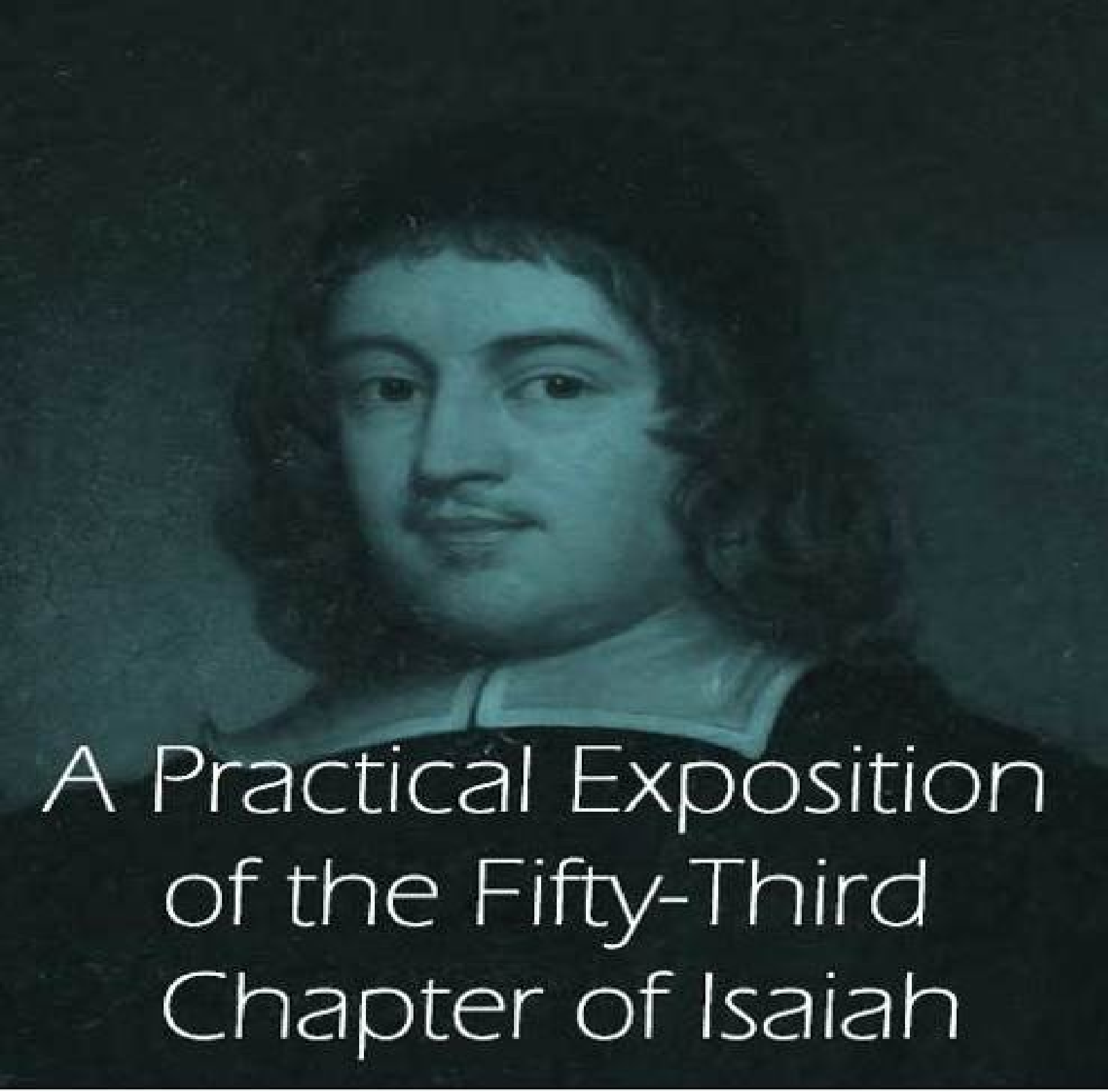
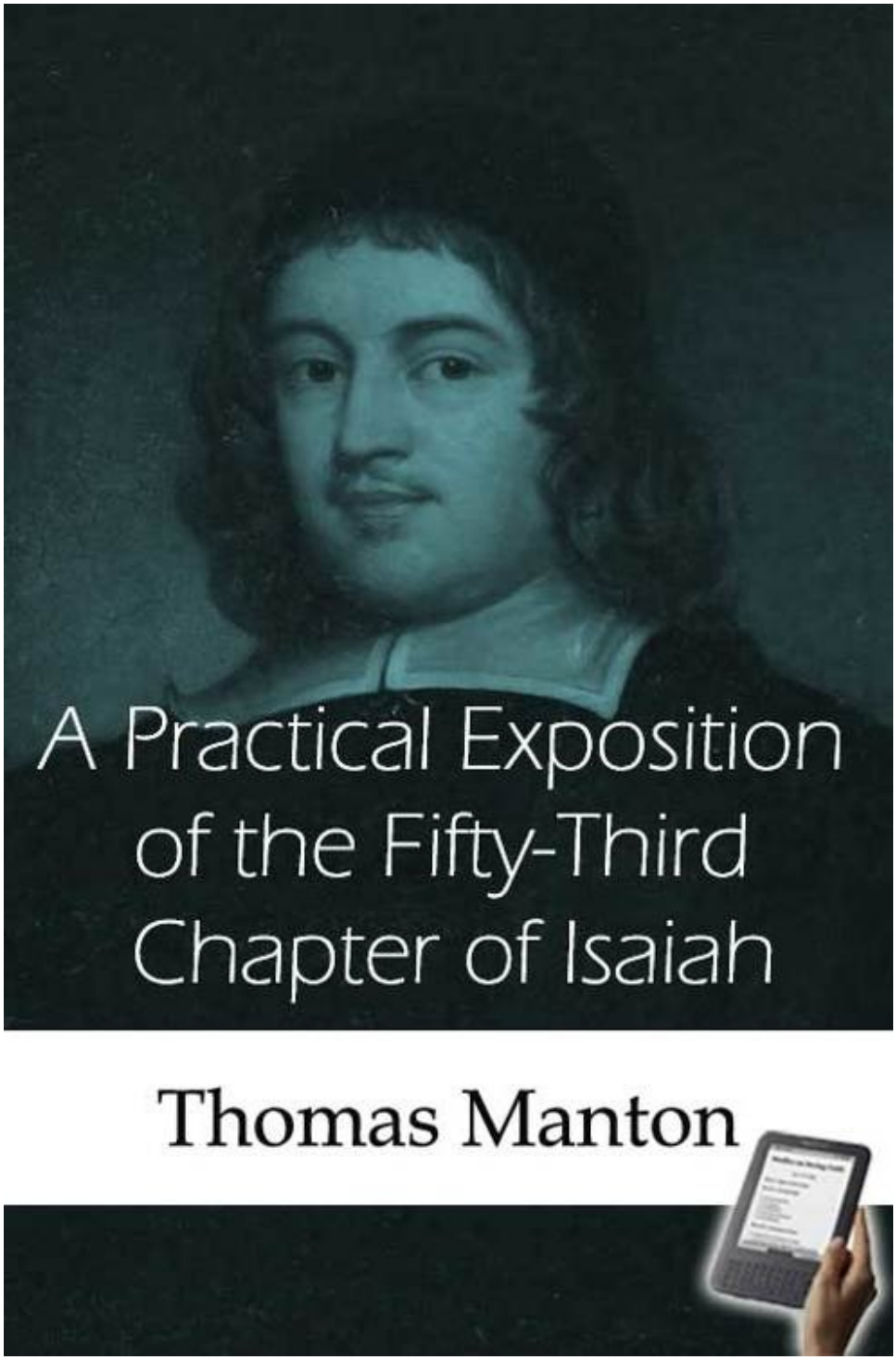


A Practical Exposition of the Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah

Thomas Manton





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VERSE ONE.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?—Isa. 53:1.

I SHALL in the course of this exercise go over the several verses of this chapter, which is an eminent portion of scripture, and calls for most serious attention. It may rather be called the *gospel* than the *prophecy* of Isaiah. It contains so ample and clear a discovery of Jesus Christ, that one would rather account it historical than prophetical. Other prophecies are explained by the history of Christ in the New Testament, but this prophecy explains the history; there is no chapter so often quoted and vouched by Christ and the apostles as this, viz., no less than seven or

eight times in the New Testament. It is so full and clear, that it rather needs meditation than a comment, faith more than learning, to conceive of it. The coherence or connection of this with the former chapter, take briefly thus —The evangelical prophet (for so he may justly be called) had in the end of the former chapter spoken, of the glory of Christ's kingdom, how readily it should be entertained among the Gentiles, how he should 'sprinkle many nations,' and make 'kings to shut their mouths,' that is, with silence hearken to and consider his doctrine. Here, coming to the Jews, he finds, on the contrary, nothing but contempt and scorn, and therefore in an holy admiration cries out, 'Who hath believed our report?' He saw it was not believed in his days, and that it would not in after days. It was in vain to speak to them of the Messiah. In this chapter there are three remarkable parts:—1. A description of the Jews' horrid unbelief and contumacy against Christ, ver. 1.

2. The occasion, and ground of, that unbelief, viz., Christ's meanness as to outward show and appearance, from ver. 2 to 10.

3. The removal of this occasion, and taking off this scandal and prejudice, by showing the fruit and glory that followed this meanness, ver. 11 to the end of the chapter.

Our text is the first of these, containing a pathetical description of the Jews' contempt and rejection of Christ. It is propounded by way of query, in two questions.

1st. The one holds forth the thing or evil itself by way of admiration: 'Who hath believed our report?'

2dly. The other, the cause of it: 'To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?'

1st. In the first there is considerable: the person, *who;* the act, *believed;* the object, *report*.

That the words are a question is clear, but what kind of question is not so clear. Some understand the words as a commiseration of the prophet: *q.d., I* am to tell you such things of the sufferings of the Messiah, that you

will scarce believe men should be so barbarous toward him. But this is so absurd that it needs no confutation. It is not a question of commiseration, but of admiration, or rather of complaint, in which Isaiah' applies himself to God, as the Septuagint shows by putting in the word *Kurie, Lord,* being herein followed by St Paul, Rom. 10:16, 'For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?' So John 12:38, it is also said, 'Lord, who hath believed our report?'

But let us come to the parts of it. *Who?* Though the inquiry be general, it is not to intimate that none, but only that very few did believe, or think there was any truth in what was spoken. Then for the object, *our report,* understand it concerning Christ; or, as the LXX. express it, *ath akoh hmwn,* 'our hearing,' that is, what they hear from us. The Jews are guilty here of a double lie in wresting this place; they say it means the report concerning their own misery and succeeding glory, as if Israel were spoken of here under the notion of one common person; and they transfer the evil complained of from themselves to the Gentiles. But the sense is this: There are very few that will hearken to those things that we are to tell them concerning the Messiah; they will seem riddles and contradictions to them, that there should be such glory in things so vile and ignoble to outward appearance.

2dly. For the reason: 'To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' As if the prophet had said, Therefore they do not believe, because the arm of the Lord is not revealed. Here is some difficulty about what is meant by 'the arm of the Lord,' which, without question, is metaphorical. Some take it for the counsel and contrivance of God effected and brought to pass; as Acts 4:28, 'Whatsoever thy hand (or arm) and counsel determined to be done.' It is more properly taken for the strength of God: you know the arm is the chiefest receptacle of strength. But what strength of God? Some understand it of the gospel, which is called 'the power of God to salvation,' Rom. 1:16; the gospel is not revealed to them. So 1 Cor. 1:18, 'The preaching of the cross' is called 'the power of God,' because of that admirable virtue and success which accompanied the preaching of it. Some by the power of God understand the power of God with Christ. He did miracles, and yet they would not see the arm of the Lord. They thought he cast out devils by Beelzebub, as if it were by the power of

Satan, not of God. Some by 'arm' understand Christ himself, who, 1 Cor. 1:24, is called 'the power and wisdom of God;' he is the power, the arm, the right hand of the Father. There is no great work of God but is done in and by Christ, as a man doth his work by his arm; as in making the world, vanquishing his enemies, delivering his church, it is everywhere spoken of as done by Christ. Others by 'arm' understand the power of the Spirit in and by the ordinances. I rather prefer that of the gospel, together with the Spirit.

Then for *revealed,* you will say the gospel was revealed to the Jews. I answer—There is a double revelation. First, Common, which is nothing else but the promulgation of the gospel; this must be to every creature. Secondly, Proper and special, to the elect, by the Spirit. There is the Spirit's revelation, and the prophet's revelation. The meaning is: To whom hath the Spirit of God revealed that what I speak is true? To whom is the power of God to salvation inwardly manifested and made known by the Spirit? Implying they will not believe without this manifestation.

Thus you have the meaning of the words. I shall offer to your thoughts some occasional observations before I come to the main points.

From the Jews wresting this text, observe:—

1. That there is an evil disposition in men to turn off upon others that which nearly concerns themselves. Men are good at making false applications, and turn off that to others which the word and Spirit intend to them. When Christ had spoken to Peter, it is said, 'Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith to Jesus, Lord, What shall this man do?'

2. Observe, that it is no new thing in persons to vouch that for themselves which makes most against them. Thus the Jews do this chapter against the Gentiles. So that which you find written, 1 Cor. 14:16, 'How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen?' the papists vouch it for Latin service, though it is the drift of the apostle to condemn it. Let not the like usage in our time amaze you, when Antinomians and Socinians urge those texts for them that are really against them.

3. Observe this too: When God, for the wickedness of a people, hardeneth their hearts, they are apt to mistake in that which is most plain. A man would think that this chapter should work upon a Jew if anything could; so you wonder why men are not wrought upon by such powerful persuasions which speak very home to them. The reason is, God hath hardened them, Rom. 11:7.

4. From the prophet's great admiration, observe, that when we can do no good upon a people, the most effectual way is to complain of it to God. He can help us and them too; this will stop murmuring. The mind is eased of that burden that lies heavy on us, when we can go and report the case to God, and pour out our complaints into his bosom. Other of God's messengers besides Isaiah have great cause to say, 'Who hath believed our report?'

5. Observe, that those that profess the name of God may be much prejudiced against the entertainment of those truths and counsels that he makes known to them for their good.

6. That it is a wonder they should not believe so plain a discovery of Christ, though by the just judgment of God they did not.

7. That the first believing of Christ is a believing the report of him; but afterwards there are experiences to confirm our belief. The soul then knoweth that there is a Christ, and that there is mercy in him 1 Peter 2:3, 'If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious;' John 4:42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know indeed that he is the Christ, the Saviour of the world.'

I come now to the main points which I shall prosecute.

First, That there may be a glorious report of Jesus Christ, and yet few believe it. Or—

That Jesus Christ may be clearly represented to a people, and yet but few won to believe in him.

Secondly, That the gospel is the arm and power of God, or word of

righteousness. Though it is an uncredited report to the world, yet it is the arm and power of God to them that believe.

Thirdly, Therefore so few believe, because God's arm is not revealed to them: the power of the word is not manifested by the Spirit.

I. As to the first of these points, other truths may be delivered and not closed with, but it is a wonder that so sweet a truth as this should not be received. The wonder is so much the greater if we look upon

1. The persons making this report: The prophets of old time, the apostles in Christ's time, the ministers of the gospel now-a-days—men that, if you look upon them singly, did deserve some reverence and esteem—men that gave forth abundant declarations that God was with them, and spoke by them, who were as polished shafts in God's quiver. Then consider them speaking the same thing, all proclaiming the same Christ; that is more. For I conceive there is an emphasis in this *our report*—not *my,* but *our;* or, as Zachariah, John's father, said, Luke 1:70, 'As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.' Though there were many holy prophets, yet they had but one mouth, they spake as if with one mouth: 'Who hath believed our report?'

2. The persons to whom the report is made: A professing people, a people that were nurtured and taught this from their infancy and youth, by all the ceremonies of their religion, leading them to that Christ whom the prophets did more distinctly reveal to them. They had been tutored and taught this lesson for many hundred years by the pedagogy of the law; for so that place is to be expounded, Gal. 3:24, 'The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.' The ceremonial law may properly be called *paidagwgoV eiV Cpiston,* or the dispensation of Moses. Yet 'who hath believed our report?' 3. The manner how it is reported: Distinctly, plainly, though in

prophetical expressions, by Isaiah and Jeremiah, God gave some *praeludia;* some clear expressions were then used by all the prophets. Though they had not noonshine, they had the dawning of the day, light enough to see the day approaching. Had it been such a dark intimation as that of the seed of the woman breaking the serpent's head, it had been the

less wonder if they had not weighed it, because they could not so distinctly have conceived it. But when all is made so clear, the wonder is the greater that they should not consider it.

I shall prove the point by distinguishing the several times in which there have been any glorious discovery of Jesus Christ, and show you that in all these times the company of believers have been few. *Distinque tempora, et exis bonus theologus* (By distinguishing the times, you show yourself a good theologian). The way to understand the reason of it, is to find out what have been the main prejudices against Christ in the several times of his revelation. I shall name four times:—(1.) The prophets' time; (2.) John Baptist's time; (3.) That of Christ's life; (4) Our time; or the time of the first promulgation of the gospel.

1. The prophets' time, when the number of believers was few. They had all some loose and general expectation of a Messiah, but few believed, at least not in such a Messiah as the prophet prophesied of.

[1.] Because of the grossness of their hearts, which rested in the outward ceremonies, as if they were ordained for themselves, and not to signify any other thing. They were observant of the ceremonies, but did not observe the end and purpose of them. Therefore doth God so often protest against sacrifices. A sacrifice was not acceptable to God but according as they did eye Christ in it. Now they used no farther reach or recollection, but rested in the sacrifices; as Isa. 66:3, 'He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man.' And therefore did God so often tell them that 'the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to him.'

[2] Because of their want of due observation how God did fulfil his promise concerning the Messiah, few troubled themselves about it. Only the pious Jews lived in a continual expectation of it, and their hearts were always upon the wing of strong and earnest desires after it. It is said, Luke 2:25, Simeon 'waited for the consolation of Israel.' He was a man whose thoughts ran that way. So Daniel, chap. 9:2, 'sought by books;' then, ver. 21, an angel tells him the time of the Messiah. But others were negligent.

[3] Their obstinate hatred against the prophets that revealed these things

concerning Christ. They reproved their other sins, and therefore they believed them not in this: Jer. 5:13, 'The prophets shall become wind, and the word of the Lord is not in them.' Disaffection is the great prejudice against anything. They judged it false or to no purpose before it was spoken. The Jews, though they honoured the prophets when dead, could not endure them whilst living: Mat. 23:29, 30, 'Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' But that was a deceit, as I shall show you by and by. These three I conceive to be the causes why, in the prophets' time, they did not believe; they are to be marked by us, because there is somewhat in them suitable to the case of gospel unbelievers, viz., a circle and track of cold duties; a non-attendance on God in his ordinances; and a wicked spirit of contradiction against his word.

2. John Baptist's time. I distinguish this from the former, because Christ doth so, Mat. 11:11, 'Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist; and yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.' And Christ saith that he is 'more than a prophet.' He made a more glorious report of Jesus Christ, as being immediately to come; and then a common rumour was given forth that the Messiah's time was come. Now what were the prejudices then?

[1] The levity and rashness of the people. If any man were more eminent than other, they presently cried him up for the Messiah, and therefore, being disappointed in some, they were prejudiced against all Luke 3:15, 'And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or no; John answered them, There cometh one after me who is mightier than I.' He plainly directeth them to another. Multitudes flocked to him indeed, but it was out of a nice and vain curiosity. Few believed his report.

[2] The evil influence of the scribes and pharisees, who thought all the water lost that went beside their own mill. They would fain keep the people under their beck and pleasure, and therefore had a vigilant eye upon every new way, or anything that might seem to take off from that respect and devotion wherewith the people were engaged to them. By-

ends in some that should have been teachers, have been always a hindrance to the entertainment of Christ. Those that preached Christ for their own ends were enemies to the cross of Christ, Phil. 3:19.

[3.] Offence at John's boldness. His office was to humble and change proud hearts, and he goeth about his work vigorously, therefore they forsook him. I shall speak no more of this, because it will fall in with the next head.

3. As to the time of Christ's being in the flesh. There were divers prejudices concerning him, both in the Jews and in the Gentiles.

First, In the Jews. I will name the chief.

[1.] An erroneous opinion of the Messiah. The people thought he would set up an earthly kingdom; they were weary of the Roman yoke, and expected that he would free them from it. See an excellent place for this, John 6:14,15, 'When the men had seen his miracles, they said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. And when Jesus saw that by force they would come and make him king, he departed into a mountain alone.' They conceived he was able to gratify their malice on their enemies, out of a hope, conceived from his miracles, that he could maintain an army with very little cost. But Christ would not hold by that tenure. He would be king of their hearts, not of their lands. And therefore, being disappointed, they rejected him. There is nothing prejudiceth a man more against a thing than a false conceit of it. When we expect what we do not find in it, we loathe it. The apostle calleth this 'knowing Christ after the flesh,'—in a pompous carnal way. This is to be noted, because we have such gross conceits in our hearts. We expect Christ should serve us in our own ends, as St Austin speaketh of those conceits he had of God when he was a *child—Sentiebam te esse magnum aliquem qui potes exaudire et subvenire nos; et rogabam te parvus, non parvo affectu, ne in schola vapularem* (I perceived you to be one who is great because you could hear clearly and were able to help us, and I asked you to be small, when with no small emotion I [prayed] that I would not be beaten at school). Such childish conceits have some entertained of Christ, they could close with him to serve their covetousness, revenge, or vainglory. They look upon him as some great thing that should help them.

[2] A fond reverence of Moses and the prophets, as if it were derogatory to them to close with Christ: John 9:29, 'We are Moses' disciples; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.' This Christ confutes, John 5:46, 'If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me.'

[3.] Offence at his outward meanness (that is the scope of this chapter), and the persecution he met with; the just judgment of God upon them to fit them for destruction. Thus much for the Jews.

Secondly, As to the Gentiles, there were divers prejudices why they would not believe the gospel when tendered to them.

[1.] Pride in the understanding. They were loth to captivate their knowledge to the obedience of Christ, and to make their principles of reason strike sail to the truth represented. Therefore, 1 Cor. 1:23, it is said, 'Christ crucified' was 'to the Greeks foolishness.' It was a foolish doctrine, because contrary to their forestalled principles. This is to be noted by us also, because we are very unwilling to receive anything but what cometh dyed in the colour of our own conceits, and is suitable to our carnal minds.

[2.] The meanness of the reporters, poor fishermen; though sufficient enough for the matter they took in hand by the Spirit's mighty assistance, yet of no great repute and value in the world. God would have the gospel commend itself to have a respect without the addition of any outward excellency, and therefore he useth the ministry of mean and weak men: Ps. 8:6, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength.' God knoweth how prone the world is to close with a truth upon a preposterous ground, not for its own sake; we cannot endure to stoop to a mean man. That of Salvian is very

true: *Omnia dicta tanti existimantur quantus est ipse qui dixit, nec tam dictionis vim respiciunt quam diclatoris dignitatem* (All things that are said are estimated as much according to the one who speaks, as according to the strength of what the speaker says). Men look to the worth of the speaker. Any attempt at innovation or alteration must needs be ill taken from them who are in the eye of the world very mean and low, especially against such practices as have been authorised by men of gravity and

great judgment, countenanced by antiquity and long custom, confirmed by the joint consent of all; for men to quit such practices upon the intimation of persons of mean presence and estates, it must needs be a great prejudice. As it is said, Paul's bodily presence was base and contemptible among them, 2 Cor. 10:10. Therefore, having so many obstructions in the way, well might the prophet cry out 'Who hath believed our report?' It is good to observe this, because this is a great prejudice against the entertaining of many of the truths of Christ in our days: we have men's persons in disesteem and contempt.

[3.] The hard conditions upon which they were to entertain Christ. He was not, as other of their gods, to be worshipped in company; he was to be worshipped alone: they were to forsake all their old ways and worship, and to abridge themselves of their unlawful gains and trades; and this was a prejudice they could not brook: Acts 19:27, If this doctrine go on, 'our craft is in danger to be set at nought.' They were to expose themselves to all the obloquy and scorn that could be. It was crime enough to say they were Christians— *Vir bonus nisi quod Christianus* ([He would be] a good man if he were not a Christian). They were to be cast upon the disadvantage of the hatred of near friends, upon all manner of persecution and cruelty, to be led about the cities and amphitheatres as the objects of public scorn and malice,—nay, and these things were not to be hidden from them, and only the lighter and better part revealed to them,—if they would be Christ's disciples. This is a prejudice enough, you will say, against a new way,—enough to make the world look upon it as some odd, humorous conceit of a few brain-sick persons, who had no other bait to allure to their way but fire and faggot, whips and scourges; for the present they would promise you nothing but these things. Well might they cry out, Who will believe our report? God would have no outward blandishment at first, that the truths of religion might not be suspected; and indeed hence did so few believe, insomuch that the cause of Christianity never came to an indifferent hearing; they hated the name, and would not let it plead for itself. Thus for the Gentiles.

4. I come now to prove it in our times, or the time of the first promulgation of the gospel. I might divide my discourse into these two heads: Few believe the report of Christ, and few believe in Christ. I prove

the latter. We all profess ourselves Christians, disciples of Christ, those that have entertained him,—but few do really believe. The lets and hindrances now are these:—

[l.] Ignorance. Men hear of Christ, but are not acquainted with him; many come to the ordinances, but only to sit out the hour, not to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. There is much in a man's ends why he cometh to the ordinances: God seldom meets with a man in his word that cometh to it with a vain end; if they do not seek after knowledge they shall not find it. Many of the reports of Jesus Christ are lost upon an ignorant people; they hear the name, and do not weigh the thing in their thoughts; they look upon him as *aliquem magnum—as* some great person that the preachers talk of, and go no further. Thousands are damned this way through their ignorance; they do not trouble their thoughts about getting the knowledge of Christ in his word, they come to the church and rest in that. There must be distinct apprehensions of the report of Christ before faith, not only to hear the sound, but weigh the sense: Rom. 10:14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' that is, not only the sound of his name, but heard so as to weigh the doctrine that was delivered concerning him. This affected ignorance is a great hindrance when men do not apply themselves to knowledge; as it is, Prov. 2:2,3, 'Incline thine ear to wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding: yea, if thou criest for knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding.' Many incline their ears, but they do not apply their hearts to knowledge, weigh and ponder what they hear; if they attend to it while it is spoken, they do not consider it afterwards in their more serious thoughts, and ponder it in their minds; and therefore no wonder they do not close with Christ: Rom. 3:11, 'There is none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God.' That will necessarily follow, if they do not understand Christ, they will not seek after him; a man will not value an unknown good. This is one hindrance, gross and affected ignorance.

[2] An easy slightness; men do not labour after faith. It is true our diligence alone can never attain it, but yet we should use the means. Men marry to beget children, yet it is impossible they should generate a rational soul without the concourse of God. So we should do those things that are likely, and leave the success to God: we should seek after it. God

will not violently withhold faith from those that are diligent, that are much in meditation, much in earnest supplication, much in observation, much in a continual and holy expectation, when Jesus Christ will be begotten in their souls. God will not fail such a waiting soul Ps. 130:6, 'My soul waiteth for God more than they that watch for the morning; yea, more than they that watch for the morning.' Such souls as are thus eager in the pursuit, and earnest in their expectation, that would fain have Christ come and appear in their hearts, may well expect God's blessing. But there is a great deal of idle and easy lightness in men's hearts; they complain for want of faith, yet they will not pray, meditate, hear, read; as if God should infuse it into them in their sleep. It were an easy cut to heaven if God should do all. What need had Christ to tell you, 'Strait is the way'? And faith is called a work, not in regard of the toil of it, but in regard of our diligence and intention of spirit. 'This is the work of God, that ye should believe in him whom he hath sent.' It is a sign people do not prize a thing when they do not labour after it. If men thought Christ worthy of respect, they would not sit still, but take pains in the seeking of him. The idle and evil servant are joined together: Mat. 25:26, 'Thou wicked and slothful servant!' The wicked will be slothful; and as idleness and sin are joined together, so idleness and destruction Prov. 1:32, 'Ease slayeth the fool,' so it is in the margin, or, 'The turning away of the simple shall slay them.' Men perish by resting in their slight wishes; they would have Christ, but they would not take the pains to get him. Certainly a man valueth the report of Christ at a low rate when he doth not think it worthy of a few thoughts, and a little time to consider it. You know what Christ saith, Mat. 11:12, 'From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' They close with the gospel, which is called the kingdom of God there, that pursue it with a great deal of earnestness and fervour of spirit. This is the next hindrance, an easy slightness.

[3] A careless security. They are not won to believe in Christ, because they think themselves well enough without him. Most cannot endure to look beyond their present condition. A false heart is so far from knowing the worst of its own condition, that it will not so much as suppose a time will come in which it maybe miserable. Oh! think upon changes; rouse up your souls with the sense of your danger! If you lull your souls asleep, you

may awake in flames; even the gospel is peremptory in this kind: Mark 16:16, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' It will not be always with you as now. Oh I cry out, then, Do I believe? If men would not put away all thoughts of their eternal condition, they would see a greater need of Christ than now they do. What a strange thing is it to keep the thoughts of that from our heart, which we cannot possibly deliver our souls from hereafter, to wit, endless eternity!—to be witty to deceive our own souls, to invent shifts that we may put far away the evil day! A man doth not care for things till he wanteth them, no, not for the best things, the comforts of Christ, the joys of the Spirit. While we have outward comforts we care not for inward, because we have a false conceit that our comforts will still continue with us: Luke 12:19, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' He would not so much as suppose they might be taken from him that night. A man's peace may be tried by this. Secure hearts cannot endure to think of danger. Though believers think of danger, yet they think more of Christ. They consider their misery, and so are directed to a remedy against it. Others, though they cannot put away the evil day, they put it out of their thoughts, and labour to make the most of the world they can. Briefly, that security is a hindrance is plain, because the number of believers is increased by those that have least to trust to in the world, and so are necessarily engaged to a consideration of their misery, and a want of something that may stand them in stead at the end of their days: James 2:5, 'Hath God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith?' And yet the poor may be secure'; they have their pleasures and vain thoughts to make them forget their sorrows.

[4] A light esteem of Christ. As we do not see our own needs, so not his worth. As the heart is, so it judgeth. A carnal heart valueth all things by outward pomp and splendour. Such objects take as are most excellent in the eyes of the world: Ps. 144:15, 'Happy is the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord.' A man's temper may be discerned by his valuation of things; carnal hearts cannot prize spiritual mercies. We prize those things that are most suitable to our desires: 1 Peter 2:7, 'To them that believe Christ is precious.' He is an honour to them; they look upon him as a most attractive object, and therefore their hearts move after this loadstone. Everything is loved

according to the suitableness and proportion it bears to our desires. Therefore see how Christ is spoken of by the faithful: Cant. 5:10, 'As the chiefest among ten thousand;' 'He beareth the banner from ten thousand,' as Ainsworth rendereth it. And in the 16th verse, 'He is altogether lovely.' But see what the world judgeth of him: Isa. 52:14, 'His visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.' Look then to the value you have for a thing, for from thence will arise your endeavours after it. They that will be. rich, are drowned and sunk in the cares of this world, they are all for moiling and business. They that love pleasures, their thoughts and the strength and vigour of their souls will run that way. So for honourable preferment, they that seek after it will spend all their thoughts about it. What a man valueth, it will be his work to gain. Therefore this high esteem of Christ taketh off men from these things, Acts 18:15, 16. He that thought the promulgation of the gospel to be but a strife about words and names, 'cared for none of these things.' This is the next hindrance; men that profess themselves Christians, make the getting of Christ the least of their care.

[5.] A presumptuous conceit that we have entertained Christ already. Many think every slight wish, every trivial hope, will serve the turn. Many would be scholars, if they did not think themselves so too soon. I would not weaken any man's confidence; I know it is our office to establish it: 'The fruit of our lips is peace,' Isa. 57:19. But there are those to whom our God will not speak peace. 'No peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' Many wicked persons think it enough to be named Christians. It is an advantage, I confess, to be born a Christian, but to rest in it maketh it the greatest judgment that can be. People will reason thus, Do not all believe in Christ? Oh, no. Thou: mayest profess Christ, and yet not believe in him. Many depend upon this that they are Christians, as the Jews did that they were the seed of Abraham. I shall touch upon this afterwards.

[6.] Hardness of heart. The mind will not stoop to Christ till it be tamed. John Baptist, that was to prepare the way for Christ, was to bring the mountains and hills low, Luke 3:5. The heart must not only be serious, but humbled, if it would entertain this doctrine. A man must see his error before he will be willing to be governed by Christ, and guided into a better way: Acts 2:37, 'They were pricked at their hearts' before the apostle bid

them 'repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.' The heart never yields till it bleedeth with the sense of sin. We have been wrong, oh, what course shall we take? There must be a conviction of sin before that of righteousness. It is happy when both go together, John 16:9; so Acts 16:30, 31. First, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Then comes, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.' A man hath no reason to begin a new way till he is convinced of the vanity of the old one. There must be at least so much of humiliation as to make a man anxious and solicitous about a better course. Well, then, here is another hindrance: a proud and unmortified spirit, a hard heart; a man must get humbled, That you may do so, examine your state by the law, and aggravate it by love. There is some apprehension of love, some general consideration that precedeth faith. You have done all this, and you have done it against a merciful God, and indeed that is a keen argument to wound the spirit: Joel 2:14, 'Rend your hearts, for God is merciful.' See your sins, and aggravate them with unkindness. There is something in nature to make us relent, when we have done wrong to a kind person, that, for aught we know, meant better to us. But of this more by and by.

[7.] Self-confidence. When men's consciences are troubled, they would fain get them eased. Those that are so greedy after quiet and peace, rather than holiness and grace, usually ease themselves in a wrong way; they fly to a few outward duties, or to some slight resolutions for God, and there rest. It is better to keep the conscience raw a while than to skin it over too soon; that will make the wound fester and rankle. Most desire ease too soon, they consult and contrive suddenly how they may ease themselves of that pain and horror that is upon them, and so vainly rest in the way of their own thoughts. A man should not look to be eased of grief till he find himself fitted for holiness, that he may not be engaged to the like grief again; otherwise we shall but stop the grief rather than cure it. We must be directed to a better course, and that must be only by Jesus Christ. It is a sign we are guilty of this self-confidence when we resolve upon a. better life, and do not think how unable we are for it. Great resolutions are always vain, unless joined with the consideration of our own weakness. The people of God have promised much, but always it is with the concurrence of Christ. The apostle saith, Phil. 4:12, 'II can,' or will 'do all things,' but it is 'through Christ.' David promiseth, Ps. 119:32, 'I will run

the ways of thy commandments;' but he addeth, 'when thou shalt enlarge my heart.' There are divers such places in scripture. We walk in the strength of our resolutions when we do not see a need that Christ should help us, that we may not walk in the same ways of error and maze of misery again.

[8] Carnal fears. These hinder the soul from closing with that mercy that is reported to be in Christ. They are of divers sorts.

(1.) Fear of God's anger, as if he were so displeased with us that certainly he did not intend Christ for us. Why, consider, the more angry God is, the more need there is to fly to his mercy. His mercy is as infinite as his wrath, nay, I may say more infinite: Ps. 138:2, 'Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name;' that is, God's promise in Christ is greater than all other things by which he hath made himself known. Christ was an instance of infinite wrath and infinite mercy at the same time, but rather of infinite mercy. Nay; to clear all, God expressly saith, 'Anger is not in me.'

(2.) Fear of being too bold with the promises. Take heed of mere formality with God. A man cannot be too bold where he is so freely invited: Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden.' You are unworthy to believe, but God is worthy to be obeyed. And 'this is his commandment,' 1 John 3:3, 'That we should believe in the name of Jesus Christ.'

(3.) Fear of the sin of presumption. Oh! they shall presume too much. A man doth not presume if he knoweth his own danger; if he be lost to himself and his own apprehension, it is pity he should be lost to God too. Presumers are seldom troubled about their estate; it is enough to disturb a false peace so much as to suspect it. There can be no presumption where there are no slight thoughts of sin and mercy. The mind cannot presume when it is serious.

[9.] Carnal reasonings from our sins. They are arguments of confidence, but not of dejection: Ps. 25:11, 'Pardon my sin, for it is great.' If so, it is the better for God to pardon. Sins should not hinder a man from duty. It is your duty to believe. The sense of sickness will cause us to make use of

the physician. You cannot see anything in sin, but you may see more in Christ. Not greatness: Ps. 57:10, 'Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the ,clouds; Not number: Rom. 5:16, 'The free gift is of many offences '.unto justification.'

[10.] And lastly, carnal apprehensions of Christ. We will believe no more to be in God than we find in ourselves: 1 Sam. 24:19, 'Who findeth his enemy, and slayeth him not? will he let him go well away?' The soul in all her conclusions is only directed by premises experimental and of sensible apprehension. We think God is but as man; we are used to the dispositions of men, and therefore cannot believe there is anything more in God: Ps. 1. 22, 'Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself.' But remember, 'God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent,' Num. 23:19; and Hosea 11:9, 'I will spare Ephraim, for I am God, and not man;' so Isa. 54:8-10, 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts:' Jer. 3:1, 'If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall be return to her again? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return unto me again, saith the Lord.'

Use 1. Is by way of information. It informeth us of divers truths; as—

1. That the paucity or fewness of followers is no disgrace to a thing or doctrine. The world followeth the multitude, as if the way to religion were like that to a town, where there is the greatest track Luke 12:32, 'Fear not, little flock,' *mikron poimnion*. Christ's flock is a little flock. The world usually casteth that prejudice. There may be but one Micaiah against four hundred false prophets.

2. It informeth us that the number of believers is not as large as the number of professors: 2 Thes. 3:2, 'All men have not faith.'

3. That it is a very difficult thing to believe, and therefore so few attain it.

Use 2. Is by way of examination. If but few are won to believe this report, examine yourselves—Are you of the number? Are you of the number of

those that are won by the preaching of the word to believe in Christ? I will name a few effects:—

1. If so, you will find this persuasion melting you: Zech. 12:10, 'I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.' God and the soul come together just as Saul and David: 1 Sam. 24:16, 'Saul lift up his voice and wept; Is this thy voice, my son David?' Thus the soul, Oh! didst thou love me so, O Lord my God?

2. You will find it teaching you a way to resist sin. You could not tell how to prevail against it before, now you have a cutting argument against it: Titus 2:11, 12, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' Now you are taught to gainsay sin.

3. You will find it quickening you to good: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' 'Such melting commands and commanding entreaties have a powerful influence to that effect: 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

I shall now come to the second point, namely—

II. That the gospel, or the report concerning Jesus Christ, is the arm and power of God. Though it be *our* report, yet it is the arm *of the Lord*. There is some controversy, as I hinted before, about what is meant by the arm of the Lord; some applying it to Christ, some to the word. I rather incline to the latter, but it is good to observe, that what is spoken of Christ, the same is spoken also of the word. Christ is called 'the power of God,' I Cor. 1:24; and the gospel is called 'the power of God,' 1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16; because in the word Christ is made known, and his excellencies are displayed. And what is spoken of the word is spoken of faith. Christ is revealed

to the heart by the word, and so he is likewise by faith.

