

THE
Unpardonable Sin
AGAINST THE
Holy Ghost.

As preached by the Late

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A
S E R M O N
ON THE
UNPARDONABLE SIN.

[1 JOHN, v. 16.]

— *There is a Sin unto death*

THIS sin which St. John calls here, "The sin unto death," is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost described by our blessed Saviour Matth. xii. 32. That whosoever commits it, hath no forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come; For, "All manner of sin and blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men. And he that speaketh a word against the Son, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come." This sin against the Holy Ghost, is that sin which St. John calls here, "The sin unto death." Not because that sin deserves death alone, for so does all sin deserve death both temporal and eternal: "For the wages of sin, even all sin, is death." Rom. vi. 23. But this sin against the Holy Ghost

called, "The sin unto death," because it binds man over to eternal death, without any possibility of recovery. Now, some there are, that go on from one degree of sin to another; they heighten and aggravate their sin more and more, until they are brought to that height at last, as to commit that sin for which there is no forgiveness.

THERE is no mere man since the fall, can live without sin, for all are sinners: But yet there are degrees of sin; some sins, in their own nature, are small; others are more great and heinous. Many sins there are that are great, yet pardonable; and one sin there is, unpardonable: And whosoever commits that one sin, all have no forgiveness, but must forever bear the weight and punishment both of that and of all his other sins. There is such a sin as St. John speaks of here in my text, that is, "A sin unto death." And now I come to the explication of these words; from whence I shall raise this point doctrine,

Doct. "That amongst all the sins committed by fallen mankind, there is only one sin, that is 'A sin unto death;' and whosoever committeth that, he hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come."

Now, for my further proceeding on this subject, I shall lay open to you,

What "The sin unto death," is.

Secondly, That all other sins, how great and heinous soever may be forgiven.

Thirdly, That this sin alone, shall never be forgiven.

Fourthly, The reason why this sin alone is unpardonable. And then,

Lastly, I shall conclude all with a few words of Application.

I shall begin first with a description of this unpardonable sin: Where I shall endeavour to make as plain a description of it, as possibly I can. And, in doing of it, I shall 1 Shew you negatively, what is not this sin. 2 I shall shew you positively what it is.

I shall shew you, negatively, what is now "The sin unto death:" Or, in what degree a man may sin, and yet not commit that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

1 It is not every quenching of the motions of the Spirit that is this sin. It is true when the Holy Ghost comes with a still voice, and knocks at the door of sinners' hearts for entrance he often comes and strives with them and secretly woos and beseeches them to leave their sins and be converted; yet they quench and stifle all the motions, and bear up their hearts against him and will not be obedient to the heavenly calls Now, such sin grievously against the Holy Ghost

but yet this alone is not the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost; for many that have stood it out a long time, and have often quenched and grieved the Holy Spirit, yet at last they have been wrought upon into sincere conversion.

2 A man may commit many heinous and crying sins, and yet not be guilty of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. A man may be an idolater, a whoremonger, a fornicator, a murderer, and work witchcraft, and sin with a very high hand; nay, he may live in all manner of filthiness and lewdness, and yet not be under the guilt of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. Thus we read, 2 Chrn. xxxiii. that Manasseh sinned with a very high hand; he was an idolater, an inchanter, and worked witchcraft, and dealt with familiar spirits and wrought much evil, in the sight of the Lord.— And Mary Magdalen had seven devils cast out of her, Luke viii. 2. and yet both were pardoned.

3. A man may sin presumptuously against great light and knowledge, and yet not commit this sin unto death: For, Peter, when he denied Christ, he did it against great knowledge of Christ; he knew Christ to be his Lord and Saviour, he was one of Christ's beloved disciples; and, for all that, how strongly he denied Christ, and that with an oath: And yet, for all that, Christ looked upon him with a merciful eye and he repented and was forgiven.

4. IT is not every malicious sin that is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost: for

St. Paul certainly had great malice in his heart when he went on so furiously to persecute the church of God, and yet he was converted, and became a preacher of the gospel of Christ, which before he persecuted.

5. And lastly, It is not final unbelief, nor final impenitence, that is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, tho' some be of opinion that it is, because that sin is unpardonable, and Christ himself hath said, Mat. xxii. 31. "That all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, except it be the sin against the Holy Ghost." But you are to take the words of our Saviour in their true sense and meaning; it is all manner of sin and blasphemy committed within the compass of a man's life, that shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; for the sin of final impenitence, and final unbelief, is not completed until the very moment of a man's death; and then you know that there is no repentance, and consequently no pardon after death; for Christ said, "He that sins against the Holy Ghost, hath no forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come." Now, why should Christ say, "In this world," if there be no space to be forgiven in this world? But a man may commit the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost even many years before his death.— Besides, there are many thousands that die in impenitence and unbelief, and are damned and yet never committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

THUS have I shewed you, negatively, what is not this unpardonable sin ; none of those sins in particular is that sin.

