all people shall be gathered before him, "he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." That, my brethren, will be an awful time, when this separation shall be going on; when the holy angels, at the command of the great Judge shall be gathering together, all the obedient followers of Christ, and be setting them on the right hand side of the judgment seat; and shall place all the remainder on the left. Remember that each of you must be present; remember that the great Judge can make no mistake; and that you shall be placed on one side or on the other, according as in this world you have believed in, and obeyed him or not. How full of joy and thanksgiving will you be, if you shall find yourselves placed on the right hand; but how full of misery and despair, if the left shall be appointed as your portion. What then ought you to do? From the present moment, until you die, seek the grace of God with increasing diligence that you may repent more of your sins, that you may have greater faith in God's mercy through Christ, that you be more obedient, to him every day. Follow this course continually, and you may hope to rise from the dead with joy at the resurrection in the last day.

When the righteous shall be set on the right hand, and the wicked on the left, "then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come ye

blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."— You see how graciously the great King will speak to them: he will tell them to come to him, whose members they were made at their baptism: to come to him, in whom they believed, whom they loved, and served while they were here. He will call them the blessed of his Father: they were made children of God at their baptism; they spent their days on earth as children of God, obeying him, seeking him continually through his Son, and by his Spirit; they were consequently blessed by him here, and shall be blessed in his presence forever. He will tell them to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; that heavenly kingdom which he, in his death, opened to all believers; that glorious kingdom of which they, at their baptism, had been made inheritors; that kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness, and for which they had been continually preparing by faith in their Saviour's merits, by obedience to his commands, and by praying for the Holy Spirit. Do you hope that in that day he will say to you, *come*? If so, let your belief in him as your Saviour, and your obedience to him as your Lord and Master, shew that you are not indulging a vain hope. Do you hope that he will call you, the blessed of his Father? If so, let your earnest prayers to your Heavenly Father, for mercy and grace, through Christ, and your constant endeavour to do his will, prove that you are indeed his children. Do you hope to inherit the kingdom of heaven? If so, let your daily hungering and thirsting after righteousness, let your

repentance for your past sins, and your growth in holiness of living shew that Christ is formed in you the hope of glory.

The great King and Judge of men shall go on to tell those on the right hand why he approves of them ; and I beg you to observe how their faith in Jesus, and their love to him, made them try and please him in every thing that they did. He shall say, "for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." The righteous, to whom this shall be addressed, are represented as not understanding how their Lord could speak to them in this way : " they shall answer him, saying, Lord when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? or when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee ?" Now mark the answer of our Lord, " And the King shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." That is, because your faith in me, and your love to me, moved you to do good to the least, the poorest of my followers, whom I regard as my brethren, I look upon it as if you did the good to me myself.

Now, my brethren, you say that you hope to be saved through Jesus Christ, who died for you ; but do your faith in him, and your love to him shew themselves in any way ? do they bring forth in you any good works ? do they make you do any thing for him, who so loved you as to shed his blood for

you? You see that if, in the great day, you would be placed on the right hand, you must, from love to Jesus, be kind to one another, and be ready to help any one as much as you can. You must do this from love to Jesus, and with a desire to please him. You must endeavour to shew, by doing good to others for Jesus' sake, that you are building your hope of heaven upon the only foundation, Jesus Christ crucified for the sins of the world. And you should pray diligently to God for the grace of his Spirit, that you may have the same feeling, and the same desire always. Thus in your daily work, you should try and keep the Lord before you, and do it as to him, and not to man. When tempted to commit any sin, you should resist the temptation, saying with Joseph, "how can I do this wickedness, and sin against God?" When any one offends you, you should, from love to Jesus, forgive him, and pray for him. If in this way you act from love to God, and with a desire to please him, you may enjoy a comfortable hope, that our Saviour in whom you are trusting, and whose Spirit you seek for your guide, will, as your Judge, say to you, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

But what shall he say to the wicked on the left hand? to them he shall say, "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." He will tell them to depart: they did not while here seek him by repentance and faith; they did not obey him; and he will drive them from him. He shall call them cursed: they were born into this world in sin, children of wrath; they did not seek the mercy and grace of God through

that precious Saviour, who, to redeem us from the curse of God's law, was content to be made a curse for us: they lived like children of disobedience, and in the day of judgment they can inherit only a curse. And whither shall they depart? "Into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Into that same horrible pit, which was prepared only for the devil, and all wicked spirits, shall these wicked children of men be cast, who would not come to Jesus Christ, that their souls might be saved.

The great Judge shall then declare, that they were wanting in all those good works, which, if they had been done from love to him, would have marked them as good Christians. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." As they did not, for their Saviour's sake; and from love to him, abstain from evil and do good, they must hear those dreadful words, "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

This passage of scripture, my brethren, brings the proceedings of the day of judgment very plainly before you. You know that you must all be there, and be set either on the right hand or on the left. And through the mercy and goodness of God, you

may now so live, by faith in Jesus Christ, as to secure a place on the right hand. But has the goodness of God brought you all to repentance, to a living faith in Jesus Christ, to a willing obedience to him, to earnest prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit? Think of these things, my brethren; live each day as if it were your last, and prepare to meet your God in judgment.



SERMON XVI.

LUKE v. 12, 13.—And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy; who, seeing Jesus, fell on his face and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

IN this place we read of a diseased man, a leper, coming to Jesus, to be healed of his dreadful disease; and we see how readily our Saviour shewed mercy to the poor man, and made him well. These wonderful works our Lord was always doing, and if we have ears to hear about all that he did, we shall receive much good in our souls.

“And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy.” This leprosy was a disease that was rather common among the Jews; and those who were afflicted with it, were in a very unhappy state: they not only had to bear a very bad sickness, but by the law which God gave to his people Israel, they were looked upon as unclean; they were not permitted to come into the temple of God to worship him there, and were obliged to separate themselves from all other people. So you see the leper was in a very sad state.

From this we are plainly taught the very bad nature of sin. Sin may be called the leprosy of the soul. The soul is in danger of dying with the disease of sin. You must know that it is written in the Bible that we are all born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath; that is, children that

God is angry with. So that in our natural state, we are unclean through sin, and are not fit to appear in the presence of the holy God : we cannot come before him with clean hands and a pure heart.

Let us now compare this, our natural state, with the condition of the leper. Was the leper looked upon as unclean, and therefore forbidden to enter into the house of God, with his people ? So, until the sins of men are washed away in the blood of Jesus, and their hearts are changed and made new by the Holy Spirit, they are unclean in the sight of God : as long as they continue with the leprosy of sin upon them, they cannot be true worshippers and servants of God, and if they live and die in sin, they shall not enter into heaven, for God cannot look upon iniquity ; into heaven nothing can enter which defileth.

Was the leper commanded to separate himself from God's people, lest he should defile them ? lest he should give to them his dreadful disease ? And what is more contaminating than sin ? If the people of God are fond of being much with those whose souls are filled with the leprosy of sin, they will run the risk of becoming like them, and of sharing in the punishment reserved for all the ungodly.— Thus, to repeat what I have said, the case of the leper shews us the very bad nature of sin. Sin is the disease of the soul. The love of sin cuts man off from the favor of God ; the love of sin shuts heaven against him, and drags him down to hell. O what a blessing it is that there is forgiveness with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But let us go on with the account of this man, full of leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he “ fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou

wilt, thou canst make me clean." You see how anxious this man was to be healed. Do you not think it made him sad to have such a disease upon him, which not only of itself afflicted him, but which shut him out from the house of God, and made the people avoid him? Yes, he felt the grievous state that he was in, and as soon as he could, he came to Jesus, and fell on his face before him, and cried, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

Have you, my brethren, ever felt the leprosy of sin in your souls? Have you ever been made sad on thinking that you are miserable sinners? Have you ever been filled with grief, that because you are defiled by sin, you are unworthy of the favor of God, and deserve to be shut out from his presence for ever? If you have felt in this way, you must have often done as this leper did; you must have often fallen upon your knees, confessed your many sins to God, asked forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ who died for sinners, and prayed for the Holy Spirit to make your hearts holy and clean.

But have any of you never felt sorry that you have sinned against the Holy God? Do any of you never grieve at the thought, that for your sins you deserve to be shut out from God for ever? Do any of you never kneel down before him, and confess your sins, and pray for pardon and for grace in the name of that Saviour who shed his blood for you? If any of you are thus living carelessly in sin, consider your ways, I pray you; let the certainty of death, the judgment in the last day, the eternal pains of hell, bring you at once to repentance. Let the mercy of God, in sending his own Son to die for you; let the goodness of God, in bearing with you so long, bring you to repentance. Do as this

leper did ; cry to our Saviour, Jesus Christ, as he did ; “ Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” See, also, the strong faith of this man, full of leprosy : “ Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” The man did not doubt the power of our Lord. Have you like faith in Jesus, the Saviour of sinners ? You should often pray, “ Lord, increase my faith.” “ Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.” We know, we are sure, that he is both willing and able to save us. We know it, for he came and died for us : we know it, for he is now in heaven pleading for us, and sending the Holy Spirit to all who ask.