But in what respect is the gospel the arm and power of God? I answer:—

1. In respect of the sense and meaning of it, which is to be regarded above the bare sound of the letters and syllables. Many make a charm of the word of God, by applying some sentences of it to drive away diseases in a way of exorcism and conjuration, or by coming to it in a customary way, as if the mere hearing or reading of it were sufficient; as if salvation were to be had by the bare hearing of it: John 5:39, 'Search the scriptures,' saith our Saviour, 'for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.' *Dokeite en autaiV zwhn aiwnion, 'ye* think ye have;' this is not barely a command, but a reproof, otherwise Christ would have said 'ye shall.' He speaketh it to the pharisees and hypocrites that had rejected him.

2. In regard it manifests the power of God. There are instances of God's eternal power in the creatures, Rom. 1:20, but the great and mighty instances of his power are discovered in the word. God showeth his strength every day, but in the gospel he holdeth forth 'the man whom he hath made strong for himself,' Ps. 80:15, the branch or Son, meaning Christ—though he is there speaking of the church's afflictions: 'The vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou makest strong for thyself.'

3. It is said to be the arm and power of God, chiefly as it is a glorious instrument in his hands, as a weapon that is managed by the Spirit, which will work mightily indeed. It is observable that when Isaiah speaketh of the word as pronounced by the prophets, he saith *our report;* but as revealed by the Spirit, *the arm of the Lord. You* must understand it as accompanied with the Spirit's efficacy: 2 Cor. 10:4, 'The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God;' there lies its force. So 2 Cor. 3:6, 'Who hath made us able ministers of the new testament: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' He calleth the law the letter, as it showeth what is to be done, but ministereth no abilities. The letter killeth, leaveth us miserable, but the gospel, accompanied with the Spirit, is an efficacious instrument to beget life in us; because all the efficacy thereof depends upon the Spirit, therefore, in opposition to the law, it is called spirit.

4. It is called the arm and power of God, because in one sense it worketh much even upon those on whom it has the least effect. It is powerful to their destruction, if not to their salvation: Heb. 4:12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword.' It is 'the savour of death unto death,' if not 'of life unto life.' It is not a dead letter even there where it cannot obtain the least entrance into the heart; it bindeth them over to judgment, if it cannot force them over to obedience. It is a heavy arm of God to the wicked; if they be not converted, they are judged, by the word. An arm, you know, is used in scripture in both senses, to protect friends, and to destroy enemies; and to that purpose it is said of God by the Psalmist Ps. 89:13, 'Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.' This mighty power of the word appears in divers ways.

[1.] It troubleth sinners. The power of the gospel awakeneth their consciences, for fear of which they cannot so freely run into such excess and outrage as otherwise they would, Acts 24:25. When Paul 'reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.' When a guilty conscience is touched, it is enraged: Acts 7:54, 'When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth.' It causeth a tumult in the soul of a guilty creature; if nothing else, the word worketh such a trouble in them, that they cannot be at rest in their minds.

[2.] It worketh some faint resolutions in sinners to look after Christ: Acts 26:28, 'Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian.' They have much ado to put off the force of the word, and therefore are even won by it. It argueth a mighty power in the gospel, that it can put a wicked man on acting, though weakly, against the bent and inclination of his evil heart. And it is some argument of the divine power in the gospel, that men are brought thereby to wish and resolve against their evil practices, though they will not leave them.

[3.] It judgeth them, it bindeth them over to eternal punishment; as it is said, I Cor. 14:24, of the unbeliever, 'He is convinced of all, he is judged of all;' that is, his sentence is passed upon him in the word: John 3:18, 'He that believeth not is condemned already;' that is, the power of the word is passed upon him: Mark 16:16, 'Go preach the gospel to every creature; he

that believeth not shall be damned.' That is the peremptory sentence of the gospel.

[4.] It punisheth them, the arm of God is upon them. It is said to the stubborn Jews, Zech. 1:6, 'But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?' Mark, not so much the wrath and vengeance of God, as the prophet's words. So it is said, 1 Kings 19:17, 'It shall come to pass, that he that escapeth the sword of Hazael, shall Jehu slay: and he that escapeth from the sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay.' So Hosea 6:5, 'I have hewed them by my prophets: I have slain them by the words of my mouth.' So much for the determination of this point.

To prove it now, it will appear by two things:—

1. By the uses for which God did appoint it.

2. By the glorious effects of it, suitable to those ends of God. I shall handle both together.

Let us consider the uses for which God did appoint the publication of the gospel, and certainly you will then say it is the arm of the Lord. God's designs by the preaching of the gospel are either public or private.

First, Public, which are—

1. To purchase and gain the world for a kingdom and an inheritance for Jesus Christ.

2. To conquer all the enemies of Christ.

Secondly, Private, so it is to convert souls. The appointment of the gospel for these ends showeth there is the arm of God in it.

First, Public, which are—

1. To purchase the whole world for a kingdom and an inheritance for Jesus Christ. This is the main end of the gospel, and therefore it is called, Ps. 110:2, 'The sceptre and rod of Christ's strength.' The gospel is the

sceptre of Christ; it was by the word that he was to sway the nations; and so Mat. 13:19, it is called 'the word of the kingdom.' Now, how should a man purchase a kingdom but by his arm? Great enterprises require proportionable strength, and therefore such a glorious design as this necessarily calleth for the arm and power of God. That this reason may have its due force on you, do but consider what it is to purchase the world for Christ, and what prejudices and difficulties there are against it that must be overcome.

[1.] The report of Jesus Christ was a despised truth. If a man would win others to his conceits and opinions, policy requireth that he should make them as plausible as he can. It is difficult to win a. people from their old religion, though a new one that is proposed be never so agreeable to reason. But now, when this is utterly inconsistent with our former apprehensions and notions about religion, the mind riseth against it; it stoppeth all further inquiry after the truth of it. Now such was the report of Jesus Christ to all the world: you may divide them into Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were to be brought off from their fond esteem of Moses and the prophets; the Gentiles were to be won from their old vain religions, received by traditions from their fathers: and we well know by experience how ill changes in religion are brooked in the world. But that was not all; they were to leave their religion that they had so long professed, and to expect (what they thought very absurd) eternal life and happiness by him whom they looked on as an object of misery, and who suffered such a shameful death himself: 1 Cor. 1:18, 'The preaching of the cross was to them that perished foolishness.' It might well be so among them that perished; the prejudice was as great among them that professed: Mat. 27:42, 'He saved others; himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him.'

[2.] It was given forth by despised persons. If a man would be prevailed with by any, he would be by men of some repute and renown in the world. But now, Ps. 8:6, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength.' If babes and sucklings could prevail so much by the use of their mouths, certainly there is some secret and invisible force in such doctrines, or else it would not prevail for babes' and sucklings to

speak so prevailingly as Christ promised: Luke 21:15, 'I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall never be able to gainsay nor resist.' So, much power in so much appearing weakness argueth a divine arm.

2. The next end was to conquer the enemies of Christ. To conquer their minds, or destroy their bodies, the best weapon is the gospel, especially to do the former. This is the ark that beats all the Dagons in pieces. It is said, Isa. 11:4,' He shall smite the earth with the rod. of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.' Mark, it is with the rod of his mouth; the gospel slayeth the outward enemies, and the mists of error do inwardly vanish before this sun. As—[1.] The paganish rites and worship were forced to give place to it, as the oracle of Delphos, which had voice enough left to proclaim its own silence, and also that among the rocks of Sicily. But then—

[2.] As to antichristianism, God hath appointed the word to be a weapon against it: 2 Thes. 2:8, it is said, 'God shall consume them with the spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming.' God bloweth in the mouth of his ministers the force of their words against Antichrist; it is the spirit or breath of his mouth. When the gospel was a little revived by Luther, how many of his kingdom did Antichrist lose? The goose-quill gave him a deadly wound, saith Beza; Rev. 11:13: when the witnesses had finished their testimony, 'the tenth part of the city fell.' This is a most powerful engine to shake the strongholds of that city, these blasts of the gospel. The great policy of that party is to withhold people from the knowledge of the gospel. When Dr Day discoursed with Stephen Gardiner concerning free justification by Christ, saith he, 'O Mr Doctor, open that gap to the people, and we are undone!' The more gospel there is discovered, the more Antichrist is discovered. Free grace puts the foundation of that way out of course.

[3.] All lesser errors, like the little foxes, are slain by this sword. Those that went greedily after Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, what doth God say to them? 'Repent, or I will come and fight against thee with the sword of my mouth,' Rev. 2:16; that is, with his word. That is punishment enough, to detect their errors by the gospel. The sword is put for a powerful weapon; the sword in, the mouth showeth it was the word;

God's appointing it to these great uses argueth there is a divine power in it.

Secondly, Private; and that is to convert souls: Ps. 19:7, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' This is such a difficult work that it must needs require a divine power. That this may be of use to you, I shall show you what a difficult thing it is to convert a soul, there being so many obstacles and hindrances against it, and yet the word is the only fit instrument to overcome them.

1. There is Satan, who is strong. The devil hath great power to possess the hearts of wicked men; he is said to 'work in the children of disobedience,' Eph. 2:2. Those frequent possessions in Christ's time were a discovery of that spiritual thralldom in which the heart of man is engaged whilst in the service of the devil: 2 Tim. 2:26, 'That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.' As violent tempests whirl things at their pleasure, so doth he our blinded understandings and crooked, wills. We are taken of the devil in his snare, to be led about at his will and pleasure. Well, then, no power but that of God can set us free; it must be by the mighty ministry of his arm. The strong man. will hold fast till he be cast out by a stronger than he, Luke 11:22. It is not so easy dispossessing the old man, and to turn from the power of Satan to the power of God.

2. The perverseness of man's heart. The chief hindrances there are these: —[1] Subtle evasions, crafty pretences, whereby to evade and escape the power of the word: Heb. 4:12, 'Piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.' The soul is that faculty wherein the affections do reside; the spirit is the reasoning power; it reveals the closest affections of the heart, and the most secret plots and devices of the spirit; it telleth the heart how it cleaveth to sin, and the mind how it plotteth pretences to hide it The mind and spirit conspire together.

[2.] Crafty disputes and reasonings. There are great and many perverse debates in our hearts against the things of God; therefore the apostle expresses the power of the word thus: 2 Cor. 10:5, 'Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the

obedience of Christ' It demolisheth all carnal reasonings, and convinceth of truth. Then—

[3.] Swelling lusts. To tame these, nay, to set up the work of grace instead of these, must needs argue a divine hand. It is a hard matter to break the course of any inclination, much more of a rooted affection; to break the very course of nature; to turn lions into lambs, as it is said, 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.' There shall be such a wonderful change, that the violence and turbulency of the affections shall be done away. To make the filthy and intemperate to become chaste and sober, and to make the proud to become humble, argueth the great power of God. Thus you see how it overcometh difficulties.

But now observe how powerfully and wonderfully the word worketh this. It is not by a fond conceit and opinion of it in the minds of men: 'The simple believeth every word,' as it is said in the Proverbs; and some weak persons may be easily awed into a scrupulous fear. But, on the contrary—

(1.) It hath wrought upon them that have been 'cast upon it unawares, that looked for no such thing. The apostle saith of unbelievers: 1 Cor. 14:24, 'And there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned; he is convinced of all, he is judged of all,' if he be by chance put upon the ordinances. Thus we read in the story of Austin and of Firmus, who, though they looked for nothing less, yet were wrought upon, and converted to God.

(2.) Those that came with a mind to despise the word have been won by it. The unbeliever that cometh in falleth down on his face, 1 Cor. 14:25. It may bring men that have wrong conceits of the *ways* of God on their faces, and to say, 'God is in them of a truth.'

Use 1. Is exhortation. And that—

1. To ministers. Is the gospel the arm and power of God? 'Then—

[1] Be not ashamed of it, but preach it boldly. St Paul saith, Rom. 1:16, 'I

am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.' Many are ashamed of the naked simplicity of the gospel, and therefore hanker the more after profound parts and human learning. You must imitate Christ; preach boldly; as having authority from him.

[2] Wait for the success of it. Doubt of success is a great discouragement, and taketh off the wheels of a man's ministry. Refer it to God; it is his own arm, if it cannot be mighty through us, it will be mighty through God: Jer. 1:9, 'I have put my words in thy mouth.' It is a great lesson of holy wisdom, if we could learn it. to mind duty, and refer the success to God.

[3.] To dispense it faithfully; not to use God's arm for our own ends. There is a preaching the gospel out of envy, Phil. 1:16. This is a putting God in a servility to our designs, a prostituting of the greatest power to the vilest uses, an debasing a thing beneath its office.

[4.] To dispense it so as to look to the Spirit to make it effectual; not to think to make it work by our own fancies: 1 Cor. 2:4, 'My preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' A minister may be apt to be too full of self. The old Adam may be too hard for young Melancthon. It is said of Christ, Luke 24:32, that 'he opened the scriptures;' and ver. 45, 'Then he opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures.'

2. To the people.

[1.] To all in general.

[2.] To those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed and made known.

[l.] To all in general: to press them to see God in his word. Many see no more than what is of man, and therefore are not wrought upon by it. The power of God is veiled under our weakness: 1 Thes. 2:13, 'Ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' But what is it to receive it as the word of God?

I answer—It is to receive it:—

(1.) With reverence. It is a description of God's people that they tremble at his word,' Isa. 66:2,5. Do not slight it as if it were but a little sound poured out into the air.

(2.) Look up unto God, and wait upon him for this power to be let into your hearts. 'See that, besides the report, you have a discovery of God's power and arm. Do not rest contented with enjoying the word till you feel the power of God making it effectual on your hearts. Oh, be careful lest it should work upon you the wrong way, and prove the savour of death unto death I As the people waited for the angel's stirring of the waters, so do you for the Spirit's motion. Man's voice can but pierce the ear: *Cathedram habet in coelis qui corda docet* (He who teaches the hearts has a seat in heaven), God only can reach the heart.

(3.) Receive it into your hearts, open your souls for it with such a resolution as is expressed, Acts 10:33, 'We are all here present before thee, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.' Then it is a sign we are willing to take home the message to ourselves.

(4.) Let not your thoughts rest in the abilities of the minister, if your hearts be touched: Acts 3:12, 'Peter answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly upon us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?' It is not our report, but God's arm; we are but the instruments, his arm must do the work.

[2.] To those to whom the arm of the Lord is made known, two duties I shall exhort them unto:—

(1.) To behold and admire the power of God working in them for their salvation: Eph. 1:19, 'That ye may know the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.' A man doth not know the excellency of this power till he takes a review of it. Man can better observe such experiences when past, when he seeth and feeleth such a power of God upon his soul.

(2.) To walk worthy of it in their conversation;—to walk so as a man may perceive the power of God hath passed upon him: 1 Peter 2:9, 'That you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' Inward holiness is expressed by the power of godliness. Take heed of having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Oh, do not carry it as if there were no power passed upon you!

Use 2. Is of examination. See whether any of this power hath passed upon, your hearts. Have you ever felt the power of the Spirit in the ordinances, that will convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment?

1. Hath it powerfully humbled you for sin? There is the power of the word seen to bring men upon their faces, and to make them lay their mouths in the dust, I Cor. 14:25. The first work is to humble the heart and to subdue the pride of it.

2. Is it powerful to comfort and refresh the soul? Every man hath not comfort, but every man that hath it can tell which way it cometh: Psa. 94:19, 'In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.' What is the refreshment of your hearts? Is it not the power of God's Spirit? When a man is in distress, it is known what he maketh his trust in: then we shall see what our heart fetcheth comfort from. Do you look upon gospel comforts as powerful? John 16:33, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have rest; be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'

3. Is it powerful to enable to holiness? You will then be able to gain upon your lusts more, they will not he so pleasing to you: Ps. 110:3, 'Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power.' You will he made ready to duty, and be more cheerful in God's service, when the power of the word hath passed upon you.

I now proceed to the last point observable in this verse, which is:—

III. That none believe the report that is made of Jesus Christ, but those to whom it is revealed by the Spirit.

It is meant of an inward revelation; though it were outwardly proclaimed

in their ears, yet the power of the report was not secretly conveyed into their hearts. The arm of the Lord was not revealed to them. Or thus:—

The cause why so few are won to believe in Jesus Christ is because they have not the Spirit's revelation.

This I shall prove to you by these reasons:—

1. Because without the Spirit's revelation all the outward tenders and reports of Jesus Christ will be to no purpose. The efficacy of the word lieth in the Spirit's assistance. I told you in the former point how powerful the word of God is, but withal I told you it was when the Spirit sets it home upon the heart. God may knock at the door and yet no man open to him; and, therefore, he speaketh by way of supposition, if he doth but barely knock: Rev. 3:20,' Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me It is put upon an *if:* it is a great peradventure whether any man will open the door or no, when it is but a bare knock of the word. The spouse pleadeth excuses when Christ stood and knocked, saying, 'Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled,' Cant. 5:2; but in the 4th verse it is said, 'My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him;'—that signifieth the working of his Spirit, and then she opened. Men would fain take one nap more in sin when they are roused by the ministry; but when God puts his fingers upon the handles of the lock, Christ hath an admittance and the door then flieth open: Acts 11:19-21, 'The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.' God's hand was upon the lock. If the word be anywhere spoken of as powerful, it is in reference to the Spirit, as 1 Thes. 1:5, 'Our word came unto you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost;' therefore in power, because in the Holy Ghost.

2. Because the Spirit's revelation is the token of God's special love; and that is not given to every one: God has appointed his special love but for a few. The outward revelation is to leave men without excuse; it is but a token of God's common love: 2 Cor. 4:3, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost'—hidden from their hearts, though it be revealed to their ears. Those that are lost have not the inward discoveries—that is,

the effectual discovery and special effect of God's peculiar love: Acts 13:48, 'As many as were ordained to eternal life believed;' such have God's special love. Those that have least have many times an outward revelation: Acts 14:17, 'God left not himself without a witness, in that he did good;' yet, ver. 16, 'he suffered them to walk in their own ways.' They had a revelation, but they had not an *efficacious* revelation. And in this sense it is said, that 'many are called but few are chosen, many are invited and few wrought upon. They have the doctrine of life propounded to them, but they have not the Spirit of life setting it home upon their hearts; few taste of God's special love.

3. Because the least of Christ that is made known to the soul is made known by the Spirit; even common illumination, any slight taste of the doctrine of life, it cometh from the Spirit. Those that apostatised afterwards are said, Heb. 6:4, to be 'made partakers of the Holy Ghost.' A historical persuasion of the truth of the articles of religion flows hence. There are some things like this inward effectual revelation in the hearts of wicked men, namely, some notional irradiations and illuminations in many profound mysteries of the scripture. In this sense is that place to he understood: 1 Cor. 12:3, 'No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed;' and that, 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.' Even their common illumination and profession that Jesus is the Lord was from the Holy Ghost. And so that, Mat. 16:16,17, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered, Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' He did not learn this from nature, but from a revelation. Even, I say, a notional apprehension of these truths, without any fiducial assent given to them, is from the manifestation of the Spirit, and, therefore, much more is this the cause of believing.

4. Because there is so much corruption in a man that hindereth the soul from believing in Jesus Christ, that it cannot be done away without the Spirit's manifestation. There is a double seat of this corruption—the mind and the heart. First, in the mind there is ignorance and unteachableness. Secondly, In the heart there is obstinacy and carelessness; which things cannot be conquered any otherwise than by the Spirit of God. Let us look upon these things severally. Consider a man naturally as he is:—

[1.] In his mind; and so—

(1.) There is ignorance; he hath no savoury apprehension of the truths of God: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned: There is no suitableness between the heart and the things of Christ; and, therefore, though they understand the words, they have confused apprehension of the thing, and cannot tell what to make of them for their comfort and peace. These sottish conceits in the minds of men prepossess them against the receiving of Jesus Christ. They are like leaky vessels that cannot hold this precious liquor; the cockleshell of their brains cannot empty this ocean. A natural man hath abundance of confused, indistinct, indefinite conceits of Jesus Christ. Festus said, Acts 25:19, That the Jews and Paul had 'a controversy about their own superstitions, and of one Jesus, that was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive;' as if it were no more. And the like conceits are to be found not only in him but in all natural men. They do but look upon him as Austin in his infancy said he did upon God, *Tanquam aliquem magnum*—assome great remedy against all evils. Now these conceits, though they be a little rectified in some by pregnancy of wit, ripeness of experience, and industrious meditation, yet no savoury knowledge, nor wisdom to salvation, can be fetched out of these divine truths but by the Spirit. We cannot learn Christ, as the apostle speaketh. A man may know Christ, but he hath not learned Christ, Eph. 4:20. That supposeth a teacher, which is the Spirit of God: John 6:45, 'They shall all be taught of God.' The Spirit teacheth us Christ, so as to have communion and fellowship with him—to fetch comfort out of him; and this helpeth our natural light, and doth indeed set off Christ to us: Job 32:8, 'There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.' Then we begin to look upon Jesus Christ with a true and distinct eye. A man may have eyes, but if he have not light he cannot see well, nor discern the distinct shape of things. Light must come to light;—first the light of the sun or candle to the light of the eye. Thus our reason must be helped to fasten upon divine truths so as to fetch comfort out of them. Thus ignorant men cannot tell what to make of the promises of the gospel or the commandments of the gospel, what to think of Christ or what to believe. Therefore, it is said, 1 Cor. 2:10, 'The deep things of God'

are 'revealed to us by his Spirit;' that giveth us the knowledge of the truth and worth of them.

(2.) Unteachableness. We are not only in the dark, but blind; we have not only lost the use, but the faculty: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of Goo, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' We have no spiritual eyes, and therefore we cannot see spiritual things. Things are apprehended by us according as they carry a proportion and suitableness to our hearts. Now our hearts are so gross that we cannot measure truths by them. This unteachableness remaineth in the soul till the Spirit disposes it to knowledge; and therefore St Paul prayeth, Eph. 1:17,18, 'That God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, and open the eyes of their understanding'—take away the scales. And so you read, Luke 24:29, That Christ 'opened their understanding;' i.e., made it, teachable. The word is not only proposed to them to rectify their apprehensions of Christ, but their minds are opened; which implieth, that as they had no light, so they had closed eyes, a wicked mind as well as a weak mind, a mind disaffected, prejudiced, full of corrupt principles and reasonings that are advanced [against] the truth.

[2.] In the heart there is carelessness and stubbornness. And therefore, as God must teach their minds, so he must draw their hearts; as it is said, John 6:44, 'No man cometh unto me, except the Father draw him.' The power of the Spirit must be put forth into the soul to bend it to Christ.

Let us take notice of these two evils.

(1.) Carelessness. Men slight Christ, and then they are not won to believe in him. This carelessness cometh from two things:—(1st.) A love of ease. Men cannot think of Christ without reluctancy, and they are loth to put themselves to the trouble. When the spouse is lodged in the bed of security, see how she pleadeth: 'I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?' A carnal, careless heart, that loveth ease, sticketh at every little hesitancy and vain excuse. In hot countries, where they went barefoot, they were wont to wash their feet after travel. They are loth to arise to entertain Christ for fear of trouble and loss to themselves: Prov. 20:4, 'The sluggard will not plough

because of the cold: Many do not care for Christ, because it will cost them some pains and care to pursue after him. They must follow him through so many prayers, meditation, and observation, that they had rather sit still. There is need of a great deal of revelation to make the soul seriously to attend. The spouse fainted, Cant. 5:6, when Christ put his finger into the key-hole of the lock: 'Then I rose up and opened to my beloved, and my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone; my soul failed when he spake.' When he beginneth to touch the wards of the heart, all idle excuses vanish, then nothing but Christ will satisfy the heart. So Acts 2:37, 'When they were pricked in their hearts, then they cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Men that are not converted indulge their vain thoughts and excuses still; but when that is once past, they cannot dally with salvation any more: Acts 16:30, the jailer saith 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' Oh, tell me quickly, it can brook no delay!

(2dly.) Doting upon other excellencies. One love, like a nail, driveth out another. A man slighteth a thing when the stream of his affections are carried another way. Some had a farm, some a yoke of oxen, some had married a wife, some one excuse, some another; but they all said, 'I cannot come.' Men are severally taken up, either with honours, or profits, or pleasures; but all keep from Christ. Therefore there is need of the Spirit's revelation, to display the beauties of Christ before the soul, that they may see that there is more in this beloved than in other beloveds, Cant. 5:9; that so the force of our ill affections may be broken, and the stream of the heart diverted another way, and brought about to Christ. This is that which is desired in that request, 'Draw me; we will run after thee,' Cant. 1:4; that the Spirit would display the glory of Christ to the soul, that we may look upon him as an attractive object, and so find our hearts and our desires following after him. Thus for carelessness.

(2.) Stubbornness of heart, that is another thing. There is a wilfulness in men; they will not believe, because they will not believe. Men will not close with Jesus Christ; God showeth them the way, and they contemptuously reject it: John 5:40, 'Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.' Christ inviteth men by the gospel 'Come unto me, all you that are weary and heavy laden;.' and they will not come; there is no answer in the heart to God's call because of this stubbornness of spirit.

But now, when gospel invitations are seconded with the Spirit's motions, they command their own entrance into the soul, the heart submits to the way that God revealeth for its good. The heart, like a quick, strong echo, returneth the full answer of gospel demands: Ps. 27:8, 'When thou saidst unto me, Seek ye my face, my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek;' Zech. 13:9, 'I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.' So much for the proof of the point.

I shall answer a doubt or two before I go on to the application.

The doubts are these:—

1. If the want of the Spirit's revelation be the cause why so few believe, how can God be just in punishing men for their unbelief, since he doth not give them all a like revelation?

I answer—Two ways: First, From God's sovereignty: Exod. 33:19, 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy;' so Rom. 9:15,16. God's will is the measure of his actions, as the moral law is the measure of our actions. That is a rule to us, not to God; he giveth no account of his matters, he acteth out of infinite sovereignty, and so he may do what he pleaseth Who shall set a task for him? Mat. 11:25, 26, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, because it seemed good in thy sight' That is the upshot of all, and the result of all disputes about it: 'Even so, Father, because it pleaseth thee.' He doth not tell you for what cause it pleased the Father; but even so it pleased him, as if that were reason enough: it is just because it pleased the Father. You are not to be judges of God's actions, but doers of his will. God made you not to censure him, but to give him glory. The pattern of all justice is to be copied out from God's will; it is just because God did it.

Secondly, The beauty of God's justice shineth in this, in that the positive cause of unbelief—

[1.] Is in ourselves, it being through our own blindness and stubbornness. We 'will not come to him that we may have life.' Hosea 13:9, 'O Israel,

thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.' God is the positive cause of faith, the privative cause of unbelief. The Spirit's revelation worketh faith; but in case of the want of it, our own perverse hearts are the cause of unbelief. If the earth be light, it is from the sun; but if it be dark, it is through the lack of the sun, that is from itself: 2 Cor. 4:3, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.' It is to those that take a course to ruin themselves.

[2.] Men do not their utmost, and therefore are justly punished, because they did not what they were able to do to get faith. He is justly condemned that complaineth of the length of the way, and therefore doth not stir one foot to see whether he shall conquer it, yea or no: Mat. 25:26, 'Thou wicked and slothful servant.' Many complain, as if God required brick and gave no straw. They are wicked and slothful; they do not what they should. Men had rather accuse God than reflect upon their own idleness; they will not come to him.

[3] They abuse their parts, and are so far from improving of them to the utmost, that they employ them against God: Jude 10, 'What they know naturally as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.' So 2 Peter 2:12, it is said, 'They utterly perish in their own corruption.' There is wickedness enough in them to cause the wrath of God to proceed against them. This is the first doubt.

2. The next is (which is somewhat answered out of this) if this be cause—viz., the want of the Spirit's revelation—Why then should we labour after faith? Our labour will not do without the revelation of the Spirit.

Ans. {1.] We should labour after it, to see our own weakness, that we may took up to God the more earnestly for it. Men think it is easy to believe till they put themselves upon the trial. They do not see a need of the Spirit till they perceive the fruitlessness of their own endeavours: 'If thou appliest thy heart to understanding, and criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hidden treasure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God,' Prov. 2:3-5.

[2] That we may manifest our obedience to God, and meet him in his own

way, He hath commanded us to believe; let us do what we can towards it. Improve your natural abilities, and use the means that God hath appointed, and refer the success to him: Luke 5:5, 'Master, we have toiled all night, and catched nothing; nevertheless, at thy command I will let down the net.' Consider God's prerogative over you, and make the best of the power you have; and if for nothing else, yet at his command perform thy duty. God hath enabled you to do somewhat, and he may justly require you should do the utmost of it. Every man hath a command over his locomotive faculty; he can choose whether he will come hither or go thither. Every man can 'watch at the gates of wisdom,' Prov. 8:34, 'and wait at the posts of her door.' Therefore, let the command of God enforce you to do what you can.

[3.] That you may manifest your desires after it. God doth not give Christ to many, because they do not care for him. If a man did care for a thing, he would endeavour after it. Excuses are always a sign of an unwilling heart. Where the desires are vehement, they will not easily be put by: Mat. 13:45, The merchant that 'found a pearl of great price,' 'went and sold all that he might buy it.' Those that desire not Christ, do not look upon him as a pearl of price; if they did, their hearts would follow hard after him. Those that say they have no power, it is to be feared they have no heart. It was the slothful person said, 'There is a lion in the way,' Prov. 26:13. Therefore strive after faith, if for nothing else, yet to show that Christ is worth your most earnest seeking and pursuit after him.

[4.] Because though by the using of means we do not get faith, yet without the means we shall not have it. It is *conditio sine qua non,* though not *causa fidei:* Rom. 10:14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' A man hath it not by hearing, nor for hearing, yet he hath it not without hearing. There is not merit nor efficacy in the means, and yet there must be the presence of them, because it holdeth negatively, if ye do not use the means ye shall never believe. The Spirit causeth faith, but it is by the word: see that text, Acts 13:46, 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you; but seeing ye have put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' Men that refuse the means, pass the sentence of condemnation upon themselves, they declare themselves to be those

whom God will judge to be unworthy of eternal life—unworthy, because they would not seek after it. When the psalmist describeth desperate men, he represents them to be such as reject the means: Ps. 58:4,5, 'They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.' The adder stoppeth one ear with her tail, and the other lieth close upon the ground. So wicked men, if they come to the ordinances, take care they shall not prevail upon them; they are not diligent to attend to the word.

[5.] It is very likely God will come in and meet with us if we seek him in his own ways; and who would not venture upon a likelihood of safety to come out of a certain danger? If you do not use the means, you are sure to perish; if you do, you may be likely to obtain mercy; and certainly it is the safest course to adventure upon these hopes. The soul reasoneth in such a case just as the Aramites did: 2 Kings 7:4, 'If we enter into the city, there is the famine, we shall die there; if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come and let us fall into the host of the Assyrians; if they save us alive, we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die.' So if we continue in our sins, it is death; if we neglect prayer, or hearing, or meditation, it is death; though there be but an *if* of mercy, venture upon it, a little to keep up the heart. Men near drowning will catch hold, though it be but of a reed or a twig.

[6.] This is God's usual way, to meet those that seek him. The God of Jacob would not have them seek his face in vain, Isa. 45:19, and Luke 11:9; though he would not arise and give as his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will arise and give him. When the soul is importunate with God thus, it is a sign of mercy, and it is through the preliminary efficacy of the Spirit. This earnestness after faith is the first impression of the Spirit's efficacy. Thus I have answered the doubts.

I shall now come to the application.

The first use is exhortation, to press you to divers duties; as—

1. To wait for the Spirit's motion and revelation. Do not look to the words that are spoken, but how the Spirit giveth you the savoury sense and meaning of them. They that were at the pool looked for the angel's

stirring of the waters; so do you look for the Spirit's revelation, to see how the confusedness of your light and knowledge is done away. The mind knoweth some things, but doth not know things as it should know them. See how the Spirit giveth you satisfaction. If you would have faith, your chief care is to attend the Spirit; and therefore, faith is called by the Spirit's own name, 'the same Spirit of faith,' 2 Cor. 4:13, because it is the faith of the Spirit.

2. Yield to it. Many are of an unteachable heart, they are not won by the Spirit's allurements: Gen. 9:27, 'God shall persuade (or enlarge) Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem.' God shall allure the allurable. Take heed you resist, not the secret whispers and persuasions of God's Spirit. There is a great deal of thwarting in the heart against it, that God's Spirit, when it should allure, it is forced to dispute it; and therefore God saith, Gen. 6:3, 'My Spirit shall no longer strive with men.' The Spirit convinceth us this is right, and then our interests and vile affections set the heart a-disputing against it; and we would fain put off these inward motions and checks of conscience. Many of God's elected servants do very often resist those motions, so that it were even just with God to cast them off, but that Christ's word is passed: John 6:37, 'All that my Father giveth me shall come to me, and I will in no wise cast them out.' But as to reprobates, God stayeth a great while with them too. *No longer,* implieth a long time, even as long as he shall think fit, and then he leaveth them. Take heed of these withdrawings.

3. Cherish it. Many have had strong resolutions, but they die away without this. They have a great many previous workings of the Spirit, as, much knowledge of the will of God, much sense of sin, fear of punishment, many thoughts about their freedom and deliverance, some hopes of pardon, some kind of care and desire; but then they drown these things again by the cares and pleasures of this world, and so they are to no purpose. This is called by the apostle 'quenching of the Spirit,' 1 Thes. 5:19. Now, the Spirit is quenched two ways:—

[1.] When they do not blow up the coals, stir up the graces of God that are in them, and labour to feed and cherish by prayer and meditation these desires, which is the strengthening of the things which are ready to die, Rev. 3:2; when we do not labour to rouse up ourselves, and keep in the

heat and warmth in our souls: Mat. 13:19, 'Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in their hearts.'

[2.] When they do as it were cast water on the Spirit's motion by the return of their lusts. Men are apt to return to their old ways, after these partial desires and partial care to get Christ; but 2 Peter 2:21, 'It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.' Enraged lusts return the stronger, and have the greater force upon the heart.

4. In case you have it, praise God for it. Oh, get largeness of heart to conceive of this great privilege, to have Christ not only to be revealed to you, but in you! There is a threefold ground of thankfulness:—

[1.] In respect of yourselves, that God was not discouraged with your often resistance of him, but that he should go on with his work: Isa. 66:9, 'Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?' God speaketh of the outward glory of his church, but it is also true of grace in the hearts of his servants. Oh, how justly might God have broken off and interrupted his design and purpose of grace and mercy, and have given over such a stubborn heart as yours to the sway of its lusts! As Elizabeth said, Luke 1:43, 'Whence is this, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?' So whence is it that the. Spirit of the Lord should come tome, stubborn me? There should be such a reflection upon our unkindness.

[2.] In respect of the freeness of the gift, that he should give his Spirit to work faith in us so freely. Faith is expressed to be the gift of God, Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29, 'To you it is given to believe,' *umin ecarisJh;* you have it of the free grace of God. Flesh would fain boast, and have these things in its own power, but you see, 'to you it is given.'

[3.] In respect of others. That he should reveal himself unto you, and not unto others. What did he see in you more than in others, that he should give you a token of his distinguishing love? Christ thanketh God for the distinguishingness of it: 'Father, I thank thee, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes,' Mat. 11:26. And therefore we have the greater reason so to do: John 14:22,

'How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?' Thus you see what cause there is of thankfulness on this threefold account.

Use 2. Is examination, to see whether you have closed with the report of Jesus Christ or no. If you have closed with it aright, it is with the Spirit's revelation, it is because you have been inwardly convinced in your hearts of the truth of it. But how shall we know that we believe in the report because of the Spirit's revelation, and that many will say and everyone crieth it up for a truth, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners? I answer:—

1. The Spirit's revelations are distinct; it showeth the soul how Christ will be received. Most men's knowledge of Christ is an indefinite knowledge; they know him in a confused, indistinct, indefinite manner; they look upon him as a Saviour, but they do not look upon him as commanding things contrary to their vile affections. Now the Spirit revealeth him determinately, what he is, and upon what terms we must take him.

2. It giveth men an experimental taste of Christ: 1 Peter 2:3, *'If* so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' They can speak of what sweetness there is in Christ. Notional knowledge looketh upon him as a man looketh upon a thing in the bulk. When a man hears a minister talk of Christ, he taketh it up as a great and comfortable truth, but he cannot speak out of experience. All Christians can speak out of their desires, though not delights: Oh, come, taste and see how good the Lord is!

3. The Spirit revealeth so as to influence us to obedience. Spiritual light is like that of the sun, it hath heat with it. But now it is otherwise with notional irradiations, and common illuminations; the heart is vain, and the conference conduceth to controversy, more than to the conversion of others.

Use 3. The third and last use is to condemn all that false faith that is in most people: they think they believe in Christ, whereas they scarcely believe the report of him. True faith hath a true ground. Most men have this in their thoughts, that there was such a person as Christ; the preachers tell them so; the laws of the land and the customs of the people are for it. Alas! most people are like wax, they are fit to take the stamp

and impression of any religion that is bequeathed to them. They are not said so properly to believe, as to have a superficial apprehension of the common report that is made concerning such a thing. They have no more saving faith in Christ than Turks and infidels, and have as little true love for him as the Jews that crucified him. I cannot examine every false ground. I will give you marks in general when you have it from any wrong ground; as—

1. When you take it up without weighing: Prov. 14:15, 'The simple believeth every word, but the prudent man looketh well to his going.'

2. By your fickleness; when a man embraceth a thing upon wrong grounds, he will leave it upon wrong grounds: Gal. 1:6, 'I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel;' 2 Thes. 2:2, 'I beseech you, brethren, be not soon shaken in mind.'

3. By the dissonancy of our practice, and inconstant resolutions. This is called, 2 Peter 2:1, a 'denying Christ that bought us.' Though they profess him in words, yet in deeds they deny him. It were better to renounce the profession of Christ than to keep it with these resolutions: Mat. 6:31-33, 'Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed; for after all these things do the Gentiles seek; but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

THE SECOND VERSE.

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

I AM now to make entrance upon the cause and ground of the Jews' unbelief, namely, Christ's meanness and sufferings. His meanness is described:—

1. In regard of his birth.

2. In regard of his manner of life, and outward appearance in the world, which are the two things the prophet prosecutes in divers expressions. I shall take notice of them in this and the following verses.

My method shall be:—

1. To open the phrases to you as they lie in the order of the words.

2. To apply them to Jesus Christ, and to give you some helps for your meditation.

3. Because Christ's life holdeth forth much matter of observation for the guiding of our lives, I shall give some more general and practical points, that so what is said of Christ may be useful for us.

First, For the phrases, and these respect:—

First, His birth and original; and here three expressions are to be explained.

1. *He shall grow up as a tender plant*. What is meant by that?