II. I come now to shew you positively, what this sin unto death is, and wherein this unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost doth consist.

Now there are several opinions in the world about it, but I will endeavour, through God's help, to lead you to the plain sight of it by the light of the holy Scriptures.

Now, in the first place you must know, that there are two sorts of people that cannot commit this unpardonable sin.

THE true believers cannot commit it, because it is a sin against great light and knowledge.— Indeed the greatest part of the world shall be damned ; yet among the greatest part, there are but few of them that can commit that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

SOME have both light and grace ; these shall not commit the unpardonable sin.

AGAIN, some have neither light nor grace ; these cannot commit that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

Now, there must be two ingredients, to make up this unpardonable sin ; that is. light in the head, and malice in the heart : Without these two the sin against the Holy Ghost, cannot be committed ; for, to sin against great light and

knowledge, nor yet to sin ignorantly, without malice, is that sin ; but they must both join together to make up this unpardonable sin. Thus we see plainly by the example of St. Peter and St. Paul ; Peter denied Christ, and forswore himself too, and that grievously against light and knowledge ; for he knew Christ to be the only begotten Son of God, and he knew God in him ; he was one of Christ's disciples, and one of his beloved disciples too ; he was taught of Christ, and had experimental knowledge of his love and favour, and yet he wickedly with an oath denied him. Now, if Peter had done this out of malice and spite, then he had committed that sin unto death for which there is no forgiveness ; but Peter had no malice in his heart all the while, even at the time when he denied Christ, as you may see in Matth. xxvi 34. 35. when Christ told him. " Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice ;" he answered. " If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee : " And then denying him, through infirmity and weakness of the flesh, when he had considered what he had done, " He went out and wept bitterly," Ver. 75. But Paul had great malice and spite against the ways and people of God, as you may see, Acts ix. 1. " Paul breathed out threatnings and slaughters against the disciples of the Lord, and went to the high priest, desiring of him letters to Damascus, to the Synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether men or women, he should bring them bound

to Jerusalem." Now here was great rage and malice in Saul, against the ways and the people of God; but doing it ignorantly, he at last heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And seeing a light from heaven, and hearing it was JESUS that he persecuted, he was pricked at the heart, and trembling and astonished said, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" Now, by these two places of Scripture, you may plainly see, that Peter sinned against great light, and Paul out of great malice; yet neither of them committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. But whensoever light and malice meet together in one man then there is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Now, as all other sins, so is this sin against the Holy Ghost,

1. IN thought; that is, when a wicked man, against his clear light and knowledge, doth but conceive a malicious thought or purpose towards persecuting the Gospel of Christ, or of the saints of Christ, to hinder the work of the Holy Ghost in them.

THIS sin as is to be thought, was the sin of the lost angels; for which cause they were lost without all hopes of pardon. Now some dispute whether this sin was a sin of the thought: but I say, in all likelihood it was; for the angels being only spirits, without bodies, and so having no use of bodily tongues, it could not be committed in word, nor yet could they commit it in action' because they were cast out of heaven,

before they could bring it into practice: therefore it must be a sin for the thought.

Now, the sin was this: Their habitation being in the highest heavens, and under God himself, they had exceeding great light and knowledge; they had more knowledge than all the men in the world ever had, and were happy above all other creatures; but, when not being contented with this estate, they thought to be as high as God himself, therefore they maliciously sought to make war against the Son of God, and were immediately thrust out of heaven, never more to see the face of mercy; and thus, from the beginning, they have been counted malicious and revengeful; as raging beasts, and as roaring lions. Thus their sin being of the same nature with the sin against the Holy Ghost, they were excluded all hopes of pardon,

But that the sin of our first parents was not the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost is clear; for, though they sinned against great light, yet they obeyed, and complied with the will of God, even when the tempter came, until at last they were enticed and overcome; but they did not fall maliciously, and so were not excluded all possibility of mercy.

2. THIS sin may be committed in word too, that is, when a man speaketh blasphemously and maliciously of Christ and his holy ways. This

was the sin of the Scribes and Pharisees, Mark, iii. 22. "There were certain Scribes who came and said, This fellow hath Beelzebub, and casteth out devils by the prince of devils." Therefore saith Christ unto them, ver 28. 29. "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven to the sons of men, and blasphemes wherewith they shall blaspheme; but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."