Think then often, with sorrow, of all your sins past : fall down before God, and confess them, and cry with faith to Jesus as this leper did, “ Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean ;” and you will find to your comfort that the “ blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.”

Did our Lord take any notice of this leprous man crying so earnestly ? Yes, his ear was always open to the cry of the miserable : his hand was always ready to help the needy. He “ put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will : be thou clean ; and immediately the leprosy departed from him.” Behold here the mercy of Jesus. No sooner did he see this unhappy leper fall down before him : no sooner did the cry of distress, the cry for help, reach his ear, than his hand was stretched out to help ; the word of mercy went out from his lips. And is he not now the same ? “ Is his hand shortened, that it cannot save ? Is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear ?” “ He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” Only confess your sins to him, with a desire to forsake them : only believe

that he is mighty to save: only cry for mercy,—“Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner,” and he will surely hear you and help you, and will give you all the mercy that you want. He invites such poor sinners as we are to come to him: “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

See also the power of Jesus. “I will, be thou clean:” “his word was with power:” “he spake and it was done:” and he is always the same:—“with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Only come to him as he tells you to do: come, repenting of your past sins; determined, through his grace, to lead a new life; come, believing in him, the only Saviour, believing that his body was broken for you, that his blood was shed for you: come with this penitent and believing heart, and you may comfort yourselves by thinking that this word of mercy and power is spoken to every penitent sinner. “I will: be thou clean.”

But let me ask you, my brethren, how are you all living? Are you in the habit of repenting of your past sins? Do you wish, do you try to lead a life of holiness? Do you deny yourselves in sinful practises which you like, and make it your meat and drink to do the will of God? And are you diligent in prayer, that you may have a stronger faith in Jesus, and may have the Holy Spirit abiding in your hearts? Ask yourselves these questions, and delay not to lead the life of a follower of Jesus. The night of death will soon overtake you, and then no work can be done. Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching.

SERMON XVII.

LUKE x. 37.—Then said Jesus unto him, go and do thou likewise.

IN this part of the Holy Bible, we are told that a certain lawyer, that is, a certain teacher of God's law among the Jews, stood up and tempted our Saviour, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He wanted to try our Lord; to see what kind of an answer he would give. And it was a great question which he asked. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" There is nothing that we should inquire about as much as this. We must soon die; how then ought we to live here, so as to have eternal life in heaven hereafter? Our Lord answered this question, by saying to this lawyer, "what is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And Jesus said to him, thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live."

This, my brethren, is what you and I, and all people must attend to, if we hope to be accepted in the day of judgment, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

You say, that you believe that God will forgive you all your past sins; that he will look upon you as his adopted children; that he will give you the Holy Spirit to sanctify your hearts; that he will

hereafter take you to heaven ; you believe that he will give you these great blessings, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died to save us. But this belief of yours must, to do you any good, be alive in you. You must shew that you have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ : and how can you shew this? By attending to this word of scripture : by loving God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and by loving your neighbor as you love yourselves.

I am not now going to speak to you about the first of duties, love to God, and love to man. I will only add, that if you are indeed looking to Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour of your souls, you will always pray very diligently in his name, that "the love of God may be shed abroad in your hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto you ;" and that you may do to all men, as you would have them do to you.

We are next told that this lawyer, "willing to justify himself said unto Jesus, and who is my neighbor?" He wished "to justify himself;" to shew, that as far as his duty to his neighbor was concerned, he had acted righteously. He therefore asked our Lord, "who is my neighbor?" Thinking, no doubt, that what he said, would agree with the common saying among the Jews at that time, namely, that the law, which commanded them to love their neighbor, referred only to their own people, and that they might hate all other people. We shall see what a very different lesson our Saviour taught him ! And it is important that we should fully know this : the ten commandments teach us our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbor : we then ought perfectly to understand who is our neighbor.

Our Lord answered this question by speaking a parable. He said, "a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed leaving him half dead." What a wretched condition this poor traveller was in. The thieves took away every thing he had, even to the clothes that he had on: and then they wounded him, and left him lying naked upon the road, and half dead. What object more deserving of pity could be found? Surely, it might be said, the first person who comes along the road will be a neighbor to this wounded man, and will help him!

But let us see what our Saviour says: "and by chance there came down a certain priest that way." The first person that came by, was a priest of God, one holding the holy office of a minister of God; one whose duty it was to shew the people, by his good life, how to serve God: he then will certainly be a neighbor to this poor wounded Jew, and will help him. But no: he did not love his neighbor as himself: he did not know how to do to others, as he would have them do to him: and when he saw this poor wounded man lying naked on the road, he crossed over to the other side and went on his journey, leaving him to perish. The next person who came along was a Levite: this was another of the ministers of God, and he had no more compassion, no more love for his neighbor, than the one who had just gone before him. He came and looked upon the wretched dying man, and passed by on the other side. The next person that came along the road, was one, who knew how to look upon any one in distress as his neighbor. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he

was." These Samaritans lived close by the Jews; but the Samaritans and the Jews had no dealings with one another: the one people hated and despised the other people. We might suppose then, that when this Samaritan, travelling through the Jew's country, the country of his enemies, came to where the wounded and dying Jew was lying, he too would pass by on the other side. But no: he did not think about this man's being an enemy: he did not think about trouble and expense: he did not let any such thoughts keep him from doing good: here was a fellow-creature in distress, and immediately he acted the part of a neighbor.— "When he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." But was that all that he did? No: if he had merely dressed his wounds, and left him, he might still have died upon the road; he therefore "set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." But his kindness did not stop there: the man was so badly wounded, that he required care and attendance for many weeks. On the morrow therefore, when this good Samaritan was about to proceed on his journey, he gave some money to the man that kept the inn, and said, "take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee."

When our Lord had spoken this parable, he said to the lawyer, who had asked him the question "and who is my neighbor?" "which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?" The man could not hesitate a moment: he said "he that shewed mercy on him." Yes, the Priest and the Levite, who

passed by on the other side, did not love their neighbor as themselves; though this wounded man was their own countryman. But the Samaritan shewed mercy even on an enemy; he shewed that he knew what charity meant; he shewed that he knew who his neighbor was. Our Lord then said to this man, that put the question to him, "go, and do thou likewise." And in this way he shewed him, that the Jews, who used to say that they were to love only their own nation, and might hate all other people, were in very great error. And he speaks the same words to each of us; "go, and do thou likewise." If you wish to be followers of Jesus Christ, love one another. If you hope to receive mercy from God through Christ, shew mercy to one another; be a neighbor to every one, whether you look upon him as your friend or your enemy. If you hope to be indeed God's children through Christ, you must imitate God in being kind to every body, just as he makes his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. But you know that you cannot root out hatred from your hearts, and have love, christian love in its place, unless you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you: and our Saviour says "God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask." Ask, therefore, in the name of Christ: give yourselves to prayer; and if you desire this most precious gift, so that you may believe in, and follow our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, you will surely find that his words are true; "every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

SERMON XVIII.

LUKE XVIII. 35--43.—And it came to pass, that, as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried so much the more, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, what wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

WE have here the account of Jesus giving sight to a blind man. As long as our Lord remained upon earth, he went about doing good. Wherever he went, the sick, and the diseased, and the blind, and the lame, and the miserable came to him; and none ever came in vain. He spoke, and they were healed; or he touched them, and they were made perfectly well. He was thus always shewing his pity and love for us poor creatures; he was always giving proof of his readiness to help us.

We read, “and it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging.” Now, this was a very sad state for a poor man to be in. He was blind; he could not therefore work to get himself food and clothing; and he sat down by the way side, and asked people that were passing by to give him

something. While he was thus sitting and begging, he heard a multitude of people pass by, and he asked what it meant; and they told him that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." Now, he had heard of Jesus: he had heard of the wonderful works which he was always doing: he had heard that he was always ready to help those in need. Therefore, as soon as he heard that Jesus was passing by, he cried, saying, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." You see what this man did: he felt his blindness, he knew that he could not see, and this was a grief to him; and as soon as he could, he cried to Jesus for mercy.

Now, all people are naturally, in their minds, in the same state that this poor man was. I, and you, and all people are, by nature, in a blind and dark, and dead state. We cannot, of ourselves, see the way to heaven; we cannot, of ourselves, find the narrow gate which leads to heaven: we cannot, of ourselves, understand the word of God: we are, naturally, as blind in our souls as this man was in his eyes. But is there any help for us? Is there any one to whom we may cry for mercy? Is there any one to give light to our dark souls? Yes: the same Jesus, to whom this blind man cried for mercy, is always ready to receive and to help those who truly turn to him. He is always ready to help them to turn from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness and truth. His word is, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And he says in another place, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." If, then, you feel your sinfulness and unworthiness, as this man did his blindness; if the

many sins you commit are a grief to you, as this man's blindness distressed him, you will thank God that there is a Saviour, Jesus Christ, the righteous : you will thank God, when you remember that " the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." You will thank God for the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to abide in the hearts of his faithful people, making them new creatures, guiding them into all truth. You will want the light of truth in your souls, and will come every day, by prayer and faith to Jesus, the light of the world, taking up this cry of the blind man, " Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

When the blind man had cried out in this way, we are told that " they which went before rebuked him that he should hold his peace." The people that were going along with Jesus, told him to be quiet, not to cry out so. But did he attend to them ? No : his blindness was a sore trouble to him : he believed that Jesus was able to help him : " he wanted his eyes to be opened, and therefore, he cried so much the more, thou Son of David have mercy on me."