The Septuagint (because the word for *tender plant* signifieth also a *sucker)* have translated it *wV paidion*. We have spoken of him as a sucking child. But I conceive it is not put here to signify the infancy of Christ, so much as the low and mean manner of the original that he would take upon himself. He would be as a tender plant, not as a tall tree full of limbs and branches. For it is usual in scripture to set forth the several conditions of men by trees and plants: thus Nebuchadnezzar's greatness and strength are represented, Dan. 4:21,22, by the tree whose leaves were fair, whose fruits were much, and the branches thereof reaching to heaven and shading the earth. So the Psalmist describes the wicked's prosperity, Ps. 37:35, 'I have seen the wicked great in power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree.' And on the contrary, misery is expressed by the heath in the desert, a low mean shrub, Jer. 17:6. So here, Christ's meanness and poverty are held forth by a tender plant, newly sprouted forth, and come up above the earth, which a man would tread upon rather than cherish. And indeed it is observable that Christ is often

represented by the expression of a tender plant, or as a branch: thus Isa. 11:1, 'There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.' I shall touch upon it again. So it is said, Zech. 3:8, 'I will bring forth my servant the branch.' So chap. 6:12, 'The man whose name is The Branch:' Jer. 23:5, 'Behold the days shall come that I will raise unto David the righteous branch;' Jer. 33:15, 'Behold, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David.' And I conceive this expression holdeth forth two things:—

[1] Christ's present meanness, what he was in the world's eye, which was no more than a branch or twig.

[2] His future glory. He should be a tree: Ezek. 17:22-24, Thus saith the Lord, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and I will crop off from the top of his young twigs 'a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fair fruit, and become a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.' Thus it was a tender plant, yet such a one as might become a spacious and goodly tree.

2. A root out of a dry ground; that is, not only a tender branch, but a branch that hath little verdure and freshness. But why a root? And why out of a dry ground? The root does not come up, but the branches. I may answer—*Root* is put figuratively, the cause for the effect, the root for the sprigs; or else to denote the dryness of the branch; it was not fresh and green: even like a root, or like heath in the wilderness, which is a branch and root too. Or more properly it may be to show that Christ is such a branch as that he is a root likewise. And I the rather take notice of this, because the scripture doth so: Rev. 5:5, 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book;' and chap. 22:16, 'I am the root and offspring of David.' Mark, not the branch, but the root. Christ was David's son and David's Lord, Mat. 22:45, yet 'a root out of a dry ground.' Some triflers understand by this is meant the womb of the virgin; but it is rather the dead and withered stock of David's house. For though that family was obscure, and all the glorious branches cut off to the very stump, yet even then shall sprout out the last and greatest ornament of it, like a root out of a dry ground. Therefore it is observable

it is said, Isa. 11:1, 'A rod shall come out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots.' He doth not say, out of the stem of David, who was the first king and honour of that family, but Jesse, whose name was more obscure, implying that at this time this house should be reduced to its first meanness, or that it should not be the house of David so much as the house of Jesse. Out of his decayed roots should spring up this tender branch.

3. *Before him*. Whom? Some say himself, for so they say the Hebrew word is to be understood. As if the sense were, if you look to the state and presence of the person himself. But I shall pass by that, and take notice but of two persons to whom this *him* may be referred; for the scriptures have this privilege, to abound in senses.

[1.] *Him,* that is, the Lord, for so may it be referred. He was but lately spoken of, ver. 1, 'The arm of the Lord;' and then it is added, 'Before him shall grow up a tender plant.' Though he was so mean, yet God saw it, and permitted it, because he had appointed it. It was not by chance, and because it could be no better, but by God's special decree and appointment. Before the Lord he shall rise up a tender plant.

[2.] *Before him;* that is, before the party that believes not the report: ver. 1, 'Who hath believed,' &c.—because before him Christ riseth up in such a mean manner. By this *him* must be meant the unbelieving Jews of whom he spake. Reason cannot expect that the Messiah should lie hid under so mean a shape. They will be offended in Christ's meanness, as I shall touch by and by. Thus for the phrases of Christ's original.

Secondly, For the phrases now that belong to the outward state and appearance of his life. Christ hath not in him proportion and beauty, which are the objects allurable to men. We love things for the orderly disposition of parts or colours; the one is called *form* or *comeliness,* the other *beauty*. So that Christ's mean appearance is described two ways:—

1. By the removal of excellency.

2. By the restraint of affection.

1. As to the removal of excellency. And therein—

[1.] No proportion, no form nor comeliness is found in him. Then—

[2.] As to beauty, there was no fitness of colour. These things are not put here literally, to deny there was any individual or personal beauty in Christ; for I believe that he was not of a monstrous and misshapen body, but well compacted and well coloured,—though I doubt not but there have been a great many fictions about the body of Christ, particularly what Lentulus says in his letters concerning the amiableness of Christ's countenance, that he was of so fair a face, and yet of so majestic an eye, that all that beheld him were enforced to love and fear him. Nicephorus likewise said that Mary Magdalen, who was at first a common strumpet, was drawn to hear Christ upon a report of the comeliness of his person, and afterwards won by the efficacy of his doctrine. No doubt he had a comely, well-featured, healthy body. But this is not spoken of so much as his outward port and presence to the world. He did not come with such pomp and glory as they imagined was suitable to the majesty of the Messiah. They thought he should have come in a royal way, with a great deal of outward pomp and splendour, that so all the world might have admired the great Redeemer of the Jews.

But how can it be said of Christ that he had neither comeliness nor beauty, since it is said, Pa. 45:2, that 'he is fairer than the children of men,' or 'than the sons of Adam'? And in Cant. 5:10-16, he is described by the spouse to be well-coloured, 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand;' and likewise well-featured, as she goeth on from part to part, from head to feet; and then concludeth, 'He is altogether lovely.'

To this I answer:—

(1.) It is one thing what Christ is to the spouse, another what he is to the unbelieving Jews. Christ's beauties are inward, seen of none but those that are inwardly acquainted with him. The spouse speaketh of him in a spiritual sense. Here he is spoken of in respect of his outward habitude in the world.

(2.) We must distinguish between Christ's humiliation and exaltation, his Godhead and his manhood. In his Godhead; so he is 'the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. 1:3, and consequently full of beauty. In his humiliation; so he is not only a man, but a mean man: Phil. 1:9, 'He made himself of no reputation.'

(3.) In Christ's humiliation we must distinguish as to what he is in himself and as to what he is in the eye of the world. In Christ's manhood he did not appear in the form of God. It is said, Phil. 2:7, 'He took upon him the form of a servant;' yet he did not lay aside his Godhead: that appeared too sometimes in the power of his doctrine and miracles; but the world saw no form in him, none of the form of the Godhead in him. Then—

2. As to the phrase that implieth restraint of affection, 'why we should desire him.' But you will say, How then is Christ said to be the desire of all nations, as we read, Hag. 2:7, 'I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come'?

I answer—

[l.] Though he is not actually desired, yet he is nevertheless worthy of esteem and affection. Pearls do not lose their worth though swine trample upon them. It is the world only that is offended at his meanness, and saith, 'There is no beauty in him wherefore we should desire him.' But—

[2.] You judge by the eye and appearance. Now a carnal heart can see no excellency in Christ; and when you see him, if you trust to your sight merely, you will not desire him. Thus you have the meaning of the words. Now—

Secondly, To accommodate this prophecy to Christ, and show you how it agreeth to him, that so his love may be displayed and held forth to your meditations, that he should submit himself to such meanness for your sakes. Wherefore I desire that you would with me observe these few things. And first from the causal particle: *'For* he shall grow up as a tender plant.' He gives a reason why so few believed the report.

The point therefore is this:—

Doct. 1. That Christ's meanness, dud want of outward pomp and splendour, is the great prejudice against the entertainment of him and the things of his kingdom.

In handling this point I shall treat of his meanness both in his life and doctrine.

First, As to his meanness in his manner of revealing himself to the world. Because the beginnings of his kingdom were weak, the world rejected it. I will prove this by a reason or two.

1. Because we have no light to see any excellency in other things but what are outwardly glorious. Men being inured to such things, think them the only things. Corrupt desires make a corrupt mind. Where there is flesh, there will be a knowing of things after the flesh, 2 Cor. 5:16; and we will think such things only to be glorious. Men's judgments are as their affections; for as these are, so are their conceits of happiness: 1 Cor. 2:12, 'We have not received the spirit of the world.' There is a spirit of the world which maketh men think that the greatest excellency is in the things of the world, as in outward fineness, royalty, learning, eloquence, pomp, and splendour. Christ is mean, and therefore rejected, because he cometh not with these things.

2. Because we judge altogether by likelihoods and outward appearances. Samuel thought sure that Eliab was the man, because he looked upon his countenance and the height of his stature, I Sam. 16:7; but it is added, 'Man seeth not as God seeth; man looketh to the outward appearance.' We judge of things according as they are to our senses. Many would have thought that some great emperor should have been the Messiah, rather than the poor child in the manger at Bethlehem. Most people will have it that truth is rather on that side that is accompanied and accommodated with outward authority, applause, and other advantages of learning and eminency, than among a few despicable men, such as the martyrs were.

3. Because we envy and despise any worth that is veiled under meanness, as if it were a disgrace to us to take anything from those beneath us. It

was a great condescension in Job, chap. 31:13, that he would 'not despise the cause of his servants when they contended with him.' Certain it is otherwise in the world; they consider the person and envy the excellency; as you may read, Mat. 13:55, &c. Though they were astonished at his doctrine, yet they said, 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' and were offended at him. His mean original hindered them from giving that due honour and respect that they should.

Use 1. The use of this may be to inform us:—

1. Whence it is that Christ is differently entertained in the world, which is, because some see nothing but the outward meanness, others the inward excellency: Luke 2:34, 'This child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel.' Because this child, therefore for the fall and rising of many. And therefore he is called a rock of offence and a stumbling-stone, Rom. 9:33. God would not satisfy every one. There was inward power in Christ, and outward meanness, and many times he did exert and put forth his inward power: I Peter 2:7, 'To them that believe he is precious; but to others a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.' God will satisfy those that are desirous to learn the things of his kingdom; as for others, there is so much out-ward meanness and reproach laid upon his ways, as to harden them against them. If you will know the reason why so many are prejudiced against the ways of Christ, it is because they see nothing in them worthy of their choice. Oh, it is a great mercy of God for any to see the beauty of religion through the clouds of meanness, affliction, self-denial, and all those troubles to which it engageth men.

2. Do not despise things for their meanness, for so thou mayest condemn the ways of God. God will have his people love him for his own sake, not for the outward accommodation and advantages we have by him. As it is said, John 6:26, 'Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracle, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.' Princes try the affections of their subjects most when they come to them in a disguise, and veil their majesty under the plainest garb; and so did Christ to the world, and still does to this day. He suffereth this stumbling-block, to see if we will look beyond it. As there was meanness in the outward habitude of Christ's person, so there is now in the administration of his kingdom; as appears by considering:—

[1.] That the ordinances are weak to appearance; there is nothing but plain words, plain bread and wine, in one ordinance, and only water in another. The simple plainness of the ordinances is an obstacle to men's believing; they would fain bring in pomp, but that will mar all. When there were wooden chalices, there were golden priests. God would have his ordinances like himself, simple and full of virtue. The tabernacle was all gold within, but covered with badgers' skins without. This stumbleth the world at first dash; they will not look for gold where they see nothing but badgers' skins: 2 Kings 5:12, 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?' What! no greater thing to be done for my health? I might have done thus at home. So some are apt to say, We had better read at home, than wait upon such plain preaching; but remember, it is God's ordinance, and that puts a value upon it.

[2] These ordinances are administered by weak men. Many times God singleth out the meanest. Our Saviour sent fishermen to conquer the world, and made use of a goose-quill to wound Antichrist. Moses, the stammering shepherd, was commissioned to deliver Israel; God makes use of Amos, who was a herdsman, to declare his will, Amos 1:1. So Elisha the great prophet was taken from the plough, 1 Kings 19:19. And many times God made use of young men, such as Paul, whose very person causeth prejudice; young Samuel, young Timothy, men of mean descent, low parentage, and of no great appearance in the world.

[3.] The manner how it is by them managed, which is not in such a politic, insinuating way as to beguile and deceive, and as if they were to serve their own ends: 2 Cor. 1:12, the apostle saith, 'Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, we have our conversation among you.' He calleth it carnal wisdom to use any underhand dealing to gain esteem to their way, or to go in any by-path out of Christ's way. They did nothing deceitfully and closely, but what they openly held forth. And so now the less there is of worldly wisdom, the more God prevaileth: Luke 16:8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.'

[4] The persons by whom it is entertained, the poor: James 2:5, 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith?' Usually God's true

people are the meanest and most contemptible, not being so noted for outward excellency as others, Mat. 11. God revealeth the things of his kingdom to babes, men destitute of outward sufficiencies. This hath been always a great prejudice against Christ's doctrine: John 7:48, 'Have any of the rulers or the pharisees believed on him?' Have the great men, the great scholars, closed with that way?

[5.] The general drift of it is to make men deny their pleasures, to overlook their concernments, to despise the world, to hinder unjust gain, to walk contrary to the honorary customs and fashions of the world. If men would be Christians indeed, they will find that the usual customs of the world are most contrary to Christianity; as to forgive injuries, to seek reconciliation, to put up with disgrace, and to show kindness to those that are not likely to repay us again: Luke 14:12-14, 'When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they bid thee again, and a recompense be made unto thee; but call the poor, the blind, and the lame, and the maimed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.' So to make a man contented, though he and his family should be in a mean condition, though he be not so great in the world as others; yet this is a great prejudice against the ways of Christ. Therefore do not despise persons or things for their meanness; do not count zeal folly, or religion weakness; do not reckon them among fools that are conscientiously scrupulous: Heb. 13:2, it is said, that some that entertained strangers thereby entertained angels unawares; so some that refuse things because of outward appearance, they refuse Christ unawares; they may condemn and reproach the very saints and people of God. Luke 16:15: 'That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the eyes of God.' There is no judging by the outward probability and face of things. Still true, strict Christianity is disesteemed in the world; men look upon it as some humorous, misshapen conceit, that looketh enviously upon their pleasures, contrary to their natures, and unbefitting their quality. That you may not thus despise the things that any way concern the kingdom of Christ for their meanness, I shall give you these four directions:—

(1.) Beg the Spirit of God that he would suggest to you his will and

counsel in all things. The spirit of the world or your own spirit will make you judge amiss, and that nothing is God's but what is outwardly glorious; and so even Christ may become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to you, and you may despise the greatest truth. The things of Christ's kingdom are carried in a secret way. The Spirit telleth us what things are given us of God. Plain things must be set on by the demonstration of the Spirit, or else we shall see no beauty in them: 1 Cor. 2:4. A Christian sucketh marrow out of that which is dry bones to a natural man. Do not trust to your own reason. Leave a man to his reason, to the mere considerations of flesh and blood, and he can perceive no beauty in the glorious ways of Christ. This is the cause why great scholars are so much mistaken in the things of his kingdom

(2.) Walk in the ways of God, in his fear and love—keep communion with him and he will direct you: Ps. 25:13, 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; he will show them his covenant.' God discovereth himself particularly to his own people. They are his friends, and you know friends reveal themselves mutually to one another in the greatest secrets; as Christ giveth the reason: John 15:15, 'I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have revealed to you.' Those that keep up a continual acquaintance with God, by manifesting their live and fear if him, shall have divine mysteries manifested to them: Col. 1:26, 'The mystery that was hid from ages is made manifest to the saints.' Truths that have long lain hid through many successions and revolutions of ages, are at length made known to holy persons. Where there is purity, there is revelation: 'The pure in heart shall see God,' Mat. 5:8. They shall see more of his truth and mind in those things which if they should judge if by their own reason, they would contemn. So also it is said, Prov. 3:32, 'His secret is with the righteous.' They have not only other kinds of knowledge, but knowledge of the secret of such a way as is veiled with contempt, reproach, and unlikelihood to the world. Blind and carnal men sometimes stumble upon the despised ways of Christ; but they do but plough with the saints' heifer, and light their torch at the altar. Their self-ends and by-interests make them borrow from truth; but it is with them as it is with parrots, they speak the words of men not of reason but custom; they learn a truth when it is delivered, they have been used to such notions.

(3.) Exercise faith; that is, the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11:1; that is, not seen by natural sense or reason. It is *o f ojJalmoV thV yuchV*,—the eye, the discovering part of the soul. As reason is to a natural man, so is faith to a godly man. It carrieth a man within the veil: what cannot be made out to sense and reason is made out to faith. *Ideo credo quia est impossibile*,—therefore I beieve, because it is impossible. Though, in your own thoughts, you would fain have things otherwise, yet, if there be revelation to the contrary, believe it; as that there is happiness in sufferings,—that the reproach of Christ is better than all the treasures of the world,—that there is life in death. Faith seeth that easy and plain which is the greatest contradiction to reason and sense. See what a riddle St Pail telleth you by faith: 2 Cor. 6:9,10, 'As unknown, yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.' Faith maketh us see that in a thing which reason would tell us were the greatest absurdity and inconsistency in the world to believe; as that Abraham should see Christ before he was extant. The Jews were ready to stone Christ for saying so: 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.' Faith captivates reason to scripture, and maketh a man close with the revelation against his own conceits and prejudices. Only take this caution,—though faith seeth things impossible and improbable, yet they are only such things as are revealed by God.

(4.) Deny carnal reason and sense; do not judge of divine things by outward appearance. Hear what the apostle saith: 'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him'—that is, carnal eyes, carnal sense, and carnal thoughts; weighing that place with the context, that seemeth to be the meaning. To an ordinary reason, or eye, or ear, things would nit appear so. Now, because this rule is general, I shall a little restrain it by these particulars.

1. Do not cast away anything of Christ because it is despised or discountenanced. Take heed, a saint may suffer under a reproachful name. Christ was a despised branch, a root out of a dry ground; and Christianity was contemned because of the ill name and common cry

against it. Most Christians offend in blind zeal; they condemn things before they have tried them. Though the censure be right, it is ill in thee. Nicodemus suggested good advice: 'Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?' It was a pharisaical spirit to take up a prejudice, and not to be willing to hear what might be said for it. It was the misery of the primitive Christians that they could nit be heard to speak out. *Nolentes audire quid auditor damnare non possunt* — men are unwilling to hear that which they are resolved to condemn as soon as heard. It would be confutation enough if men did but know the beauty of the ways of religion. It is always this hasty zeal which rejecteth things upon public scorn without due trial: examine first and then speak. Though it be a despised and unlikely way, it is like thou, mayest find somewhat of God in it.

2. Because it is an afflicted way. Afflicted godliness is a great prejudice. But remember God never intended that truth should be known by pomp, nor condemned or disallowed for the troubles that accompany it. The drift of Christianity is to take us off from the hopes and fears of the present world; therefore he that liketh Christ and his promises is not likely to be separated from him by persecution.

3. Because poor men are of that way, those that have the meanest parts, and no outward excellencies: Mat. 11:26, 'At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' The jesuits have charged it upon the ministers of France, that they were poor. So in Salvian's time; *Coguntur esse mali, ne viles habeantur*—men would not be religious, because they would not be ranked among poor men. So the Albigenses were called the poor men of Lyons. Usually the priests' lips preserve knowledge, but sometimes God worketh *extra ordinem*. A simple layman nonplussed a bishop at the council of Nice, and many that were very mean in the world were martyrs.

4. Because thou mayest seem to hazard thy wisdom by closing with it. 'If any man seem to be wise, let him become a fool that he may be wise.' Thus I have despatched the first observation, namely, that Christ's meanness in his person and kingdom is the great hindrance against the

entertainment of him; few or none believed. 'For he shall grow up as a tender plant.

I come now to insist upon the second point, which is this:—*Doct. 2*. That though Christ's meanness be a great hindrance against the entertainment of him, yet, it is by the special appointment of God. He shall grow up before him. God orders it that the Messiah should come in such a manner. I shall be brief in handling this point. There is nothing about Christ but fell under God's decree, and the special care of his providence. All the circumstances of his birth, the time, place, manner of every action, you have some instance of it. The counsel of God brought it to pass, and the scripture was frequently quoted, 'that that might be fulfilled which was spoken concerning him;' yea, the most malicious actions of the enemies are spoken of as appointed by God, as particularly their spite to him in his death: 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' Judas delivered him, Pilate delivered him, and God delivered him. 'For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done,' Acts 4:27,28. 'Whom being delivered by the counsel of God.' This was God's grand contrivance; here was his *polupoikiloV sojia,* 'the manifold wisdom of God,' Eph. 3:10. So St Paul calleth the wise disposition of our salvation by Christ: 'Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' This was the great mystery. When a man is to make some rare engine, he will look to every screw and wheel, that all is set and ordered right. Here was God's great masterpiece, in which he would show himself, and the great copy of his eternal thoughts. That is the reason.

This point affordeth us many useful considerations, as this decree of God may be referred—

1. To Christ.

2. To the wicked.

3. To the godly.

1. To Christ. God decreed this, and Christ fulfilled it. It is a wonder to see how all things did conspire to make Christ conform in every thing to God's counsel concerning him. As, for instance, in Augustus his decree, which caused Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, where she was delivered. It would be too long to give you the history of the gospel. Many providences did meet, that all things whatever God had decreed might come to pass. Admire therefore the manifold wisdom of God in contriving these things.

2. In respect of the wicked. God appointed this meanness of Christ before them. Before them he shall rise up. God punisheth sin by occasions of sin. God maybe said to harden sinners three ways:—(1.) By leaving them to themselves, as it is said, he left the Gentiles to their own ways, Acts 14:16; (2.) By permitting them to enter into them; (3.) By presenting to them such objects from whence their corruption taketh occasion to sin, though they were things good in themselves; as Jer. 6:21, 'I will lay stumbling-blocks before this people.' The Jews argue that Christ is not the Messiah, because he did not come in such a way as to satisfy all his countrymen. God would have Christ mean that all might not believe in him, though not to cause sin, but to promote his just judgments. So God's cause and Christ's ways have difficulty enough in them to harden them. God pursueth his secret judgments upon them. Admire, therefore, and fear God's judgments on the wicked. It was by the special appointment of God that it was so mean.

3. For the godly. God appointed all the meanness of Christ for their sakes, for whom it is a double comfort.

[1.] From the eternity of God's thoughts towards them. Christ from before all worlds was appointed to be a captain of salvation through many sufferings, and to undergo many hardships for your sakes. This length of love is a great refreshment to the spirit; and when the soul reflects upon the meanness of Christ as the effect of God's eternal thoughts of mercy to it, it is the more encouragement to believe. 'Christ verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last times for you.' He would have them established in that as a sure truth.

[2.] It is a comfort to them in their meanness; it is that which is

appointed. They shall be conformable to their Head in this respect. They shall undergo no condition but what God from all eternity had decreed for them: Col. 1:24; Paul and all the godly are said to fill up what is behind of the sufferings, of Christ in their flesh. The church and Christ make but one body; that which they suffer, he suffers; that which he suffereth, they suffer. The sufferings of the godly are appointed as well as Christ's meanness.

I now proceed to the third observation, namely:—

Doct. 3. That this meanness of Christ was willingly taken up by him both in his birth and life and manner of appearing among men.

1. In his birth.

[1.] For the time of it. It was when the royal stock of David was quite extinct, and even come so low that Joseph was but a carpenter by profession. 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' And therefore is the genealogy of Joseph and Mary so carefully sought out by the evangelist, because it was not commonly and publicly known that they were of that lineage. The throne of David was occupied by Herod, who was an Ascalonite; he was *Epi joroiV tetagmenoV,* rather an observer of the tribute than a king.

[2.] The place, Bethlehem, a small place, not able to make up one division in Israel, the least of the thousands of Judah. A man would have thought he should have been born in some great city, as Rome or Jerusalem. No; but he chose to be born in Bethlehem, and suffered at Jerusalem: he had the least place to be born, but the greatest to suffer in. And then again, he was not born in any stately room at Bethlehem, but in a stable, nay, in a manger in the stable. Christ would have all mean at his birth.

[3.] Consider how in everything he was found in shape like another child, being circumcised the eighth day. He submitted to the law as soon as he was born into the world, to teach his followers obedience.

[4] Consider the oblation that was made for him, such as was made for poor people—a pair of turtle-doves and two young pigeons, the poor's

offering. Those that were not able to bring a lamb were to ring two turtles and two young pigeons, and that was accepted for an atonement. Thus much for his birth: yet we may observe there was something divine still mingled with Christ's outward meanness, as the appearing of the star, the trouble of the Jews, the wise men's report and offerings. By these things God would leave them without excuse, and under this poverty discover some glimpses of the deity.

2. Now for his life and manner of appearance in the world. He was altogether found in fashion as a man, as the apostle saith; that is, to outward appearance just as other men, for his growth was as other men's, by degrees: 'And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.' Though he had a most perfect divine soul given him at first, yet as he grew in stature he exercised and discovered the vigour of his faculties, which is there called increasing in knowledge, showing forth in his several ages more degrees of knowledge, that in all things he might conform to us. It would be too large for me to insist upon everything, therefore briefly take it thus:—His life was spent in much toil and labour, going to and fro; nay, and probably too, in mean labour, in his father's trade Mark 6:3, 'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?' Not only the carpenter's son, but the carpenter. In his younger time he exercised that trade, as Justin Martyr, a most ancient historian, writes he made yokes and ploughs. And when he put himself upon the way and duty of his ministry, be was in much want and penury; he was an hungry, Mat. 4:2; thirsty, John 4:6; without house and home Mat. 8:20, 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' Yea, so poor was he, that he had not wherewith to pay his poll-money for his head to the Romans, Mat. 17:27; therefore Peter is fain to go to the sea and catch a fish. I will not touch upon those that especially take in his suffering, that will fall in the next verse; only take notice how he was hunted up and down by the pharisees, how he was scorned and derided by them. so far as it reflects upon his weakness, as Luke 16:14, *exemukthrizon*. —they blew their nose at him in great scorn, as the word may be rendered. Nay, when he would show any royalty, and come as a king to Sion, he carne riding upon the foal of an ass, Mat. 21:5.

Use 1. Oh, then be exhorted—

1. To admire the love of God, that he should stoop to such a low condition for your sakes. Here is a large field for meditation; expatiate your thoughts, then, and trace Christ in all the history of his life, from the cradle to the grave, from the stable to Golgotha, and see what a mean and contemptible life he led.

2. Faithfully apply it, and say, All this was done for my good. The scriptures do not only take notice of Christ's humiliation, but of the very end of it. Most read the history of Christ as a man would do a romance, to be a little affected with it for a time; they take notice

I what ,is done, but not why; there is not that faithful appropriation Gal. 4:4, 5, 'When the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem us that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' Mark the end, and say, This was done for *me*; for *us* is too general. Why was Christ so mean? It was that I might be rich: 2 Cor. 8:9, 'For y e know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich;' rich in grace, and rich in comfort. *PtwcoV,* the word signifieth he became a beggar, not that he did beg, but he lived in continual need of a supply, and would sometimes put forth some glimpses of his divinity to command his welcome: Luke 19:5, 'Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.' Yet I say, Christ put himself upon this meanness for our sakes. *Speciosus prae filiis hominum, obscuratur pro filiis hominum,* saith Bernard. It is for our sakes that he who is altogether lovely in himself had no form, that we might be made lovely and beautiful; he was without comeliness, that his church might be comely, without spot or wrinkle, as the apostle speaketh, Eph. 5:27. He was besmeared with blood, that the church might be without spot. It is good to observe that Christ's meanness was not only in judgment, for a stumbling-block to the wicked, but in mercy to the godly. If he had discovered his deity at first, he had never suffered, and then the work of our redemption

I had stood still. It is a good observation of St Austin, quoted by Aquinas, Dum *omnia mirabiliter fecit, auferret quod misericorditer fecit—if* he had done all things wonderfully, he had done nothing mercifully. Christ's meanness, as it is a great mercy to mankind, see that it be so to you.

Use 2. Is information. It informeth us, then:—

1. That poverty and meanness is not disgraceful. Christ himself was a carpenter, Paul a tent-maker, and the apostles fishermen. Christ, you see, scorned that glory, pomp, and greatness which the world doteth upon. Men look upon the outside as if the horse were the better for the trappings, or anything without a man could ennoble him: Prov. 19:1, 'Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips.' A man is rightly esteemed by his internal qualifications. One holy saint is to be preferred above all the rich men that abound in the greatest affluence of estate and pomp. It should be so with all, much more with the godly. It is a reproach to Christ to contemn any man for his poverty, because he is meaner in the world than we: Prov. 14:31, 'He that despiseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: Can I believe that ever you would honour Christ, who despise the poor? Would you not him too? He that despiseth the poor reproacheth his Saviour. It is the most contrary affection to the Christian religion.

2. It informs us that poverty should not be irksome to us. Christ underwent it before you; his apostles were base in the world's eye 1 Cor. 4:13, 'We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things' counted the scurf of the earth. Christ chose this kind of life, a holy meanness, and therefore be not troubled. Poverty is a great burden, I confess, and layeth a man open to many a disadvantage, scorn, contempt, and refusal. But consider, Christ hath honoured it in his own person, and he honoureth it to this very day. If there be any respect of persons with God, he respecteth the poor, and reveals most of himself to them: 'The poor receive the gospel,' Mat. 11:5; 'I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord,' Zeph. 3:12. God hath provided for the esteem of all his servants. What is wanting one way is more plentifully supplied in another; so that those that have the least outward esteem, are justly accounted the most excellent. Every condition, I confess, hath its snares, but poverty hath least. This disposeth the soul to hearken to divine things, that their outward defects may be made up in some inward excellency. Everything naturally seeketh after a supply of its wants; and therefore, as it is in outward things, persons that are themselves deformed are most deeply

stricken with the love of beauty in others, that they may cover their own wants by linking themselves with that abundance of perfection that they spy in them; so the godly poor are more disposed to hearken to religion, because more sensible of their defects, that the meanness of their outward estate may be covered and satisfied for by the riches of those graces that are in their souls. And indeed, as these are fitter to receive a manifestation, so God doth most manifest himself to them: the first report that was made of Christ was made to shepherds and poor swains. Therefore on these accounts poverty is not so irksome.

Use 3. Is instruction. It teacheth us divers lessons:—Was Christ both in birth and manner of appearance in the world mean? Then—

1. It teacheth us humility, that he should empty himself of all his glory, and live in a mean estate. The apostle sets out this pattern excellently: Phil. 2:6-8, 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' He divested himself of all his royalty, that he might teach us this pattern of humility. Most men love to live to the utmost,—in a proud, pompous way, and disdaining of others. You see Christ, when he might have discovered majesty, held forth nought but poverty. And, indeed, it was principally to teach us this lesson: Mat. 11:29, 'Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly of heart.' He doth not say, Learn of me, *quia potens;* but, Learn of me, *quia humilis sum*—not, Learn of me, for I am powerful; but, Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly. Christ is not to be imitated in his power, but he is to be imitated in his graces. Not, Learn of me to do miracles, to create the world; but, to be lowly and humble-minded. This is the great pattern and copy that God hath set us, to wit, humility.

2. To be mean and low for Christ, as he was for you. Christ was poor that you might be rich—rich in peace, joy, comfort, salvation. Can you find such a rare instance as would be poor for Christ that he may be rich in his glory, in his ordinances, in the safety of his servants? We have read of many that have been poor for their lusts, they have prodigally lavished away their estates upon their pleasures; but very few have been poor for

Christ: Phil. 2:5; 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Jesus.' The apostle applieth it to humility, and we may also to the same purpose. Do you have as bountiful a disposition to God as Christ had for you? Can anything be too much for him? If a man truly serveth God, he would come as near him as possibly he could. Well, Christ cast away his glory for you; do you cast away your riches for Christ, not by a vowed poverty, but by a voluntary laying out yourselves for his word, his cause, and gospel? It is not waste where all is due; and indeed nothing is lost that is laid out upon God: Mat. 10:39, 'He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.' Therefore, if you do, as Ahaz's dial, go back ten degrees in your estate or outward pomp, the nearer will you come to the pattern. There is one who has quitted more for you than you can possibly quit for him. But I shall proceed to the next doctrine.

Doct. 4. That Christ is so outwardly mean, that the men of the world do not any way desire him, or that carnal men do see nothing in Christ wherefore they should desire him. To his spouse he is all beauty, 'altogether lovely;' but to them there was no beauty why they should desire him.

The reasons of the point are these:—

1. Because carnal men neglect the study of Christ; their hearts are so taken with the things of sense, and the beauty of the creatures, that they do not look any further. We are not much affected with an unknown beauty; things that we know only by a general hearsay do not work upon us. Christ must be in our thoughts before he can be in our desires. The Jews looked upon Christ's outside, and thereforeminded him no further. So men hear of Christ in a slight way; so far as they know him by the common noise and report, so far they close with him. But they do not see why they should desire him, and slight apprehensions stir up but weak affections. The spouse displayeth every part of Christ, to work upon her bowels: Cant. 5:10-16, 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold; his locks are bushy, and as black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and finely set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings, set with the beryl; his belly is as

bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires; his legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughter& of Jerusalem.' The apostle wondereth that the Galatians should not obey the truth, when Jesus Christ was evidently set forth and crucified among them before their eyes, Gal. 3:1. It was so in the word, but not in their thoughts. Men's hearts are wedded to the creatures, and so the breasts of their own roe satisfy them, and therefore they do not gaze upon other beauties.

2. Because they reject Christ; he is not for their turn; nay, he is quite contrary to their ends. Carnal men have not all the same ends, but they all agree in this, their ends are carnal. Those that would not come to the wedding-supper, some had their farm, some their merchandise to mind, another had married a wife, and therefore could not come; all said, they could not come: Mat. 22:5, 'They all made light of it, and went their ways.' So they all despised Jesus Christ. Some wicked men make riches their end. Now see what Christ saith Mat. 19:24, 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.' It is by the great power of God that a rich man is saved, as it followeth, 'All things are possible with God.' Now Christ is not for a rich man's turn. Christianity furnisheth men with precepts, not only against unjust gain, but mere desires of gain, or delight in gain. It contains precepts, that the kingdom of God is to he sought first, and his righteousness. And we are to look to these things from God for an additional supply: Mat. 6:32, 'After these things do the Gentiles seek.' It is not a Christian but a paganish spirit that maketh men so inordinate in the pursuit of gain. Then for honour, preferment, or applause, the scripture is peremptory against it: John 5:44, 'How can ye believe, who seek honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only?' This pursuing of glory, honour, and renown is incompatible with a Christian affection. The force of the argument lieth thus: How can those that seek honour believe in him that contemneth honour? Only he is fit to believe in God that maketh eternal life the end of his desires and endeavours, which is called the glory that cometh from God. The like argument is used by the apostle: Gal. 1:10, 'For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.' He did not labour to frame his doctrine and life so as

might be pleasing and suitable to the affections of men. Pride and ambition are the most unsuitable affections to religion that can be. There is such an antipathy between what God liketh and men like, that it is impossible they should be in the same soul. Then for pleasures; there are men that have quit human nature, and are so far from desiring Christ, that they do not desire a free use of their reason. Reason is not for their turn, and therefore certainly religion is not. This is the very affection that is in the brute beasts. They have some general object, a sensual good, only they differ in the particular modification of the object. Beasts are for grass and water, these for meats and drinks. All the use they make of their reason is to be more curious than the beasts in their choice; and therefore Christ is not for their ends: 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life,' Mat. 7:13. It is spoken specially in opposition to the voluptuous. The ways of God are fenced up with thorns to them: Prov. 15:19, 'The way of a slothful man is an hedge of thorns.' Everything is grievous and troublesome that requireth care and diligence. Thus they reject Christ because he is not suitable to them. To apply it now.

Use 1. It serveth for information, to teach us the difference between God's people and carnal men. To God's people he is all their desire; to carnal persons there is nothing desirable in him. It is good to observe their several verdicts of him: 1 Peter 2:7, 'To you that believe he is precious, but to them that be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.' To the world he is base and ignominious: Ps. 22:6, 'A worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' To the spouse, glorious and full of allurements: Ps. 45:2, 'Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips.' To the world he appeared deformed and contemptible: Isa. 52:14, 'Many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men;' but quite contrary to the spouse: Cant. 5:10, 'My beloved is the fairest of ten thousand.' The Hebrew word signifieth an ensign-bearer. In the world's view there is no form nor comeliness in him; he is without beauty. To the spouse he is 'altogether lovely,' Cant. 5:16. Well, then, you see here is the true differencing note between us and the men of the world, whether we see anything in Christ why we should desire him. And it is both an inclusive and an exclusive mark. Some

marks are inclusive; that is, if a man find them in him, he may be sure he is in Christ; but if not, he is not to determine he is out of Christ. As the eminent and vigorous workings of holy graces, they do not take in every state of Christianity, they do not take in the infancy of grace. Other marks are exclusive; that is thus, they knock off the fingers of pretenders, and serve to show a man out of grace, but not in. As frequenting of the ordinances, a care of duty; if a man doth not these things, he may be sure he is none of God's, though he cannot be sure he is of God because he doth them. But now this is a mark that is inclusive and exclusive too. It is inclusive, for if your desires be to Christ, no doubt he is yours. It is a true mark, and a mark that is compatible to the weakness of grace. It is a true mark, for God looketh to the heart more than to the duty: Prov. 23:26, 'My son, give me thy heart.' And desires are the chiefest part of that. Desires are most genuine and suitable to the judgment and determination of the soul. They are a mark in which God's weakest servants may comfort themselves. Those that fail in other things are not wanting in desires. However they may have many defects in their carriage and in their duties, yet they are sure their desires are towards him. If they cannot be much in duty, they will be much in their desires and valuations of him. Peter, that durst not appeal to his own conscience for other things, dareth appeal to God's omnisciency for this: John 21:17, 'Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.' And the people of God often vouch this: Isa. 26:8, 'The desire of our soul is to thy name;' Neh. 1:11, 'Thy servants who desire to fear thy name.' Therefore it is comfortable; and it is convincing too, and exclusive. Wicked men feel no desires; they have some slight wishes, carnal and weak velleities, but they have no serious desires, nor true volitions. Balaam may wish to die the death of the righteous, Num. 23:10. So they may desire Christ out of some general conceit of happiness; but they do not desire Christ for holiness. So there is no beauty in him why we should desire him. They do not desire him as seeing any beauty in his ways John 6:34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread.' When Christ said he was the bread of life, those that would not come to Christ would fain have the bread of life. Nay, heaven itself is not really desired by wicked men; it is true, they may desire it in a carnal way, as a Turkish paradise, and such a place of ease and delight as the Koran sets forth; but not as it is in itself, to enjoy God, and Christ, and more grace, and to be more free and undisturbed in respect of the

prevailing of sin and corruptions. Those that desire Christ truly, desire him not for ease (the spirit of the world may do that), but from the beauty and excellency they find in him, and in his ways. His service is of a high and honourable nature, and 'therefore they desire it. So that you see here is the note of trial, and the main difference, viz., a desiring of Christ for the rare beauty and perfections that are found in him. Do you, then, try yourselves by this note. But that you may not deceive yourselves in this matter, I will give you a few notes. I will not speak anything of the cause of desires. A high value and price set upon Christ, and a seeing rich beauties in him, of that I shall speak in the next verse. I shall only treat now of the effects of this desire. If it be earnest and strong after him, it will be manifested by these things.