Now, the reason of this speech of our blessed Saviour, is shewn in ver. 30. "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Which plainly shews, that these Scribes had spoken blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; as these Scribes were great learned men, they could know no other but that Christ was the Son of God, and must know that he cast out devils by the Spirit of God, and yet they, out of spite to Christ, maliciously and blasphemously said, "That he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils." Thus the Scribes committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, and that in word,

3. This sin may be committed in action too; that is, when a man being once thoroughly enlightened, having entered upon a holy course of life, and tasted the comforts of God's Spirit, and some foretaste of the joys of heaven, and not only makes profession of the gospel, but teaches it to others; yet, at last, take a dislike to the holy courses, and through spite and malice

utterly forsaken, opposes and persecutes those good ways of God, which he before professed and taught. But, to sum up this point, this unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, is fully described by the apostle to the Hebrews, Chap. x. 26, 27, 29. "For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.—Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?" Likewise, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. "For it is impossible for those who are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to open shame."

Now, the sin against the Holy Ghost, is briefly this: It is a wilful and malicious opposing the known truth, joined with final apostacy.

I shall a little explain these words, and then proceed.

1. THIS sin unto death is an opposing sin. Now, to oppose a thing, is to contradict it, or gainsay it; as when a man says a thing is so and so, he denies it, and says it is not so; or

when a man says a thing must be done, he says again, It must not, or it shall not be done ; such an opposition is in the heart of him that commits this unpardonable sin : But a man may be an opposing man, and yet may not commit this sin. Therefore,

2. It is the truth he must oppose ; that is, he must utterly oppose and reject Christ, who said, "I am the truth," John xiv. 9. He opposeth all his threatenings, and will not believe his promises, and counts the Blood of the covenant to be an unholy thing : Nay, he also opposeth the Spirit of Christ, who is the Spirit of truth ; so that he will not obey his motions, and will not be led nor guided by him. But a man may oppose the truth, and do it ignorantly : Therefore,

3. It must be the known truth that he opposeth. He must be one enlightened ; but you must know, it is not only a rational knowledge, and human learning, for he may know much of God, and of his will, in the letter of his word, and yet not be capable of committing this unpardonable sin ; but he must be so far enlightened as to see the evil that is in sin, and the excellency of Christ ; he must taste of the heavenly gift, and be made partaker of the Holy Ghost ; and taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come ; and by the blood of the covenant, which he counts as an unholy thing, he is in part sanctified and

cleansed from many sins; he must have sweet communion with God, in his word and sacrament: he must have some taste of the love and favour of God, and comforts of his Spirit, and be refreshed by it, and taste of the joys of heaven and have some foretaste of the happiness of the world to come. This is that light and knowledge that lays a man open to the committing of that unpardonable sin: But yet a man may sin against all the light and experimental knowledge, and yet do it through the weakness of the flesh, or through some violent temptations, as Peter did when he denied Christ: Therefore,

4. He must oppose the known truth wilfully. He must wilfully fall away, after he hath received the knowledge of the truth; other sins are committed through infirmity, but this sin wilful, the will is the chief actor in it; and to compleat and make up this unpardonable sin there is,

5. MALICE in the heart: Without this this sin cannot be committed. It must be a malicious opposing of the known truth; that is when a man being once enlightened, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and hath been made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and hath had some sweet relish and foretaste of heaven, he comes to take a dislike, and to hate the holy ways of God, and maliciously oppose and persecute them, in despite of the Spirit of grace, crucifying afresh the Son of God, and putting him to open shame.

Now, a man having gone thus far, he comes, in the last place, to be an apostate; for thus to oppose wilfully and maliciously the known truth, is always joined with final and total apostacy: For he that is so far enlightened as to see the evil of sin, and the excellency of Christ and holiness, and hath been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of his graces and comfort, and tasted of God's love and favour in Jesus Christ, and has some foretaste of the joys of the world to come; for such a one wilfully, spitefully, and maliciously to fall away, he so falls as never to rise more. It is true, the children of God fall, and that often, and rise again; but then they fall through weakness or infirmity, and not wilfully or maliciously; but these wicked wretches fall wilfully and maliciously, and so fall finally. Against such, the door of mercy is for ever shut! Concerning such, St. Peter said, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them: But it happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is returned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Pet. ii. 21. 22. There is a dreadful place in Scripture against these kind of apostates: that is, Heb. x. 26. "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation,"

Thus have I given you five steps, as so many links in a chain, all which make up the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. It is a wilful and malicious opposing of the known truth, joined with final apostacy. Thus have I shewed you, as plain as I can, what this "sin, unto death" is.