In the same way, if the darkness and blindness of your souls is a trouble to you ; if the remembrance of your past sins is a grief to you ; if the thought of God's anger fills your hearts with trouble ; if you feel sorry that you cannot always serve God as the Bible teaches you ; if you are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, so that you may become fitted for heaven, you will never cease crying to Jesus to have mercy on you. If all the world should tell you to hold your peace, that will not stop you ; if you want your souls to be saved ; knowing that Jesus died for your sins, that in him

alone there is hope, that without him you are lost, you would cry so much the more, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

When the blind man continued crying out in this way, "Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him." You see here the kindness, the compassion of our Saviour. He felt for this poor man: he listened to his cry, and commanded him to be brought to him. And do you think he will let any poor repenting sinner cry to him for mercy, without hearing him, and without shewing him the mercy which he wants? No: he says, "come unto me, and I will give you rest." He says again, "him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." And there is another very precious promise: "it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and whiles they are yet speaking, I will hear." The Lord Jesus Christ, my brethren, who came and died for our sins, and rose up again, is now our Mediator at the throne of grace. If you will truly repent of all your sins, and cry to God for mercy in his name, he will hear you, and will accept your prayer: you shall, through Jesus, receive the mercy and the grace which you want.

When this blind man was come near to our Lord, "he asked him, saying, what wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? and he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight."

It was this man's blindness which brought him to Jesus; and when our Lord asked him what he should do for him, he said, "Lord, that I may re-

ceive my sight." And what should bring you to your Saviour? Your sins, your sins should bring you to Jesus: your sins should make you fall down upon your knees, and pray to him for mercy: your sorrow for your sins should make you confess them all to God, and should make you tell him what you want. Lord, that my sins may be forgiven me;—that my sins may all be washed away in the blood of Jesus; that my sinful heart may be made new by thy Holy Spirit.

You see, also, that the word of our Saviour was with power: as soon as he said the word, the man's eyes were opened; and Jesus is always the same: "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;" always ready to help; always mighty to save. But you must come to him in faith: he said to this man, "thy faith hath saved thee." The man did not doubt either the goodness or the power of Jesus. He felt sure that Jesus was willing and able to open his eyes. He came in this faith, and was healed. And if you desire that your sins may be forgiven, and your souls saved through him, you must have faith in him. While you are repenting of your sins, you must believe in Jesus Christ; you must believe that he came into the world to save sinners: you must believe that when he died upon the cross, he died for your sins, and the sins of all people. You must believe that there is no way in which you can be saved, but in and through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose up again, and who is now pleading for us in heaven, and is sending down the Holy Spirit to all who ask. Thus believe in him, thus trust in him; thus look always to him the only Saviour, and you may

hope that all your sins shall be blotted out through him.

After this blind man had received his sight, " he followed Jesus, glorifying God." He felt so thankful to our Lord, that he continued with him, and he praised God for his goodness to him. And if you repent of your sins, and truly believe in Jesus Christ our Saviour: if you so believe in him as to have light in your souls instead of darkness, you will show it by following Jesus, and by praising God, not only with your lips, but in your lives. If you are, indeed, thankful to God for sending his Son to die for our sins, you will make your life of obedience to him speak forth his praise; and you will pray constantly for the Holy Spirit that you may have strength to do so. Thus, to shew you what I mean by making your lives shew forth the praise of God, if any of you have been in the habit of telling lies, you will, from love to God, speak only the truth. If any of you have been in the habit of stealing, you will, from love to God, keep your hands from picking and stealing. If any of you have been indulging in the sins of the flesh, gluttony, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, you will, from love to God, keep your bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity. If any of you have borne hatred and malice in your hearts, you will, from love to God, love your neighbour as yourselves. If any of you have been disobedient, unfaithful servants, you will henceforward, from love to God, be obedient servants, doing your work with good will, as to the Lord, and not to man. In a word: if you feel as this blind man did, after he was cured, your holy life will shew it, and thus you will praise God by your good life.

And, my brethren, if you hope to be saved through Jesus Christ, your trust in him must bring about this change in you, for heaven is a place wherein dwelleth righteousness. Remember this: and while you have the opportunity, get ready for it, by repentance, by faith in Christ, by constant prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and by a cheerful obedience to the will of God in all things.



SERMON XIX.

JOHN x. 27, 28.—My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

OUR Saviour Jesus Christ, here calls his people, his sheep : and he tells us by what marks his sheep are known. He says, “ my sheep hear my voice, and they follow me.” He tells us also, what a blessed condition theirs is : he says, “ I know them : ” I know them to belong to me. He says also, “ I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” Now is it not the first of blessings to be the sheep of that good Shepherd Jesus Christ ? — We, at our baptism, were “ received into the congregation of Christ’s flock : ” we were then numbered amongst the sheep of his pasture on earth. But as too many of these will not obey the Good Shepherd, but are like goats among the sheep, and will be placed on the left hand, in the day of judgment ; it is well to examine the greatness of the blessings, which they have, who are indeed the sheep of Christ, and also the marks by which they are known. In this place, you are told, that to enjoy the blessing of belonging to Christ, you must “ hear his voice and follow him.” Is it not the greatest blessing to have the Good Shepherd to know us ? If you would have him to know you as his sheep, you must “ hear his voice and follow

him." Ought it not to be your chief desire, to receive from that Good Shepherd eternal life? If such is your desire, you will "hear his voice, and follow him." Do you wish to be among those, who shall never perish, who shall never be plucked out of the hand of the Good Shepherd? If so, you will never cease "hearing his voice, and following him."

There is, as you know, my brethren, one only Saviour Jesus Christ. He came into this world to save sinners: and when he died upon the cross, he died for the sin of all mankind. If then you want your sins to be forgiven you, if you want to escape from the punishment of hell, if you want to be received into the kingdom of heaven, you must be always looking to that Saviour Jesus Christ. If you truly belong to him, you are safe: but if you are not his, you are in a miserably lost state. For this is his own word, "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Now it pleased him to call himself the "Good Shepherd:" and this name teaches us how much he cares for us; how much he loves us; and what great things he is still doing for us. As the "Good Shepherd" he came down from heaven to seek and to save lost man: for man had strayed away from the ways of God like a lost sheep: he was lost in the ways of sin, in the ways of darkness, in the ways leading down to hell. Surely the love of the "Good Shepherd" was very great, to bring him from the glory of heaven to save such a poor lost creature. Man was in danger of perishing in the snare of the devil, just as a poor wandering sheep, in a wild country, is in danger of being killed by the lion or the wolf. But Jesus Christ, the Good

Shepherd, came down from heaven, to destroy the works of the devil, and he gave his life, for the life of the sheep. And all the time that he was in the world, how mild, and kind, and gentle he was to all; doing good to all that would receive any good from him; healing the bodies of the sick, speaking peace to the hearts of the distressed; calling on all people to come to him, that they might find rest for their souls. And although he is now in heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, he is still the Good Shepherd, he still takes care of his sheep, guiding them in the right way, protecting them from danger, feeding them with the spiritual food of his gospel, and preparing them for the rich and eternal blessings of heaven. Surely the love of the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ, to his poor wandering sheep in this world, is great indeed. And ought not we love him in return? Oh pray to God to help you to love him, who so loved you, as to come from heaven to die for you. Pray to God to help you to be always obedient to this Good Shepherd, who cares for us, and who intercedes for us in heaven.

We cannot have any doubt as to the love of God towards us, and his desire that all of us should be saved. "He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." And he will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. So that if any one here is not walking in the way that leads to heaven, it is his own doing; he is bringing down the anger of God upon his own guilty head; he is willingly going along the broad road that leads to hell. That we may all understand, how the case stands with us, whether we are

in the broad road leading to destruction, or in the narrow road leading to heaven, let us see what our Lord says about his sheep, and the mark by which they are known.

The Good Shepherd says, "my sheep hear my voice." They are glad to hear all that Jesus says in the Bible; and they hear with the intention of doing whatever he commands. Now you can soon find out whether you bear this mark of the "sheep of God's pasture." You can say to yourselves, am I hearing the voice of my Saviour? Do I love to hear the word of Jesus in the Bible? and when I hear it, do I try to do it? That you may the better understand this, I will speak of a few plain commands which our Lord gives. He tells us to repent of our sins. Do you hear him and obey him in this? Are you sorry for your sins, and do you try to forsake them? Do you pray to God for his Holy Spirit to teach you to repent, to teach you to lead a new life? You can find out in this way whether you are the sheep of Christ.