1. A holy impatiency in the want of Christ. When we strongly desire a thing, the heart fainteth under the want of it. Amnon was sick for Tamar, 2 Sam. 13:1-4. And the spouse was sick of love for Christ, Cant. 5:8. The soul languishes with a holy desire of the sense of his mercy, with a longing after pardon, and grace, and quickening, and life, and what is to be found in Christ. They can find no rest in themselves till they do enjoy it: Ps. 13:1, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so doth my soul pant after thee, O God.' Thirst is the most implacable impression that can be upon the body; the creature cannot be quiet till it be quenched. Now, of all creatures the hart is most thirsty by nature, and the thirst is mightily increased when it is hunted. And mark, it is the she-hart, for so the Seventy read it, i7 h elajoV, 'The she-hart panteth after the water brooks.' Passions in females are stronger than in the males. As the she-hart panteth when chased, such a rage of thirst was there in his soul till it were satisfied with God, and refreshed with the comforts of Jesus Christ. Search then for such a restless and strong desire; try if there be such an ardency and earnestness upon your affections, that nothing can satisfy but Christ, that you cannot be quiet till you have him. Was your heart never chased into a panting for the water brooks? Some are haunted so by the ghastly apprehensions of God's wrath, that they have no ease, no rest. But certainly all that love Christ are chased into a panting; they have such

a sense of their sins and miseries, that their souls are put into an earnest expectation of the mercies of Christ.

2. A holy indignation. Passions usually serve and accompany one another. If there be a holy desire, there will be a holy anger. And this is at two things:—

[1.] At anything that would rival the affection.

[2.] At what would hinder the enjoyment of the object.

[1.] At anything that would rival Christ in the affection. There is a scorn that anything should come in competition with him, that we should have so much as a thought that anything were worthy but Christ: Phil. 3:8, 'I count all things but loss and dung, that I may win Christ.' Any outward excellency in comparison of him is but *skubala,* dog's meat. It thinketh the worst name good enough for anything that shall come in competition with him. And in such a case gold is not gold, but dog's meat—honour is not honour—pleasure is not pleasure—but all is dung and dog's meat. You know in a natural way things have their due respect from us, till they be compared with what we dearly love and prize; then no term is bad enough for them. So here, the soul doth even abhor the thought that Christ and other things should be spoken of the same day, which otherwise might have fairer respects and valuations from the soul. It is worth your observation to see how the saints do abominate the thought that anything should be supposed to satisfy them without or besides Christ: Ps. 4:6, 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift up the light of thy. countenance upon us.' O Lord, do not think we are of that strain. It is the many, the men of the multitude, that think so; they speak as if they would not own such an unworthy thought, nor entertain any resolution to prostitute their desires to any sensual good. God shall not turn them away so. If they should have all things else, it is irksome to them to think they should be contented. *Te ipsum, Domine, da, quod peto, Domine, da te ipsum;* as Austin crieth out: 'Thyself, Lord —thyself, Lord.' They are angry with themselves if any pleasing thought should arise any other way, any vain conceit, that they should be happy apart from God and Christ. It is an excellent saying of one, *Taedet gaudere sine te, delectat contristari pro te*—They had rather mourn for God than delight without him. All their comforts are irksome to them if they have not Christ with them. Try, then, is there such a zealous indignation against false thoughts in your comforts? In what case do you

think yourselves? 'Happy is the people that is in such a case.' If that be a thought that is pleasing to your minds, it is a good sign.

[2] Indignation against what hindereth the enjoyment of the object. A man is angry with what cometh between him and his desires. If your desires be to Christ, you will be angry with your perverse hearts, that keep you from him. When a man desireth to sin, he is angry with God because he cometh in with his law, and steppeth between us and our desires: Rom. 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be.' So when the desires are set and bent upon Christ, a man is angry with himself that he is so clogged and weighed down with the flesh that he cannot enjoy such full communion with him as he desires: 2 Cor. 5:4, 'For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.'. And David crieth out, Ps. 120:5, 'Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!' *h paroikia,* my pilgrimage, is prolonged. They are angry with their own base hearts, that still there is such a strangeness between them and Christ.

3. It will cause a holy waiting. Those that desired the coming of the Messiah, waited for him; as Simeon: Luke 2:25, 'Waiting for the consolation of Israel: Earnest expectation is the formal and most proper effect of the desire of anything. Look, as it is said of Sisera's mother, Judges 5:28, 'She looked out at a window and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming?' She would fain meet with it as far as she could with her eyes. And so it is said, Rom. 8:19, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' *Apekdecetai,* the creature lifts up the head—would fain see the general restoration of all things in the world; so the soul lifteth up the heart, it would fain see Christ coming to it in this or that ordinance,—with a great deal of longing they expect when he will draw their hearts to himself: Ps. 130:6, 'My soul waiteth for thee more than they that watch for the morning; yea, more than they that watch for the morning.'

4. Another effect is a powerful command over the whole man. Desires are the most vigorous faculties, they carry the whole soul along with them. They will take up your thoughts, time, care, endeavours, speeches. Look and you shall observe that a man is so affected in earthly things, and, therefore, why not so in heavenly? It is a bad sign when there cannot be

found the same proportion and care for heavenly things as men have for the things of the world. Let us see these things a little severally.

[1] It will take up your thoughts. Our thoughts will be conversant about what we desire. We love to feed upon the sweet of those things that we long for,—to enjoy them in our meditations before we really and actually enjoy them. Thoughts are the pulses of the heart, you may know by them how it beats. When desires are at a high pitch, we shall not be able to put off those pleasing imaginations that concern the object of these desires. Nay, they will haunt the mind in the time of our usual repose and 'rest: Isa. 26:9, 'With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.' Night and morning, all their mind was upon this, how they should get God.

[2] It will challenge more of your time and care. When men will make bold with God rather than their own occasions, it is a sign they are but coldly affected to him. If your desires be to Christ, your care and time will be more laid out upon him; you will rather borrow from yourselves, your own pleasures and business, than borrow from God. I confess a man that is in a particular calling, and is to provide for a wife and family, must necessarily spend more time in the world than he can in religion; but when he begrudgeth all time to God, or thinketh all lost that is spent in duty, it is a sign there is little desire after Christ. When we are where we would be, time goeth too fast for us; therefore, try how it is with thee in point of religion Is all too much that is spent in duty? If the heart goeth out that way, all will be too little. As men's desires are so their time goeth away. Job 21:13, It is said of the wicked, 'They spend their days in wealth.' Voluptuous men do so,—so worldly men, they spend their time in business and worldly cares, and are cumbered about much serving. You may try your bent by that, how you spend your days.

[3.] It will put you upon endeavours. Those are true desires that evil in action. Slight wishes after Christ never put us upon a pursuit of him. If a man be earnest in a thing, he will try all ways he can to compass it; it shall be his earnest business. Men that are slight would fain have Christ, but they will not seek him—*Vellent, sed nolunt:* Prov. 21:25, 'The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour.' The slothful are most full of desires; they would fain have things, but they do not labour after

them. Now, it is otherwise with the children of God. The spouse, that was sick for want of Christ, sought him through the streets, though it cost her many a wandering, Cant. 5:7. God hath fenced up every excellent thing with *difficulty,* to see if we think it worth our endeavours.

Use 2. In the next place it serveth for exhortation, to press you to do otherwise than the men of the world do, and to beware of their spirit. Men see nothing in Christ why they should desire him, because they judge with a carnal spirit. Let not any such black note be found upon you: Do you make him the desire of your souls who is deservedly styled 'the desire of all nations.' This exhortation hinteth at three duties:—

1. Long to get him into your hearts. As all things are to him, let your desires be to him: Rom. 11:36, 'Of him, and through him, and to him are all things;' therefore, all creatures,—for it is the law of their creation to move towards God, especially for reasonable creatures so to do. But particularly by your desires look upon, him as *summum necessariurn,* as the only chief thing for your souls.

2. Be careful to keep communion with him. If you have got him, take heed you do not lose him again. Remember the fate of the spouse for parting with her beloved, and how dearly she paid for it, Cant. 5:6,7. Whatever carnal men judge of it, the favour of Christ is worth the keeping.

3. Labour to get more interest in him. Worldly blessings have all this lot and fate, that they cloy in the enjoyment. Christ is a mercy of a nobler nature; the more you see of his excellency, the more you will thirst after him. When a man hath a taste of Christ, he will labour for more of him. The great prejudice against him is, that men have never had experience of him, Austin saith of himself, in the ninth book of his Confessions, chap. 1: 'That the reason why he was loth to close with Christ was, because he was to forego all pleasures, and to deny himself in whatever was delightful, and that was very irksome to him. But since,' saith he, 'when once I had tasted Christ, *quam suave mihi subito factum est carere suavitatibus nugarum!* It was the greatest delight in the world to abstain from worldly delights.' Christ made abundant recompense for them. Oh, how sweet is Christ to those that have tried him, and made experience of him! They will not want their old delights again. I shall prescribe a few means how

you shall bring your hearts to desire Christ, to keep him, and to get further interest in him:—

[1.] Consider nothing is a fit object for your desires without Jesus Christ. The creatures are beneath you. The desire of the soul is like a member of the body out of joint when it is fixed upon a wrong object. All things without Christ are either sin or the creatures. To desire sin was the cause of the first misery; that is, forbidden fruits. We know what that is by sad experience. As to the creatures, to desire them for themselves is beneath us: it is, as it were, to sit upon the threshold and the door of the gate when we might sit upon the throne,—to make that our crown which should be our footstool Ps. 8:6, it is said, 'Thou hast put all things under his feet.' God made these things to be under our feet; and, therefore, the church is described, Rev. 12:1, to have the moon under her feet. All sublunary things are beneath the people of God. I should a little digress from the matter in hand, at least vary from my purpose, if I should at large discourse of the uncertainty and frailty of the creatures, and show how the desires may be lost and wasted upon them, which they cannot be upon God; or should I descant upon the unsuitableness of the creatures, which cannot give true satisfaction to the soul; but I will only conclude this first rule with this: That sin is not to be desired at all, and the creatures only in reference to God and Christ, otherwise, we sin in the desire or enjoyment of them.

[2.] Look upon Jesus Christ alone as the only object upon which thy affections should be exercised. He hath all the properties in him that a lawful desire looketh to, though the world cannot see it. He is an excellent good, a necessary good, and one that deserveth the best of our desires.

(1.) Consider he is an excellent good. Whatsoever is an attractive of love is to be found in Christ. Oh, display his glorious beauties before the soul! There is in him greatness, goodness, glory, mercy, peace, comfort, satisfaction: these are the beauties of Christ. Look over all the world and see if there be any that can do you so much good as he is able or willing to do. Cant. 5:10-16, The spouse describeth her beloved as a comely young man, as one of the greatest perfections. It would be too large to go over every particular of that description; only, in the general, observe that the Spirit of God useth such expressions as serve to discover outward beauty,

to show us that whatever we admire in the creatures is, in a far more eminent degree, to be found in God and Christ. I know not how to be particular in this large field; only I shall a little single out the name of God to you, as it is said, 'Thy name is as an ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee,' Cant. 1:3. And the desires of God's people are always expressed to be towards his name in the scriptures. I shall mention two attributes, and pour out the savour of them, and display the beauty of them, which shine most gloriously in Jesus Christ; namely, his power and his mercy,

(1st.) His power and might. Christ is spoken of to be the desire of the nations, when he gave forth the greatest experiences of his power Hag. 1:7, 'I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.' Who would not desire him that is able to secure him against all, fears, to keep him in the midst of all dangers, and to comfort him in all conditions? If a man would long after any person, he would after him that is able to shake the nations and to secure him against the common visible fears of mankind. Men run after things for a little satisfaction and security, but still this troubleth them; they must die, and then all their shifts will not serve the turn: Prov. 11:7, 'When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish.' Then all his desires—wife, children, friends—will not serve the turn, when his cold corpse must be laid in the grave. But now Christ is so powerful, that he is able to secure us against this fear, to comfort us in death, and to raise us when dead.

(2dly.) His mercy is very great. A man's desire is restrained to things many times, which though otherwise allurable, yet he hath no hopes to obtain. Now here you may desire and be welcome, for your suit will be entertained: Ps. 111:8, 'He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with, goodness.' When the soul openeth itself to God, he filleth it; the longing soul is satisfied: Rev. 21:6, 'I will give to him that is athirst of the water of life freely.' You need not stand off upon terms or punctilios; Christ will satisfy your longing freely; he hath passed his word: John 6:37, 'He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.' They may have their comfort hindered and interrupted in their own thoughts, but he will in no wise cast them out.

(2.) Christ is a necessary good. Things may be excellent, yet if they be not

needful to us, the affections move but faintly after them. Now Christ is *unum necessarium,* the one thing needful. It is not enough to choose that which is good, but that which is needful: Luke 10:42, 'But one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen the better part.' Many follow after riches, pleasures, and honours, and outward comforts; these may be good in their kind, but they are not needful. What good will those things do us to all eternity? There the love of God will only stand us in stead. The things of this world, according to that usual saying among divines, are temporal in their use, but the punishment for the abuse of them is eternal. The most necessary and serviceable good to us is Jesus Christ; therefore get the judge to be your friend against the assizes. (3.) Consider, he hath deserved that our strongest desires should be after him, not only as he is the being of beings, and the fountain of our lives and mercies, but as he laid down his life for us: John 12:32, 'And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to me;' that is, I will do that which shall draw all men's desires to me; he will leave such a debt of thankfulness upon them. Though we could expect nothing from Christ, yet, by the law of thankfulness, our desires are due to him.

Thirdly, I come now to the third thing propounded, which was to give you some practical points and observations that concern man in the ordering of his life and conversation. I shall handle but three, and so quit this verse.

1. That God prosecuteth and accomplisheth his greatest designs by the most unlikely and despised means. Jesus Christ, the great Saviour of the world, was but a tender plant, which a man would be more apt to tread upon and crush, than to cherish.

2. God cometh in for the deliverance of his people in times of greatest despair and unlikelihood. For when the branches of Jesse were dried up, and had no verdure, even then sprung up the greatest ornament of that stock, although a root out of a dry ground.

3. Mean beginnings may grow up to great matters and glorious successes. Christ, the tender plant, was to he a tall tree, under the shadow of whose boughs all the fowls of heaven should lodge.

I begin with the first:—

Doct. 1. That God accomplisheth his greatest designs by the most unlikely and despised means. I might trace the way of God's prosecution throughout all succession of ages, and show you how this truth is verified. He made us out of the dust, and that is contemptible matter. And as hath been our creation, so hath been our preservation, even by dust, that which we would trample upon rather than admire. But I shall rather come to the reasons of it, which are as follow:—

1. That his glory may more appear. The weakness of the instrument directs our thoughts to the power of the supreme worker. Should things work according to the constant tenor of nature, and the order of second causes, God might have no glory. We should look upon successes and deliverances as coming to us by chance, and not mind the great sway and poise by which all things in the world are moved, and carried to their proper ends. Therefore God doth sometimes more eminently put forth his hand this way. The weakness of the instrument holdeth forth the glory of the first mover and agent. The spirit of providence is discovered by it: Zech. 4:6, 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.' My Spirit; that is, the invisible sway that directeth and ordereth all things to their proper uses and effects. God worketh sometimes the most eminent glorious things by these weak means, that you may not rest on second causes.

2. That we may not see to the end of his counsels. A man doth not know what God will do with despised branches; God worketh in such a way as doth not suit with our usual expectations: Isa. 48:7, 'They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.' The things of God's providence are said to be new things, not created of old, lest we should say we understood them; deliverance cometh that way that we least looked for it. Certainly this is a new thing, it is not according to the course of this world. God hath created some things of higher value and greater efficacy than others, but they are the old things. Notwithstanding, weak things are often made use of by God. Should we see a man of a stately presence and comely lineaments and proportion, we should straightway cry, This is the anointed of the Lord, he is now before him, as

Samuel did I Sam. 16:7, 'Here is now the person that God will work by;' but it is added there, 'God seeth not as man seeth;' that is, God will not work according to the usual way of your expectation. David, the least and the youngest, God chooseth him. So again, man thinketh that the eldest son shall advance the family, as being the flower of the parents' strength; and by the constant course and tenor of nature, the elder proveth the most successful; yet many times God appointeth otherwise: Gen. 25:23, 'The elder shall serve the younger.' God will not have us look to the end of his counsels, and therefore the younger is the most eminent.

3. That he may declare his displeasure against the pomp of the world. God maketh least use of that which we so much adore, outward glory and splendour. Most of his glorious instruments have been taken from the plough and sheepfold. Christ himself, as I told you, honoured meanness in his own person. You may see by Isa. 2:11-22, that God's great design in the latter days is to destroy the pomp of the world, the oaks and the cedars, and whatever is lifted up: 'The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.' God's choice is of the meanest and most unlikely things, hereby showing certainly that there is not so much as the world thinketh in outward glory, which hath always proved unhappy to the church, who, when she enjoyed golden cups, had but wooden priests. Though Constantine was a worthy instrument, yet *Seminatum est venenum in ecclesia*—in his time poison was sowed in the church.

4. That he may shame his enemies in their security. When they have to deal with those that are unlikely to prevail, they think they shall carry all before them, 1 Sam. 17:42. The ruddy youth was despised by Goliath, and threatened terribly too, that his flesh should be given to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field; but yet he overcame the giant. The more shame doth God pour upon his enemies by far, when they meet with their destruction where they least think of it. Abimelech, after he had overcome Shechem, the hold of, the god Berith, and divers other strongholds, and there was but one fort stood out, had his skull broke by a woman with a piece of a millstone, Judges 9:53. God ruineth them most ignominiously. Thus the Almighty goeth to war against Pharaoh with flies, and frogs, and lice, Exod. 8, the most putrid of all living creatures. The Moabites were

put to flight before the Israelites by a fancy, to wit, the sun shining upon the water, which they thought to be blood. Pope Adrian was choked with a gnat. So Judges 5:20, it is said, 'The stars in their courses (or paths) fought against Sisera.' And what was that? Nothing but a little rain and hail, as Josephus witnesseth; for as they drew to battle there fell suddenly a storm of rain and hail just in their faces, that they could not see; and it being on the backs of the Israelites, it drove them on with the more fierceness against their enemies. Now by this way God poureth a great deal of contempt upon his adversaries.

5. That he may take off all cause of boasting from the creature, that the flesh may not glory in itself. Thus this very reason is urged by the apostle, 1 Cor. 1:27-29, 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things in the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.' The things that are nothing in our respect and valuation, God honoureth, and uses them as instruments, that we may have no cause to boast of our strength or merit. The creatures are apt to vaunt when they see there is anything of theirs concurring towards a work, though they do in part see God's hand in it: Judges 7:2, 'And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.' It is observable that David called twice upon the mighty: Ps. 29:1, 'Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.' When a people are mighty they are very loth to give the glory and strength to God. Therefore God worketh by those that cannot any way ascribe it to themselves.

6. Another reason may be, that God may provide for the esteem of the meanest. God hath so tempered his providence, that he will leave no cause of contempt and disrespect among us. He casteth honour upon the meanest, and those that are not so high in the valuations of men. This is the reason of God's various distribution, why he hath made some mean, and some glorious, that he might upon times single out some of those mean ones to show his power by. Look, as Christ saith of the blind man,

that he was made blind to fit him for a miracle—John 9:3, 'That the works of God should be manifest in him'—so some are poor, some are unlikely, that the work of God might be made manifest, that he might show his power and might and wisdom in working by them. He will leave none to scorn and contempt. Despised persons; shall be honoured by him, when other more glorious persons are laid aside as useless.

To apply it now. It affordeth divers inferences of duty, suitable to our divers cases and conditions.

1. To keep up the heart in case the means be weak. Take heed, do not sink to any base despondency of mind or spirit. Usually when means are weak men fly to wicked means, to a base desertion of the cause of God that they have undertaken, and yield to every unworthy ,fear: Isa. 8:6, 'Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son.' Shiloah was a little stream in Jerusalem. Now rivers are often put for the refreshments and accommodations of a place. So that the sense is, they had rather basely yield up to Rezin and Remaliah's son than wait upon God, to see what he will do with the small forces in Jerusalem. Do not despise the waters of Shiloah. It is the greatest honour that can be done to God, if we keep up endeavours for him, 'though we have but weak means and encouragements; but then faith is tried, how you can cast yourselves upon a bare promise.

2. In case you have great means, fear them; God usually worketh by the most unlikely. The prophet David in the Psalms often expresseth himself as full of fears when his armies had been successful and victorious, not doubting of God, but himself; doubting lest he provoke him by being lifted up with his mercies, as you know in that place, 2 Chron. 32:25, 'His heart was lifted up, therefore there was wrath upon him.' David, when he had great strength, must needs fall to numbering of the people, 2 Sam. 24:11. It is a sad sign of speedy ruin when a people reckon and rely upon their strength. The more it is, the less it should be in your value and estimation. Asa had an army of six hundred thousand, and yet, 2 Chron. 14:11, he saith, 'We have no power.' Get it out of your hearts; it is no strength to you unless God go with it.

3. In case weak means have been successful, give God the glory, and do

not boast. This is visibly one of God's ends in such providences, that we may take notice of his strength. In other instances it is from God, but in this most remarkably: as Pharaoh's magicians said, Exod. 8:19, 'This is the finger of God.' There God remarkably discovereth himself in such deliverances. We ascribe it to his power, but not to his mercy. Therefore our care, as I told you, should be especially that we do not ascribe the merit of it to ourselves, as we do ascribe the working of it to God: Deut. 9:4, 'Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land.' Give the Lord the praise. This is our case; our praise should live beyond the day of its public solemnisation.

I proceed to the second point, viz.:—

Doct. 2. That God cometh in for the deliverance of his people in times of greatest despair and unlikelihood. I will give you a few places. Zech. 14:7, 'At evening time it shall be light;' that is, *sepulcrum lucis*. It shall break forth when a man would think that all things should be enveloped and wrapped up in darkness. So Mat. 25:6, 'At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh,' when all slumbered and slept; all expectation was given over. So Luke 23:8, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? 'All things will be at such a desperate pass, that nobody will believe that ever he will come. Faith there is taken for a confident expectation of good success, not in its whole latitude, as it is falsely misexpounded.

The reasons are:—

1. That he may seize upon his enemies suddenly, even steal upon them, as Christ did upon the world, when the sixth vial was poured out. Christ saith, Rev. 16:15, 'Behold, I come as a thief; 'that is, as one not expected. So 1 Thes. 5:2, 'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night;' that is, with respect to the suddenness of it. To wicked men it is unexpected.

2. That he may sufficiently try and exercise the patience and other suffering graces of his people: James 1:4, 'Let patience have its perfect work.' It is but a partial patience in a partial calamity. Then it is perfect

patience when it is thoroughly exercised. So also that he may try their faith, whether they will believe in him or no, whether they can fetch one contrary out of another: Hosea 2:15, He hath given 'the valley of Achor for a door of hope.' And so for prayer, and to stir up delight in him.

Use. Do not then give over your dependence upon God in the worst of times: Gen. 18:14, 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' Unbelief stumbleth most at God's power; when we cannot see which way we shall be helped, then we are apt to doubt. But at such times consider:—

1. You have no cause to distrust God; though he doth not find means, he can create them. The root of Jesse, though there be no branches, it can bear a sprig. God, that could make the world out of nothing, can preserve the church by nothing; you do not know his invisible way of working. Believe beyond what you can see. Luther was wont to comfort himself, when all supplies failed, with this, that God was alive: Dan. 2:34, 'A stone cut out without hands, smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 'In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.' It is a spiritual proverb, Gen. 22:14: in the greatest extremities the Lord will appear, and provide for those that commit themselves to him.

2. You have much ground of confidence: Ps. 102:13,14, 'Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come: for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.' Now you are in a condition fit for deliverance: Deut. 32:36, 'For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left.' God puts his people into such a condition in which deliverance will be most welcome, and then he bestoweth it upon them. Wait upon him now you are in a condition for God to help. When Caligula was angry with Philo, saith he, 'Now God will help, for the emperor is angry:

I come now to the last point.

Doct. 3. That mean beginnings may grow up to great matters and glorious successes. This is admirably set forth by the prophet Ezekiel, chap. 17:22-24, 'Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a

tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain, and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowls of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken, and have done it.' As it was with Christ, so it is many times with his followers; as in many instances. Jacob from himself and his staff was multiplied into two bands, Gen. 32:10, meaning his company of children and cattle, so divided to meet Esau. David was taken from feeding of sheep to feed Israel: Ps. 78:70,71, 'He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.' Saul, when seeking his father's asses, found a kingdom. Christ's kingdom sprang from a small beginning. This might also be shown from the great spreading of Satan's kingdom, many times from little matters: it is well known that 'a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' Arius, a private priest in Alexandria, drew the whole world after him; as Montanus and other heretics might be said to do. We should not therefore lay too much on success. So Rev. 12:3, 'The dragon drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth.'

The reasons of this in short are these:—

1. God's sovereignty over us, as we are his creatures; he that hath made us, can do what he will with his own.

2. Because he will keep the world in a continual vicissitude and change, some up, some down.

Use 1. To teach us to look to beginnings: Ps. 129:1, 2, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: 'many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me;' Cant. 2:15, 'Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.' This is added for abundant caution, to teach the church to prevent errors and heresies in the beginnings of them, before they spread, and grow strong and incurable; to crush things in the beginnings.

2. To support the hearts of Christians when they first put forth into the world: Eccles. 4:14, 'For out of prison he cometh to reign.' One seed multiplieth into many. Broad rivers come from a small fountain: Job 8:7, 'Though thy beginning was but small, yet thy latter end shall greatly increase.' Men rise like hop-stalks out of the dunghill, by the pole of Providence.

3. To keep men from despairing of public mercies. When the child of deliverance hath put forth the hand, it will come to the birth Zech. 4:10, 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' Christ was but a branch at first.

4. To encourage those that are weak in grace, Mat. 12:20. God will not despise smoking flax, though it cannot flame: Phil. 1:6, 'Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.' Be humble and thankful in admiring God's goodness towards you, saying, as David, 'Who am I, O Lord, and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?'

THE THIRD VERSE.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

THE prophet proceedeth now to the second scandal and offence that the Jews took against Christ, who therefore would not believe the report that was made of him. The first was Christ's meanness in his birth and life, which we have handled in the second verse. The next is his sufferings, and those are either of his life or of his death, which are set forth in divers verses following. In this verse the prophet's expressions do chiefly hint the sufferings of his life. Here are divers phrases which discover the several degrees of Christ's sufferings, though I shall not give them to you in the order of the words, because the expressions lie scattered here and there. The degrees are these:—

1. He was not esteemed.

2. He was actually despised, and became an object of scorn and contempt.

3. He was liable to great miseries; and—

4. He was continually pestered with them. This is the sum of this verse. I will make it out unto you from the phrases, opened as the text presenteth them.

1. *He is despised and rejected of men*. That which we read *rejected of men,* the Hebrew *chadal ishim,* signifieth 'the leaving off of men.' It may bear a double interpretation:—

[1.] That Christ was so extremely mean and miserable that it was impossible to he lower as a man. He was the *minimum quod sic of* a man; if he had gone any lower, we must have had some other name for him. In this sense it is said, Ps. 22:6, 'I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' You must seek for some name for him among the worms.

[2.] The leaving off of men; that is, there men left him, they would converse with any other, but not with him. Nobody would deign him speech and company; he was least of all. Our interpretation seemeth to favour this exposition. There is not much matter which you prefer.

2. *A man of sorrows*. A Hebraism to express the height of misery. They use the genitive case of the substantive to express the superlative degree of anything, as 'a man of Belial' for a very wicked man; so 'a psalm of degrees,' an excellent psalm. This expression compelleth some of the wiser Jews to feign two Messiahs, one that is already come, that walketh up and down on the earth under the shape of a beggar, that he may satisfy for the sins of the Jews, and is in a great deal of misery. The other a glorious king, whom they do as yet expect; that is the second expression.

3. *Acquainted with grief. Familiaris morbo, so* Tremellius renders it knowing diseases; that is, by his own experience. Disease is put for any kind of trouble and molestation, because they are the things that are most

irksome. For otherwise Christ, though he had many griefs, yet he had no diseases, these usually arising out of some intemperance or badness of constitution, neither of which agree to Christ. He took our personal, not individual infirmities; hunger and thirst he was acquainted with, not stone or gout or fever.

4. And we hid as it were our faces from him, or, as it is in the margin, *He hid as it were his face from us;* the Hebrew will bear both. It is either a hiding faces from him or from us. Since the text doth so indifferently allow of both these renderings, I shall show you the sense of both. He hid his face from us, which the Septuagint follows, To *to proswpon auton.* His face was turned away as it were; in modesty say some, as if he were ashamed of the meanness of his condition; but that is unworthy of Christ. The Chaldee paraphrase seemeth to hint another sense, *subtraxit vultum majestatis suae*—he hid the countenance of his divine majesty; that is probable, but doth not thoroughly reach the force of the expression. Others thus—he hid his face as a person doomed to die, as sentenced persons had their faces covered, or when much discountenanced. Thus Haman, when in displeasure with the king, Esther 7:8, it is said 'his face was covered.' So in great sorrow and mourning, 'Thou shalt cover thy face,' Ezek. 12:6; or it is more properly in shame, or as a token of being unworthy the society of men. So it was with the lepers, who by the law were to put a covering upon the upper lip, Lev. 13:45. It is not difficult to reconcile any of these senses with the matter in hand. But let us consider the other reading, 'We hid our faces from him.' This is a natural gesture, and at all times signifieth some abomination and withdrawing of the mind from a thing; but sometimes it is in one affection, and sometimes in another; as—

[1.] Sometimes in anger; to hate them so as we will not give them a look. Thus God is said to hide his face from his church to express his anger against their sins.

[2.] Sometimes in shame. We turn *away* from them, as rich men do from their poor friends; they scorn to give them a look.

[3] Sometimes in pity. It is such a sad sight that we dare not look on it. I rather prefer that of a scornful shame, being ashamed to follow such a

poor, mean, miserable man. Thus many now hide their faces from Christ, when it is disgraceful to close with him. There is nothing now remaineth that is difficult; only it followeth, he was despised and looked upon as a man leprous, whose face should be hid; and therefore we did not esteem him worthy of our company. The sum of the verse amounts to thus much, that Jesus Christ was so miserable in regard of his outward face and appearance, that he was looked upon as an abject, as a man not fit to he kept company with. I shall only note these two things more for explication, because upon them I shall build two points, which shall he all I will handle out of this verse.

1. Some of these expressions set out Christ as indeed he was;

2. Some, only as he was in the apprehension of men. He was in himself 'a man of sorrows,' but in the eye of man he was a despised and an abject person: the one is the cause or the occasion of the other;. and the prophet so intermingleth these two things in this verse, that the phrases may be taken both ways—how Christ was in himself, and how he was to men.

1. As he was in himself: from thence I observe this point:—*Doct. 1.* That Christ's appearance in the world, and state of life among men, was not only very mean, but very miserable.

2. From men's judgment of him: upon this account I observe:—*Doct. 2.* That carnal men do not look upon Jesus Christ as worthy of any esteem from them.

I shall begin with the first, viz.:—

Doct. 1. That Christ's appearance in the world, and state of life among men, was not only very mean, but very miserable.

I shall take the several degrees in the text to make it out unto you.

1. The lowest step is negative; he was 'not esteemed.' He had not that due respect and value in the world that he might justly look for; and it is a misery to be slighted by those to whom we intend the greatest good. It was much that they should not own him as some eminent man; it was

more that they would not give him the respect due to any man, to an ordinary prophet: John 1:11, 'He came to his own, and his own received him not.' There is an emphasis in the words *his own,* those over whom he had a special care, and to whom he meant the greatest good. Mark, everything else acknowledged Christ, but man would not. The angels ushered in his birth, Luke 2:14. The wind and seas obeyed him, Mat. 8:27. The fish paid his tribute to him, Mat. 17:27. The wild beasts, when he was in the wilderness, would not touch him, Mark 1:13. The Holy Ghost would have us to note it as a special circumstance, that he was in the wilderness forty days, and he was with the wild beasts.' Nay, the very devils confessed him, Luke 8:28. The man that had many devils fell down before him, and cried out, and with a loud voice said, 'What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high?' Yet man would not own him. They thought any one was more like to be the Messiah than he. John, though he never did miracles, nor taught with such authority as Christ did, yet they sent an honourable message to him, John 1:19. The Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him whether he were the Christ or no. But now they never sent an honourable embassy to Christ, never put him to the question, but only in a scoff asked him whether he were the Christ or no. Yet John gave them as much ground of distaste as Christ did, freely taxing their sins. John was sent to in an honourable way, because he was a priest's son, but Christ only a carpenter's son, therefore Christ was not esteemed. Anything is enough to prejudice them that are not affected to a thing or way. Nay; they not only preferred John before him, though famous for no miracles, but even Barabbas before him: John 18:40, 'When Pilate said, Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Then cried they all, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.' Any rather than Christ. They had very little esteem of Christ, you see. And this fault is objected to them; indeed, it was a great aggravation of their guilt: Acts 3:14, 'Ye have denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you,' even a cruel highwayman before Christ. *Esteeming is* a relative word, and it implieth every one, even the worst of men, to be higher in their thoughts than Christ.

2. As he was not esteemed, so actually he was despised, and became an object of scorn and contempt.

[1] He was despised and contemned in their thoughts. They looked upon him as an abject, the leaving-off or off-scouring of men; they thought it was a disgrace for them to converse with him; and therefore Nicodemus went to Christ by night, John 3:2, as being ashamed to be seen in his company by day. So John 9:22, the blind man's parents, that had received a great benefit by him, would make a lie rather than own him. It is said, 'These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.' They thought him unworthy of their company, and therefore every one hid his face from him, and would not seem to look that way.

[2.] In their words they used all kinds of reproaches, they thought no name bad enough for him: John 8:48, 'Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?' There was such a deadly feud between the Jews and the Samaritans, that to call a man a Samaritan was the greatest disgrace that could be, and the ready way to beget him public hatred. Here are two scandals fixed on Christ—a Samaritan, and one that hath a devil; the one reflecteth upon his person, the other on his doctrine. And that which is worthy of your notice is, that to that of his doctrine Christ answereth, but doth not care how they vilified his person. In Mat. 11:19, they call him 'a glutton, a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners.' They looked upon him as an object of common scorn and hatred. So they accounted him as an enemy to Caesar; anything that would make him obnoxious to danger and scorn. They likewise called him a deceiver Mat. 27:63, 'Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive.' Proud, insulting malice! They would not call him by his own name, but as if he had been so notoriously guilty, that it was a sufficient description of him to say *that deceiver*.

[3.] In their general carriage towards him. To any that seemed to own him, they showed a great deal of contempt and scorn. Because the blind man acknowledged him, they cast him out, or excommunicated him, John 9:34. So John 7:52, by way of taunt they said, 'Art thou also of Galilee?' But chiefly their behaviour to his person was intolerable, and that in the last scene of his life: Mat. 26:68. The rude soldiers make him their game, and blinding him, say, 'Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is

he that smote thee?' So it is prophesied, Mat. 20:19, 'They shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him.' There is a special emphasis in these words—that he, being a Jew, should be delivered over to the Gentiles to be mocked, scourged, and crucified. Nothing was more vile and abominable, insomuch that they would not come into the place where Pilate sat judging, for fear of being contaminated: John 18:28, 'And they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled.' Therefore it was that Pilate went forth to them, for they would not come in. Look, as it was an aggravation of David's fault that he made Uriah to be slain with the sword of the children of Ammon, 2 Sam. 12:9, so it was of the Jews' contempt, that they should deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged. Thus you see how he was despised, and looked upon as an abject.

3. *A man of sorrows*. This noteth the multitude of his afflictions, and the greatness of them. He was a man assaulted with all kinds of sorrows, and grievously afflicted with them. A man of sorrows, that is, a man of miseries; the affection is put for the condition, because they left a great impression upon him. All kinds of sorrows he endured for our sakes, as scoffs, persecution, contempt, unkindness, miseries, hunger, thirst, faintness, and weariness. I might tire you with a woful variety of this nature; the scriptures everywhere testify it. Let me briefly tell you, that they were as much as might fit him to be a mediator; his sufferings are to be measured by his mediatorship; and then, they were such as might stand with the holiness of his person. Now, these sufferings were the more grievous to him, because his senses were most quick and smart; and, therefore, he must needs, above other men, have a sensible apprehension of what was done to. him. The best constitutions have the most vigorous affections; and therefore, it could not be but that all these sufferings should leave very dolorous impressions upon the spirit of Christ. And, indeed; it is more than probable that he was so wasted with them, and they had so dried up the moisture and freshness of his countenance, that when he was little above thirty they thought him near fifty years of age John 8:57, 'Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' He was little above thirty; but griefs blasting his beauty, he might appear more aged than he was. Thus you see he was a man of sorrows. I do not touch upon the last scene of his death, the sorrows of

his life justly give him that character.

4. *Acquainted with grief*. It was not only now and then, but it was always miserable with him. Acquaintance with a thing or person implieth the usualness of it. Now, Christ was acquainted with grief, that is, accustomed to it, never freed from it. As soon as he began to live he began to suffer. He was exiled, and forced to fly into Egypt as soon as he was a month old, and ever afterward hunted up ands down by the pharisees. Trace him through all the scenes of his life, from the cradle to the cross, from the stable to Golgotha, and you shall see that grief was his familiar—he had no other companion. It is an observation in that letter that Lentulus sent concerning him (if that letter be not forged), *Visus est flere saepe, ridere nunquam*—he was often seen to weep, never to laugh, being always acquainted with grief. And in regard of those cruel persecutions that did constantly attend him, he is called in the title of that psalm that sets out the misery of his life, Ps. 22, 'The hind of the morning;' see the title, 'A psalm concerning Aijeleth Shahar,' that is, Christ, who was always from the very morning hunted and worried by the dogs. He complaineth of it in that psalm, ver. 16, 'The dogs have compassed me.' The dogs hunted him in the morning early and betimes. Herod, one of the dogs, as soon as he was born, endeavours to murder him. So at the time of Christ's death the Holy Ghost giveth us this circumstance John 18:28, 'That they led Christ from Caiaphas unto the judgment-hall, and it was early in the morning.' The bloodhounds were up to worry him betimes in the morning. Well, you see Christ was acquainted with grief, even early, from his first breath to his last gasp, from his lying in the cradle to his *consummatum est* (it is finished) on the cross. Nay, it is very observable, that in the short glory of his transfiguration he was not without sorrow, for even then he remembered his death to come, as you shall see, Luke 9:31; when Moses and Elias appeared to him in glory, 'They spake of his decease, which should be accomplished at Jerusalem.' In the midst of his glory he would remember his death. And therefore, you see, well might the prophet use the expression *acquainted with grief*. *So* much for the determination of the point, to prove to you that Christ's state of life was so miserable in the world.

I shall now show you why he was so miserable. Why did he undergo all

these sorrows? It is a profitable question; as the former for our meditation, so this for our faith. The causes either respect God or the creature.

First, In respect of God; and so it was:—

1. That his promises might be fulfilled. God had foretold it so by the prophets: Mark 9:12, 'It is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.' Now this sentence is nowhere in one prophet, but the meaning is. It is the constant drift and result of all that is written concerning the Messiah, that he must suffer many things, and be counted as nothing; though he alludeth specially to this chapter and the 22d Psalm. This was so far from being a scandal against Christ, that it rather confirmed him to be the Messiah, for he was just such a one as was promised and prophesied of.

2. That he might declare his obedience to God's decrees and appointment. It is said, Heb. 5:8, that 'He learned obedience by the things that he suffered.' He did by experience find what it was to have a Father whom he must obey, though otherwise he were every way equal to him. But the excellency of his person exempted him not from suffering; for, having taken our debt upon him, his holy life was a ,part of his obedience to his Father, but his sufferings showed a higher degree of it, which made him a full and complete mediator. To obey God in the ordinary way of our actions is a common lesson to every holy person; but Christ's obedience was chiefly tried by his sufferings, because, being without sin, he never deserved it. Thus much in respect of God.