SECONDLY. The next thing to be considered is, That all other sins and blasphemies, whatsoever may be forgiven. Be our sins ever so great and many, though we be the vilest wretches that ever lived, yet there is hope of pardon upon repentance. Manasseth was the vilest wretch that ever we read of, yet he repented and was pardoned. Also, Mary Magdalen was the chief of sinners, for out of her came seven devils; yet because she loved much, much was given her. A man may be a whoremonger, an adulterer, and work witchcraft, and deal with familiar spirits, and yet, at last, he may repent and be saved. And yet I have heard talk of some that are so foolish as to take the sin of fornication for an unpardonable sin, from God's own words, in the fourth commandment: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation." From whence they say, that children that are base born, are not saved unto the third and fourth generation. But this is a most erroneous interpretation of God's sword: It is those that hate him, and continue in hating

of him, that he will inflict their iniquities upon: For fornicators and adulterers themselves may repent and be saved; much more the children, who knew nothing, nor could help nothing: For Christ, with his own mouth, tells the Scribes and Pharisees, Matth. xxi. 31. that the publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before them: For there is no sin but what is pardonable, except the sin against the Holy Ghost. But,

THIRDLY, This sin against the Holy Ghost is alone the sin unto death: that is, a sin unpardonable, never to be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. Not because the merits of Christ are not sufficient to pardon it, for this sin, as well as other sins, is but finite, whereas the merits of Christ are infinite.

OBJECT. What is the reason then that this sin cannot be forgiven?

ANSW, This question brings me to the fourth thing considerable. Do but mind me a little, and I will, as plain and as clear as I can, tell you what the reason is.

This sin is called the sin against the Holy Ghost, not because it is sin against the person of the Holy Ghost, for so is all sin against his person; but it is called the sin against the Holy Ghost, because it is against the office and work of the Holy Ghost. Now, every one of the three persons have their particular work:

The work of the Father is to create; the work of the Son is to redeem lost sinners; and the work of the Holy Ghost is to enlighten, convince, sanctify and convert them. Now, a man committing this unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, rejects all this work of the spirit. Now for a man to be thoroughly enlightened by the Holy Ghost, that he comes to know the evil of sin, and his lost and undone condition without Christ, and that nothing but the merit of Christ can save him; and, notwithstanding, wilfully and maliciously oppose him, and the work of the spirit, and refuse to be beholden to him for salvation; now for such a one, I say, to be forgiven is utterly impossible.

OBJECT, But why is it impossible? Nothing is impossible with God?

OBJECT, Nothing is impossible with God, that does not imply a contradiction: but that God will forgive the sin committed against the Holy Ghost, implies a contradiction: For, how can he have a pardon given him, that utterly rejects it! As, for instance.

A man, through ignorance, may deny Christ, (nay, maliciously fall from the profession of the truth into all kind of wickedness, as did St. Paul, and the Jews that crucified Christ) yet not falling against light and knowledge, there is room for the Holy Ghost to work upon him, to enlighten him, and to convince him of his folly, and so make way for conversion. But for a man,

When he in once enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and has had some foretaste of the joys of heaven and then, a last, utterly opposing this illuminating work of the spirit, wilfully and maliciously fall away, and so to reject the spirit's renewing work; alas! then the Holy Ghost has done, has nothing more then that he can work in him; for this wretched creature has utterly rejected him, his enlightening work, his convincing work, his sanctifying work; he has utterly rejected Christ's pardon, heaven and all! Now, this poor wretch is past all hopes of mercy, all hopes of pardon! Nay, for such a one we are commanded to pray, as you see in the verse whereof the text is a part. Now, Christ prayed for them that maliciously crucified him, Luke xxvii. 34. saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Alas! they knew not what they were doing; "For had they known it, they could not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii 8. But if they had known, and yet have crucified him, Christ would not have spent his breath to pray for them; for it would have been utterly in vain: For, when a man has committed this unpardonable sin, neither the praying in heaven nor earth can do him any good; for the text saith, "There is a sin unto death."

I shall conclude with a few words of application; and I will be as short as possible, lest this discourse should be too large for so small a book as here is,

FIRST. A word of comfort.

SECONDLY. A word of counsel.

FIRST, A word of comfort. It may be that by hearing and reading of this terrible discourse, your hearts begin to ache for fear that you have committed this unpardonable sin: But I think I have sufficiently proved to you what it is; and I tell you again, that there are few who can commit it; nay, there are millions that are tormented in hell, yet never committed this sin: Nay, farther, an ignorant Protestant may thro' weakness, and out of a slavish fear, turn Papist and renounce his profession, and yet not commit this unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost: For doing it out of ignorance and infirmity, there may be matter left for the Holy Ghost, to work upon whereby he may yet be converted and saved. Consider this also, If you are afraid you have committed it, and wish that you had not committed it, and would not commit it, if it were to do again; then, that is a true sign you have not committed it.