Our Lord tells us, to believe in him as our Saviour. Do you hear his voice and obey him in this? Are you indeed believing in him; looking to him for the saving of your souls? Do you believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, and only his blood, will wash away your sins? Are you always, day after day, trusting in him who died for you, for the forgiveness of all your sins? In this way you may try yourselves, and see whether you are the sheep of Christ.

Our Lord tells us to pray to God in his name: to pray always and not to faint: to ask, and we shall have; to seek, and we shall find; to knock, and it shall be opened unto us. Do you hear his voice

in this? Are you praying to God in his name, day after day, night after night, seeking through him the pardon, the mercy, the grace, which you want every day? In this way again you may find out whether you are the sheep of Christ.

Our Lord says, "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Do you hear his voice in this? Are you trying to love your neighbor as yourselves? Are you trying to do to others as you would have them do to you? Do you for Jesus Christ's sake, love your enemies? Do you bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you? In this way, again, you may try yourselves, and see whether you are the sheep of Jesus Christ. And in the same way, you may try yourselves, by all the commands of our Lord, and see whether you are so hearing his voice as to be indeed his sheep.

Our Lord also declares in this part of the Bible, that his sheep follow him. He not only died for our sins, to save us from hell, but he also gave us an example, that we should walk, as he walked.—Now do you bear this mark of the sheep of Jesus, that you follow him? Are you trying to be meek and lowly minded as Jesus was? Are you following him in his humility, in his patience, in his gentleness? Are you helping one another, as he was so ready to do good to all that came to him? Do you follow him in his obedience to the will of his heavenly Father? Do you forgive those that injure you, as he prayed for those that nailed him to the cross? In this way you may try yourselves, and see, whether you are so following Jesus, as to be indeed his sheep. And ought you not very seri-

ously to look into this, and see whether you belong to Jesus or not? For suppose you are not really his: suppose you are not hearing his voice or following him, in what condition would you then be? Surely in none other, than in the broad road leading down to hell. Attend to this matter then with much anxiety and earnestness; and while looking up to Jesus dying upon the cross for your sins, while believing that God will forgive you your sins for his sake, see that you pray very diligently, for the Holy Spirit, that you may hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd, and may always follow him.

If you do this, how very blessed will you be.— Our Lord says that he knows his sheep. He knows them to belong to him; he will be with them, taking care of them here: he will confess them at the last day before his heavenly Father, and before the holy angels. What greater blessing can there be than this?

Our Lord says, “I give unto my sheep eternal life.” They love and obey and follow him here; they have peace with God through the merits of his death, they have his Spirit abiding in them, and he will give them hereafter eternal life. What greater blessing can there be, than to be the sheep of Jesus?

Our Lord says, “my sheep shall never perish.” They must indeed leave this world, they must die, and their bodies turn to dust, but he will raise them up again, and give to them eternal life. What greater blessing can there be, than to be the sheep of Jesus?

Our Lord says, “neither shall any man pluck my sheep out of my hand.” It matters not who or what are against them; so long as they hear the

voice of the Good Shepherd, and follow him, they are safe under his protection: he will guide and keep them here; he will place them on his right hand, in the day of judgment; he will say to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Surely there is no blessing equal to this, to be the sheep of Jesus. God grant, that we may all so hear his voice, and so follow him, that he may acknowledge us to be his, and may nourish us up unto life everlasting.



SERMON XX.

JOHN XIV. 6 — Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ was teaching his twelve disciples on the night before he was crucified. He told them he was going away to his Father, and would prepare a place in heaven for them: and he said to them, “whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, not understanding that our Saviour was indeed going back to heaven, “saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

Now these are very important words which we should be always paying especial attention to: they tell us in a plain manner what we must be doing, that our souls may be saved.

In the beginning of our Church service, we confess to God that “we have erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep.” And in this place we hear the voice of Jesus, the good Shepherd, saying, “I am the way.” So that by following him, we turn from the ways of sin, in which we have been wandering, and walk in the ways of holiness.

When wandering in the ways of sin, we do the works of the devil, who is the father of lies: but in this place we hear Jesus saying, “I am the truth;” so that by learning of him, and obeying him, we turn from lies to truth; we are turned from the power of Satan unto God.

We must all of us soon die ; and if we now live in sin, we must meet with the second death, the eternal pains of hell. But in this place, we hear Jesus saying, "I am the life." So that we must be raised again by our Saviour at the last day ; and if we now believe in him, and follow him, and obey him, we shall not suffer the second death in the fire of hell, but shall live forever in heaven.

On account of our many sins, we deserve the anger of God, both here and forever. But in this place, we hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." I am the true living way, by which all men may come to God : and "no man cometh unto the Father but by me." So that if we do indeed walk in the way that Jesus directs, and receive and obey the truth which Jesus teaches, and seek that life which there is in Jesus, and which is the gift of God through him, we are now, through Jesus, reconciled to the Father, and shall also be blessed forever by him.

These are, indeed, very important words of our Saviour Jesus Christ. If you will treasure them up in your hearts, and believe as they teach you to believe, and live as they teach you to live, and seek for all that they teach you to desire, you will, by the help of the Holy Spirit, be walking in that way which leads to everlasting life.

Jesus said, "I am the way." When Adam and Eve sinned against God, they were driven out of Paradise, and the *way* to God was shut against man. But God, whose "mercy endureth forever," pitied poor fallen man, and made a way by which man might return to him—and that way is Jesus Christ.

Surely, my brethren, God is love, and he "so

loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And how did Jesus Christ become the *way* to heaven? He became the Son of Man; and in the body which he then took, he died, to atone for the sin of Adam; to atone for the sin of all mankind. As John the Baptist, his forerunner, said of him: "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." By his dying for our sins and rising up again; by his ascending into heaven, and interceding there for us, he is the way, and the only way, by which we can be saved.

You are sinners; how can you escape the anger of God? Jesus is the way. Look to him dying for your sins; believe that his blood cleanseth from all sin; be sorry for your sins, and confess them to God; cry to him to spare you, to have mercy upon you, to forgive you for his sake, and God's anger will be removed—he promises to receive and forgive those who so come to him.

You must soon die: how can you overcome the fear of death? how can you escape the second death, the pains of hell? Jesus, and Jesus only, is the way. Look to him, not only dying for your sins, but rising again from the grave; thus destroying the power of death, and hell, and the devil; and if you are, indeed, trusting in him, you will have a comfortable hope that the second death shall not harm you, but that through Jesus, the way to heaven, you shall be happy in God's holy presence.

You are weak creatures: How then can you do the will of God? how can you keep from falling into sin? how can you escape from the snares of

the devil? Jesus, and Jesus only, is the way. He said, "God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask." "If ye ask anything in my name, God will give it you." "My grace is sufficient for you." If then, my brethren, you will pray very diligently in the name of Jesus; if you will look to him with believing hearts, and with sincere desire to do his will, though very weak in yourselves, you will become strong in him, and in the power of his might. You will have the Holy Spirit abiding in you: you will find that you can do all things through Christ strengthening you. Thus, in every thing connected with the saving of your souls, Jesus, and Jesus only, is the way.

Jesus is also the truth. After Adam and Eve sinned against God, the mind of man became dark through sin and error; he loved the way of lying rather than the way of truth, and became the servant of the devil, the father of lies. But when Jesus came into the world, he was the light of the world: as the sun rising in the morning, drives away the darkness of night, so does Jesus drive away, from all who receive him, the darkness of error and sin, and shew them the light of truth.— When he was in the world, he taught the way of truth; he made known to the world the true God, and himself the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit of truth, who guides God's faithful people into the ways of peace and truth. And in his holy Bible, we can all learn "the truth as it is in Jesus."— There, we learn true knowledge, true wisdom, even that blessed truth by which we can live here as true followers of Jesus Christ, and by which we can be fitted to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.

Do you then want to know the truth, and to possess the truth? you must come to Jesus, who is the truth. Be always glad to hear his word read to you, and pray diligently to God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that you may love the truth, and keep the truth, and walk in the truth; you will then, by the grace of God, be increasing in true knowledge and true holiness, living to the glory of our God and Saviour, and enjoying a well grounded hope of eternal life.

Jesus is the life. When Adam sinned, God said to him, "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." But the gospel brings us this blessed news. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Jesus is the life: he died for our sins, and rose up again to die no more. And if we believe in him who so died for us; if we turn from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, we shall through him, not die eternally, but live.

Jesus is the life: we must, indeed, leave this world: our souls must be separated from the body, and our bodies be committed to the grave; but at the end of the world, our Lord shall come again and raise up all the dead; when to those who have loved him, and have believed in him as their Saviour, and have obeyed him, he shall say, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Do you desire this life, this eternal life, which there is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Surely you would all desire life eternal in heaven, rather than never ending torment in hell. But are you seeking this life? are you living for heaven? Oh, my brethren, take heed how you pass your few days

that you spend here. On the manner in which you live now, depends your condition for ever and ever. If you do not attend to religion ; if you live in darkness, in sin, in the way of lying, doing the works of the devil, you must suffer for ever the pains of hell. And could you endure those everlasting burnings ? If not, flee at once from the wrath to come ; escape, while you have time, from the punishment of the wicked. Hear, with open ears and obedient hearts, these words of Jesus, “ I am the way, and the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Walk in this way which Jesus points out to you : learn and obey this truth which Jesus teaches : seek this life which Jesus offers ; and the Father, who sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world, will put his Spirit within you, and bless you both now and forever. May you all know, by happy experience, that the follower of Jesus can alone be called blessed.