Secondly, In respect of men; and so—

1. That he might set off his love to us. Usually they are dearer to us that have suffered anything for our sakes, than they that have otherwise done us good. And therefore Christ, to set off his love, spent a miserable thirty-two years and upwards in the world, and afterwards died a terrible death; and that not for himself, but for us. Some say it was to merit his own glory; but it is not good to divert the stream, or any part of it, from that channel in which Christ intended it should run: Dan. 9:26, 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.' Christians, all his sufferings were for

you.

2. That he might be a perfect mediator for us. Christ was perfect in himself, but he wanted somewhat to make up his office: Heb. 2:10, 'It behoved the captain of our salvation to be made perfect through sufferings; 'Heb. 5:8, 9, 'By the things which he suffered he was made perfect.' Christ was perfect in himself, but not perfect in his office; he was made perfect as a captain of our salvation when he went through those things in which others were to follow him.

3. That he might be able to comfort his people in the like distresses: Heb. 2:18, 'For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' A man can the better comfort others, when he hath had the experience of their miseries in himself. Christ knew how sad it was with his own soul when he was acquainted with these griefs, and therefore no doubt he is willing and able to help you. Experienced men are pitiful; those that have suffered pity others when they are in the like case. It is God's charge often to Israel, that having been strangers in the land of Egypt, they should learn to pity strangers. And certainly whatever is good in the creature, is eminently so in Christ. He hath stronger impressions of affection and pity than we have. Mark what the apostle saith Heb. 4:15, 'For we have not an high priest that cannot be touched ,with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin.' Christ knew how it was with himself. In the like experiences and afflictions, therefore, it cannot but work upon his bowels, though men's hearts are shut up.

To apply it now. Out of all that I have spoken to you, you may infer much for your instruction.

1. The matter, what he suffered.

2. The manner, how he came to suffer.

3. The reasons and ends why, for our good; so that here are three chief lessons for a Christian to learn:—

[1.] Patience and comfort.

[2.] Humility.

[3.] In the end, love.

[1.] It teacheth you patience and comfort. There is a double ground for that. Christ went before you, and he did it that he might have experience and a fellow-feeling of your case and sufferings. Here is the comfort of God's people; they have a high priest that is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Christ's bowels melt over them whilst God's hand striketh them. A man may have moral grounds of comfort, but here is the true ground, Christ sympathises with us John 18:10, 'The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' Though it is a bitter cup, yet it is my heavenly Father that hath put it into my hands. There is a difference between the strokes of God upon. the wicked and his own people; strokes upon the wicked come from God's hand, but those upon the godly from God's heart. Bear up, then, against the greatest crosses. Art thou looked upon as an abject, the leaving-off of men? So was Christ, and so are many of God's people: 1 Cor. 4:13, 'We are made as the filth of the world, and are as the off-scouring of all things: The world's filth,—worms, not men. Worms are bred out of the world's filth. Art thou compassed about with losses, affliction upon affliction, like waves one in the neck of the other? do men hide their faces from thee, or art thou in no repute, no respect with them? so was Christ, and Christ knoweth what it is for thee to be in such a case. Job heareth of loss upon loss from the Chaldeans, Sabeans, Job 1:14. It is often repeated, 'While he was yet speaking, came another and said.' So Jer. 30:17, 'Zion, whom no man looketh after.' God's people have often become the wagging of the head, but Christ' sufferings teach us patience.

[2] Humility. Christ taught us this in his meanness, and he teacheth it in his sufferings. See the difference between Christ and Adam; Christ would be most abject, Adam would be higher than man. The highest is become the humblest; our first parents would be as gods, and Christ would scarce be as man, even be man's leavings. It is good to learn humility from this pattern showed us in the mount, even in Mount Calvary; to deny ourselves to set up Christ, as Christ denied himself to set up us. Of all things, men cannot endure to cast their crowns at the Lamb's feet—I mean, to sacrifice their glory and esteem to Christ, or to be nothing that

he may be all in all. Pride is like the heart, first living and last dying in a man: 3 John 9, 'Diotrephes loved to have the pre-eminence.' Some are all for precedency, they would be preferred before others. You see Christ is otherwise. He freely submitted himself to the most abject condition. Thus it teacheth us humility.

[3.] Considering the end,—his love. All this was for you. Oh, what will you do for God again? Christians should blow up the fire of love by these thoughts. How are we wrought upon by every petty kindness that passeth between man and man! How much more, then, should the consideration of what Christ hath done and suffered endear him to us? And this was done for our sakes. Let it melt our hearts, and draw them out in love to God again.

I proceed now to the second point.

Doct. 2. That carnal men do not look upon Jesus Christ as worthy of any esteem from them. Christ was mean and miserable, and therefore the world esteemed him not, but despised him rather, and looked upon him as an abject, unfit for their converse and society.

I shall give you a few reasons for it.

l. Because they look altogether upon the dark part (as I may speak) of Jesus Christ; they do not consider the light and the more glorious part. In sins they look altogether upon the light part, and not upon the dark—the pleasures of sin, and not the cross and shame that attends them. Now, taking into their thoughts Christ's worst, and sin's best part, no wonder if they miscarry in their judgments. They look upon the world's pomp, but not the world's vanity; upon the pleasures of sin, but not upon the shame and horror that accompany them. Therefore it is said, Prov. 5:3,4, 'The lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword.' Men think to swallow the honey, but do not think of the wormwood. Things are to be esteemed as they prove in the end. Heathens had some light into this truth, that no man is happy till the end, till they try how things prove with them. Things are better known in their departure than in their coming; the sting is in the tail, and therefore you

shall see it is said, Deut. 32:29, 'Oh, that they were wise, that they would understand this, that they would consider their latter end.' That is wisdom, not to look upon 'things as they are at present, but what they will prove at the latter end—how we shall find them upon trial. But with Christ they deal otherwise; they look upon Christianity as a hard, laborious thing. Many sad fears they have; a great deal of duty to be performed; much care, much toil, and much grief attends it; with many other inconveniences. But they do not look upon the sweet of all this: Rom. 6:22, 'But now being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' There is a good end. Carnal men thing it a hard saying to part with pleasures, profits, honour, esteem, to part with all for Christ, and to expect nothing in this world but grief, and sorrow, and care. This is sad. Christ is not esteemed, because they look upon him with such an unequal, unfaithful eye. We are willing to stumble at his meanness, but will not reflect upon his excellency.

2. Because carnal men want that which should set off Christ to. them as an object fit to be esteemed; and that is two things —the Spirit's discovery, and faith's eye; the one to reveal the object, the other to apprehend it.

[1.] They want the Spirit's discovery. A man cannot see the sun without its own light; no more can you see Jesus Christ in his beauty without the Spirit of Christ. Reports and education may do much, but it is the Spirit that sets forth Jesus Christ as a worthy object. What is the reason that many that know Christ and profess him, yet cannot esteem him? The Spirit hath not convinced them of the worth that is in him. A man may be convinced of the truth of a thing, but not practically convinced of the worth of it. And 'flesh and blood doth not reveal that to us,' as Christ said to Peter. The reason why Christ is valued by his own people is because he hath discovered much of himself to them.

[2] They want the eye of faith, and that is the discovering part of the soul, that showeth much of Christ to it. Till we have faith we judge by sense and carnal reason, and then no wonder if we turn away from him. 'Faith is the evidence of things not seen,' Heb. 11:1. It carrieth the soul within the veil, and showeth unto us better things, and maketh them present in

the heart through hope and the promises. Faith and the Spirit discover a world of satisfaction, sweetness, glory, excellency, and beauty in Christ. There are large discoveries of God's love and purposes, and what he will do for his people.

3. There are perverse inclinations in the heart that carry the soul another way. Men look upon everything as it cometh dyed in the colour of their own affections. Here is the great depravation of nature since the fall, that those things which should follow guide and sit at the stern; vile affections besot the judgment: Rom. 1:26, with 28, 'God gave them up to vile affections;' and presently afterwards, 'He gave them over to a reprobate mind.' Men are so injudicious, because they consult with their affections. Now they cannot make a right judgment. It is true, things should be desired and loved as the judgment propounds them to be good and true; but now, in the disorder of nature, it is otherwise. We let our desires get the start of us, and therefore men do not esteem Christ, because he is so opposite to the chief object of their desires. A worthy thought of Christ would exasperate our base affections that are carried to other things. Hear what the apostle saith: Rom. 8:5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.' They mind only those things, they only savour and relish them.

4. Because they do not know what it is to want Christ. Men make other things serve instead of him, and therefore they do not care for Christ. Now when the soul looks upon the insufficiency of all things else to give rest and quiet to it, then it will prize him. When a man extremely wants a thing, nothing will satisfy him until he obtain it. As Abraham, for want of a child, though he had much, yet he crieth out, 'What wilt thou give me, since I go childless?' Such is the language of the soul—What is all this, since I have not Christ? Sampson his victory could do him no good when he had no water to quench his thirst: Judges 15:19, 'Thou hast given me a deliverance, and now I shall die for thirst.' Thus carnal men have other things, but they shall die and be damned for want of Christ. If men were brought to this, to see that there were satisfaction nowhere else for them, they would value him.

5. They do not know what it is to have an interest in Christ; they never had experience of him. Here is the difference between Christ and other

comforts: The more experience we have had of them, the less satisfaction we perceive to be in them; but the more experience we have of Christ, the more we desire to have. Taste Christ once, and there will be no room left for any other desire. Though you want other things, this maketh amends for all. As Austin crieth out, *Quam suave mihi subito factum est carere suavitatibus nugarum!* (That which is sweet to me is suddenly made into a trifle devoid of sweetness.) A man may be weary of other comforts, of the greatest comfort of life, but you never beard of any that complained they had too much love for Christ. Men are easily prejudiced against Christ that never tried him. They that familiarly conversed with him among the Jews, they saw his miracles, the others saw only his meanness.

Object. But you will say, Do not carnal persons think Jesus Christ worthy of any esteem from them? How is it, then, that they think and speak so honourably of him, and count it a dishonour to them not to profess him? A Turk, or a Jew, or a pagan, they are terms of reproach among us.

Ans. To solve this doubt I shall show you—

1. Affirmatively, in what manner they do esteem him.

2. Negatively, how they do not esteem him.

1. Affirmatively, how they may esteem him.

[1.] Hypocritically in their words: Titus 1:16, 'They profess they know Christ, but in works they deny him.' It is not what a man speaketh out of a little traditional knowledge. A man's carriage is the best measure of his esteem. When the judgment determineth aright, the conversation is proportionable in some measure; that followeth *ultimum dictamen,* the last determination of the heart. Men may thus profess they know Christ, and value him, who live in a habitual neglect of what he commands, and indulge and allow themselves in a continual practice of what he hath forbidden.

[2] Indefinitely they may esteem him, that is, in some nice and bare speculations, when they do not look upon him as commanding what is contrary to their carnal desires; they consider Christ in an indefinite way,

not such a person as he is set forth in the word. Speculative truths and general apprehensions do not thwart our corrupt desires. A man may love Christ in general, but not in a particular way.

[3.] They may have some partial esteem for him, as conceiving him to be able to bring them to happiness: John 6:34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread.' And with Balaam they may wish, 'Oh that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end may be like his.' They would esteem Christ were it not for his hard terms of duty and obedience.

[4.] Customarily, in a traditional way. They esteem Christ so far as he is commonly esteemed of in the world. If anything recede from the general form and usual rate of duties, it is base in their eyes, not being honoured with the common custom and practice of men. Carnal professors will despise others that do more than they. Singing of psalms, repeating of sermons, Christian conference, these meet with a scoff from them. Men of Michal's spirit will scoff at what is more than ordinary, as she did at David when he danced before the ark 2 Sam. 6:20, 'How glorious was the king of Israel to-day! 'But David replieth, 'If this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile.'

2. Negatively, how they do not esteem Christ.

[1.] They do not esteem all of Christ.

[2] Nor always. These two will somewhat clear it.

[l.] They do not esteem all of Christ. If Christ be truly precious to the soul, then all of Christ must be precious; not only his name, and offices, and sufferings, but also his ordinances, ministers, members, and government. You must esteem everyone of these. Many esteem Christ in one thing, but not in another; they may delight in his mercy, but not in his holiness; they may love him as a priest to die for them, but not as a king to rule over them; they will not submit to the laws of his kingdom; they find no sweetness in his ordinances; they despise his servants, they do not love a whole Christ. It is a fancy of their own making; they think they esteem Christ, but they esteem him not as he hath set forth himself in his word.

[2.] They do not esteem him always, nor at all times. It appeareth plainly that Christ is set at nought by them in times of outward or inward opposition. Our esteem is shown when it cometh to these cases.

(1st.) In time of outward opposition; when the profession of Christ is oppugned, they lay it down, they do not think him worthy the suffering for. Most men esteem Christ because of the common countenance that is given to his ways in a state or kingdom, and therefore do they so often vary. The same men that were Protestants in King Edward's days were Papists in Queen Mary's, and Protestants again in Queen Elizabeth's. England hath been often used to these changes. Men look to the public favour that is given to the ways of Christ, and so join with them; but in times of disgrace and opposition they hide their faces from him, they will not own him.

(2dly.) In time of inward opposition; they assent to the goodness of Christ in the general, till it comes to a particular trial between him and their lusts. When Christ cometh in competition with their sensual pleasure, and honour, and estimation, then is he set at nought by them. They did not esteem him upon these terms, to part with their lusts for him. So much for the doctrinal part.

Use is for information, to give us the difference between carnal men and the people of God. Christ is an abject to the one, and a jewel to the other. It is good to observe this difference of esteem and valuation, and therefore I shall discover it on both sides.

1. I shall show you how the wicked show themselves to disesteem Christ.

2. How the godly manifest their esteem to him.

1. How the wicked show themselves to disesteem Christ.

[1] They prefer every base lust, the satisfaction of every sinful motion, before him. What care they for obeying Christ, so they may satisfy their present corrupt desires? It is said, Heb. 12:16, that 'Esau' (that *profane person,* as the Spirit of God brandeth him) 'for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.' The birthright among the patriarchs was a pawn of the blessing of being heir of the promise. Now he esteemed the satisfaction of his sensual desires more than his spiritual prerogative; like another profane person that said he would not lose his portion in Paris for his portion in paradise. The Jews would rather have Barabbas delivered to them than Christ. They chose the vile pleasures of sin, or the vain things of the world, rather than the sure mercies of David. These the apostle describes to be, 2 Tim. 3:4, 'Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' They prefer a little contemptible pleasure before Christ. They venture their souls for a minute's pleasure, for one dram or taste of it.

[2.] They prefer the pleasing of carnal men before him. They can rather deny the motions of Christ's Spirit than the importunate solicitations of a wicked friend. Many that are not allured into the tents of Shem are easily drawn into sin. The most easy facile natures and dispositions are hard enough to be wrought upon to any good, but they are easily drawn to sin, and to continue wilful and stubborn to Christ. It is said, Prov. 7:22, 'He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.' Whereas a godly man saith as Joseph, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' They cannot so readily comply; others,—they will rather lose their souls than leave their wicked company; they cannot say nay to a solicitation that pleaseth the lust.

[3] They are so far from esteeming Christ, that they think he will be a disgrace to them, and therefore they are ashamed to be joined to him in a more strict and holy way, especially if they be great in the world. They think to be religious is beneath them. Nicodemus, being a rabbi, was ashamed to come to Christ before he was converted; but afterwards this

Nicodemus spake boldly for him: John 7:51, 'Nicodemus, that came to Jesus by night, spake boldly, Doth our law judge any man before it hear him?' There is a base disposition in men; they think religion a disgrace, and that it is an abasement to them to stand publicly for the ways of God, to vary from the customs of the world, to begin holy conference, to do something beyond the general tenor and frame of profession in the world.

2. For the godly; they manifest their esteem of Christ divers ways.

[1.] By labouring after communion with him with all care and diligence, and earnestness of desire. Oh, how they prize communion with him! 'Thy loves are better than wine,' Cant. 1:2; 'Thy loving-kindness is better than life,' Ps. 63:3. They would rather have some intimations from God of his love, than life, and comfort, and honour.

[2] By rejoicing in him when they have at any time found him Cant. 1:4, 'The king hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee;' that the king should give them any closet-mercies, and the sweet solaces of his chamber: Isa. 61:10, 'My soul shall be joyful in God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation.'

[3.] By prizing those things where they find most of Christ, viz., his ordinances and servants, judging they are the excellent ones of the earth: Ps. 16:3, and Ps. 27:4, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.'

[4.] By their boldness in professing him. A man that is ashamed of his religion dishonoureth it: Heb. 11:16, 'They declared plainly that they sought a country, that is an heavenly.' And St Paul saith, Rom. 1:16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.' Nature brands evil with shame. They conceive more honourably of Christ's ways, than to be afraid to be seen in them.

[5.] By seeking his honour and praise more than their own concernments. It is enough if Christ be exalted. They would fain have him exalted not only in their own hearts, but in the kingdom also where they live. Men desire that what they esteem should be publicly advanced: Ps. 14:7, 'Oh

that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When will the Lord bring back the captivity of his people?'

[6] By avoiding all means whereby Christ may be dishonoured and disesteemed. They would have Christ held forth in, their hearts, and in their ways. Christians are often pressed to live to the glory of God Mat. 5:16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven;' 1 Peter 2:12, 'Having your conversations honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation: One of their questions will be, Shall I not dishonour God by this? Nathan, when he came to David, telleth him he had made the name *of* God to be blasphemed: 2 Sam. 12:13, 'Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.'

[7.] By accounting those things which are dishonourable in the world to be honourable with Christ, such as reproaches and afflictions. It is said, Acts 5:41, 'They departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name.' So St Paul saith, Acts 28:20, 'For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.' He holds it up in triumph.

THE FOURTH VERSE.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

THE prophet having given you the meanness of Christ's birth, and the manner of his appearing in the world, beginneth now to draw towards his death and passion, and in this verse entereth upon it, and doth not barely describe Christ's agonies and fears, but showeth the cause of it, confuting the folly of the Jews, who rejected Christ because he came under this disguise of meanness and sufferings, by showing it was fiat their sakes: 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.'

This text is the rather to be prized, because as it is a clear conviction against the Jews, so it is a ground of all consolation to Christians. It is a clear demonstration against the Jews; they could never elude it, insomuch that when Luther urged this place to them, they had but this poor shift, that certainly the people of the Jews did not deserve these plagues and therefore the Messiah needed not to take them away; or if they did deserve them, it was because they did not persecute Christ enough, the pretended Messiah. Thus it is usual with people to have an ill apprehension of their miseries. But other Jews left all upon the reading of this chapter; and being asked why? they answered, God was stricken and smitten, they could never put by that, they said. And it is the ground of all consolation to Christians. Luther said all St Paul's epistles were so, and those floods of consolation flowed out of this fountain: 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.'

Therefore, let us a little look upon it. The parts are two

1. Christ's love.

2. Man's unthankfulness.

1. Christ's love, which is set forth in that clause, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' And there consider—

[l.] The certainty of what is averred of Christ: *surely*.

[2.] The acts of Christ's obedience, set forth in two words: *he hath borne,* he hath *carried*.

[3.] The objects: they are *griefs, sorrows*.

2. Man's unthankfulness, in censuring Christ and despising him; and there consider—

[1.] The persons: *we*.

[2] The guilt: *esteeming Christ stricken and smitten of God*. These are the parts; and that I may open them, I shall go over them in a short comment and explication, and then clear a doubt about the quoting of

these words by St Matthew. I shall first go over the words.

Surely. To note—(1.) The reality of the' thing in regard of Christ's suffering, it was verily and really done. (2.) To note the truth of the proposition; this is a true proposition. Christ hath borne our griefs; he bore them, and it is true that he bore them really. And then for the acts, he *bore* and *carried*. They note a susception or taking up of things to put them upon our backs. And then the objects, *our griefs, our sorrows*. The first word signifieth sicknesses, the last wounds. The one importeth the sin, the other the punishment of sin. The Septuagint translates it, ov*outoV taV amartiaV hmwn jerei kai peri hmwn odunatai* —he beareth our sins, and is pained for our sakes. Then the specification of the object, *our sins, our griefs*. It implieth, first, that it is for our sakes he endured these sicknesses and sorrows for us. Secondly, He not only bore pains for our sakes, but the pains that we should have endured, or at least equivalent to what we should have borne and carried, if we had suffered for sin. And it implieth not only the cause of suffering, but the quality of suffering. So much for the first part.

2. For man's unthankfulness, yea, evil requital of Christ's love. For here is first something implied, an unworthy refusal of him for our saviour: *yet we*. Secondly, The ground of this refusal, expressed upon a false supposition or surmise, that all these calamities came upon him by the just judgment of God: *we esteemed him stricken and smitten of God*. Some read *quasi leprosum*—stricken with a leprosy. Leprosy was esteemed among the Jews as the greatest expression of God's anger. They looked upon him as in the state of leprosy, as if he had the expressions of God's anger upon him. And then as for *smitten of God and afflicted*. Expressions are heaped up one upon another, to show the height of Christ's sufferings, and their malice. He suffered much, and they looked upon him as having all the expressions of God's anger: 'Stricken, smitten, afflicted.'

But you will say, Was not this true? was he not stricken and afflicted by God?

I answer—True, but not in their sense; they did not look upon themselves stricken and smitten by God in him. For the matter of the censure, it was

right, but for the form and manner of application to Christ, it is wrong.

But now to answer one objection to the whole, and I have done with the explication.

If this be the meaning of the words, how cometh it then to be quoted by Matthew in another sense? Mat. 8:17, 'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.' Where it is applied to the healing of corporal and bodily diseases.

This is a doubt fit to be solved, and I shall answer it.

1. Some think, and, for aught I see, Junius is in the number, that this place is to be meant of bodily diseases, as if it were an argument only brought to prove that Christ was the Messiah by the power he exerted in curing those diseases; and that this bearing and carrying intimated no more than the bare taking them away. But if it be properly to be understood of diseases, how will the last clause agree? for it is nonsense to think he was stricken and smitten of God because he took away diseases.

2. Others therefore think that the proper and literal sense is concerning the bearing and taking away of sins and punishments, though in an accommodative sense it has respect to diseases bodily. But how is it said then, 'that it might be fulfilled,' which is a note of difference when a text is quoted for the thing contained in it, or the words alluded to in it? Therefore—3. What is to be done then? I answer—We must distinguish of the sense of a place. There is the proper and full sense, and the less principal, secondary, and subordinate sense. So it may be applied to diseases, which was some kind of representation of his great love in taking away our sins, and is virtually so in this place, because sicknesses are the effects of sin at least. And this action of Christ's taking away diseases, was a type of his taking away sin. Now, Matthew applieth that to the sign, which did more fully agree to the thing itself and the truth signified. And observe this, for the clearing of this and other scriptures: as the patriarchs in their actions, and in what they did, were types of Christ, so Christ's own actions were in a manner types of what he himself

would more principally do, as casting out of devils, dispossessing of Satan, healing the sick; and so the prophecy was fulfilled in the type: and it was a taste of Christ's love when he cured the sick and healed every disease. And so upon the cross, when he bare our sins, and suffered for them; as it is quoted by Peter, who expressly followeth the Septuagint's translation of this place, saying, 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' Now the words being explained, I shall give you several brief notes upon them; for if I should speak largely, I shall prevent myself in the chapter. (1.) From that deep assertion with which this truth is proposed, *surely,* look upon it, it is a sure thing: this is a true proposition, that Christ did bear our sins and carry our griefs; it noteth the truth of the thing, and the unquestionableness of it this *surely* chiefly relateth to that our sins; though it is to the whole sentence, yet to that emphatically. The note then is this:—

Doct. 1. That it is a most unquestionable truth that Jesus Christ suffered for our sins. As the centurion said, Mat. 27:54, 'Truly this was a just man, and the Son of God.' They had some tremulous consent before, but then he puts it out of question: truly it was so, he was some great man. But to prove it, take that place: 1 Tim. 1:15, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' It is a sure thing, an unquestionable truth. So the gospel of salvation is a word of truth, Eph. 1:13. In regard of its effects, it is called there the gospel of salvation; in regard of its property, the word of truth.

I shall prove it to you a little by parts.

1. It is an unquestionable truth against the Jews that he did not die for his own sins, for to those the prophet chiefly speaketh: and I should not be faithful to the text if I did not hint it. John 8:46, Christ maketh this challenge, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' not, Who can lay anything to my charge? For they were ready to lay anything to his charge, and to object against him as a traitor, deceiver, glutton, demoniac, what not; but they could not make it good, nor convince him of it. Nay, it is worth the observation, that God would not suffer him to be condemned till Pilate had solemnly acquitted hint thrice by his own mouth. See it in one chapter, Luke 23:4, 'He saith to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man;' and again, ver. 14, 'Pilate said to the chief

priests, and the rulers, and the people altogether, I have examined him before you, and have found no fault in him touching those things whereof ye accuse him;' and in ver. 22, 'And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him.' And there was nothing but popular tumult, and a confused noise of voices. 'Crucify him, crucify him,' but no cause specified. Just as Tertullian saith of the old Christians, *Suo jure non inimicum vulgus invadit lapidibus et incendiis—when* they were dismissed from the judges, the common people would tear them in pieces, but they could assign no cause. Therefore, 'surely he hath borne our griefs.' As in the place before quoted, the centurion and they that were with him, when they saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, were forced to testify his innocence, Surely this was some hero, some man highly favoured by the gods.

2. It is an unquestionable truth that he died for our sins, in that—

[1.] It is the sum of all truth: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God are in him yea, and in him Amen.' It is called 'a more sure word of prophecy,' 2 Peter 1:19. That part of the prophets that concerned Christ was more sure than all revelations and voices.

[2.] This truth is confirmed by God's oath, Heb. 6:14-19, when God made a promise to Abraham, 'because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely in blessing I will bless thee;' which, as the apostle reasoneth there, belongeth to us, through Christ. So that we have two immutable things—God's promise, and God's oath. Surely that is God's oath; if not, let me not be God.

[3] This a truth confirmed by Christ's own testimony, by the apostles and witnesses chosen to this purpose, whom the world was not able to withstand. And by a multitude of miracles wrought by them, and extraordinary gifts bestowed on them. Therefore it should be entertained as a sure truth, as a sure word of promise.

Use. It serveth to show us how this proposition is to be entertained by us, as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation and belief. Such truths are so commended to us to show how they should be received. It is to

check our unbelief that these asseverations and commendations are annexed to great truths. A physician commendeth some medicines, not that they need it, but that the patient may the better take them. So we say it is true, not as if there were a doubt of it, but that the act of your faith may be the more revived and exercised upon these truths. Now then close with this truth both in the general and particularly.

1. In the general, look upon it as a faithful saying, that Christ the Son of God came into the world. There is a great deal of difference in men's assent to the gospel in the general. Every one doth not believe it to be a word of truth. First, In some there is but a conjectural apprehension; it may be true, or it may not, for they never made a strict inquiry into it, only received it by tradition. As the men of Samaria. Christ telleth them, 'Ye worship ye know not what,' John 4:22. So they take up the gospel at haphazard, not knowing the worth of it, never feeling the power of it, nor experiencing the comfort of it. Secondly, In others there is but opinion, in which the mind is strongly swayed to think it true, but they cannot tell how it may prove. There are fears and doubts of the falsehood, as well as of the truth of it. They cannot contradict it, and yet cannot settle in it, for the establishing of their souls. There may be seine ungrounded overly persuasions, which may work in them that which the apostle calleth an enlightening. and a tasting of the powers of the world to come, Heb. 6:5. As some were drawn into baptism in the primitive church out of a probable conceit of the truth of the gospel, there may be some flashy momentary lightnings, but in few there are real and thorough persuasions of the truth of this proposition.

2. In particular, we should get the riches of assurance of understanding that we may fetch comfort out of it for ourselves. We should all say, For *our sins* Christ died; and if that word be too common, *my sins*. Take heed of making God a liar: 1 John 5:10, 'He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.' Here is the oath of the Spirit of God, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs.' There should be the like confidence in our hearts as there is truth in the proposition. Do not doubt of the sure word of promise. Many are loth to determine upon comfort; they are afraid of presumption; they are afraid to look upon the promises on the bright side: why then, look upon them

in the humbling way. Claim by the apostle's tenure, 'He came to save sinners, of whom I am chief,' 1 Tim. 1:15. He came to die for sinners; why not than for me? I am sure I am as much a sinner as any other man, and more too. The faithful saying is, that Christ came to die for sinners surely I am sinner enough for Christ to save,—that you can say by experience. Why, if the word be true, it is as true Christ came to take away our sins.

But how shall I look upon this as a faithful saying, that Christ came to die for my sins? Is not that to believe a lie, suppose I be a reprobate?

Ans. [l.] The word of God excludeth none but those that exclude themselves. We are to go to God's revealed will; that we are bound to believe, though in his secret will it should not be truth. As Abraham was bound to believe, after God's command, that Isaac should die under his hand, though God had otherwise purposed; for you know it is said, 1 Tim. 2:4, 'Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.' God showeth them that the promulgation of the gospel is general.

[2] Though every wicked man is not bound to believe that his sins are pardoned, yet he is bound to come to Christ that he may obtain forgiveness. Therefore I close this proposition with a great deal of joy, that surely Christ came to pardon our sins, and to carry our griefs. So much to this use and point.

2. From the first act of Christ's love, with the object of it: 'He hath borne our griefs;' that is, took our sins upon him: the point is:—

Doct. 2.That Jesus Christ bore the guilt of our sins.

All our griefs were really transacted and cast upon him. The scriptures delight much in the expression of Christ's bearing our sins, and it implieth two things:—

1. A sublation, a taking of them away from us.

2. A susception of them upon himself. Look, as the sacrifice is said to bear the iniquities of the people, and the two goats—the slain goat and the

scape-goat—typed out Christ's death and resurrection Lev. 16:22, 'And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited;' so Christ is said to 'bear our sins in his own body upon the tree,' 1 Peter 2:24—the guilt and the punishment of them. So Heb. 9:28, it is said, 'Christ was once offers d to bear the sins of many;' and John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the *world,'-airei:* the word signifieth both to *bear* and to *take away*. *Now,* this bearing, in the language of the scripture, implieth a real susception of guilt; not only Christ's taking away of sin from us, but a taking of it into his own person; as Ezek. 18:20, 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the farther, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son;' that is, his wickedness and his guilt shall not be transacted upon him. Now Christ bore our sins:—

[l.] That he might make a change with us: 2 Cor. 5:21, 'He was made sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' He would take our sins, that we might have his righteousness. What a great exchange is were! As if a king should take a beggar's weeds and dunghill rags for his own royal robes. It was much for Joshua to have his filthy garments taken from him, more to have change of raiment; most of all that Christ should take such cast-off rags upon himself. We are righteousness in him, he is sin in us. In the great contrivance of the covenant, everything is done by way of exchange. The Son of God was made the Son of man, that the sons of men might become the sons of God. He took our misery that we might have his glory. He was born of a woman that we might be born of God. Christ was really sin for us, that we might be really righteous in him.

[2.] That he might destroy sin in us, by taking it into his own person: 1 Peter 2:24, 'He bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might be dead unto *sin,'-apogenomenoi:* the word signifieth that we might be unborn to sin: it cannot be fully rendered. We were before dead in sins: Christ would make us dead to sin, and, therefore, he took it into his own person. You know some foul diseases pass from us by the transmission of the infection to others. Christ was infected, as it were, by our corruptions, that we might be free. We, that were dead in sins, are now dead to sin, the vigour and strength of sin being extinguished by virtue derived from Christ's bearing of them, whereby the soul is restored to health again.

The uses of this point are:—

1. To discover to us the love of Christ, whereby our faith hath somewhat to fix and dwell upon. The love of Christ is seen in that he would not only take away the guilt of sins, but take it into his own person. Here is the lowest condescension, and so the highest expression of love, that he was 'made sin.' This is that which is most abhorrent from the purity of the divine nature, to be sin; and yet he was so for our sakes; that was the lowest step and condescension that could be. Christ was made many things for us, but there is the highest wonder of his love, that he should be made sin for us. Usually that is the highest expression of love, when men do not only stoop beneath themselves, but do that which is contrary to their natures, to do us good. As when a stern man doth not only serve our necessities in his own way, but with great affability; and when a modest man is bold for our sakes. These things take with us, when men deny their very tempers and dispositions to serve us. This was the greatest self-denial in Christ, to become sin. Oh, work it upon your hearts, and display it before your faith! Here is cause of triumph: Col. 2:14, 'Whatever was contrary to us, Christ took it away, nailing it to his cross.' How nailed it? It was nailed when Christ was nailed: he bore it in his own person. Oh, how hath God provided for the triumph of our faith!

Doct. 3. I might further observe, that sin is our soul-sickness.

He took our griefs or sickness. The more gracious, the more healthy the soul is: 3 John 2, 'I wish above all thing that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.' Gaius had a healthy soul in a sickly body. As a disease blasteth the perfection and beauty of the body, so doth sin that of the soul,—it doth not thrive and prosper under it. There are some sins that bear a great analogy and resemblance with outward diseases, and affect the soul just as they do the body. But I will not speak to that now.

I proceed to a fourth point from the second act of Christ's love.

Doct. 4. That the Lord Jesus Christ took not only our sickness but our sorrows.

He did not only bear our griefs, but carried our sorrows; that is, took not only our guilt, but our punishment upon him; that is, the very wrath that we should have endured if we had suffered for sin, even the curse of the law and the wrath of God. He put himself in our stead; Christ would give us an experience of what he freed us from in his own person. That I may make this out to you, consider:—(1.) What; (2.) How; (3.) Why Christ suffered.

1. What Christ suffered. His sufferings were not only outward and visible, such as he endured in the garden, in the hall, and on the cross,—buffetings, scourgings, taunting insultations, being mocked, spit upon, crowned with thorns, pierced, crucified. Not only these, but inward sufferings, such as were:—

[1.] The assaults of spiritual wickednesses. The devil, seeing Christ under great agonies, thought he had a great advantage upon him, and therefore was very busy with him. Now God gave him leave, and Christ offered as it were the occasion, being stirred with passions; though, as a glass of clean water that is shaken, there was no filth to arise. God gave Satan leave, the chains of his providence being taken off from him, as in that place, Luke 22:53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness: *h wra, kai h exousia tou skotouV*. Hell's licentious time,—it was, as it were, let loose to do what it would. The devil, who would tempt Christ in his fasting, would now much more in his dissolution and desertion: hell had a kind of license to tempt Christ, so far as it might stand with the innocency of his person.

[2] The desertion of God the Father, whereby all comfort was eclipsed and hidden from his soul; he was sequestered from all sense of comfort, though the union were not dissolved. Therefore, he crieth out, Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Though he lost his Father's love, it was not as if he had apprehensions that there was any change in God towards him; God was the same to Christ still, though not appearing in the same way: as the sun is the same, whether it shine through a red or green glass, and so casteth sometimes a comfortable and sometimes a bloody reflection.

[3.] He suffered inwardly the impressions of his Father's wrath, and that was a heavy burden indeed; and, therefore, he saith, Mat. 26:38, 'My soul

is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' It is said, Gal. 3:13, He was 'made a curse for us;' not only deprived of love, but made a curse. He suffered so much of the wrath of God, and underwent the curse of the law, so far forth as it might stand with ME office and person, that, if he had not been God, he would have remained under that curse to all eternity.

2. How he suffered. It was with a great deal of reluctancy and consternation expressed in his prayers, fears, grief; insomuch that he needed an angel to comfort him; and yet, notwithstanding, he was in so great an agony, that he sweat great drops of blood: the word is *Jromboi,* crumbs and clots of blood, Luke 22:44. That implieth a great deal of consternation of mind. Ordinarily, men, when they are in a great passion, emit sweat; but the impression of it was so strong upon Christ that he emitted blood,—nay, thick clots of blood, a sign that his soul laboured under the violence of strong passions. How poorly, then, do they provide for the honour of our Saviour that say he suffered no more than the cruelty and malice of men! The martyrs have suffered a great deal of more outward cruelty from men cheerfully, when they have been sawed, burned, melted, roasted, harrowed, boiled it lead or oil. They never felt much agonies and consternations, and, therefore, there was more in Christ's suffering than man's cruelty.

3. Let us consider why he suffered, and how that will clear the conclusion we have in hand.

[1.] He suffered to free us from the wrath which he endured, that was one end: 1 Thes. 1:10, 'Even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.' Therefore, he underwent it in his own person; and the pains of hell did in a manner compass him round about. The ground of this reason lieth in this, that Christ was our surety and substitute, and, therefore, was to subject himself to that wrath which we had deserved by our sins, and should have endured in our persons, if he had not redeemed us from it. Our surety must carry our sorrows. He was to suffer not only for us, but in our name and stead; and the surety was to pay the same sum of money that the debtor oweth Heb. 7:22, Jesus was 'made a surety of a better testament.' The debt of punishment was to be exacted of him, as well as the debt of obedience. Jesus was made our surety, and he fully satisfied

God's justice for that punishment that we owed to him by suffering it in his own person.

[2] He was to suffer to satisfy for our sins that be had taken upon him; for our sins were really put upon Christ, as was shown in the former point. And if the sins and the punishment, which was the wrath of God, it followeth by a necessary consequence, that he who bore our griefs should also carry our sorrows. The ground of this reason is, because, as God meant to magnify his mercy at this time, so also his justice. He would not pardon sin without satisfaction for sin in us, or in our surety: Ps. 116:5, 'Gracious is the Lord, and righteous.' Now, if God had restored mankind without requiring our sins of Christ, he had only discovered his mercy. Nay, if an ordinary death had been accepted, as some dream of an acceptation, it had been all grace still. Now, it was God's design to express his justice as well as his mercy; Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.' And the apostle repeateth it, ver. 26, 'To declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;' that is, that he might be acknowledged just, even while of mercy he forgave sins. This is what the light of nature teacheth men, that justice must be satisfied before mercy could have a free passage. And, indeed, in the business of believing, the soul sticketh here: God is a just God, and this was what made the most seeing and knowing heathens to be at a loss how divine justice could be satisfied; and, therefore, to expiate guilt, they would give all that was near and dear, to them,—the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls. Whereas the gospel, you see, holdeth it forth in a sweet way,—Christ suffering the infinite wrath of his Father, even as much as would have sunk any soul to hell eternally, if it had been laid upon him. These arguments, I conceive, are sufficient. I will not traverse all the arguments and doubts that might be objected. Solid and fundamental truths are much weakened and lessened in the hearts of the hearers, when they are proposed in a controversial way; and therefore, lest I should prejudice this comfortable doctrine, while I go about to confirm it, I shall only touch upon two objections that concern the main state of the point.

Object. 1. If Christ made a full satisfaction by bearing our sorrows and his

Fathers wrath, how then doth God love us freely?—how is mercy magnified?