SECONDLY. I must conclude all with a word of counsel.

1. Watch very diligently against all sin; But, above all, take special heed of those sins that come near to the sin against the Holy Ghost; and they are these: Hypocrisy, taking only the

outward profession of religion, and so dissembling and mocking of God ; sinning wilfully, against conviction of conscience, and against great light and knowledge ; and sinning presumptuously, with an high hand. These sins, though none of them are the direct sin against the Holy Ghost, yet they come very near to it ; therefore take special heed of them, lest they, in time should bring you to the committing of that unpardonable sin. And,

2. LABOUR to be sincere in religion ; and by a true faith ingraft yourselves in Christ ; for they that be in Christ, can never commit this unpardonable sin ; For know this, that among all the sins committed by fallen mankind, there is one sin that is a “ sin unto death,” which is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost ; which whosoever commits, hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

CONSIDER what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding.

END OF THE SERMON.

E X T R A C T

From the Writings of a French Protestant Minister, on the Revelation of the Apostel John.

Published in the year 1685.

AFTER that we have explained all the visions in this Revelation, we are not to forget to enquire the reason why Jesus Christ judged it convenient to direct it, together with the Epistles, particularly to the Seven Churches of Asia; Ephesus, Symrna, Pregamus, Thyatira, Sardia, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

1. THE number 7 is a mysterious number through this whole Book: It signifieth the universality and the fulfilling of all times as appeareth by the consideration of the 7 Seals, the 7 Trumpets, and the 7 Vials; because that number denoteth the whole train of things which the seals, Trumpets, and Vials, foretell are to come to pass till the very destruction of the Antichristian empire,

2. CHRIST appeareth, having in his hand 7 Stars, which are the seven Pastors of the seven Churches; and walking in the midst of 7 Candlesticks, which are the seven Churches, that we have mentioned. But why Seven? Doth he not promise to be the protector but of these seven Pastors and the Overseer and Defender but of these Churches?

3. THERE is a conformity between that vision in the first Chapter, and those of the seven Seals, and of the opened Book; For we

we find the same pomp the sound of a Trumpet, and the glorious presence of our SAVIOUR in the midst of his Church; and, withal he appeareth there walking in the midst of the seven Candlesticks, and sitting in the midst of the four living Creatures and the four-and-twenty Elders: By which conformity, we are given to understand, that this first vision is of equal weight and of an equal extension, with all the other; and that this of the 7 Churches reached to the end of the world, as all the following together do.

4. JESUS CHRIST saith to John, ver. 19. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Which is as much as if he had said. Write, not only things which concern the Churches that are mentioned, and which ought to be instructed as these are; but which also concern all Churches to the end of the world and whereof the seven that are named are a model and type.

The State of the Church of Ephesus doth lively represent the condition of the Primitive where Truth prevailed, and where, at the last, the decay of Charity became a disposition and a step to a more doleful state. Whosoever well considers what is said to the Church of Ephesus, will therein find the condition of the Primitive Church painted forth to the life

THAT of SYMIONA represents the state of the church during the fourth and Fifth Ages; wherein Ar-

ianism had the upper hand, and wherein the orthodox were outrageously persecuted. That is the *Tribulation of ten days*, wherewith Symeon is threatned; not the Ten Persecutions, of which Dioclesian's was the last.

THAT of Pergamus hath a reference to the time when *Antichrist sitteth in the Temple of God*, and when the Church is hardly visible, through her dwelling as the Church of Pergamus did, *where satan had his throne*

THAT of Thyatira hath a great conformity to the Condition of the Church when Antichrist both began to fall, and began to raise himself again: According to the Testimony given by our SAVIOUR to that of Thyatira, "Thou hast not the doctrine of Jezebel, and thou hast not known the depths of Satan,"

THAT of Philadelphia is a protraiture of that of the Church when she shall be perfectly Reformed, when Zion shall be perfectly re-established, when the alone Key of David shall open and shut; when the voice of JESUS CHRIST shall be perfectly followed, and that both with respect unto manners, and to faith. This is the state wherein the Church will be during the time of the Millennium reign.

LASTLY, That of Laodicea is a mirror, wherein we may behold the state of the Church towards the end of the world; when zeal shall become cold, Charity scarce to be found, and corruption shall abound, and be universal, and thereby draw upon the world that deluge of fire, which shall give a renovation unto it.