SÉRMON XXI.

JOHN xv. 4.—Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

How beautifully simple are these words of our Saviour! And how plainly do they teach us, that if we would have spiritual life in our souls, we must be united to Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners. In this parable of the vine, our Lord shews the close union which there is between him and his Church, and how every living member of his Church receives all his spiritual strength and nourishment from him. He says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." Jesus calls himself "the true vine." In a vine there are three parts; first the root, then the stock or stem arising from the root, and lastly the branches which grow upon the stock or stem. And when our Lord says, "I am true vine," he speaks of himself, and the Church, which depends altogether upon him.—Jesus is like the root and stock of the vine; and the Church is like the branches: for as the root and stock of the vine support the branches and keep them alive; so does Jesus Christ support his Church and give spiritual life to each member of his Church.

"My Father," he says, "is the husbandman."—As a vine must first be planted in good ground, and must afterwards receive much care and attention that it may produce good grapes; so it is with and his Church, which is the spiritual vine.

“ My Father,” says Jesus, “ is the husbandman.” It is God the Father who planted this true and spiritual vine in this world ; who has protected it from the beginning until now : who waters it continually with the dew of his blessing ; who prunes it with afflictions ; who watches over each member of it with the tenderest care. For he sent his own dear Son into the world to die for sin : Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, and died for the sins of men upon the cross : and all who repent of their sins, and believe in him who so died, and are baptized, are made members of his Church, and children of God : they have the Holy Spirit given to them, and the promise of eternal life in the next world. How can we sufficiently thank our heavenly Father for his mercy and goodness towards us ?— “ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” Try and think often, my brethren, of the greatness of the love of God to us miserable sinners, in redeeming us with the precious blood of Christ, and thus bringing us near to himself. And oh be careful to shew your thankfulness and your love by a cheerful obedience to him.

Our Saviour next says, “ every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.” If there is a branch in a vine which bears no fruit, what is usually done with it ? It is cut off, and thrown away, or burned, as a useless branch. So also it is in the spiritual vine, the Church : if there is a member, who will not yield the fruit of a good life, the time shall come, when the Lord shall take him away, and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. Remember this, I pray you. Are you like fruitful

branches, or like barren branches? Are you seeking in prayer the help of the Holy Spirit, that you may shake off your sins, and become holy, as God is holy: or are you still dead in trespasses and sins? Oh take heed to your ways, and as long as God, in his goodness, permits you to live, let your repentance for your sins, become deeper; let your faith in Jesus become stronger; let your prayers for the Holy Ghost become more frequent and earnest; let your endeavors to keep God's commandments become a constant habit, lest God cut you off in anger, finding you only like a useless branch.

Our Saviour goes on to say, "and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." A vine requires a great deal of pruning every year; not only must the useless and barren branches be cut away, but the good branches must also be pruned, and trained in a proper direction, or they would soon become good for nothing. God does the same in his spiritual vine, the Church. Every member of the Church, who is bearing the fruit of a good life, he purgeth; he visits with different kinds of affliction. And why is this? That he may bring forth more fruit. That he may serve God better in this world, and may be more fit to be received into heaven. We all of us need a great deal of correction; and the Lord, in mercy to our souls, chastises us in various ways. Our sins have taken such hold upon us, that affliction is necessary to make us use the proper means of getting rid of them. We are so little inclined to serve God, that affliction is necessary to draw us near to him.—Whenever, therefore, the sorrows of this life are pressing you sore, think of this saying of our

Saviour, "every branch which beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." If you are indeed followers of Jesus, it will, at such times, comfort you to think that a Father's hand is upon you, chastising you; in love chastising you to make you partakers of his holiness. And remembering this, you will pray to him for his grace that his chastisement may have a good effect upon you, in making you more sorry for your sins, and more obedient to his holy will.

I will now go on to the words which I read to you at the beginning. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "Abide in me," says our Lord, "and I in you." Thus must it always be. Jesus, Jesus Christ crucified for your sins, must be all in all to you, if you would enjoy a sure hope of being saved. Abide in him by faith, and he will be in you, teaching you to live to his glory, and preparing you for heaven. As each day runs on, keep your eye fixed upon Jesus, who died for your sins, and is now at the right hand of God, interceding for you. While confessing your sins to God, and repenting of them, look to Jesus, believing that his blood cleanseth from all sin. While praying to God, look to Jesus our "Advocate with the Father," believing, that for his sake you shall obtain the mercy and grace which you need. In all that you do, look to Jesus. While sitting in the house, and when walking by the way, in lying down and in rising up; while doing your daily work, look to Jesus: look to him for his power to protect you, for his grace to guide you. Thus abide in him, and he will abide in you: your sins, through him, shall be blotted out; your

prayers, through him, shall be heard; you shall have his Spirit dwelling in you; you shall be under his special care in this world, and shall be made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Oh how great a blessing it is to be thus closely united to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us desire this, my brethren, more than any thing; let us pray for it; especially let us live as they ought to do, who are seeking heaven through him.

Can any one do what is right in the sight of God, unless he abide in Jesus Christ? It is impossible. Hear what he says. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." This is setting the matter before us in the plainest way. If you cut off a branch from the vine, it must wither and die. And the same is true with regard to the branch in the spiritual vine. Unless you, as branches of the spiritual vine, are abiding in Jesus, receiving from him spiritual strength, you can have neither the will, nor the power, to do works pleasing to God. Unless you have the Holy Spirit helping you, you cannot repent truly of your sins; you cannot live a new life of obedience to God, you cannot pray or believe, or do any thing as you ought to do. You are entirely in the condition of a branch cut off from the vine: dead in trespasses and sins. Oh what condition can be so sad as this! From such a dead state, good Lord deliver us all.

You must see, my brethren, how the saving of your souls depends upon your being joined to our Saviour Jesus Christ by a lively faith, that you may be always receiving from him the grace which you want. Learn, then, often to offer up such prayers

as these. "Lord increase our faith." "O God, make clean our hearts within us, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us."

Our Lord continues to speak of this necessary union between us and him. He thus, in mercy to us, gives us "line upon line, and precept upon precept:" for, as the Bible teaches us in another place, there is salvation only in Jesus Christ: "for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." He, therefore, goes on to say, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." He thus continues teaching the same great truth, that we have spiritual life in our souls, only by being joined to him, as a branch is joined to the vine. And the blessed effect of this union must be, "that we bring forth much fruit."

You, my brethren, profess to belong to him:—you have been baptized in his name, and have thus been "grafted into the body of his Church." But as in any vine, there may be both living and dead branches; as there may be some branches bearing fruit, others never bearing any fruit: so it is in the Church of Christ. Some members of his Church are always seeking, in the ways appointed by him, more grace, and are glorifying him by their godly lives. Other members of his Church, to their shame be it spoken, do not seek through him, as they ought to do, the grace which they need, and dishonor him by their ungodly lives.

What then, let me ask, are all of you doing? If

you are living branches of the spiritual vine, you are "bringing forth much fruit." If you are living members of Christ's Church, you are glorifying your Saviour by "bringing forth much fruit." But is it indeed so? Is the fruit of the Spirit seen in your lives? have you love? love to God and love to man? have you joy and peace in believing?—Joy, because God sent his Son to die for you; and peace, because you believe that God will have mercy on you; and forgive you for Christ's sake? Are you long suffering, and gentle, and kind, in your dealings with one another? Have you faith, so as steadfastly to believe all the great and precious promises of the gospel of Christ? Are you aiming at being meek like our Saviour? And are you temperate in all things, keeping under your bodies, and bringing them into subjection? This, as the Bible tells us, is the fruit of the Spirit. Let it be then your constant prayer, that you may "bring forth this good fruit," and may thus shew that you are abiding in Christ.

How sad will be the eternal condition of those who will not live as true followers of Jesus Christ! He says, "if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

But how full of joy and comfort is the state of those, who are in truth and sincerity, looking to Jesus, and are following him. He says, "if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Great and glorious promise, indeed! May we all be partakers of it, Lord Jesus.

SERMON XXII.

LUKE x. 38, 39.—Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman, named Martha, received him into her house. And she had a sister, called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

WE are told in this part of the gospel of St. Luke, that as our Lord Jesus Christ was going from place to place along with his twelve disciples, he came to a certain village. The name of this village was Bethany, and it was not far from Jerusalem—When they had entered into this village, a certain woman, named Martha, received Jesus into her house. This woman had a sister, called Mary, and also a brother, named Lazarus, about whom I hope to speak to you at another time.