I answer briefly—The freeness of God's love or mercy doth not exclude the fulness of Christ's merit. You shall see the apostle joineth both together, God's mercy and Christ's merit: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' Freely, in respect of us; we could contribute nothing of desert, nor nothing of satisfaction toward it. There can be no price paid by ourselves, nor by any for us. We could not satisfy for ourselves, nor merit a satisfier. And therefore there is a great deal of freeness of mercy held forth in it, in that God freely gave Christ for us. The scriptures always speak of Christ as a gift: 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.' There are divers respects that set out the freeness of the gift. First, In that he gave him of his own accord. We could not enlarge our thoughts to such a desire, Isa. 65:1. As God said in another like case, 'I am found of them that sought me not.' It is impossible that man or angel could take in such a contrivance in his thoughts to ask it of God. Secondly, Freely, because, as we cannot deserve it, so we cannot requite it. God giveth Christ to them that can give nothing for him. But this must be the work of another place.

Object. 2 is this, How did Christ suffer our punishment, since his sufferings were but temporary, and ours to be eternal? There are divers answers. I will give you that which is most satisfying.

1. I distinguish of our punishment; it may be considered two ways as to the substance, and as to the circumstances of it. For the substance, Christ suffered it fully, even infinite wrath, though not with such circumstances as could not stand with his person and office.

2. That those circumstances, the eternity and duration of our punishment, are not so much in regard of the punishment itself, as the persons that undergo it. It is because they cannot conquer and get above it. Now Christ was such an excellent person that he could not only undergo infinite wrath, but get above it. Christ could set himself free by his own power. The scriptures hint this answer in that expression, Acts 2:24, 'Having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he

should be holden of it.' Death and the curse were, as it were, in travail; for look, what pains and throes a travailing woman sustaineth till she be delivered of her burden; even such pangs did the grave and the curse feel till Christ were gotten free from them, for it was impossible he could be holden of it. Thus for that objection. Those curses that would have continued upon him for ever and ever, Christ conquered by the power of his Godhead, for he was to suffer triumphantly.

Use 1. Is exhortation, to press you to three duties:—1. To observe this great work of God, to put the punishment of our sins upon Christ.

[1.] Meditate upon it in your thoughts. Here is enough to take them up to all eternity. Deep sufferings seem to challenge from us a serious contemplation: Lam. 1:12, 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger,'—which some have applied to Christ, though I think improperly. I quote it only to show you that a transient glance, a mere passing by, is not enough for deep sorrows; you must behold and see. The scripture speaks of looking upon him whom we have pierced, Zech. 12:10. And observe it seriously; it is not a slight turn of the thoughts this way that will serve. What is the reason that men that know the evil of sin and the mercy of Christ do not more love Christ and hate sin? They have but a slight and superficial apprehension—it swimmeth upon the top of their thoughts, and is readily up: It is true we are all sinners, and God is merciful. These men, though they speak often of it, do least of all believe it. Therefore do not hastily run over these truths. The scriptures always, when they express the love of God, they seem to give occasion for some pause of the thoughts: 'God so loved the world!' 'Behold what manner of love!' and the like. The works of God's providence require an accurate search: Ps. 111:2, 'The works of the Lord are great, and to be sought out by all that take pleasure therein.' Much more the great contrivance of the covenant. Take it into your thoughts, what it is to have a God suffering, and a God punishing.

[2.] Observe it with admiration. One said he had gotten this good by philosophy, that he had learned to admire at nothing. The more you know of the things of God, the more you will admire at everything, especially at

this great mystery. There is an observation of curiosity, when men look into every turning of it by their reasons, and so lose themselves in a mist of errors. The Christian way is to look upon it with admiration, to admire the wisdom of God, that he should in such a sweet way magnify infinite wisdom and infinite justice at the same time. This very thing, the sufferings of Christ, the angels desire to pry into, 1 Peter 1:12; if you consult the context, you will find it so. He alludeth to the two angels that were set upon the mercy-seat, which was the covering of the ark, and typed out Christ. They would fain see the utmost of this mystery. They desire to look into it out of a thirst of knowledge, or a delight in meditation. So 1 Tim. 3:16, 'Seen of angels;' that is, this was the ravishing object that took up their thoughts.

2. To learn that which God teacheth us in such an instance. There are many profitable lessons. I will but name them:—First, There is the evil of sin. God would express his hatred against it by punishing it in Christ. Sin is such a thing, that when Christ did but take the guilt of it into his own person, he must suffer the infinite wrath of his Father. Secondly, Then the impartial severity of divine justice: God spared not his own Son. It is said, 2 Peter 2:4, that he 'spared not the angels that sinned,, but cast them down to hell.' But lo, here is a greater instance: Rom. 8:32, 'He spared not his own Son,' when he bore our sins by imputation. No prerogative then can hinder. In vain do men pretend privileges against God's wrath. There is nothing but Christ that hath borne wrath that we can oppose against wrath. There is nothing that stoppeth the long furrows but the casting God's Son in the way. Think of this, that you may fear before him. God is a consuming fire, Heb. 12:29. He was so in Christ in a sense, and is so to all out of Christ. Thirdly, The law's dignity and indispensableness. God would fulfil every tittle; not the least iota must pass away, but it must be fulfilled in Christ, both in regard of the duty it commandeth, and the curse it annexeth to the breach of it. Fourthly, The love of God in providing amply against all our scruples, that he would offer us mercy in such a way as he might declare his justice, and so satisfy all our doubts. There is a saying usual in some men's prayers, 'We appeal from thy justice to thy mercy.' This expression is not so warrantable. God's justice and God's mercy both look comfortably upon a sinner through Christ. It is mercy, and mercy purchased, when justice is

satisfied. God is now faithful and just. That which before caused our greatest horror, causeth now our greatest triumph. God is a just God. What would men have given heretofore to appease justice? It could never enter into men's thoughts which way that should be done, till the gospel revealed it.

3. To render praise and thanksgiving to God. We enjoy a great deal of benefit by it, and great benefits require a great deal of duty. Here is a double motive to praise. The wrath of God is taken away from us, and Christ endured it for us. As to its being taken away from us, consider what it is to be freed from the wrath of God. What should we have endured if Christ had not made such a satisfaction! You cannot expect that I should give you a map of hell. I have observed that great truths never do well when they are painted by fancy. War and hell are rather pleasant in the description than horrible. It is like there may be a little shrinking in the soul; as a gentle fresh gale that is let out upon the face of the sea may a little furl the surface and upper part rather than stir the billows, it doth not work soundly. A mere relation is better than a passionate description. Oh, consider, then, what it is to be deprived of all sense of the favour of God, to be delivered over to torments ceaseless, endless, and remediless. One flash of God's wrath into our consciences, how doth it make us roar! And if a drop be so irksome, what is it to have an ocean of wrath poured upon us, and to be overwhelmed in soul and body! Oh, what a mercy is it that our Saviour hath delivered us from this everlasting vengeance of hell-fire! I had rather you

should enlarge your hearts to think of these things than expatiate upon them. To have all this taken away should make us abound in praise. And then, in the next place, consider how Christ took it upon himself. 'He hath carried our sorrows!' There are some rare instances and representations of those in story that have exposed themselves to violence and cruelty for others; as in Damon and Pythias, Pambo, &c. But none riseth so high as this, to wit, the leaving of infinite glory to suffer infinite wrath for us—that was a hard exchange. Oh, then, work it upon your thoughts, that you may live to that God that gave himself for you. The main argument that faith urgeth upon the soul is drawn from Christ's suffering for us Gal. 2:20, 'The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of

God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I should have been given, but he gave himself in my stead.

Use 2. Is information to the children of God to show the happiness of those that have an interest in Christ's death. There is no wrath against them: Isa. 27:4, 'Fury is not in me.' There may be sometimes *filii sub ira* (children under wrath); they may have some apprehensions of God's wrath through their own sins, when they have offended God. They must get a new act of pardon assured to them and to their consciences. There may be displeasure, though not wrath. There may be afflictions, and that in pursuance of divine vengeance; though for the matter they may be the same as light upon wicked men, yet their habitude and use is changed unto God's children. They are of exceeding great use to them, to quicken them to duties, to humble them for sin, to keep lusts low, to prevent vanity and pride of heart, and to bring us nearer to God. So much for this verse.

THE FIFTH VERSE.

He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed.

THE prophet having in the former verse briefly touched upon the sufferings of Christ, and the cause of them, by way of confutation of the Jews, he now amplifieth the argument, and enlargeth himself by setting it out in other expressions. All words and all thoughts are little enough for so great a mystery. It should not be tedious, though a man do always dwell upon it. St Paul's *ekrina* justifieth a minister, if he should preach no other thing to you: 1 Cor. 2:2, 'For I determined not to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.' Christ's sufferings are like the widow of Sarepta's cruse; though we spend much of the oil of it, it will not fail, it will afford more consolation still; and therefore it should not be grievous to you, if we hold your meditation to it. The prophet here, now he is fallen upon the subject, will not give it over. Though he had told you that surely he bore our sorrows and carried our griefs, yet he will not

quit it so till he hath more fully expressed it to you, as he doth in the text: 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,' &c. You may here in this verse observe three things

1. The history of Christ's sufferings.

2. The cause of them.

3. The fruit and benefit of them. These three things are scattered in divers expressions throughout the verse.

1. The history of Christ's sufferings, set out by *wounds, bruises, chastisements, stripes;* which expressions are multiplied to fasten the thought of it the more upon our minds. And the words do not only imply those wounds in Christ's body by the nails, the spear, the scourge, but the whole bitterness of his bloody death; and some of the expressions will bear it. 'He was wounded.' It is the manner of the scripture to use wounding for killing. 'He was bruised,' or broken, as it were crushed to pieces by the hand of God. 'The chastisement of our peace.' Chastisement, the word is applied to learning; and because lazy and slow learners must be whipped, it is applied to signify punishment. Some think the prophet alludeth to those that were whipped by the sentence of the law, and by way of punishment. And then 'stripes,' *mwlwpi autou,* the word signifieth sometimes gore, blood, or scars. And I conceive these things are the rather mentioned, wounds, stripes, scars, because Christ after his resurrection, for a testimony of the reality of his sufferings, retained these wounds and scars. So much for the first thing, the history.

2. The cause of it: *for our transgressions, for our iniquities.* The first word noteth more properly the doing of evil, the latter swerving from good; sins of omission and commission: Christ suffered for them all: the least neglect of duty, and the least obliquity in duties needed Christ to satisfy for them. It was for our iniquities as well as our transgressions, our defections from the right way.

3. The fruits and benefits: they are two—peace and healing.

[1.] Peace: *the chastisement of our peace was upon him.* Some

understand *by peace* whatsoever is good and precious; it being usual with the Hebrews to express it by the word peace. And because the Septuagint sometimes turn *shelomim,* the plural word for peace, into retributions, some read it thus, 'The chastisement of retributions was upon him;' that is, God payed him what should have been payed us, namely, punishment and wrath. But I conceive it noteth here that peace and reconciliation that is between God and a sinner. Christ was chastised to procure it for us. Sin made us odious, and enemies to God. Here is the first privilege: Christ bore the chastisement of our peace.

[2.] Healing. A strange paradox, you will think, that we should be healed by another's stripes; but so it is. The meaning is, by this our souls are cured from the wounds and infection of sin. From the wounds, Christ took them upon himself. From the infection, sin is wounded by it, as you will see hereafter.

I come to the points, which are three, according to the parts of the text.

1. That the Lord Jesus at his death endured many cruel and bitter sufferings.

2. That all these sufferings were undergone for our sins and transgressions.

3. That by these sufferings Christ hath purchased for us peace and healing.

Doct. 1. That Jesus Christ at his death endured many cruel and bitter sufferings. The prophet sets them out here by *wounds, bruises, stripes;* which words, because they imply most of all his outward and bodily sufferings, and what he suffered from the cruelty and malice of man, I shall most of all touch upon these things, that they may be matter of meditation to you.

1. He was betrayed by his own disciple; that is sad. It was a double stab to Caesar's heart when Brutus was among the conspirators; the grief is the more by far. David, in the person of Christ, complaineth of it, Ps. 45:12,13, 'It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have

borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid my face from him. But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.'

2. Forsaken by the rest of the disciples: Mark 14:50, 'And they all forsook him and fled;' that is, all the disciples. And that is a misery, to be deprived of the solace of friends when we most want them. A friend is for adversity; that is the reason of our choice, that we may have some to stand by us in evil times. But all are gone.

3. He was an object of the common hatred. They do not only come out against him with swords and staves, the usual instruments of vulgar fury, but thirst after his blood, cry against him, 'His blood be upon us and on our children.' They would rather have Barabbas released than Christ.

4. Then he was haled to the judgment-seat, and there accused and sentenced contrary to all law, and their own conscience. When Pilate asked of them what evil they found in him, they could rejoin nothing but a tumultous noise, 'Crucify him, crucify him;' that is all the reason they urge.

5. There are several expressions of contempt used to him, which are like vinegar to wounds, the very smart and quintessence of grief. They buffeted him, that is an ignominious expression of cruelty; buffeting being the punishment of slaves. Spitting, which was another token of contempt among the Jews: 'If her father had spit upon her, should she not be unclean seven days?' Numb. 12:14. Yea, Job reckoned it as a great aggravation of his sufferings: Job 30:10, 'They abhor me, they even dare to spit upon me.' And then they whipped and mocked him with a robe, a sceptre of reeds, and a crown of thorns. There can be no greater dishonour done to a man than to twit him with his dignity, to put the mock habiliments of majesty upon him. And then as to their several beatings and smitings, I cannot mention all. And at last they crucified him, a death designed for men accursed. Usually those that suffered that death were looked upon as accursed by God and men: Deut. 21:23, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.' It was the death of grievous malefactors, such as blasphemers and idolaters. Nay, he was hanged between two thieves, *in medio latronum, tanquam latronum*

maximus; he was put in the midst, as if he was the greatest malefactor of the three. And when he was dead, he was wounded with a spear, John 19:34. An impotent, silly malice, to triumph over the dead! Thus I have given you a taste of what you may read more fully in the evangelists.

I come now to apply it.

Use 1. It serveth for consolation, for examples are apt to ease the soul. The great sting of misery is, that we think it strange, and such a thing as never happened: 'Is there any sorrow like my sorrow?' Lam. 1.12. We are all apt to say so. Why, here is a great example. Christ, that he might sanctify afflictions to us, endured them in his own person. Comfort is never so well taken as when we speak to the particular case. Why, here in Christ's instance there is comfort. Whatever the case and distress be, there is some use in the argument 1 Peter 2:21, 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.' There is a great deal of merit in Christ's sufferings. Example is not all, and yet example is much. God would suffer too, that he might provide against all the terrible troubles you can be cast upon. I shall instance a little in those things that cause the greatest storm and tumult in the heart.

1. In case thy greatest woe is brought about to thee by the men of thine own family and cherishing, remember Christ was so used, and so was St Paul. Among the other dangers that he reckoned up, he saith, 'In perils among false brethren.' And divers of the martyrs in church history have been betrayed into the hands of their enemies by their friends and allies. It is much, I confess, to meet with evil usage from whom we least looked for it. And yet you see this hath been the lot of Christ and the people of God before you.

2. Is the case so, that you are in misery and forsaken of friends? It is a very miserable case, that you find respect no longer than you are able to purchase it. Why, Christ was left by his own disciples; and it is the lot of many a faithful servant of God, and will be till you can weed self-love out of men's hearts. Usually they aim at their own good in dispensing of their respects; and when they cannot serve themselves of us, they will leave us: Prov. 14:20, 'The poor is hated by his neighbour, but the rich hath many friends.'

3. Is it so that thou art an object of the common hatred, like Ishmael, thy hand against every man, and every man's hand against thine? Christ suffered it, and it is the lot of many a public-spirited servant of God. *Lapidibus nos invadit inimicum vulgus,* saith Tertullian. The common people are ready to brain us with stones wheresoever we go. Remember the Ephesian tumult, where the common people raged against Paul, so that he speaketh of them as if they had put off all humanity: 1 Cor. 15:32, 'If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me?' Hinting at that story in Acts 19:And it is the lot of many of God's people now to be cruelly handled by rude hands; and evil neighbours look upon the day of their brethren's adversity, and are as some of them that do it.

4. To be denied the benefit of law, the wall of our safety, the fence of our privileges and interests. The thing we suffer many times doth not grieve us so much as the injustice of it. Why, remember it was Christ's case; he was condemned, though none could fasten the least guilt upon him. So it is many a Christian's case to be denied all right and equity: Eccles. 5:8, 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of justice and judgment in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' The primitive martyrs were condemned before they were heard. Tertullian complaineth much that they would not hear the Christians plead for themselves. So it would make a man gnash his teeth for indignation to see what undue proceedings there were against the martyrs that were convened before the bishops here in England; the case was determined before heard. It was likewise so of late, agreeable to what Tertullian spake of the heathen.

5. Art thou handled with a great deal of contempt, as in all the instances of Christ's sufferings, buffeted with the back of the hand? So was Christ: Mat. 5:39, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.' A transverse blow, such as might light upon the right cheek, expresseth great contempt. Christ would have you bear it. Again, be it spitting upon us, any expression of contempt, this is that which the nature of man stormeth at; everyone counteth himself worthy of some respect. And yet Christ submitted to it. So Job, 'they even dare to spit

upon me.' See how the prophet speaketh in the person of Christ, Isa. 50:6, 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Suppose thy case to be an opprobrious punishment. John Frith was put in the stocks, mocked, and made a laughing-stock, marked as a common vagrant. So was Christ, so was Samson, and so it was with Israel: Jer. 48:27, 'For was not Israel a derision unto thee? Was he found among thieves? 'They did hoot at them, as boys do in the street after a thief when he is taken. Again, is there some upbraiding pageantry used in contempt of thee? Why, they gave Christ a reeden sceptre and a thorny crown. John Huss and Jerome of Prague had painted coats put upon them with devils round about them; and many poor souls have been served in that manner. I remember a story of a king of England in his distress, whom they would trim upon a hill with cold water. Ay but, saith he, Hot water will come, meaning his tears. Is thy case so, that thou art called to suffer a shameful death for Christ? Christ suffered the shamefulest death that can be for thee. Hanging is no dishonour to a Christian. It is not the death, but the cause that maketh it shameful. Ludovicus Marsaius thought himself honoured by his rope. *Cur non et mihi quoque torquem donas, et hujus ordinis equitem creas?* Give me a rope likewise, saith he, and make me a knight of this noble order. St Paul saith, 'With this chain,' holding it up by way of triumph. A man would have thought that it had been a golden chain that he spake of, since he honoured it so much, when, alas! it was iron. Christ hath taken away all shame of punishment. And then they gave Christ vinegar instead of drink. This has been the lot of many Christians upon the inquisition-rack. So to have your dying words misconstrued and misreported; there have not been wanting in all ages those that have turned the saints' *Eloi* into *Elias*. What reports have there been of Tremellius turning Jew, and of divers Protestants turning papists! So after death; for you may live in such calamitous times in which you may see a great deal of cruelty exercised, not only upon the bodies of the saints here, but even after death; so it was with Christ, and so with his people. They were not safe when they had taken sanctuary in the grave. So the papists did against the bones of Wickliffe, Bucer, and others. Nay, if it were possible, they would reach to the damnation of the soul. As the papists said of John *Huss, mandamus animam diabolo* (we deliver the spirit over to the devil). And then, as Christ was crucified in the midst of

two thieves, so it may be your case to be numbered among transgressors, to be counted heretics, factious, schismatics; this is what the people of God hath suffered from the proud men of the world. Papists would make Protestantism a bundle of old errors, as Baily says in the Jesuit's Catechism. Thus the enemies, like the cruel watchmen, would fain take away the garment from the spouse, expose her to shame and contempt in the world. But remember, in all these cases Jesus Christ has gone before you.

Use 2. Did Jesus endure such cruel and bitter sufferings? It informeth you how unlike Christ they are who live in away of pleasure and ease, as if the way to heaven were over a bed of roses. If Christ were a Man of Sorrows, certainly they are men of pleasures, such as mind nothing but present contentments and satisfactions. Thus I have given you the history of Christ's sufferings.

I now come to the cause. We must not only look upon the sufferings of Christ, but must look upon the cause of it: The point is:—

Doct. That Jesus Christ endured all these bitter sufferings at his death for our sins. Take a place or two of scripture to prove this Rom. 4:25, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.' You have need of places to confirm you when the most substantial truths are questioned. Delivered, that is delivered to death for our transgressions: 1 Cor. 15:3, 'For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.' This was the doctrine St Paul would preach among them, and the doctrine that contained the drift of the scriptures. He suffered for our sins, that he might become a sacrifice to appease God for us. That was it that all the world thirsted after, an expiation; and it is fully performed by Christ. God for a while trained up his people in sacrifices, that he might type out the Lamb of God that was to be slain for the satisfying of wronged justice. But I shall say no more to that here, but proceed to application.

Use 1. It confuteth divers errors and mistakes in doctrine, viz.:—

1. That evil blasphemy of the Socinians, that say that Christ only died by occasion of sin, not for sin. The scriptures speak plainly, and yet vain men

list to blaspheme, that they may take away the merit of Christ's passion, and establish only his example. Christ did not only leave us an example, but satisfied for our sins. Adam left us more than an example of sin, and Christ left us more than an example of suffering.

2. The derogatory doctrine of the papists, who extend this full satisfaction of Christ to sins only committed before baptism; but as for mortal sins, and sins committed after baptism, they say we receive forgiveness only of the eternal, but not of the temporal punishment of them, which remaineth to be suffered by us to the satisfaction of divine justice. But when the scriptures speak so fully of all sins, transgressions, and iniquities satisfied for, why should men fancy a restraint? In human matters we account those things that are in our favour may be construed in the largest sense that they can bear with probability. Christians, stand for your liberty against those encroachments of Antichrist.

3. That fond dream of some that think Christ's sufferings were any way for himself. They urge for it Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his glory?' That proveth it an antecedent, not a cause or merit of glory. There is a difference between consequents and effects: Phil. 2:8,9, 'He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him:' *dio* signifieth *after which*. In Dan. 9:26, it is said, 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.' And so here, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.'

Use 2. Is exhortation to look upon the cause of Christ's sufferings. Mr Perkins well observeth it to be a superstitious looking upon Christ, when we reflect upon his passion without looking upon the cause. So to look upon him in a crucifix is superstition to the eye; and to look upon his sufferings as a dolorous and sad story, is superstition to the ear. Look, then, upon them as they refer to the cause, to wit, our sins. This is the consideration that maketh them profitable and useful to us. The cause yieldeth this profit.

1. Here is matter for our faith to work upon. Christ died for those things that trouble a gracious heart, viz., sins. One saith, Send drooping Christians to the 53d of Isaiah, send them to this place, 'He was wounded'

for that for which your consciences were wounded. When the soul groaneth under the sad apprehensions of God's wrath and hell's horror, why here is thy comfort, 'He was wounded for our transgressions.' Pray as those for the distressed: Job 33:24, 'Deliver me from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.' O Lord, here I have found a ransom; show him Christ's wounds: O Lord, wilt not thou forgive in a servant what thou didst punish in a Son? What is there in sin that there is not in Christ's sufferings? Are they manifold? Tell God here are wounds, bruises, stripes, chastisements. Are they great? Here is infinite wrath suffered, divine justice fully satisfied. Art thou a base, vile, filthy person? Christ is a glorious and all-sufficient Saviour. Every way here is triumph for faith.

2. Here is an object for your love. It is a great testimony of the love of Christ, that he was wounded for our transgressions. *Viscera patent per vulnera—you* may see his bowels through his wounds. A strange kind of surgery! The whole body is sick, and the head wounded to cure it. We committed the sins, and Christ suffered the punishment due to them. Usually, we love them more that suffer for us, than those that otherwise do us good. Oh, work it upon your affections!

3. It giveth you help in your endeavours against sin.

[1.] It is a help to humble us for sins past. There is a leanness in the soul many times, and we cannot make sin so odious and grievous to our souls as we would. Take in this circumstance; all Christ's sufferings and wounds were but the effects of our sins. This is a glass which will discover it to us, our knowledge is by the effects. The effects of sin were never so apparent and eminent as in Christ. Oh, look upon him whom you have pierced, and then mourn, Zech. 10:12.

[2.] To caution you against sins to come. Here is a double argument, from experience, and from love.

(1.) From experience. Sin is not so sweet as the sinner imagines. Christ suffered bitter things when he bore it in his body upon the tree. It lieth when it flattereth you with hopes of some contentment. Sin indeed smileth upon the soul at the first coming. Therefore Solomon saith, Prov. 23:31, 'Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in

the cup, when it moveth itself aright;' that is, upon the seeming pleasure of it. Oh, remember, it cost Christ dear; it is a flattering, deceiving thing.

(2.) From love. Oh, shall I wound Christ again? Shall I grieve God once more? We hate that which hath injured our friends. Shall I allow that in my bosom which Christ hates? Use yourselves to these meditations upon the least solicitations to drunkenness, adultery, and the like: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.' The apostle meaneth, we should arm ourselves with such contemplations as Christ's death affordeth us. He speaketh of it as a great remedy against temptations. By such thoughts the work of the Spirit is perfected. By drunkenness, thou givest him vinegar to drink; thy oppression is a wounding of his sides; wresting scripture is a turning of *Eloi* into Elias; scoffing at religion is spitting upon him; jeering of his ministers is like the soldiers jeering at him; professing him for fashion's sake, and hating him in your hearts, is a putting mock habiliments upon him; by abusing of his servants thou dost again buffet and beat him. Thus you may exemplify in every sin.

I am now to make entrance upon the last point—That by these sufferings, Christ hath purchased for us peace and healing.

I begin with the first of these benefits.

1. That Christ hath purchased peace for his people, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him.' Peace, among other expositions of the phrase, I take to be that reconciliation and amity that was wrought out between God and a sinner. Christ was chastised to procure it for us, and all other good things that follow upon it.

I shall prove it to you by scripture, that one of the great benefits that we enjoy by Christ's sufferings is peace, or the favour of God. Take a few scriptures: Rom. 5:1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' There is peace of conscience, and peace with God, which is nothing else but our atonement and reconciliation with him. Everyone that is justified hath not peace of conscience; but every one that is justified hath peace with God. There is a quarrel between God and the soul because of sin; your sins have separated between God

and you. Sin maketh God not only an utter enemy, but a severe punisher. Now this strife and quarrel is taken up by Christ: through Jesus it is said we have peace. He maketh God our friend; so Col. 1:20, 'And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.' By the blood of his cross; that is, by the bloody cruel death he suffered upon the cross, he took away sin and wrath. The scriptures speak of what is most visible: so Eph. 2:14, 'He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.' He is our peace, the abstract for the concrete; such a speech as is usual in relation to the business of Christ's undertaking; even as he is wisdom to us, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so Zech. 9:10, 'He shall speak peace to the heathen;' so Isa. 9:8, Christ is called 'the Prince of peace.' Look, as we call men by the better title, as we say the king of England, not mentioning the lesser dominions, as Scotland, Wales, Ireland; and the king of France, not taking in the petty governments in our ordinary way of speaking; so Christ is set forth by the great privilege he hath purchased for mankind, which includes other things: Mic. 5:5, 'And this man shall be the peace.' This man shall be our peace, the Prince of peace. All these expressions imply, that as we are said to have it this way, so we can have it no other way.

I come to the reasons of the point.

1. Because Christ by his death hath slain all hatred. It is the apostle's phrase: Eph. 2:16, 'And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;' that is, took away the cause of hatred; and the cause being taken away, the effect ceaseth. Look, as when there is a whisperer that goeth between party and party, and sets them at odds and variance, we say we shall never be friends till such an one be removed out of the way; so it was between God and the soul, there is 'no hope of agreement till those that do the ill offices between God and us be removed. And therefore Christ himself would die rather than not slay our enemy. He hath slain hatred by taking away the cause of it, which was:—

[1.] The just wrath of God. Now that was abolished by Christ; he conquered it by suffering it; insomuch that God saith, 'Fury is not in me,' Isa. 27:4. God's justice being satisfied in Christ, he doth not pursue

revenge against his people. Is there any fury in God?

[2.] Sin in us, that was the cause of hatred. You may consider it both in its guilt and power, and both sit heavy upon the soul.

(1.) The guilt of it. There can be no peace as long as this lieth charged upon the soul. This works all that distance and hatred between us and God; and therefore guilt will cause horror: Job 13:26, 'Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me possess the iniquities of my youth;' that is, bitter enough to possess sins, to own the guilt of them. It was as great a threatening as Christ could use, when he told the Jews they should die in their sins, John 8:21-24. Oh, it is a miserable thing that death should seize upon us in our sins! What a perplexity is the soul then left to! Whither will it go when it dieth in its own guilt? Now this is taken away by Christ; and therefore it is so often said that we have remission of sins by his blood 1 John 1:7, 'And the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

(2.) The power of sin. This disturbeth and filleth the soul with the sense of God's wrath, and embittereth the soul against God. Through the strength of sin we hate God, because we cannot but look upon him as a punisher of it. Now Christ slayeth this hatred by sending his Spirit to kill our enmity, to heal our poisoned natures, and maketh us more willing and careful to please God. It is said, Titus 3:6, 'The Spirit of regeneration is shed on us abundantly (or richly), through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' He taketh away that rancorous disposition that is in the heart. This is the first reason: Christ taketh away hatred, and therefore purchaseth peace.

2. Because he hath taken away all show of hatred. The ceremonial law was an ordinance hinting out our guilt. Now Christ would take away whatever in show made against us, or was contrary to us: Col.2:14, 'He took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.' He would not leave any ground for doubt or suspicion; he hath provided against all our scruples: Christ would not leave the least line uncrossed, our own confessions do not make against us. As soon as you give in the bill, Christ teareth it; he hath nailed all in triumph to his cross. You can urge many things against yourselves; ay! but all these things are pardoned, and God hath nothing to show for the debt. St Paul says, 1 Tim. 1:13, 'I was a blasphemer and a

persecutor;' a heavy bill, 'but I obtained mercy.' All this was taken out of the way. Christ hath not only paid the debt, but torn also the bonds. By his death on the cross he did as it were declare to the believer that God hath nothing to show against him. As there is not anger, so there should not be suspicion of anger. He hath taken up the controversy that was between God and the soul.

3. Christ hath procured us favour. Not only the matter that kindleth anger, and alt show of it is taken away, but love is procured: the children of wrath are become the children of love: Mat. 3:17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' The eyes of God's holiness cannot but be offended with a filthy, polluted sinner, yet he is well-pleased with them in Christ, and so they are not only objects of his love but of his delight: Isa. 62:4, 'But thou shalt be called Hepbzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee; and in another place, 'He shall rejoice over them to do them good.' A man delighteth in things that are most suitable and agreeable to his nature. There cannot be a more pleasing work to God than to do his people good. It is said, Luke 15:5, of the lost sheep, that 'when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.' Before there could be no work more suitable to God's justice than to punish sinners; whereas now it is, as the prophet calleth it, 'his strange work,' Isa. 28:21, a thing that he would not be acquainted with towards his people. Whereas, to the wicked, still he laughs at their destruction, Prov. 1:26. Therefore, Christ hath purchased peace for us, because he hath not only taken away anger but procured favour. Among men, anger many times may be taken away, but they have not love. Rebels, after a pardon, live in a great deal of umbrage, and are under suspicion; the scars remain though the wound be cured: as Absalom, when pardoned, did not see the king's face. Artificial cracks will be seen though soldered; but it is not so here, for we are reinstated in God's love and affections. Christ hath satisfied wrath and merited favour; so that the soul can look upon

God with a great deal of comfort and joy.

Use 1. This serveth to reprove those—

1. That fetch their peace anywhere else. No comfort is lasting but what floweth from the blood of Christ; that only is the true peace that he hath

merited.

2. Those that are against peace, or the settling of the heart in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. I begin with these first, and they are of two sorts:—

[1.] Such as are grossly ignorant of Christian privileges, and think it a duty to doubt, and a matter of merit to keep themselves upon terms of perplexity. A popish spirit haunts many; they think assurance a dry doctrine, and therefore do not strive to settle their hearts; as if there could be no duty where there is no fear. Hereby they plainly discover out of what principles they act for God,—to wit, out of a servile spirit; and therefore they cannot be kept right any longer than they fear wrath. O brethren! turn these evil thoughts out of your hearts. True peace is a great benefit that Christ hath purchased for us.

[2] Such as would fain apply themselves to Christ, but are loth to busy themselves with what should make for the settling of their hearts and establishing their spirits; as if it were more pleasing to God to keep the conscience, raw with sins, than to heal it with Christ's righteousness. A man should labour after peace with God, and peace of conscience too. It is a natural superstitious thought to think God is pleased with the mere sorrow of. a creature; and, therefore, false worshippers have wounded themselves, that they might make some dolorous impressions upon his mind. Christ suffered the sorrows that you might have the peace; the chastisement of your peace was upon him. Why should you stand out against comfort, if there were not some secret thought of satisfying by your sorrow? Now you are not to satisfy, but Christ. It is good to reflect upon wrath, to drive us to mercy; but it is not good to dwell always in the preparations, for that is to forget our errand, and to stay in the porch when we should enter into the temple. Labour to get an interest in him in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

3. It reproveth such as would have peace, but not this way, but upon wrong grounds. Now that is an evil peace that cometh any other way. Look to the grounds of your peace. How came you to such a peaceable frame of heart? The false grounds are:—

[1.] Ignorance of our condition. A man doth not fear danger till he be sensible of it. Now many do not know that God and they are at such terms of distance and anger. Little doth a man trouble himself when be doth not know what evil is determined against him: Rom. 3:11, 'There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, they have no understanding.' And it is easy to go hoodwinked to hell. Blinded sinners go merrily to the pit of destruction, never dreaming that danger was so near hand. Poor souls that do not know the worst by themselves! This is the greatest judgment that can befall them.

[2] Carelessness in others. When men cannot put off sorrow, they put it by, and will not so much as reflect upon themselves. You may know it is bad with men when they cannot endure to look inward. Things that are evil cannot brook a trial; men will put all care out of their hearts as to their eternal concerns.

[3] When men avoid whatever may put them in mind of their misery. There are two things that humble men, doing of duty and striving against sin.

(1.) Doing of duty seriously, that will make men see what profane, unsavoury, and senseless spirits they have. A man that lieth abed doth not feel his lame leg, but when he goeth to walk upon it he does. Exercise the soul in inward duties, and you will see it diseased. We know things when we come to make trial of them: therefore, wicked men will not meddle in inward and hearty duties, lest thereby they should discover the soul to itself. Formal duties make men the more secure: they are thereby apt to think better of themselves than they ought. The pharisee thought himself in a good case, because of his vain fasting, giving alms, and paying tithes. So formal duties are a vain refuge. But now duties wholly spiritual, and spiritually performed, make men see the weakness and wickedness of their spirits; but they are looked upon as such a disturbance to wicked men that they cannot endure to hear of them.

(2.) Resisting of sin. Tumult is caused by opposition. When a man tamely yieldeth to Satan, no wonder if he be let alone. The devil rageth most when we set against him: Rev. 12:12, 'For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short

time.' Dying beasts bite shrewdly. Oh, how is the poor soul tortured with sin, when it is about to quit it! The sea doth not rage so much when the wind and the tide go together. Please the worst natures and they will not disturb you. This is a peace that will end in trouble: there will be a quarrelling between affections and convictions when a sinner cometh to be serious and thoughtful.

[4] When men do what they can to divert all care and minding of their condition: this is like a few stolen waters, when they can get conscience asleep. As it is said, Prov. 9:17, 'Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.' They lull the soul asleep by pleasures, or distract it by business. They never keep the heart empty that they may enter into themselves. As Cain built cities, so carnal men drown themselves in business or pleasures.

Use 2. Is direction, to teach us what to do if we would have peace when our consciences are enraged. Go to Christ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him. Get an interest in Christ, and you have an interest in God. God is not to be had as a friend without Christ. Get him and you are presently interested in God's favour. For 'he that has the Son hath the Father also.'

But, you will say, how shall I get an interest in Christ? I answer in one word—By faith; that is the *way* to get Christ to you with all his benefits; and, therefore, faith is expressed by receiving Christ John 1:12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;' and Eph. 3:17, Christ is said to 'dwell in our hearts by faith.' You must say, in the language of faith here, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him.' Those that offered a peace-offering were to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice, which implieth a kind of joining. So Christ is the peace-offering, and you must lay your hands upon his head. When Thomas believed, he cried, 'My Lord and my God.' That gives your souls the possession of Christ; and if of Christ, of God. But briefly I might from this speak to two sorts of persons:—

1. To secure sinners.

2. To poor broken-hearted sinners that labour under the sense of wrath.

But having spoken from several passages of Christ's sufferings for them, and more remaining to be insisted on from other verses, I shall now only speak a little to secure sinners. I shall press them to two things:—

[1.] To consider their condition; and,

[2.] The danger of their condition.

[1.] Consider your condition. You are in a state of enmity with God; God is at war with you. That this may appear to you, weigh these things following:—

(1.) That your condition is not to be measured by your present feeling and apprehension. A man may be in danger, though he be not sensible of it: Isa. 57:21, 'There is no peace, saith my God; to the wicked: they are like a troubled sea when it cannot rest.' The wicked do not think so, but my God saith so. It is what God speaketh to you, not what you think of yourselves. Wicked men's lives slide away in pastimes, and pomp, and pleasure; but still they are under continual danger, though they mind it not. Mark that expression; 2 Peter 2:3, it is said, 'Their damnation slumbereth not.' Though they slumber, their damnation, doth not slumber. 'If men could make their condemnation sleep as well as themselves, it were well. Do not measure your estate by your own thoughts, but by God's heart towards you, how he looketh upon you in Christ. God may be angry with you and you not know it.

(2.) Remember that God is angry with every man in his natural condition. Till you get an interest in Christ, you have not God for a Father. There is a war between God and every natural man. Those that think themselves at peace with God from their cradles upwards, never were at peace with him. You are at peace with God, you say, when you are at war with him. The scripture speaks otherwise of you: Eph. 2:2, You are 'children of wrath, even as others.' And, John 3:36, 'The wrath of God abideth on them.' This you must take for granted. There was a time when you were fallen out with God and God with you, even as well as others—those that embraced the Christian profession, as well as Turks and pagans. We are indeed estranged from the womb, but we are not reconciled from the womb, Ps. 58:3; therefore, whatever you think, you must conclude that

God is angry till you can get him pacified in Christ.

(3.) There are expressions of this anger and enmity that pass between God and the soul, though we do not take notice of it.

(1st.) On our part there are a great many expressions of our enmity to God; as hatred of his being, wishing he were not, slighting of his ordinances, rebellion against his laws, a rising of heart against his servants; a rancorous tumult, and rebellious storming in our affections against his providence; a vexing that he doth so thwart us in our ways and courses. This is our war. Then vexing and grieving his blessed Spirit. God hath told us what will grieve him, and yet, contrary to all the motions of his blessed Spirit, and the checks of our own consciences, we will go on our own way. As Esau took a wife from the daughters of Heth, which was a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah, Gen. 26:35.

(2dly.) From God to us. There are some flashes of wrath, and opening of our consciences, fears of hell, horrors, Hosea 2:6. Hedging up our ways with thorns, and making a wall that we should not find our paths, which maketh us to vex and storm when we cannot have as much as we desire. So likewise by turning all providences into a snare, cursing all ordinances to us. Now and then, I say, God discovereth much wrath to the soul, that it cannot but see it. Oh, then, labour to be sensible of your condition. You think to rub it out well enough, and yet you see there are many expressions of war between God and you.

[2.] Consider the danger of your condition. Oh, it is a sad thing to be at war with God. If a man were at war with one with whom he were able to make his party good, it were no such matter; but this you can never do with God. Foolish man thinketh so, and therefore the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10:22, 'Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?' Will ye act so flatly against his commandments, as if you thought you should be able to bear out yourselves in the transgression? That you may not think so, consider:(1) He it is that upholdeth you in your beings, and he can resolve you into nothing, as easily as he could create you out of nothing. Solomon saith, Prov. 16:14, that 'the wrath of a king is as the messenger of death;' that is, you had as good have one to come and tell you that you shall die, as to come and tell you that a king is angry with

you. A wrinkle in the brow of majesty is as a grave to you. If men were sensible, it is much more true of the wrath of God; he can speak you out of your beings in an instant. It is said, Heb. 1:2, 'He upholdeth all things by the word of his power.' And would a man be angry with him that is able to speak him into nothing? Now thus it is with God.

(2.) Besides his power, consider the whole creation taketh part with God; and when he pleaseth he is able to arm the meanest creatures against you. As he said that would not dispute with a king, 'I have learned not to contend with him that is able to command legions;' so should we say, that we will not contend with God, that is able to command the creatures. The meanest worn, is able to revenge God's quarrel against you. Sometimes God declareth his power against his enemies by frogs, flies, mean contemptible things, as we read concerning the plagues of Egypt. So Herod was eaten up of worms, Acts 12:23; and Pope Adrian was choked with a gnat. I would not willingly expatiate on these things, to offer only matter to your fancies, but beseech you to weigh it in your thoughts. God might kill you with the least fly that hummeth about you, and you have deserved it. It is not only the more dangerous things that can do man hurt, but all things. Consider this, I pray you; God doth more eminently discover it to you, that you may consider it.

(3.) If nobody else, yet God can make use of your own selves against yourselves. He need plague a man no worse than to open his own conscience against him. As Luther said, for a man to see but his own sins, is as great a hell as can be imagined. This hath made saints to roar, Ps. 32:3. This dried up David's moisture, ver. 4. Spira would give all the world for one motion of the Spirit to make him believe what was proposed to him concerning Christ. See that expression, Job 6:4, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.' Just as a man runneth up and down in distraction that hath a poisoned arrow shot into his bowels. In the whole circuit of nature you cannot find one medicine that will heal this grief. All friends, comforts, and relations, are nothing, and all other troubles are but sport and recreation to these. Spiritual good and evil, both are not known till felt. Oh, consider how it will be with you when God shall bring out all those unclean thoughts,

horrid oaths, lies, deceits that you have been guilty of. All shall be set on upon the heart, and you become a terror to yourselves.

(4.) He is able to ruin you, body and soul, eternally; and so he will deal with all his enemies: Mat. 21:41, 'He will miserably destroy those wicked men.' Not only destroy, but miserably destroy. Many are encouraged in their attempts, that if they be ruined, it is but their fortune, there is the worst of it. Now he is able to destroy you so as you shall not know the worst of it; he is able to sink you below all happiness of being or subsistence. Oh, consider the end of those whose peace is not made with God! Judgments without measure, most extreme and exquisite sufferings without mitigation, not a drop of cold water to cool the tongue; judgment without mercy.

By his stripes we are healed.

Doct. That the healing of our natures, as well as peace and reconciliation with God, is the fruit of Christ's sufferings. Three things are here to be taken notice of:—

1. Healing puts us in mind of a disease incurable by human art, or any remedies that are in our power.

2. Health implieth our recovery out of this disease, or our salvation by Christ.

3. The means of this recovery is by Christ's stripes.

First, For the disease.

1. The soul hath its diseases as well as the body, and may be in a good or ill plight, as well as the body. It is in a good plight when it is fit to serve 'God or enjoy him. It is in an ill plight, or diseased, when it is disabled for these ends. The diseases therefore of the soul are those inordinate dispositions by which it is hindered from bringing forth actions agreeable or belonging to the spiritual life. This came to pass by Adam's sin, which, according to the tenor of the first covenant, is imputed to all those who were naturally propagated from him, they being thereupon deprived of

original righteousness; whereby we became blind in our minds, perverse in our hearts, and so sold under sin; and till we be freed by the grace of God, we cannot but act sinfully, and daily contract and strengthen evil habits and inclinations. Therefore the work of conversion is expressed by healing: Isa. 6:10, 'And convert and be healed.' When these distempers and perverse inclinations of the soul are done away, we are healed, otherwise we lie under the power of a blind mind, and a hard heart, a guilty conscience and carnal affections, which are as so many deadly wounds and diseases of the soul.

2. The diseases of the soul are greater than those of the body, as being seated in the nobler part, and so the wound is the more grievous. As a cut in the body is worse than a rent in the clothes, so is a wound in the soul more grievous than a cut in the body. The diseases of the body tend only to the death of the body, which of itself must necessarily die: Eccles. 12:7, 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was;' and then by the power of God shall certainly rise again. But the diseases of the soul, as they make its unuseful to God for the present, so they tend to eternal destruction and death both of body and soul for ever: Mat. 10:28, 'But rather fear him that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.'

3. I assert that sin is the great sickness of the soul. There are two sorts of diseases in the soul:—

[1.] Terrors, or spiritual bondage, by which the soul is driven from God, and cannot think of him, or seek after him, with any comfort or peace. And this is a sore and evil disease indeed, for the curing of which Christ also came; for it is said, Ps. 147:3, 'He hath healed the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds;' Luke 4:18, 'He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted.' Which he doth by pardon or peace, the former benefit mentioned in this verse.

[2.] Sins, or evil habits and inclinations, which disable us from pleasing of God. These are the worst sort of diseases, as being the cause of the other; for terrors entered into the world with sin. When Adam had sinned against God he was afraid of him, and ran to the bushes, Gen. 3:810. And when sin is taken away, the others cease. Now that sin is the great sickness and wound of the soul, I shall prove by these considerations:—

First, It is a wasting disease; it bringeth the soul into a languishing condition, and wasteth the strength of it. Therefore our natural estate is described to be an estate without strength: Rom. 5:6, 'When we were yet without strength, Christ died for us;' that is, without strength to help ourselves out of that misery into which sin had plunged us. Sin hath weakened the soul in all the faculties of it, which all may discern and observe in themselves. The mind is weakened; for how acute and discerning soever it be in earthly things, it is stupid and dull in things spiritual and heavenly. We see little of the danger of eternal damnation, or the worth of eternal salvation, or the need of Christ, or the serious preparation for the world to come: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.' These things, that is, faith and other graces of the Spirit. And then the memory is weakened; it is true and faithful in retaining what is evil, but slippery and treacherous in what is good. These things we easily let slip, as leaky vessels do the liquor contained in them Heb. 2:1, 'Therefore we ought to give the more diligent heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.' Our will is fixedly inclined to evil, and averse to good: 'Their heart is fully set in them to do evil,' Eccles. 8:11. The affections are like tinder, apt to catch fire at the spark of every temptation: Prov. 7:22, 'He goeth after her straightway.' But they are like wet wood as to the entertainment of any heavenly motion: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Therefore sin hath made fearful havoc in the soul, and destroyed the strength and right constitution of it. The strength of man lieth not in the robust, healthy temper of his body; that is a brutish strength, and a bull or an ox exceedeth us in that; nor merely in the strength of natural parts, for therein many pagans excel many Christians.: but it lies in the strength of grace, strength to overcome temptations to sin, to govern our passions and affections, to do the things which God commandeth, that is strength indeed, the strength of the inward man. See, on the other side, man's proper strength described, Prov. 16:32, 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.' On the other side see weakness described, Ezek. 16:30, 'How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman!' That is a weak heart that lieth open to every temptation; that is

at the beck of every foolish and hurtful lust, as pride, sensuality, worldliness, carnal fear and sorrow. An imperious heart is a weak heart, and this weakness sin hath brought upon us.

Secondly, It is a painful disease, it woundeth the spirit; and a wounded spirit who can bear? Prov. 18:14. Greatness of mind may support us under a wounded body, but when there is a breach made upon the conscience, what can relieve us then? Take either a tender conscience, or a raging, stormy conscience, for an instance to show what sin is. Ask of Cain and Judas, and they will tell you what horror and anguish it breedeth in the soul, what storms and tempests it raiseth in the mind: Gen. 4:13, 'My iniquity is greater than I can bear.' Their lives, yea, all their comforts, are a burden to them. Nay, ask any man whose heart is well awaked, and he will tell you, that the sense of the guilt of sin is bitterer to the soul than the gall of asps, and that no tortures are comparable to the piercing stings of an accusing conscience. Even holy David could say, Ps. 38:1-3, 'Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thine hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.' If this holy man, whose heart was upright with God, did thus complain, what should they do who are nothing else but wounds and putrified sores from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot? We think a man in a fever is in a miserable condition, who hath little rest day or night: but alas! feverish flames are nothing to the scorchings of conscience, and the fearful apprehensions of divine wrath: they that are under these are miserable indeed, because the pains of hell do compass them round about, and wherever they go, they carry their own hell along with them.

Object. But you will say, They that are most infected with sin feel little of this; how is it then so painful a disease?

Ans. 1. If they feel it not, the greater is their danger; for stupid diseases are the worst, and usually most mortal. It is an ill crisis and state of soul when men are past feeling: Eph. 4:19, 'Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness.' These have outgrown their consciences. There is hope of sensible sinners; their anguish may drive them to the physician, and make them inquisitive after a remedy: Acts

2:37, 'When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' But it is more dangerous when sins do not terrify but stupefy. A spiritual lethargy is the common disease that ruineth the far greatest part of the world.

2. The soul of a sinner never sits so easy but that he has his qualms and pangs of conscience, and that sometimes in the midst of jollity; as was the case of Belshazzar, while carousing in the cups of the temple. Certainly they feel enough to show that if they were cured of this disease, it would be a great comfort and felicity to them; their best pleasures are but stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret, poor sneaking delights, when they can get conscience asleep.

3. Though they feel not their diseases now, they shall hereafter. Oh, what a pain will sin be to them when God awakeneth them, either in this life, by letting a spark of his wrath fall into the conscience, and then they become a terror to themselves; or, if not here, yet in hell hereafter, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth!

Thirdly, It is a loathsome disease. The pain of sin, which worketh upon our fear, is first and soonest felt: but the loathsomeness of sin, which worketh on our shame, requireth a quicker and more tender sense. As a man overgrown with noisome boils and sores, is first affected with the pain caused by them, and then with the sight and smell of them; so it is with soul-distempers: Ps. 38:5, 'My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness;' and ver. 7, 'My loins are filled with a loathsome disease.' The soul abhors, and is ashamed of itself, when it hath anything of tenderness, or lively sense of the purity of God. Solomon telleth us that 'a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame,' Prov. 13:5. How loathsome? He is loathsome to God, who is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,' Hab. 1:13. Loathsome to good men, who can no more delight in him than a sound man can in the conversation of a leper: Prov. 29:27, "An unjust man is an abomination to the just.' Loathsome to indifferent men, for those that can allow sin in themselves dislike it in others: Titus 3:3, 'Hateful and hating one another.' Another's pride, sensuality, and worldliness, is offensive to us. Though we be proud, sensual, and worldly ourselves, yet it is an offence to ourselves; therefore

a sinner dareth not converse with his own heart, but doth what he can *to fly* from himself, to divert his thoughts from the sight of his own natural face in the glass of the word, as being ashamed of himself and his own ways: Rom. 6:21, 'What fruit had ye then of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' However it is enough for our purpose, if loathsome to God: Ps. 14:2,3, the psalmist telleth us, 'The Lord looked down from heaven.' And what did he see here below? 'They are altogether become filthy and abominable.' All their persons, all their actions flowing forth from their corrupt hearts, are vile and loathsome in God's sight. When God looked upon his creatures just as they passed his hand, all was very good, Gen. 1:31. But when once they were infected with sin, the case is altered, they are all become filthy and abominable; some more, some less gross, as to the outbreaking of sin; but they are all odious to God, and we are sensible of it, as appeareth by our shyness of God, and backwardness to look him in the face.

Fourthly, It is an infectious and catching disease. Sin cometh into the world by propagation rather than imitation: yet imitation and example hath a great force upon the soul: Eph. 2:3, *kata ton aiwna,* Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others;' Isa. 6:5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips.' Living among such, he had contracted some contagion and taint. It, is hard to converse with wicked ones and not to be defiled: Micah 1:9, 'Her wound is incurable, for it is come into Judah.' Samaria was desperately sick of provocations, and the taint reached to Judah also.

Fifthly, It is a mortal disease if we continue in it without repentance, for 'by sin came death' into the world, Rom. 5:12; and 'the wages of sin is death,' Rom. 6:23. Not only death temporal, which consists in the separation of the soul from the body, but death spiritual, which consists in an estrangement from God, as the author of the life of grace; yea, death eternal, which consists in a separation both of body and soul from the presence of God for ever, and is a perpetual living in deadly pain and torment. The second death is set forth by two notions—'the worm that never dieth,' and 'the fire that shall never be quenched,' Mark 9:44; by

which is meant the sting of conscience and the wrath of God. Conscience worketh on what is past, present, and to come. There is a vexing remembrance of what is past, your past folly and evil choice, past neglects of grace, past misspense of time, past abuse of mercies, past despising of the offered salvation. Oh, what cutting thoughts will these be to the damned to all eternity! There is a sense of what is present; they have nothing to divert their thoughts from their misery, no company nor sensual comforts, but are left to the bitter apprehension of their sad estate. There is also a fear of what is to come, or a fearful looking for of more wrath from God. The fire is the wrath of God, which inflicts pains upon the damned both in body and soul. There is no member or faculty free, but feeleth the misery of the second death. The agonies of the first death are soon over, but those of the second endure for ever. The first death is the more terrible because of this death which is to succeed it. In the first death our struggling is for life, we would not die; but here, for death and destruction, we would not live. This is the fruit of sin.

Secondly, Our recovery out of sin, and all the effects of it, which is our health. Before the application of the blood of Christ, every man in his natural estate is in no less dangerous a condition than a man that is wounded and bleeding to death: Luke 10:30, '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.' Not as if he had any spiritual life at all, but it is spoken in respect to his natural life. So before Christ's blood is applied, every man is dead spiritually, and is posting towards eternal death; but when he is regenerated and converted to God, then he is translated from death to life. Therefore this healing must be considered—

1. As to its nature.

2. With respect to the several periods of this benefit, as to its beginning, progress, and final consummation.

1. The nature of this cure, or health bestowed upon us, will be best understood by considering what is in sin. There are in sin four *things*—*culpa, macula, reatus, poena.*

[1] Culpa. The fault is the criminal action, which is the foundation of our guilt. Now this properly is not healed, but passed by, or not brought into judgment against us, for as it is an action it cannot be reversed. *Factum infectum fieri nequit* (That which is done cannot be undone.)As it is a criminal action against the law of God, it cannot lose its nature, for Christ came not to make a fault to be no fault. This properly is not healed. Indeed some phrases express pardon but by a passing by: Micah 7:18, 'That pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage.' The Lord passeth over the fault, or quits the plea towards them that own their faults, The Lord seeth them, and not seeth them; that is, will not lay them to their charge: Isa. 57:18, 'I have seen his ways, and will heal him;' that is, not enter into judgment with him. In short, the fault is not disannulled, but passed over, and cast behind God's back. The offender is not made innocent, but pardonable on certain terms. We must remember the fault, but God forgets it.

[2] Here is *macula,* which is the blot or inclination to sin again. So he healeth us by sanctification, renewing and cleansing us by the Spirit, which is the work of God: Exod. 15:26, 'I am the Lord that healeth thee.' This is most properly his healing grace. So God reneweth and healeth our natures: Ps. 103:3, 'Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.'

[3.] There is *reatus,* the guilt or obligation to punishment. God dissolveth this by his sovereign authority, according to his new covenant: 2 Chron. 30:20, 'The Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.' There was no actual stroke or judgment upon them, but healing—there is dissolving the guilt. He forgave their sin, or remitted the penalty which they had incurred by eating the passover otherwise than it was written.

[4.] There is *poena,* the punishment, which is external, internal, or eternal. The external punishment is *affliction*. This is the wound that sin maketh in us. This wound God healeth by restoring prosperity: Hosea 6:1, 'Come, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up;' 2 Chron. 7:14, 'I will forgive their sin, and heal their land.' The internal punishment consists in trouble of conscience, or the anguish and pain occasioned by the fear of God's wrath, which he healeth: Ps. 6:2, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am

weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed;' Ps. 12:4, 'Lord, be merciful unto me, and heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.' As to eternal, or the mortal wound of sin, he healeth that by reversing the sentence of eternal death, and bestowing upon us eternal life, that from children of wrath we may be made heirs of glory. This grant is the true balsam for a wounded soul, when it is not only freed from the fears of the flames of hell and the sting of death, but made heir according to the hope of eternal life. If God and heaven be not matter of comfort, I know not what is. This is the portion of one that believeth in Christ.

2. The several periods of this benefit.

[1.] The cure is begun when we repent and believe, and so are renewed and reconciled to God; then the danger of death is over: John 5:24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.' The disease will not prove mortal.

[2] It is carried on by degrees, as he doth sanctify us more and more by his Spirit, and settles us in the peace of the gospel. Christ is still in hand with the cure: Mal. 4:2, 'The Sun of righteousness shall arise upon you with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up like calves in the stall.' Increase of grace and joy in the Holy Ghost is our continued healing. Dangerous sores and deadly wounds are not so soon cured. We have defects and distempers which disable us for duty, but the healing virtue prevaileth more and more. The wicked grow more and more diseased, and in the godly there are some ups and downs; but the Lord promiseth to heal our backslidings: Hosea 14:4, 'I will heal your back-sliding, and I will love you freely; for mine anger is turned away from you.' He will take away more and more the guilt, pollution, and other effects of sin.

[3.] Our state of perfect health is in heaven; there is our complete and eternal welfare, when sin and misery shall be no more. Therefore heaven is set forth by the tree of life which groweth in the midst of paradise, and 'beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations,' Rev. 22:2; and ver. 14, it is said, 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they

may have a right to eat of the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city;' that is into the happiness of the saints in glory. These enter into the New Jerusalem, and are there fully healed.

Thirdly, The means of our recovery is by Christ's stripes.

1. None but Christ can cure us, for he is the physician of souls —all else are physicians of no value. Sin is the disease, the Redeemer's grace the medicine, and salvation is our health; and then it is perfect when we are fully saved from sin, and all the consequents of it. Now this is above the sinner's cure, till God himself takes us in hand. Christ is the Sun of righteousness, who hath healing in his wings, and hath set forth himself under the notion of a physician Mat. 9:12, 'The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.' This sore sickness can be cured by no other hand. And the proper nature of his grace is to be medicinal, that is, a healing dispensation.

2. Christ cureth us not by doctrine and example only, but by merit and suffering; for it is said in the text, We are healed by his stripes. I confess the doctrine of Christ hath a great tendency this way; for it is said, Prov. 4:22, 'My word is life to them that find it, and health to their flesh.' There is the medicine for sick souls; there are our cordials and encouragements to prevent sinkings and despondences of spirit; there are potent arguments against distrustful cares and fears, excellent remedies against covetousness, sensuality, and pride; forcible dissuasions from unkind and unholy walking. In short, it is the common shop and storehouse against any distemper incident to the soul. The words of the Lord Jesus are wholesome words, but yet the virtue of the word mainly results from his merit and satisfaction: John 17:19, 'And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth;' and Eph. 5:25,26, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' So his example hath a great force, seeing how prone the nature of man is to imitate. And this example is so much commended to us by his kindness and condescension in coming down to be subject to the same laws we live by, by the exactness of it, and the issue and consequent—life and immortality —into which he entered to give us a visible demonstration of the success of our obedience. But an example would nothing at all have profited those

that are dead in sin and hated of God, if some other means had not been used. Compare 1 Peter 2:21 with 24; 'For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps;' then ver. 24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed.' There needed grace to make example effectual: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

3. Christ's merit and sufferings do effect our cure, as they purchased the Spirit for us, who reneweth and healeth our sick souls: Titus 3:5,6, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' We have it by virtue of Christ's sufferings: Gal. 3:13,14, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' So in many other places. He is powerful to change our hearts, and to take away sin. Our wound is not incurable. The Spirit of God can and will heal the diseased soul. God's justice being satisfied in Christ, he is at more liberty now to dispense his grace.

Use 1. Is for reproof, and that to divers sorts; as-

1. Those that are not sensible of their deadly wounds and the diseases of their souls. There is a carelessness and insensibility in most of soul diseases. If the body be but ill at ease, they complain presently, and seek help for their bodies, but never think of the languishing condition of their souls, and how lamentably distempered they are. They are hard by death's door, on the brink of destruction, yet are merry and laugh, lay not their condition to heart; nay, think it an injury done them, if you mind them of their cure. Though they are spiritually sick, yet they will not know nor acknowledge it, but, like persons of a distempered brain, who take the physician for an enemy, they murmur at and resist all Christ's healing methods, as if their duty were their torment, and not their disease. These

are in love with their diseases: John 3:19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.'

2. Some would have peace and comfort by Christ, but neglect healing; whereas both were purchased by him, and both must be regarded by us. We should aim at a sound cure, not to have the grief assuaged only, but the distemper removed. It is a mountebank's cure to stop the pain and let alone the cause; yet such a cure do they seek after that are more earnest for ease and comfort than grace. A good Christian is troubled with the strength of sin, as well as the guilt of it, and mindeth the rectitude of all his faculties as well as the ease and peace of his conscience, that he may be enabled to walk with God cheerfully, in the way of holiness, as well as enjoy the pardon of sins 1 John 1:9, 'He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' He would be an unwise man who, having his leg broken, should only mind to be eased of the pain, but not take care to have it set right again. So foolish is that Christian who is earnest for comfort, but taketh no care how to be directed and enabled to please God. Sin, in some sense, is worse than damnation.

3. It reproveth those who think it impossible to get rid of their carnal distempers. Will you lessen the merit of Christ and the power of his Spirit, or doubt of the promise of God? Jer. 3:22, 'Return, and I will heal you.' Now, upon these terms we should come to Christ with confidence, to be the better for coming: Jer. 17:14, 'Heal me, and I shall be healed.' God can heal, and he will; that is, he is ready to do it, or else why did he take this course?

Use 2. Is to press us to come to God for healing. I shall give you a few directions.

1. You must, in a broken-hearted manner, be sensible of your sickness. It is the sensible sinner Christ undertaketh to cure; the heart-whole are not within the compass of his commission: Luke 5:31,32, 'They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' A sense of our disease is a good step toward our cure. God will so heal that he will make us feel our sickness,

that the smart of it may be a warning to us for the future, that we may not presume to offend again when we are recovered: Josh. 22:17, 'Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day?' We must not make too bold with God.

2. We must by earnest prayer seek this blessing of God, for God will be entreated for all things which he meaneth to bestow: Isa. 19:22, 'He shall be entreated of them, and he shall heal them;' Ps. 91:14, 'Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.' The leaven of these distempers is so kneaded into the nature of man that it cannot be gotten out presently; therefore come often to God by prayer for healing, sometimes this, sometimes that distemper; now that our pride may be mortified, and anon our impatience; at another time our carnal fear, our sensuality; still praying as occasion requireth. We speed well at the throne of grace if we obtain the riddance and abatement of any one spiritual disease.

3. We must use God's means, viz.:—(1.) The word, which is our medicine: 2 Tim. 1:13, 'Hold fast the form of sound words which thou bast heard of me in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.' Keep the soul healthy. (2.) The sacraments, they are a part of the medicinal dispensation, sealing the great benefits of God towards us, and our duty towards him, and so are a help against backsliding. (3.) Meditation on the death of Christ, not only as a price and ransom, but morally, as it represents the odiousness of sin, and also the love of Christ towards us. So that, out of gratitude to him, and kindness to ourselves, we are bound to abstain from sin for the future. *Viscera patent per vulnera.* By his stripes we see what we have deserved, and what Christ hath endured.

4. When God is seriously dealing with us about a cure, and applying means of healing, let us take heed we do not lose the advantage and grow worse: Jer. 51:9, 'We would have healed Babylon, but she would not be healed' So of Sion it is said, Hosea 7:1, 'When I would have healed Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered.' God is willing to offer us help to cure us of our sins, and affordeth us special means and excitations to that purpose. Now, when the waters are stirred, we should step in that we may be made whole; otherwise the disease is the more irritated, and breaketh out in a worse manner than it did before. The great Physician of souls must be carefully observed and constantly waited upon, and in time he will give us perfect ease and health.

5. Take heed, when you are healed, of casting yourselves into new diseases: John 5:14, 'Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;' Heb. 9:14, 'How much more shall 'the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?'

THE SIXTH VERSE.

All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.

IN this verse we have two things which ought to be matter of continual meditation to us all our days, to wit, our misery by sin, and our remedy by Christ.

1. Our misery in the former clause; where—

[1.] Our sin is charged upon us collectively in common: *we have all gone astray*.

[2.] Distributively: *every one to his own way*. We all agree in turning aside from the right way of pleasing and enjoying of God; and we disagree, as each one hath a by-path of his own, some running after this lust, some after that, and so are not only divided from God, but divided from one another, while every one maketh his will his law. *Velle suum cuique est, nec voto vivitur uno:* several desires breed difference.

2. The remedy provided against this misery: *and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.* The burden of sin, that would otherwise have ruined us, is cast upon Christ. The sheep wander and the shepherd is slain. He is the good shepherd that layeth down his life for the sheep. David saith, 2 Sam. 24:17, 'These sheep, what have they done?' David was more tender of his people than of himself, yet David was guilty. But here it is otherwise, for our iniquities were laid upon Christ. Here we may observe:—

[1] The author of this benefit, or who it was that provided this remedy for us: *the Lord*.

[2.] The nature of the benefit: *he laid our iniquities on him;* that is, on Christ.

[3.] The persons concerned: the iniquities *of us all;* all those that are at length gained to believe in him, and return to him, as the bishop and shepherd of their souls.

First, I begin with the misery or the woeful case wherein all those for whom Christ died were in before conversion.

1. They wandered in their ignorance and sinful ways to their own

destruction, set forth by the going astray of sheep: 'All we, like sheep, are gone astray.' It is a usual similitude, which is not put here by way of extenuation, as in some scriptures, as 'I send you forth as sheep among wolves;' but in a way of aggravation, not to extenuate the sin, but to set it out the more. It is to show the folly of man. Sheep, of all creatures, are most apt to stray without a shepherd. They are apt either to be driven out of the fold as a dog or wolf scattereth the sheep, or to wander of their own accord, a fit emblem of our folly, who love to depart from God, and go astray from the way of life Rom. 3:12, 'They are all gone out of the way;' that is, the way to true happiness.

2. They were unable to bring themselves into the right way: Luke 15:18, 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: St Austin saith, *Domine, errare per me potui, redire non potui*—Lord, I could go astray of my own accord, but could not return by myself.

3. In hazard to be preyed upon by the roaring lion, and the dogs and wolves that are abroad: 1 Peter 5:8, 'Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.' Our misery is mentioned to show the necessity of a Saviour; and this misery is made to consist in sin or straying from God; the sense of which is our first motive to make us look after Christ, that we by him may return again to our own happiness, even to God, who is the refuge of our souls, and the centre of our rest. But let us more nearly observe how our misery is described. And first of the universal particle, *all we;* and then of the distributive particle, *every one*.

First, From the universal particle *all,* we may observe:—

Doct. 1. That no son of Adam can exempt himself from the number of those that are gone astray from God and the way of true happiness. I shall explain the point in these considerations:—

First, All are sinners by nature. There are three branches of original sin:—

1. The communication of Adam's guilt.

2. The want of original righteousness.

3. The corruption or pollution of nature. These are derived from Adam to all his children, and in respect of these they are all out of the way.

1. Because the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to us; his guilt we receive as children do the brand of their ancestors, that are tainted in blood and forfeited in law. Look, as Reuben's act in defiling his father's bed was a stain to all, his posterity, and they lost the sovereignty by it, Gen. 49:4, so all mankind, being in Adam, as they descended from him, and were in him as in a common person, they sinned in him, so that what Adam did we did. Thus it is said, Heb. 7:9, 'Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.' There is ground you see in nature for the imputation of the father's deed to those that descend of him: and God may as justly impute to us Adam's sin as to Levi Abraham's paying of tithes. When Abraham did it, it was as if Levi did it; and when Adam sinned, it was as if you sinned. We were all in his loins at that time; and, if it had been our personal case, we should have done so. Now this answer may satisfy as to the angels, that do not beget one another, and, therefore, sustain not the person of one another;—their sins do not take hold of one another; they, being all immediately begotten by God, are not guilty of each others' sins, unless it be by consent and mutual agreement; therefore, those only fell that combined to follow one as the ringleader of the faction. Hence it is said, Mat. 25:41, 'The devil and his angels;' not as if begotten by him, but adhering to him. But to return, in pursuance of the former matter, note, the scripture looketh upon parents as sustaining a common person, and, therefore, what injury is done to the father, is spoken of as done to his seed; and many families suffer for the miscarriages of their progenitors: Gen. 4:10, 'Thy brother's blood crieth unto me:' thou hast shed the blood of his offspring in spilling his, and, therefore, it is *bloods,* in the plural number. And so for Jacob and Esau, God elected them as sustaining the common persons of their posterity, and so likewise in many places. Now this holdeth good in man's justice, for treason in the father taints the blood of the son.

2. The want of original righteousness, which cometh upon us thus. As poor and ignoble parents convey their poverty and want to their children, and none can give what he hath not. A bankrupt father must needs leave

his family poor; so Adam, having lost his righteousness, he could not bequeath it as a legacy to his children.

3. As to the corruption and pollution of nature, that is conveyed as a leprosy is propagated to the children of lepers: 2 Kings 5:27, 'The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and to thy seed for ever;' so that every child born of that line was born a leper. Thus men beget children like themselves, corrupt and sinful; the copy answereth the original—the blood resembleth the kind. Of vipers there cometh nothing but vipers, and sinners produce sinners after their kind. If the immediate parent be sanctified, yet, that being not natural, doth not alter the case; from a circumcised father there doth not come a circumcised child,—threshed corn doth not produce threshed corn.

But let us consider these branches a little more particularly.

1. All men are sinners as they partake of Adam's guilt in being descended of him. As they sprang from him, they were in him as in a common person, and sinned in him; as Levi paid tithes in Abraham, as aforesaid, Heb. 7:9. To be sure, sin and death came upon him and upon all: Rom. 5:12, 'Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so that death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' If death, as is visible, then sin, even upon children: ver. 14, 'Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.' Otherwise the apostle's reason would not be good and cogent, and there would be a punishment without a guilt: but *ubi poena, ibi culpa* (where there is punishment, there is guilt). Yea, Rom., 5:19, 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' *Made sinners* is meant *sense forensi,* in a law or court sense, by the imputation of Adam's guilt, as appeareth by the opposition. In short, those things are said to be imputed to us which are reckoned ours to all intents and purposes, as much as if they were our own. As another man's debt, taken on upon my score and account, is really and truly mine: so Adam's disobedience, and Christ's righteousness are imputed to all those whom they represented.

2. They are sinners as they want original righteousness: Rom. 3:23, 'For

all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' By 'the glory of God' may be meant his glorious recompenses, or his glorious image. The latter, questionless, is meant: 1 Cor. 11:7, 'A man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.' See also 2 Cor. 3:18, 'But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.' This necessarily maketh them sinners: for the soul being destitute of a principle to incline it to God, wholly accommodateth itself to the interests of the flesh, and is only employed to cater for the body and the bodily life; for, though it be created by God, yet being created destitute of grace and original righteousness, and put into the body, it soon forgets its divine original, and that region of spirits from whence it came, and conformeth itself to the body; as water put into a round or square vessel, taketh form from the vessel into which it is put. The soul doth only affect things present and known, having no other principle to guide it. Now things present and known are the delights of the body and bodily life, such as meat, drink, natural generation, sports, wealth, honour, and pomp of living. And the soul is turned from the love and study of better things. That self-love that carrieth us to these things is naturally good but morally evil, as it destroys the love of God, and the care of pleasing and enjoying him. There is a conversion from God to the creature, a falling off from our last end.

3. There is pollution or corruption of nature, the stock of sin which we have inbred in us, consisting in a blind mind, perverse will, disorderly affections, an unruly appetite, and evil inclinations to sensual things. This corruption is often spoken of in scripture: Ps. 51:5, 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;' John 3:6, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh.' We all partake of the same carnal nature, the dunghill of corruption, which wreaketh out in the mind by vain thoughts, in the heart by carnal desires, and constantly discovereth itself by a proneness to all evil: Gen. 6:5, the imaginations and 'the thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually.' An aversion from and enmity to all that is good Rom. 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be.' Man, in respect to that which is good, is described not only by terms that imply weakness, but hostility and opposition, as unfit for every good work, and so opposite to it Col.

1:21, 'Alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works.' If a man were indifferent to good and evil, a neuter and not a rebel, the case were the less; but the bent of his heart is against it, as appeareth not only by scripture but experience. There is a proneness, and a greater inclination to evil than to good. Now, from whence should it come? Not by example, for then this inclination would not discover itself so early, and children would be as capable of good as evil. We catch a disease from the sick, but not health from the sound. We find a manifest disproportion in all our faculties. In the understanding, a sharpness of apprehension in carnal things, but a dulness and slowness to conceive of what is spiritual—the will is backward and slow to what is good, but there is a strong bent and urging in it to what is evil. We need a bridle to curb and restrain us from evil, and a spur to excite and quicken us to good. Evil things persevere and continue with us. Oh, but how fickle and changeable are we in any holy matter! The memory is slippery in what is good, firm and strong in what is evil, the affections quick, and easily stirred; like fire in tinder, they catch presently what is evil, but are cold and dead, like fire in wet or green wood, to anything that is good. The body is unwieldy for any holy use, but ready to execute any carnal purpose. In short, there is the seed of all actual transgressions before it break forth; so that we are gone astray and out of the way indeed. This should be minded by us. Nothing inferreth so much a contradiction to God as our being sinners by nature. This is a standing enmity; actual sin is a blow and away, a fit of anger, this a state of malice. Surely, we had need look to a redeemer and a change by regeneration, that are so corrupt and fleshly in all the powers and faculties both of soul and body. This secludeth us from any possibility of attaining heaven and true happiness.

Secondly, All that come to the use of reason have actually sinned against God. The bad: 1 Kings 8:46, 'For there is no man that sinneth not.' The good: Eccles. 7:20, 'For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.' Our nature, being unsubdued, discovereth itself in acts suitable: Gen. 8:21, 'For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, and that continually.' Though there be mixtures and intermissions, and though this corruption be in part broken, yet it is not wholly vanquished; as cloth dyed in the wool doth not easily leave its first mixture. Principles in the best are mixed, *so* are their operations, like fair

water passing through a dirty sink. *Bonum non est nisi ex integro* (the good are not so apart from their innocence)—not so purely good, as merely evil before. The best are either overtaken, Gal. 6:1, or overborne, Rom. 7. The saints in heaven are called 'spirits made perfect,' Heb. 12:23. They sin no more; but here we come very short of that exact obedience which the law requireth: Prov. 20:9, 'Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?' They have entered upon the work of cleansing their hearts, but cannot get them quite clean, but still go on with the work, and make use of the blood of Christ. Though none accuse them, yet God and their own hearts may justly condemn them for many sinful swervings from their duty.

Thirdly, This departing from God and his ways is fitly represented by the straying of sheep: 'All we like sheep have gone astray.'

In the general it implieth:—

1. That we are brutish in our sin and defection from God: it could not be expressed but by a comparison fetched from the beasts; we were like sheep led aside in a sensual way. Man aimed at being equal with God, and he was made beneath himself: Ps. 49:12 'Nevertheless, man being in honour, abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish.' He continued not in the honour of his creation, and in that excellency and dignity wherein God had set him; but became like a beast, governed by his senses and lower appetite. It is true of all men, they do not continue in the excellency of their being, they have lost much of the dignity of their reason, and are more led by sense, as the brute creatures are. And therefore you have the saints often complaining: Ps. 73:22, 'So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.' I was as *behemoth, a* great beast. Sometimes they have no command of their affections, but are merely led by the unruliness of appetite or passions: so Prov. 30:2, 'I was more brutish than any man;' that is, he was no more able to gain heavenly knowledge, whereby to be wise for heaven and salvation, than brute creatures are able to wield man's reason, whereby to apply themselves to the affairs of this life. Therefore man is often compared to beasts for fierceness and cruelty, as the prophet calleth the proud oppressors cows: Amos 4:3, 'And ye shall go out of the breaches, every cow at that which is before her.' So for their rude wanton simplicity, they are compared to 'a wild ass's colt,' Job 11:12.

And here to a sheep in decay of knowledge and government. In the general, then, it implieth something brutish in us, and that through the fall we have slipped beneath the excellency of our rank and being.

2. Proneness to err. No creature is more prone to wander and lose his way than a sheep without a shepherd, which is easily seduced. So are we apt to transgress the bounds whereby God hath hedged up our way: Jer. 14:10, 'Thus saith the Lord unto this people, thus have they loved to wander.' They loved to try experiments in a way of sin. Man indeed would fain transmit the fault from himself, as Adam doth obliquely upon God: 'The woman which thou gavest me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat,' Gen. 3:12. It may not be the shepherd's fault if the sheep wander, but their own nature, their aptness to wander. When we bring ourselves into inconveniences, we are apt to murmur, and secretly to accuse God in our thoughts, as if he did not sufficiently provide for us. Solomon saith, Prov. 19:3, 'The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.' It is our own folly, and we blame our own fate, our evil destiny, and those unlucky stars that shone at our birth; and in these things we blame God himself. The saints themselves have been guilty of this evil, fretting at God for what inconvenience comes to pass through their own sin and folly. 2 Sam. 6:8, it is said, 'David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah.' He should have been displeased with himself and his own ignorance, to order the ark to be carried upon a cart, when it should have been carried upon the priests' shoulders. Thus, as sheep, it noteth to us self-abasement, because of our own proneness we did it as sheep, and they are apt to wander.

3. Our inability to return, or to bring ourselves into the right way again. It is like a sheep, not like a swine or a dog; these creatures will find the way home again, but a sheep is irrecoverably lost without the shepherd's diligence and care: Jer, 50:6, 'My people have been lost sheep, their shepherds have caused them to go astray; they have turned them away on the mountains, they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place.' The farther they go the farther they will be from the flock, and in a very sad condition. It holdeth good too here; for we do not know the way back again to God. Austin saith, I could wander by myself, and could not return by myself. And God saith as much, Hosea 13:9, 'O

Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.' That is done in a moment which we cannot help to all eternity. Our destruction is from ourselves, but our reparation from God. The good shepherd bringeth home the lost sheep upon his shoulders, Luke 15:5.

4. It noteth our readiness to follow evil example. A sheep is *animal sequax,* they run one after another, and one straggler draweth away the whole flock: Eph. 2:2,3, 'Wherein in times past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others.' There is Satan, corrupt examples, and evil inclinations, the world and the flesh, all concurring to ruin man. We easily swim with the stream and current of others' examples, and do as they do; and even so men take and do a great deal of hurt by evil examples. Thus sins are propagated, and we live by imitation; like sheep, we draw others out of the pasture together with ourselves. Sheep go by troops, and so do men follow the multitude to do evil; and what is common passeth into our practice without observance.