Now we read in another place in the Bible, that “Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.” What a great honor and blessing did this family enjoy! It is written of them that Jesus loved them. And this could not have been, unless they had been obedient to the word of Jesus, walking in the way of righteousness which he taught them. If you, my brethren, would enjoy this chief blessing, to have it said of you, that Jesus loves you: while you look up to him as your Saviour, see that you obey him as your Lord and Master. He himself says, “he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

When our Lord and his disciples came to Bethany where this family lived, Martha received them into her house. We may very well suppose that she, as well as Mary and Lazarus, would be glad indeed to open their doors to our Saviour, that they might pay him all the respect that they could, and attend to all his wants; and, what is of more importance, that they might hear from him the words of eternal life.

These sisters, Martha and Mary, appear to have been very different in their characters. Mary is spoken of first, as sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing his word: "She sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word." Our Lord, it would seem from this, began to teach those that were in the house, as soon as he came in. This work of love he was always engaged in. He came into the world to save sinners, and he never lost an opportunity of teaching sinners how their souls might be saved. Whilst he was speaking in the house of Martha, "the words of eternal life," Mary "sat at his feet and heard his word." This shews us that Mary was of a meek, and lowly, and humble spirit; that she was willing to be taught; and gladly improved this opportunity of hearing the word of Jesus: she would not lose so good an opportunity; she might never again be so much favored: she therefore "sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word."

You see how meek, and lowly, and humble Mary was. You must be of the same spirit, if you would have Jesus to love you. The whole Bible teaches you, that you must be "clothed with humility:" the life of our Saviour while upon earth teaches you to be very lowly minded and humble: all our Saviour's teaching shews that you must not have any

high or proud notions about yourselves; that you must not think of yourselves as greater or better than others; that you must not, in the pride of your hearts, be lifting up yourselves one above another: his word is "whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

You see also, in the conduct of Mary, how willing she was to be taught: "she sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word." This again is an example which you must be ready to follow, if you would have Jesus to love you. In the holy Bible we have the word of Jesus. Whenever you come to Church, you have the word of Jesus read to you. But do you always, with the willing mind of Mary, sit and hear his word? Do you come desiring to *know* all the will of God? Do you come, wishing to learn all about our dear Saviour? how he came down from heaven? how he led a life of sorrow here in the nature of man? how he was always going about doing good; healing the sick and preaching his gospel to poor sinners? how he suffered both in body and soul, and died upon the cross for the sins of men? how he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven? how he sitteth at the right hand of God, and ever liveth making intercession for us? Do you come wishing to know the comfort of the Holy Ghost, that most precious gift, which was bought for us with our Saviour's blood, and which he promised should be given to all who ask in his name? Do you come to Church as to the house of God, with reverence and godly fear, being anxious to pray to him in spirit and in truth? With this kind of mind you ought always to come here,

to pray to our reconciled Father, and to hear the word of Jesus. But do all persons so come? No: some do not care about their souls or religion, and when they go away, the devil takes out of their careless hearts all that they have heard; some have hard and stony hearts, hearts that are made hard by the love of sin, and by resisting God's Holy Spirit; and if the word which they hear does make some little impression upon them, instead of really repenting of their sins, and praying for a new heart and for more grace, they soon grow tired of the way of holiness, and go on living again according to the bad desires of their hard and obstinate hearts: others again are so fond of the things of this world, that there is no room in their hearts for the words of eternal life. But how do you hear the word of Jesus? Oh pray to God to send you his Holy Spirit, that your ears may always be open, and your hearts ready to receive the word of Jesus, and that you may be as willing to be taught as Mary was. Pray to him to give you the spirit of little children, that you may hear with meekness that word of Jesus, which is able to save your souls, and that you may always be ready to say as young Samuel did, "speak Lord for thy servant heareth." Above all, pray to God to give you obedient hearts, so that when you know what his will is, you may have grace to do it. Our Saviour says, "blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it."

You see again, in the conduct of Mary, how desirous she was to hear. She would not lose so good an opportunity. As soon as our Lord came into the house, what did she do? She sat at his feet, and there she continued sitting, hearing his word. Have you all been as careful not to let slip

any opportunity of hearing the word of God? I am afraid you have carelessly and sinfully lost many opportunities of worshipping God along with his people, and hearing his word. Consider this, I pray you, and learn to follow this good example of Mary. Not one of you will be able to say, in the day of judgment, I had no way of hearing and learning about my God and Saviour. No: you have reason now to thank God that you can, by hearing his word, become wise unto salvation. Do not any of you, I beseech you, abuse the goodness and mercies of God, but rather let the goodness of God to you, make you seek him more, and serve him better. Pray to him especially for the gift of his Holy Spirit, that you may be humble and lowly minded like Mary; that like her you may seize upon every opportunity of hearing his word; so that walking humbly and obediently before God in this world, you may enjoy the blessed hope of everlasting life, which he has given us in his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.



SERMON XXIII.

LUKE x, 41.--“ And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things : but one thing is needful.

I PREACHED to you from this passage of scripture the last time we met together. I spoke of the great blessing which Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus enjoyed, as it is said of them that Jesus loved them; and I shewed you how you too may be disciples whom Jesus loves, namely, by doing the things which he commands you. I spoke to you also of the conduct of Mary, how she sat at the feet of Jesus, and heard his word. And I told you to be humble and lowly minded like Mary, to be as willing as she was to be taught, and after her example, to seize every opportunity of hearing the word of God.

While Mary was thus engaged sitting at the feet of Jesus, and hearing his word, what was Martha doing? We are told, “but Martha was cumbered about much serving.” Although she loved our Lord, and believed in him as “the Christ, the Son of God,” yet, at this time, she was thinking only of the manner in which she should entertain him.—She was taking a great deal of trouble in providing a large supper; and while so busy about this, she was cumbered; her mind was troubled and distressed by her cares. In what a very different condition she was from her sister Mary. Mary was quietly sitting at the feet of Jesus; her mind was

not at all disturbed by cares, for she was intently hearing the gracious words which came from our Saviour's mouth. Martha's mind however, was full of cares and troubles and anxieties, while she was hurrying about, this way and that way, in getting ready a large feast for our Lord.

Now we must say, that it was Martha's duty to make sufficient preparations for the comfort and wants of her guests: and in giving herself so much trouble in making these preparations, she shewed that she wanted to do all that she could for Jesus, who had done her so much honor in coming into her house. But she gave herself too much trouble about it: she was worrying and distressing herself with these cares: and what is more, she was losing this good opportunity of hearing the word of Jesus. Jesus the Saviour of the world, who spake the words of eternal life, had come into her house, and she allowed herself to be disturbed with the cares of living, when she might have listened to him who is the bread of life; to whom if we come, we shall never hunger; in whom if we believe, we shall never thirst.

This is a mistake that a great many people make. Too many follow the example of Martha, instead of doing as Mary did. At those times when they should be hearing the word of Jesus, and attending to the good of their souls, they are fretting themselves with worldly cares, and attending only to things for the body. The Lord God, my brethren, has given us a time for all things. He has given us time to attend to the wants of the body; and has given us time to attend to the wants of the soul.— We owe it to God to do our duty in that state of life to which it has pleased him to call us; and we

owe it also to him to use all the means which he has given us, and to seize every opportunity which he gives us, to hear his words, to worship him, and to become fitted through Jesus Christ, to stand before him hereafter. What you have to attend to is this: to do every thing at its proper time, and with a right spirit. When it is time to attend to your worldly duties, go about them readily and cheerfully; doing whatever you have to do, as to the Lord, and not to men; as a duty you owe to God, whose creatures you are, and to whom you must give account in the great day. And when the time comes for worshipping God; when you have an opportunity to hear his word, and to pray to him, then drive away from your hearts all worldly cares and thoughts; thank God for his goodness in giving you to know him and his Son Jesus Christ; listen with close attention to his word; and pray from your hearts that the Holy Spirit may enlighten your minds, and may guide you into all truth.

But let us go on with this account of Martha and Mary. Martha not only lost this good opportunity of hearing Jesus speak, but she seems to have lost her temper too. She "was cumbered about much serving, and came to Jesus, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore, that she help me." Her interrupting our Lord in his discourse, and finding fault with her sister in the way that she did, shewed that the cares of serving were too much disturbing her mind. But see with what mildness and gentleness our Lord spoke to her. "Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one

thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

Thus did our Saviour, in a hurried manner, reprove Martha for giving all her time and attention to the cares of her house, when she might have been hearing his word. He told her that she was troubled about many things; but that one thing was needful. And what is that one thing? It is religion; it is the care of the soul. Martha was allowing the many things of her household cares to draw away her mind from *this one thing*, at the time when Jesus was teaching the way of salvation in her house. And he approved of Mary's conduct, instead of blaming her, as Martha would have had him do. "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Now, my brethren, all people are in danger of being too careful and too much troubled about the many things of this world, and of neglecting the *one thing needful*. This is a great error, which is found amongst people in every condition of life.—It is a fault belonging not only to rich people, but to poor people too. It is a sin committed not by masters only, but by servants too. And you, and I, and all people, have need of continued prayer to God, that the love of this present evil world may by his grace, be taken out of our hearts; and that while, as his servants, we are faithfully discharging our wordly duties, we may also attend to the saving of our never-dying souls, which is the one thing needful.

"One thing is needful." Your bodies, which some of you perhaps think too much about, and are too fond of indulging, will in a short time be put into the grave, and turn again to dust; but

your souls never can die. Should it not then be your great concern, so to spend your few days here, that your souls may, through Christ, be saved from the pains of hell, and be forever happy in heaven.

“One thing is needful:” but some of you are very careful and much troubled about earthly things; can you carry these earthly things with you when you die? Will your cares and troubles about them do you any good in the next world? Surely not. Should you not then, while doing faithfully all your worldly duties, be diligently attending to this one thing needful? laying up for yourselves treasure in heaven? Setting your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God?

“One thing is needful:” and can you not all attend to this one thing? God has put you in the way of doing so. Through the goodness and mercy of God, you can become wise unto salvation.— You are taught how to believe in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of sinners: you are taught how to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that you may repent of your sins, and may walk in the way of God’s commandments. “One thing is needful: are you *all* attending to this one thing? Oh do as Mary did, and choose that good part which shall never be taken away from you. Choose God for your portion; learn to seek and to serve him as Jesus Christ teaches us in his gospel; and you will learn how to be contented, and happy, and cheerful in this world, while you are getting ready for eternal happiness in the next. Jesus our Master and only Saviour says, “my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give

unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Here is happiness indeed, happiness now and forever, if we attend to the one thing needful, and follow Jesus in a life of faith and obedience to him.



SERMON XXIV.

JOHN xi. 3, 4,—His sisters sent unto him, saying; Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

I HAVE before spoken to you about Martha and her sister Mary : how Martha received our Lord at one time into her house, when he began to preach his gospel; and how Mary sat at his feet to hear his word. How also Martha was taking too much trouble in preparing a feast; when our Lord told her, that she was careful and troubled about many things; but that there was one thing needful, namely, the care of her soul; and how, he added, that Mary by sitting at his feet, and hearing his word, had chosen the good part which should not be taken away from her.

In this eleventh chapter of the gospel of St. John, we find the account of the sickness of the brother of these sisters. “A certain man was sick named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.” Mary anointed our Lord with ointment, sometime after this sickness of Lazarus, about which we are speaking: but when St. John wrote his gospel, it was every where known that she was the person, who had in this way shown how much she loved our Saviour.

When Lazarus was taken sick, his sisters sent to Jesus, "saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus, we observe, loved Lazarus. Is it then wonderful that Lazarus should be sick? Is it strange that any person, who is loved by our Lord, should endure sickness, or pain, or sorrow, of any kind? No: this is what the whole Bible teaches. We read in one place, "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." And in another place, "as many as I love, I rebuke, and chasten." The Bible also tells us the reason of this, which is, that the children of God may be taught to repent more of their sins, and to be more submissive and obedient to God; that they may learn to pray more for divine grace, and to put greater trust in their Saviour; that they may think less about this world, and may be more diligent in getting ready for heaven. For these good reasons God chastises his people; and whenever you become sick, or are visited with sorrows, you should try and look up to God as chastizing you for your sins, and should pray much to him for his Spirit, that you may be patient like our Saviour, when he suffered for our sins, that you may improve by his chastening, and grow more like him in holiness. We cannot, then, be surprised at this message of Martha and Mary to Jesus. "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick."

"When Jesus heard that, he said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." "This sickness is not unto death," said Jesus. Lazarus, we know, did not die at this time; but four days after, our Lord raised him up from the grave. Therefore, when he said, "this sickness is not unto

death," he meant, Lazarus shall not continue dead. I will permit him to die and be buried, and then I will raise him up again; and by so doing, God will receive glory, and I, the Son of God, shall be glorified too.

Our Saviour, my brethren, was going to do this great miracle, that men might believe in him, the Son of God, and that they might give glory and praise to God on account of it. This example of Jesus, as well as a great deal in the Bible, teaches us, that we must be always trying to live to the glory and praise of God: that we must not only praise God with our mouth, but be very obedient to him in every thing, so that others seeing the good life that we are leading, may praise God for it, and be brought to live to his glory themselves. If Christians are not doing this; if they do not deny themselves, and serve him who bought them with his blood, they are bringing reproach upon that holy name by which they are called; and this surely is a grievous sin.

We are next told that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." I have before spoken to you about the very happy condition of this family: Jesus loved them. And, as I then asked, is not Jesus ready to love you too? Most assuredly he is: he is always ready to love those who put their trust in him and obey him. He says in one place, "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." So great is the happiness of the true follower of Christ.

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, "he abode two days still in the same place where he was." As he intended working this great miracle,

he staid where he was until after Lazarus was buried. He then said, "let us go into Judea again." The twelve disciples, remembering how badly the Jews had treated him, said, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." By which he meant, that as people walking in the day time, can easily see the path, and do not stumble, but stumble only at night, so he would be quite safe from the malice of the Jews, until the time came when he was to be taken and crucified.

After this, he said to his disciples, "our friend Lazarus sleepeth: but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep." Our Saviour was, at this time, a long way off from Bethany, but in his divine nature, he was every where; and he knew that Lazarus was dead—but he spoke of him as asleep: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." It is very common in the Bible to speak of death as a sleep. St. Paul, speaking of the Christians who had died, says, "they sleep in Jesus." They lie down in the grave, as it were, asleep; and shall sleep there until the trumpet wake them at the day of judgment; then Jesus, in whom they trusted, in whom they fell asleep in death, shall raise them up, to be blessed forever with him. Thus, by speaking of death as a sleep, we shew that we believe in the resurrection of the dead; and the only way to be

saved from the fear of death, and to lie down in the grave in peace, is, to be giving up your sins, (for the wages of sin is death,) and to be obedient followers of that precious Saviour, who died that you might live. You may then, through his grace, meet your death in peace, supported by faith in him "who loved us and gave himself for us." You may then say, in the hour of death, "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ:" and may lie down in the grave, enjoying the comfortable hope, that on the morning of the resurrection you shall awake to glory and everlasting peace.

"Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead, and I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe: nevertheless, let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, let us also go, that we may die with him." Our Lord, seeing that his disciples thought only of the taking of rest in sleep, told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead." And he then told them why he had not gone sooner to this family which he loved. The reason was, that they might see his power over the grave itself, and might believe more in him. And when you, my brethren, have these things read to you out of the Bible, you should pray to God to help you by his grace, that you may so hear them, as to be made better by them.

This account of the raising up of Lazarus, I hope to go on with at another time. While hearing it, remember that you too must die, and that the same Jesus who called Lazarus out of his grave, shall, at the day of judgment, raise up your dead bodies. What then should you now be doing? Surely you

should now be attending to the "one thing needful," the saving of your souls. Surely you should now be leading such a life as will be fitting you for complete happiness after the day of judgment.—Jesus, who will then be your Judge, is your Saviour: he died upon the cross that you might live: he invites all to come to him: to believe in him that their sins may be forgiven: to learn of him: to be obedient to him: to pray in his name for the gift of the Holy Spirit; and he promises to receive all who truly turn to him; to blot out their sins, and to give them all the grace they need. Oh seek, and lean upon, and follow this precious Saviour now, and in the day of judgment you will find him to be your friend. "He shall set the righteous on his right hand, and shall say unto them, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."



SERMON XXV.

JOHN xi 25, 26, 27.—Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him; yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

THE last time that we assembled together, I spoke to you about the sickness of Lazarus. At the time of his sickness, our Lord was a long way off from Bethany, the town where Martha and Mary and Lazarus lived; and he did not go at once to this family which he loved, because he knew, that by permitting Lazarus to die, and by raising him up from his grave, so great a miracle would make the people give glory to God, and believe in him the Saviour of sinners.

After our Lord had told his disciples that Lazarus was dead, they set off to go to Bethany: and when they came, they found that he had lain in the grave four days already. You must remember that when he was taken sick, his sisters sent to Jesus, saying “he whom thou lovest is sick.” They sent no doubt in the hope that our Lord would heal his sickness: but they saw their brother die, and had laid his body in the grave: four days had passed away; and they were filled with sorrow on account of the death of their brother.

“Now Bethany was nigh to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off;” that is, about two miles. “And

many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother." While these sisters were mourning on account of their loss, many of their friends in Jerusalem went down to see them, and to try and comfort them in their affliction. And all Christians should have a heart which can feel for other people. We are taught to rejoice with those that do rejoice, and to weep with those that weep. And if any of your friends get sick, or meet with afflictions of any kind, you should be ready to go to see them, and help them; to talk kindly to them; to speak of God chastizing those whom he loves, in order to make them love and serve him better; to speak of the love of Christ in coming down from heaven to save such poor sinners as we are, and of his now "being touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and interceding for us in heaven. Acting in this christian way will bring the blessing of God upon your own souls: and when you shall be in affliction yourselves, you will be much comforted by kind friends coming in, sharing your sorrows with you, and leading you to forget them, while you think and speak of the love of Christ, who became a man of sorrows for us.— Oh if there was more brotherly love among Christians, they would bear each others burdens, and thus take off from each other much of the weight of their sorrows.

"Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." You see how Martha believed in the divine power of our Lord:

“if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.” She knew that by a word or a touch he could have made him well. His being there however, was not necessary for this; by his divine power, he could have restored him to health, even when at a distance from him.

We see again Martha's faith, that is, her belief in the power of Jesus, by her saying. “I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.” As if she had said, I know that if thou pleasest, my brother can be raised up again. Do you, my brethren, know that Jesus is both able and willing to save you? You should not only be able to say this with your lips, but the feeling should be in your hearts, making you look up to Jesus always as the Saviour of your souls, bringing you to him daily that your sins may be forgiven, and that you may, through his grace, be obedient to him in all things.

Jesus said to Martha, “thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection, at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him; yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” When our Lord told Martha that her brother Lazarus should rise again, she thought only of the day of judgment. “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” In what our Saviour said next, he intended that Martha should believe, that he was now able to raise up her brother, and that he would do it. He

said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?" As if he had said, if thou believest, that through me, all mankind shall rise up again, and that those who believe in me shall live forever; thou shouldest believe that I can even now raise up thy dead brother. And you see how immediately Martha confessed the fulness of her faith in our Saviour. "Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." And this faith, this belief, is what you, and I, and all people must have, if we desire to be saved. We must feel sure in our hearts, that there is no Saviour but Jesus Christ the Son of God; that there is no name given by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus; that our hope of heaven must be built upon the one foundation, namely, Jesus Christ crucified for sin. Let us always then look to Jesus, and often cry to him; "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

I will not now go on any farther with the account of the raising of Lazarus; but I will speak to you for a little time, about these most important words of our Saviour. "I am the resurrection." You know that it was said to Adam, when he sinned against God, "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And from that time all people have been subject to death. But when Jesus Christ came, he said, "I am the resurrection." And how is he the resurrection? When he died upon the cross, he suffered for the sins of all mankind; and he rose up again, shewing thereby, that his sufferings and death were sufficient to atone for all sin;

shewing too, that as he rose up from the dead, so should all men rise up again : and what is more, it is he that shall raise up all the dead at the last day. On these accounts our Lord said, " I am the resurrection." Now is not this a matter that you should be seriously thinking about? and ought not the thought of it to make you lead a better and more religious life? You must soon die, and be buried: but shall your bodies forever stay in the grave?—No: he that said to Martha, " I am the resurrection," shall come again at the last day, and then you must rise up again. But to what shall you rise up? to stand on the right hand of the Judge, or on the left? to hear the words " come, ye blessed of my Father," or, " depart from me ye cursed?" to be taken up to heaven, or to be driven down to hell? This will depend upon the life that you now lead. You are taught about Jesus Christ dying for your sins and rising up again. Come to God continually in his name, that your sins for his sake may all be blotted out; and pray diligently for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you may *now* die to sin and rise up to lead a new and holy life; and you may then hope to rise up with joy at the last day.

Jesus Christ is the life: he suffered the punishment of death for all mankind, that all mankind might through him live for ever. And all his faithful people that have already died, shall through him be blessed forever: and those that are now alive, and are believing in him; believing with a faith that makes them forsake their sins and obey him; shall never die: they shall for a little while sleep in the grave; but their Saviour, in whom they

trust while they are in this world, shall awake them at the last day, and give them everlasting life.

And may you become partakers of this life? it is offered to you through Christ: (many of) you have been put into the way to arrive at it, by having been baptized into Jesus Christ? but are you living for it? This is the serious question which you should put to yourselves. Are you living as persons that may die before to-morrow, hoping that through Christ, whose obedient servants you are trying to be, you shall live forever? Oh take this matter home to your hearts, and let it have a good effect upon you. Try and be more sorry for all past sins: try and pray more from your hearts to God, to forgive you your sins for Christ's sake, and to fill you with his Spirit: try and give up all your old bad ways, and serve God better; let this be a daily work with you; and through the grace of God helping you, you will gradually lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset you, and will run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.



SERMON XXVI.

JOHN xi. 43.—Jesus cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

I go on again with the account of the raising up of Lazarus from the grave. Our Lord, as I read to you the last time, had come near to Bethany, and Martha had gone out to meet him. Our Saviour told her that her brother should rise again. She thought immediately of the resurrection at the last day: when Jesus, wishing her to believe that he was able at any time to raise up the dead, said, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? she saith unto him, yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” “When Martha had said this, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, the Master is come and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.” You see how these two sisters, whom Jesus loved, went immediately to meet him, as soon as they heard that he was near. They were weighed down with sorrow on account of the death of their brother, and as soon as they could, they went to Jesus.—And Jesus, as you know, invites all that are sorrowful, all that labour and are heavy laden, to come to him, that they may find rest for their souls. The

Christian is indeed blessed, in having such a friend to go to in his distress.

We are next told, that Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. "The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, she goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Mary you see spoke to Jesus, just as her sister Martha had done: "Lord if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Both the sisters had a full belief in the power of our Lord, that he could have prevented their brother dying. But he very soon turned their sorrow into joy, by shewing his power even over death and the grave.

"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled, and said, where have ye laid him? they say unto him, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, behold how he loved him!" Now my brethren, if you are Christians indeed, if you are really and truly followers of Christ, this passage of scripture will give you much comfort. The sight of so much sorrow around him; the two sisters weeping; the Jews that were with them weeping too; made our Lord join them in their sorrow: he groaned in spirit; he was troubled; he wept. And other parts of the Bible teach us, that although our Saviour is now in heaven, he continues to be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." If his people are

persecuted, he is persecuted with them: if his people meet with troubles, he feels their troubles: if they are afflicted and sorrowful, he is afflicted and sorrowful with them. And not only this, he is always near to help them; he is always present to comfort and strengthen them. Surely the state of the real Christian is in every way the happiest state that can be. If wicked people get into troubles and sorrows, they have to bear the whole weight of their sorrows alone; but if a follower of Jesus is afflicted, he has his religion to comfort him; he has his Saviour to lean upon; he knows that his dear Lord feels his sorrow with him; and he has peace and quietness in his mind, such as this world can never give. But if, my brethren, you would in the day of sorrow find the comfort of religion, it must be your great duty to live always according to God's holy will. Each day should find you repenting of your sins; seeking diligently in prayer God's mercy through Christ, and the gift of his Spirit; and walking steadfastly in the way of his commandments. If you thus try and live to God every day, you would always know the comforts of his love and grace, whether joy or sorrow be your portion.

We are next told, that some of the Jews who were present said, "could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" As these Jews had seen our Lord work some great miracles, such as opening the eyes of the blind, we cannot be surprised at their asking this question. As they had known who the Lord Jesus was, they would have believed that he had power over all things.

"Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone

lay upon it. Jesus said, take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time, he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God." We observe that Martha could hardly bring herself to believe that our Lord would raise up her brother Lazarus, but he told her, that in what he was going to do, she should see that the power of God did indeed reside in him. "Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid; and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I know that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." As soon as the stone was taken away, Jesus lifted up his eyes to his Father in heaven. He desired that his own disciples, and all the people that were there should give glory to God on account of the great miracle which he was going to work, and should believe in him, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. He, therefore, gave thanks to his heavenly Father, in the hearing of all the people, that they might believe that he had sent him.

"And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth: and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot, with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, loose him, and let him go." Thus, at the mighty word of Jesus, the grave gave up its dead. At the mighty word of Jesus, the soul came again into this body, which had been dead four days. At the mighty word of Jesus,—

Lazarus, that had been dead, came forth alive, and was restored to his sisters, whose sorrow was thus turned into joy. Now, my brethren, all this was done "for the glory of God, and that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." And when you hear this account of the raising of Lazarus read to you, and also the other wonderful works which Jesus was always doing, ought you not to praise and glorify our great God and Saviour? Surely you ought so to do; but take care that you praise him, not only with your lips, but in your lives: praise him by giving yourselves up to serve him, by being obedient to him in every thing, by living a truly religious and holy life. Ask God for his Spirit to help you to praise him in this way, and you will be following the footsteps of Jesus our Saviour through whom we hope to be admitted into the glorious presence of God hereafter.

Finally, you see how, at the word of Jesus, Lazarus came forth from the grave. We shall all of us very soon be laid in our graves. But shall we ever come forth from them? Yes, at the last day the same Lord Jesus Christ shall come again, and then all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. You, my brethren, shall hear that voice; you must, at the sound of it, come forth from your graves, when, if you shall not be found fit for the holiness of heaven, you must be driven into the horrible depths of hell. Surely, then, you should be very seriously considering this matter.—The way to heaven is open to you through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, and rose up again, and is now in heaven pleading for us. Be wise then, and while God graciously gives you the time, attend to the things which belong to your eternal

peace. Turn to him with true repentance : serve him in newness of life : seek his mercy through Christ our Saviour ; pray diligently for his grace, and learn to spend the remainder of your days in living to his glory, and in preparing for eternal life in heaven.

END.

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