5. The danger of straying sheep, which when out of the pasture, are often in harm's way, and exposed to a thousand dangers: Jer. 50:6,7, 'My people have been like lost sheep; all that have found them have devoured them.' So are we in danger to be preyed upon by the roaring lion, and the dogs and wolves that are abroad. In our sinful estate we are as sheep whom no man taketh up, being out of God's protection, and so a ready prey for Satan. See how pathetically the prophet describeth the misery of Israel: Hosea 4:16, 'Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place.' Oh! consider what it is for a poor solitary lamb to wander through the mountains, where, it may be, some hungry lion and ravenous wolf looketh for such a prey. Even so it is with straying men, their judgment sleepeth not; it may be the next hour they will be delivered over to destruction Rom. 3:16, 'Destruction and misery is in their way, and the way of peace they have not known.'

Use 1. Is to show us the necessity of a Redeemer. All are included under a necessity of looking after a remedy; if all be sick, they must all seek to the

physician or perish. And therefore it concerneth every one to see what they have done for the saving of their lost souls. 'All the world is become guilty before God,' as the apostle saith Rom. 3:19. Guilty you are, but have you sued out your discharge?' By nature you lost the glory of God, but are you changed into the image and likeness of Christ from glory to glory? You were polluted in your first birth, but are you born again of water and the Spirit? Are you saved by being washed in the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour? You are sinners by practice, but are you washed in the blood of the Lamb, and reconciled to God? You have gone astray, but is the case altered with you? 1 Peter 2:25, 'For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.' Do you use Christ as a mediator to seek the favour of God by him? Do you put yourselves into his hands as your Shepherd, and resign and give up yourselves to be governed by him as your bishop and overseer? As the misery involveth all, so doth the care and necessity of looking after a remedy concern all. In the first Adam we contracted guilt, and became liable to the wrath of God; in the second, we have righteousness, which is a pledge of God's favour. In the first Adam we lost the image of God; by the second, we are made partakers of the divine nature. In the first, we lost paradise; but by the second, are restored to a better paradise, heaven itself.

But let us not reflect only upon this common necessity, but our own personal necessity, what need we have to look after a Redeemer, and to get an interest in him, and that his redeeming grace may become glorious in our eyes.

1. In your natural estate you were every one of you as lost sheep, fugitives, and strangers, and enemies to him. Thy way was lost, thy God lost, thy happiness lost, thy soul lost; so it was, for Christ 'came to seek and to save that which was lost.' Then the devil was thy shepherd, then thou didst put thyself under his conduct, and God was looked upon as thy enemy. Oh, think of it; at a day old thou wert sinful, even to the death, and worthy of God's hatred: Col. 1:21, 'You were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works.' And his wrath remaineth on you, till application be made of the blood of Christ upon gospel terms: John 3:36,

'He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' These terms are repentance and turning to God. Now dost thou believe that thou wert a child of wrath by nature, a fire-brand of hell? and canst thou be secure, and desirest thou not to be freed from so great a danger?

2. In practice. How didst thou wander and depart from God throughout the whole course of thy life? The stragglings of thy youth, how canst thou look back upon them without shame and blushing? Cry out then, Ps. 25:7, 'Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.' And in thy riper years how shamefully didst thou stray from God, even since thou begannest to have more of conscience, and a greater use of reason? It were endless to trace us in all our by-paths: 'Who can understand his errors?' Ps. 19:12. In every age, in every condition, in every business, we have been wandering from God.

3. Since grace received we have had our deviations: Ps. 119:176, 'I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.' Though our hearts be set to walk with God in the main, yet we are ever and anon swerving from the rule, either neglecting our duty to God, or transgressing against the holy commandment. Oh, therefore eat your passover with sour herbs, and bless the Lord for finding you out in your wanderings, and following you with the tenders of his grace in Christ.

Use 2. If the Spirit of God sets forth our natural estate by the straying or wandering of sheep, see if this disposition be still in you, yea or no. Are you not apt to go astray from God and from his ways?

1. From God. Every sin is a departing from him, but especially unbelief: Heb. 3:12, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living' God.' Adam thought to find much happiness in forbidden fruit, to mend and better his condition, but was miserably disappointed. So when we do not believe God in his word, we will be trying our fortunes and taking our own swing and course. But I speak of a more general disposition. There are some whose main care it is to be getting away from God; as the prodigal went into a far country, Luke

15:11. They think to be better anywhere than at home under God's eye and presence. This appeareth by the care they take to keep God out of their thoughts: Ps. 10:4, 'God is not in all his thoughts.' A thought of God rushing into their mind is very unwelcome and unpleasant to them; they are backward and hang off from communion with God, and the duties of religion are looked upon as a melancholy interruption.

2. From the ways of God. Though they are the only ways of peace and life, and will surely make us happy in the end, yet naturally we are of a libertine and yokeless spirit. Sinners looking upon all things through the spectacles of the flesh, count them harsh and unequal, and a strict confinement: Mat. 7:14, 'Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there' be that find it.' They cannot endure God's restraint: Prov. 14:12, ' There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' The broad and easy ways of sin are pleasing to flesh and blood, but destructive to the soul. Well, then, he that counteth the company of God or the ways of God irksome, hath this wandering disposition still remaining with him; and if it be not checked it will prove his eternal destruction. The sheep do not fare the better for going out of the pasture. We leave all good in leaving the chiefest pod; and in departing from God you turn' your back upon your own happiness; as beasts put into a good pasture will yet seek out some gap that they may range abroad.

I come now to observe from the distribution of this common error every *man to his own way:—*

Doct. 2. That there are many several ways of sinning; or thus, though there be one path to heaven, yet there are several ways of sinning and going to hell.

Every man hath his several course. And as the channel is cut, so his corrupt nature findeth an issue and passage: Eccles. 7:29, 'God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.' One hath one invention, and another another, wherein he imagineth to find contentment and happiness, but findeth none. Man swerving from the state of happiness and sufficiency wherein God had created him, thinketh to better his condition, and therefore hath many devices and inventions,

which indeed make it worse. So 1 John 2:16, 'For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Though no sin cometh amiss to a carnal heart, yet some are more kindly and suitable to that particular humour. One's notorious blemish is the lust of the eyes, worldliness; another, sensuality; another, pride; one this sin, another that. Hence the psalmist saith, Ps. 18:*23, 'I* kept myself from mine iniquity.' That which most urgeth us, and prevaileth with us, we should endeavour to mortify.

The reasons how this cometh to pass are 1. Because of the activeness of man's spirit. It is always a-devising wickedness, which as it is true most especially of the malicious musing mind, so of all evil hearts: Ps. 64:6, 'They search out iniquities, they accomplish a diligent search; both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.' A wicked spirit is a searching spirit; they contrive new ways; they are always finding out new inventions and devices; they are not contented with the way God hath set them, and therefore will try others.

2. It happeneth through diversity of constitutions. *Amores animi sequuntur humores corporis*—the conditions of the mind follow the constitution of the body. The matter of some men's bodies is more viciously disposed than others are. We plainly see the body hath some indirect operation upon the soul; the affections, in their work and exercise, depend upon the body; and these corrupt affections meeting with a disposed body for them, by a violent sway carry the whole man with them. And this reason is the stronger, because the devil joineth with our tempers to help on those sins to which we are naturally disposed, as wantonness, drunkenness, gluttony; or if of a better constitution, to pride and vainglory. As when the devil observeth a lustful man, he helpeth forward the temptation, and offereth occasions, stirring up raging and immoderate desires, until at length, forgetting all shame and modesty, or the danger of punishments, he does most foully pollute himself. So if to luxury and gluttony, he presents sweet baits till the soul is drowned and drenched in meats and drinks, and there be no sense of piety, and the heart is made unwieldy to prayer or any good duty. So for contentious or furious persons; whatever the constitution be, he 'worketh mightily in the children of disobedience,' Eph. 2:2. Godly men find least hurt by him, as

being led by the Spirit, and avoid the occasions and snares, and strive against evil suggestions, and yet they smart too much under his malice many times, through the advantage he hath over them by their constitutions.

3. It happeneth from their business and occasions in the world. Many men are engaged to ways of sin because they suit best with their employments, the sin of their calling, as vainglory in a minister. The apostle saith, 'Ordain not a novice, lest he be lifted up of pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil,' 1 Tim. 3:6. So worldliness suits a man of business, or deceitfulness in his trade; and corruption is common to a magistrate. Several callings and businesses have their several corruptions. Men easily slide into the corruption of their way, and every calling, through the wickedness of our hearts, is made to serve this or that sin.

4. Custom and education. Aristotle saith, It is ill education that engageth men to a way of wickedness, and it is not easy to break them off from it. Vessels will not easily quit their first savour, and customs will not easily be left. Teach a child the way of the Lord and it will stick by him: Prov. 22:6, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'

5. Company and example. Men learn from them with whom they converse, and thence come national sins, partly as they run in the blood, but more by example. Of the Germans we learn drunkenness and gluttony; of the French, wantonness. Men shape their practices to the patterns that are before them, and learn their way; for it easily taints the spirits. And thus you see why there are so many inventions and ways of wickedness.

Use 1. Well, then, do not be too ready to bless yourselves, provided the sins of others break not out upon you: do not flatter yourselves that you run not into the same sins that others do. The devil may take you in another snare that suiteth more with your temper and condition of life. Some are sensual and some vainglorious, others worldly; many meet in hell that do not go thither the same way. A man may not be as other men, and yet he may not be as he should be: Luke 18:11, 'The pharisee stood

and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men;' yet 'the publican went down to his house justified rather than the proud pharisee.' Those that slighted the invitation to the marriage-feast had their several diversions and reasons of excuse: Mat. 22:5, 'But they all made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.' One hath business to keep him from Christ, and another pleasures and the pomps and vanities of the present world, and another has his superstitious observances. But all obstruct the power of the truth, and the receiving of Christ into their souls. Every man will have his way, saith Luther upon this text. Some follow their hawks and hounds, and neglect their precious and immortal souls. Others busy themselves in heaping up riches; others are for plays and sports to fool away the day of grace. 'My way,' saith he, 'when I was a monk, was to fast and pray till I had made myself sick; to observe the statutes of my order strictly. I called upon the blessed Virgin, and St George, and St Christopher; and this was my way. And so vile a creature as I was, for all this, became the more sinful.' Others may hate this or that public and visible blemish, but what are thy failings? John 8:7,' He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.' We may rashly censure others, and descant on their faults, but it is better to look inward. Do not I offend God as much another way as those whom I censure? There is a double madness—not only that which is idle and light, and breaketh out in strange freaks and furious extravagances, but that which is more sober, solemn, and grave. A frenzy betrayeth itself by deep musings and high conceits. So it is true of these discoveries of sin. Some delight in vain pleasures, others go to hell in a graver course. When a man perisheth, he 'eateth the fruit of his own way, and is filled with his own devices,' Prov. 1:31.

2. Stop your way of sinning, pluck out thy right eye, cut off thy right hand, Mat. 5:29,30. Your trial lieth there, as Abraham was tried in offering up his Isaac; and David voucheth it as a mark of sincerity: Ps. 23:23, 'I was upright before thee, and kept myself from mine iniquity.' It will prove a stumbling block, and eat out all the heart and power of grace if let alone. It concerneth us in our covenanting with God to set against the sin of this inbred and natural inclination. Though original sin dispose us to all sin, yet our particular and personal inclination may carry us more strongly to some one kind of sin: 'Heb. 12:1, 'Let us lay aside every weight, and the

sin which doth so easily beset us.' Thus childhood is wanton, and old age touchy and covetous. Sins take the throne by turns, according to our vocation and course of life. Every calling hath its temptations, and there is a snare which others meet not with. Every condition of life hath a predominant sin; as the young man with his great possessions. Oh! let us consider our tender parts, our Delilah, our Herodias, that sin that hindereth us most in closing with Christ, that sin that most engrosseth our thoughts; for they always follow the temper of our hearts. Some sins we hide under the tongue, Job 20:12, which we cannot endure should be touched; our private sore is a tender place. Thus Herod would not be crossed in his Herodias, and Felix trembled when Paul 'reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,' Acts 24:25, because he lived in intemperance with Drusilla, his pretended wife. That which you reserve in turning to God, that which you set up a toleration in your hearts for, even this sin must be bewailed to God, and you must seek the blood of Christ to mortify it with all the promising occasions of it. Act the contrary grace, and see how you can deny yourselves in what you most affect.

Use 2. Is caution not to walk slightly. There is but one right path, there are many evil ones. As one said, Evil is manifold, and the way of sin divideth itself into divers paths; you may easily mistake. See that place, Prov. 4:26,27, 'Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established: turn not to the right hand, nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil.' Walk with a great deal of care and circumspection. When it is so easy to err, a man would be solicitous.

The apostle blameth those that did not *orJopodein,* not 'walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel,' Gal. 2:14. They did not go with a right foot. The world thinketh strictness to be folly and niceness. You see there is a great deal of reason for it: there is error on both sides of truth, and you may easily miscarry: there is an extreme on both hands. A little to direct you, mind that place, Mat. 7:14, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it.' There are some way-marks. I think, without wrong to that place, that I may give you three—a strait gate, a narrow way, and few company.

1. A strait gate. The entrance into it puts the soul shrewdly to it, whether

taken for the coming out of ourselves, or the getting into Christ. It is a narrow way to carry the soul right. It is like the passages by which Jonathan and his armour-bearer sought to get up to the Philistines: 1 Sam. 14:4, 'There was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side; the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other was Seneh.' So here, between presumption and despair, it is hard to keep the soul right, sometimes the wind bloweth in one corner, sometimes in another. How to keep ourselves from despair in going out of ourselves, how to keep ourselves from presumption by getting into Christ, is not so easy.

2. There is a narrow path, *teJlimmenh h odoV*, an afflicted, rough way, such as will engage believers—

[1.] To the exercise of care. A diffident, regardless soul is out of his way: you have but a ridge to walk upon: Eph. 5:15, 'Walk circumspectly;' not even as it hitteth; for it is a hard matter to keep a good conscience, Acts 24:16; and Prov. 23:19, 'Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the right way.' You had need look to it.

[2.] To a great deal of pains and sorrow. He was mistaken that said, Take thine ease. Many can swallow sins, and pursue them, and yet have no sense of them that they are wrong. It is a way that will put you upon much sorrow and affliction, because you have such a distempered soul, and such a deal of pride and intemperance and anger in it: Rom. 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Ps. 120:5, 'Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! 'The saints are apt to grieve that they have such a worldly spirit in a heavenly journey.

[3] To a great deal of self-denial. It is a way that restraineth nature; therefore we are called upon, Mat. 3:3, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight;' Heb. 12:13, 'And make straight paths to your feet.' There must be strictness in our course. It is not such a way as will leave you to the sway of your own hearts. Nature would have a thing many times, but you must put a knife to your throats, as if you were more ready to slay your appetite than to satisfy it. The thoughts, the affections, the speeches, the actions, must be reduced to the strict rules of the word.

When men please nature to the full, it is a sign they have mistaken their way.

[4.] It will engage you to much mortification, to much opposition Eph. 6:12, 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'. You have strong lusts to cope with, and those must be mortified, which you cannot do without the Spirit of Christ, Rom. 8:13. It will cost you many prayers and tears, and fighting with spiritual wickednesses.

3. The next way-mark is, that you have but little company: 'Narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it.' Many walk as others do, and so mistake. Others sever themselves from the world, but go in the ordinary track of profession, not out of the common road. This is to be true to a sect and company of men, not to the ways of God. As Paul, when he was a pharisee, he lived by the eye, and did as others did; he lived after the strictest sect of religion, Acts. 26:5. You must put a difference between the ordinary number of professors and yourself. But if you be vain and sensual, what do you more than they? Christians should look after the distinction and the difference between them and others: Mat. 6:32, 'For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.' Implying, a man should do more than they, more than the men of the world can ever do: Ps. 4:6 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good?' That is the fashion of the men of the brutish multitude. But the godly say, 'Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us.'

Use 3. Is to press you to look into the state of your hearts, and see what you have by long experience observed, what is your sin, your way of wickedness, what assaults you most frequently, most fiercely; observe the frequency of temptations, and the strength of them, the law in the members, and a thorn in the flesh; so, as it is conceived, he calleth the violent stirrings of lusts. Now bend all your strength against these; as the king of Aram said, I Kings 22:31, 'Fight not against small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.' So bend the strength of the soul against this way of wickedness.

I come now to the last point of the first part of the text, and that is drawn

from that possessive particle whereby every man's by-path is expressed: Every man *to his way*.

Doct. 3. That this is the sin of men in their natural condition, that they turn to their own way.

The phrase implieth these two things—

First, A defect or want of divine guidance; Secondly, A rejection of the ways of God when made known to us. We do not like them so well as some other, which we fancy to be better to us, because more suitable to our carnal desires; and therefore it is often charged upon the people of Israel, especially by Jeremiah, that they would not regard the ways of God, but the way of their own imaginations. See Jer. 7:24. God had told them that all that he required of them was this, 'Obey my voice, and walk in the way that I have commanded you; but they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsel and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.' So that you see it argueth a refusal of God's ways when discovered to them, as not being for their turns. So Jer. 9:13, 14, 'Because they have forsaken my law which I have set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein, but have walked after the imagination of their heart and after Baalim.' They think their own path better, safer, or more comfortable, and therefore would not meddle with God's. So Jer. 11:8, 'Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart.' This refusal is the more sottishly perverse; as in Jer. 44:17, 'But will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our mouth.' So that here is a scorning to have their ways prescribed, out of a presumption that they can better provide for themselves. The drunkard, the adulterer, thinks God's way is either insipid or injurious. Our first parents thought their conceit was better, and that God in envy had denied it to them; and therefore they did not weigh God's restraint and prohibition, Gen. 3:17; she would eat, the devil had fastened her fancy to it, and she went on with the temptation.

1. There is a defect or want of divine guidance. God leaveth men to their own sway, and taketh away all check and restraint from them; and then whatever a man doth is purely from himself. So it is said, Ps. 81:12, 'I gave

them up to their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels.' When all divine guidance or direction is taken away, you will be left to the impure dictates of a corrupt mind, or at best to some poor remains of civility. As it is said, Gen. 20:6, 'I also withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore suffered thee not to touch her.' Some restraints and chains God casteth upon men, that they are not able to do the evil which naturally they would. Though they do not go God's way, they cannot go their own. But when God pleaseth he letteth men alone, and then they do what is right in their own eyes; as you shall see, Acts 14:16, 'Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways;' that is, to live according to their own pleasure, prescribing no restraint to them by discovering himself in a law; or, to those that have the outward written word, by using no inward motions of his Spirit. So that this is the first thing, the privative part, a defect of divine guidance, either by such outward prescriptions as may revive natural light, or such inward motions as may restore it.

2. That which is positive or more formally imported is a following of the dictates of our own corrupt minds, and fulfilling the desires of our own corrupt wills. For I conceive this turning to our own way is expressed by the apostle upon the same occasion, Eph. 2:3; for he saith there, that natural men 'have their conversations in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' There is a natural inclination to obey his corrupt mind, and to satisfy his corrupt will. It is but a pleasing of themselves. It is the way they have devised, and the way they have desired. But to speak of these things a little severally:—

[1.] There is a following the dictates of a corrupt mind. This is the first and chiefest, and therefore it is often expressed, 'According to their imaginations and their counsels.' There are a great many prejudices in a natural understanding against the ways of God. It is a way of their own contriving. Men think their way is good: Prov. 14:12, 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' Their blind hearts dictate to them that their own way is the best, safest, most pleasant, and comfortable. The mind chooseth, pauseth, and determineth upon what it conceives to be better for it than the rule of obedience. Therefore it is called *our own way,* because it is not of God's

appointment, but our own choice. Men consult with their own hearts, and think sin is better. You may go through all the commandments of God, and you shall see a natural understanding dictates otherwise than God saith. As to the first table, man hath some confused knowledge that there is a God, who is to be worshipped, to be spoken of with reverence and observance; that there is some time to be set apart for his worship. Now what this God is, what is his worship, what time is to be set apart for it, and how it is to be spent, there reason faileth. We have some ways that seem right to us for that; and we are guided either by our own reason, or prescript of time, or education, or example, or custom. It is our own ways that we turn to, and therefore do not give God the glory that is due to his name: Rom. 1:21, 'Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' They do not glorify him as God. We paint out worship by our own lazy thoughts, or overdo it by some fancies of our own: this is our own way. Then, as to the second table, there natural light is most clear. There we have some sparks and knowledge left of good and evil, and yet even there our carnal understanding easily leadeth us into a way that we think better to us than that which God hath set us; and so we think liberty is better than obedience to superiors; revenge is sweet, and injury is looked upon as profitable, and mere adultery as pleasant, some thinking nature never planted such strong desires in a man but to have them satisfied. And as to theft and oppression, why should a man be scrupulous and stand upon conscience when he seeth a present benefit? So calumny and reproach of others pleaseth us and serveth our ends, by making them odious to others whom we ourselves hate. Thus, by a little use, all knowledge of good and evil is blotted out of the mind, and a thing seemeth right to us, though condemned by God.

[2] There is a fulfilling of the desires of our corrupt wills. Men go the way of their own affections; and though it be not according to the law of God, it is according to their desires, lust being their law; as if it were. warrant enough to do a thing because they desire it. The apostle saith, Titus 3:3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures;' that is, their mind was to obey their vile affections. They think the desire was planted in them that they might satisfy it, and they are not bound to thwart it: it were a wrong to their

natures, whose bent and force they follow. It is said of Eve, Gen. 3:6, that 'when she saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.' Men think there is no harm as long as they do but please appetite, and only meddle with what tempts the desire. But, brethren, do not deceive yourselves the mere fulfilling of natural desires without thwarting is a walking in your own ways; for even so you may wander beyond those bounds by which the word hath hedged up your way, be it of pleasures, honour, or profit. One of the first lessons in Christ's school is self-denial. You must reckon upon it to go against your desires, and indeed it is a hard lesson. The way of natural men is their own way, they do not love to be restrained in their desires, and therefore they have ventured upon sin, notwithstanding great restraints, yea, the more for restraints. Men fancy some exceeding goodness in forbidden fruit, and think the prohibition cruel and envious, and therefore will venture and try their own way, as being loth to lose their longing and to disappoint nature. See that place, Rom. 7:5, 'For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death;' that is, when in our natural condition, the restraints of the law revived sin, and we let it work, though it were to our destruction. Men's voluptuous hearts will not let them enter upon such a strict course as the law prescribes. Well, now, gather all together, and you may see what it is to turn to our own way. It is to be left to ourselves, and then to reject the ways of God, upon a supposition that we have found something that is better for us, because it is more pleasing to our fancies, and more suitable to our desires.

The reasons may be referred to two heads. Our own way can never be right, either—

1. To please God; or,

2. To do ourselves good.

1. Not to please God. This appears in that:—

[1.] God will not stand to our appointment. Nothing pleaseth him but what he hath required; all other things he looketh upon as mere invention

or imagination. Though man should be very zealous in his own way, with never so devout an intention, it is not acceptable. There is naturally implanted in the creature some desire to please God. Now, you will never do it in your duties, or in your lives, if your carriage be not suitable to his rule: Micah 6:7,8, 'Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' Here is a very liberal proposal. But what doth the prophet rejoin upon this? 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' There is the trial what God hath required of us. He will not stand to the creatures' courtesy; it is his prerogative to appoint what pleaseth him best. God hath been angry with things, though done with a good intention, if not according to what he hath showed. Uzzah's breach sets forth this: 2 Sam. 6:7, 'God smote him for his error;' it is said there, for 'doing besides the rule.' So you may see in a case that concerneth conversation as well as worship: Rom. 10:2, it is said of the Jews, that 'they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.' They were very furious in it; they had good intentions, but they did not understand God's way. A man may seem to have much zeal, and much scrupulous tenderness of doing good, and avoiding evil; but it is such as is in his own fancy and apprehension, but not in God's law; he hateth it. The false teachers had some seemingly strict ordinances: Col. 2:21,22, 'Touch not, taste not, handle not;' but they were the doctrines and commandments of men. Thus you see God will not like our way, though it should be never so strict, and accommodated with the advantage of many devout and pure intentions.

A popish spirit may be very devout, but God regardeth it not, because it is not according to his appointment. A good intention cannot make the action good, but the conformity of it to the rule; otherwise, those that slew the apostles and crucified Christ pleased him; many of them did it with a devout heart to that way which seemed right to them and they thought was pleasing to God: John 16:2, 'The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.' They think this is well, and will please God. Usually that hath been the lot of the saints hitherto, to suffer under such rage as hath been rashly and

unadvisedly conceived for God's sake. *Ecclesia nunquam magis passa est quam sub nomine ecclesiae* (the church has never suffered more than from those under the name of the church). Therefore I say, God doth not look to the intention of a thing, but the conformity of it to the rule, and to his appointment, that he liketh; otherwise that which is odious to him would seem right in our eyes.

[2.] Suppose God should commit it to ourselves, yet we should never do that which would please him. If God had left us no direction but the light of our own reason, we would never reach the right way, but there would be divers hindrances; as—(1st.) Ignorance. Natural men know not which way to go about it they are described, Rom. 1:21, to be such as 'became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' A frivolous mind every man hath; the word is *dialogismoiV,* they are vain in their discourses and reasonings: they have very unsavoury apprehensions of the ways of God. It is spoken of the heathen there. And the like you shall see of the Jews, and of natural men within the church Jer. 4:22, 'For my people is foolish; they have not known me, they are sottish children, and they have no understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.' Men of parts are sometimes extremely ignorant in point of duty towards God and man, and therefore certainly their own path must needs be a wrong way. Brethren, it signifies not what men in a notional way can discourse or argue concerning duty, for their foolish darkness will be discovered when it cometh to practice.

(2dly.) Their antipathy against anything that concerneth the ways of God. Our way must needs be seen, for our heart is exceeding averse to the will of God: Rom. 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' Mark, it is not only *an enemy,* but *enmity.* There is the spirit of malice in it against all the ways of God. Therefore, God's appointments and carnal devices will never be brought together; if you be wise to the flesh, you cannot be wise to duty. A carnal wise heart must needs err in its choice then. There is a disallowing of all that is good, and an approving of all that is naught: this is most suitable to us. See Isa. 5:20, 'Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.' The prophet useth divers expressions to set out that wicked disvaluing of the ways of God that is in

all carnal hearts. They think all the comfort and sweetness is in their own ways of jollity and excess, and for God's ways they look upon them as bitter and dark, such as will banish mirth and eat out all contentment, and fill the heart with sad fears and darkness. Oh, how are these men mistaken!

(3dly.) We have a base, paltry heart, and are loth to serve him as far as we know. It is said, Rom. 1:28, 'They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.' They do not approve or make such precious account of the ways of God as they should do. Carnal men are loth to go contrary to their desires. They like the knowledge that they have, and are better content with ignorance,—as it is said, 2 Peter 3:5: the apostle Peter saith, 'They are willingly ignorant' of what might make against them. This they are angry at, that they know so much, and are willing to practise so little; and, therefore, what is chosen and followed with full consent by such hearts must needs be a wrong way. You may well suspect whatever nature deviseth so willingly, and practiseth so cheerfully. This is the first reason: Our own way is not the right way, because we can never please God in it.

2. Our own way is not the right way to do ourselves good. The more we please the flesh, the more we wrong our own souls: passions and corrupt affections do but blind the heart to its own destruction. As the fishes that play down the pleasant streams of Jordan devolve themselves into the Dead Sea, so ways that are altogether suitable to

our nature do but end in destruction: Prov. 16:25, There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' Mark, it is the plural, *ways,*—itis multiplex. A man ruineth himself many ways, by one sin or another; some their way is adultery, that wasteth the strength, blasteth the beauty, bringeth infamy, poverty, reproach, horror of conscience, death, and eternal destruction. Another drunkenness, which besots the brain, wasteth the estate, betrayeth a man to reproach, brawneth the heart, and bringeth death and destruction. I will not stand longer upon the reasons, but apply it.

Use 1.Is caution to you not to go in your own ways, neither in worship nor conversation; that is the sin of men in their natural condition. Now, that you may not do so—1. I shall give you some cautionary propositions.

2. A few directions.

The cautionary propositions I shall spread before you for the greater quickening and incitement of you.

[1.] God may not like what men like: Prov. 16:2, 'All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirit.' A man that doth not weigh his service in the balance of the sanctuary is not sensible of the defects of it. God weigheth and can look beneath the veil of pretences: so Luke 16:15, 'For that which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God.' You may please yourselves in your ways, and yet you may very much displease God. The rule holdeth in duties. You may pass it off as if it were a seemly beast for an offering, whereas God looketh upon it as a poor, sick sacrifice, a corrupt thing, Mal. 1:14. This rule likewise holds good in conversation. Men please themselves in an easy moral way, but God can find a great deal of evil in it. We look upon sins as they are odious abroad, but God considereth inward guilt. Now, when men live in an easy, voluptuous, sensual way, they do not check themselves for it because others do not, but God may hate them for it.

[2.] Nay, the more thy way pleaseth thee, the more thou shouldest suspect it doth not please God. Whence cometh all this vigilance? Either the thing is carnal, or, if it be spiritual, thou art set on by the concernments of the flesh. Certainly, thy carnal heart is set on by something that is suitable. David did not dare touch the waters of Bethlehem, because he longed for them: 2 Sam. 23:15,16, 'Oh that one would give me of the water of Bethlehem! 'He would not drink of it, because they went in jeopardy of their lives that fetched it, but poured it out before the Lord. I say, in doubtful things, when thou art so vehement, suspect thy heart; and the more thy life pleaseth thee, fear it is the less acceptable to God. Consider not what thou art willing to do, but what God alloweth. Nature would not be so strongly bent upon a thing, if there were not corruption in it. These are the two quickening propositions. The rules or directions are three:—

[1.] Lead your life by a divine rule; have respect to the commandment. See how heartily David prayeth, Pa. 119:10, 'With my whole heart have I

sought thee; let me not wander from thy commandments.' That is the rule—the law a man should go by. Advise with the word. 'Bind it continually about thine heart, and tie it about thy neck.' The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light. 'When thou goest it shall lead thee, when thou steepest it shall keep thee, and when thou wakest it shall talk with thee,' Prov. 6:21-23. He would not deviate into his own path: Gal. 6:16, 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God;'—they that walk by this rule, that is, according to the word of God. The law is the expression of God's will to us creatures, therefore conform to that. If Christians had oftener recourse to the rule, they would have a better sight of duty.

[2] Beg divine assistance. We cannot keep to God's rule without God's power; beg it of God, then, as David in the psalm before mentioned. There are divers places hint this in scripture. It is a sign we run beyond ourselves when we would not be directed by God. When God leaveth us to ourselves, then we leave his law: Acts 14:16, 'In times past God suffered the Gentiles to walk in their own ways.' A man left to himself cannot but err; and, therefore, desire God that he would guide you; for a blind mind and a wicked heart cannot guide you in his ways. This is called a taking heed to the word, Ps. 119:9; and ver. 101, 'I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep thy word;' and David prayeth, ver. 133, 'Order my steps in thy word.' God must order every step, or else we shall soon go astray.

[3.] Look up to divine encouragement. As you must take the word for your rule, and the Spirit for your guide, so the promises for your encouragement: 2 Cor. 7:1, 'Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;' 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust' Worldly wisdom is seen otherwhere: Rom. 8:5, 'For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.' Christians should fetch in a supply that way; it is a sign you are in God's way when you eye God's encouragements. Some mind only to compass their carnal ends, and

sweeten all their endeavours by fleshly considerations; they are in their own way: 'To be carnally minded is death.' To savour only fleshly encouragements argueth a very naughty heart.

Use 2. Is examination, to try whether you be in the state of nature or no. Your own way is a sinful way; and, therefore, what is the generality of your conversations? Is it not a turning to your own way? But, you will say, how shall I know that?

1. By the suitableness of it to nature. A life led in pleasures, without self-denial and mortification, certainly is none of God's way; it is a way of your own choosing: 1 Tim. 5:6, 'She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.' Though she liveth a natural life, she dieth a spiritual death. This is even just as nature would have it. Observe what compliance it hath with your carnal desires and delights.

2. By the easiness of it to nature. It is your own way, for you can walk in it by your own strength. It is often said of such as were in a natural state, 'He did that which was right in his own eyes.' You have shaped out to yourselves such an easy course; but what difficulty is it to be such a Christian? Solomon saith, 'Lean not to thine understanding,' Prov. 3:5, 'but trust in the Lord with all thine heart' That is necessary to true Christianity; but now here men keep up themselves well enough, though no intercourse be between them.

3. The serviceableness of it to nature, and to natural ends and courses. Every man naturally is for himself, to attain honour, pleasure, profit, or satisfaction to his lusts. Our own way will serve for our own end. Though many things that man may do be of divine appointment, yet it is but your own way still; you borrow means of God to further your own purposes. The glory of God is the great Christian end, but men value themselves by other things.

Use 3. Is their ; to press men in their natural condition to turn from their sottishness and foolish ways by repentance. Now repentance first beginneth with turning from our own ways, as the prophet Jeremiah calleth it: Jer. 26:13, 'Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God.'

To this end a few things must be spoken to.

There are two things that make this exhortation fruitless: —1. Carnal prejudices. Do not believe what your own hearts suggest to you concerning the folly and uncomfortableness of God's ways, for these prove the best and most comfortable to the soul. Other pleasures are but for a season, Heb. 11:25. Natural reason calleth sour sweet. The best way to know is to try them once, then you will see how all was delusive; mistakes and prejudices will vanish then. 2. Despairing stubbornness. Men have been in an ill way, and they are loth to quit it: they think now they must try the worst of it: Jer. 18:12, 'And they said there is no hope, but we will walk after our devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.'

But I would not tarry too long on these black lines and dark shadows of man's sin and misery which are in the text; therefore I come now to the comfortable part, viz., God's remedy: *and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*. There I propounded three things:—1. The author of our deliverance: *the Lord;* that is, God the Father.

2. The nature or manner of our deliverance: *he hath laid our iniquities on him*.

3. The parties interested: *the iniquities of us all*.

1. The author: 'the Lord.' You may take it essentially for the whole Deity, or personally for God the Father, who, in the mystery of redemption, is looked upon as *pars offensa,* the wronged party against whom the offence is committed, and the supreme Judge to whom the satisfaction is tendered. The point is—

Doct. That God the Father laid our iniquities on Christ.

I shall a little open this point to you, and therein you shall see, that whatever Christ did as Mediator, or whatever was done to Christ, is attributed to God the Father, to his counsel and appointment.

1. He designed the person, and therefore it is said: Gal. 4:4, God sent

forth his Son;' Rom. 8:3, 'God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;' 1 John 4:14, 'God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.' It noteth the decree and designation of God the Father concerning the second person: John 10:36, 'Whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world.' When a thing or person is set aside for divine uses and purposes, it is said to be sanctified. And so it is said, John 6:27, 'For him hath God the Father sealed.' The Father cannot but accept of the obedience of Christ—in the name of those for whom it is offered, and who do lay hold upon him by faith, seeing Christ did not come of himself, but was sent of the Father to pay our ransom for us. Moses, that interposed of his own accord, was denied: Exod. 32:32, 'If thou wilt not forgive their sin, blot me out of thy book.' But God told him,' The soul that sinneth, him will I blot out of my book.' But Christ interposed not of his own accord. This sending his Son was a remedy of God's appointing. So in the place forementioned, John 10:36,' Whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world;' that is, consecrated him from eternity unto the office of Mediator, and then sent him into the world to assume human nature into the unity of his own person. 'Him hath the Father sealed;' that is, the Father hath authorised him to be the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners. He hath a commission under the broad seal of heaven. Thus kings give commissions to their ministers of state, who are employed in their affairs: Esther 8:8, 'For the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.' Christ coming in God's name is fully authorised to do your souls good.

2. He qualified him for his office, and therefore he is said to be 'anointed with the Spirit of the Lord to preach the gospel to the poor, and to heal the broken-hearted,' Luke 4:18; and John 3:34, 'For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.' As Mediator he is endowed with the Spirit for the discharge of his office, that he might be a full storehouse of all grace for his people: 1 Cor. 1:30, 'Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' Surely we may use him for what he was made of God.

3. Whatever was done to Christ as Mediator, was from God the Father; either, first, mediately by men; God ordered their cruelty with reference

to his own designs: Acts 4:28, 'For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' God hath so laid the state of our redemption, that whatever was done to Christ, he ordereth the whole business from first to last. Or, secondly, immediately by God: Isa. 53:10, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief;' Zech. 13:7, 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow: Our sin and punishment was not taken up by Christ without the Father's privity and consent; it was not by our desire and will, but by the counsel of the Father, that he laid our iniquities upon him.

4. Whatever was done by Christ, you shall find in the scripture; Christ always going according to the appointment of the Father, the whole work being but a testimony of his obedience: Heb. 10:7, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God: In the whole transaction Christ would be ordered by the will of his Father; the Son is become a servant in this business; therefore it is said, Phil. 2:7, 'He took upon him the form of a servant.' So in that place, Heb. 10:5, 'A body hast thou prepared me.' It is in Ps. 40:6, 'Mine ears hast thou opened,' or bored; that is, made me a wise and faithful servant in the work of redemption. They were wont, under the law, to bore the ears of their servants: Exod. 21:6, 'So that he was to be a servant for ever.' And thus you have Christ always professing his obedience to the Father. As if it were not his own business that he was set about, and he could not do as he would in it, but he must be acted and guided by another: John 10:37, 'If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not;' John 10:18, 'I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father.' All which is a testimony that the Father was satisfied by his sufferings, and is a ground of strong consolation to believers. The way was agreed upon between God and Christ long before the accomplishment. It was not out of impotence, as if forced to give place to the devil and the violence of wicked men, but obedience to God's designed way.

Now in two things Christ showeth this:—

[1.] As if he acted altogether by the Father's power: John 5:19, 'The Son can do nothing of himself.' So ver. 30, 'I can of mine own self do nothing;' that is, the Father and he were distinct persons in themselves, but not separate in nature, power, and operation. The Son acts by the Father, and

the Father in the Son. The Son doth nothing of himself, that is, separate from the Father. Or understand it of the manhood of Christ, that is guided by God the Father in its operations, it doth not act at pleasure. Christ would will or act nothing separate from the will and power of the Godhead. This Is spoken to remove such a gross speculation, as if the union between God and Christ were no other than that between a natural father and son.

[2.] As if he acted by the Father's appointment: for he would do nothing, neither lay down his life, nor take it up, unless God the Father said *Amen* to it; as where Christ speaketh of some power he had in himself, yet it was a power limited by the Father: John 10:18, 'No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father.' Christ would lay down his life for his people, and take it up again, and all because of the Father's commandment. The words are spoken to exclude any external power or violence that could be offered to Christ; none could impose upon him, but at the Father's commandment he would lay it down, and take it up again. Christ would leave a testimony of his love and obedience: John 14:31, 'But that the world may know that I love the Father, as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.' No outward force can impose upon him, but the Lord can impose. Jehovah 'laid on him the iniquities of us all.'

The reasons of the point.

1. Because none else had any power to lay it on Christ but God alone. That God could, it is clear by virtue of that interest he had in him. A loving son can deny the father nothing. Now, it being the ordination and the will of God, Christ would not gainsay it; and as long as the Father's commandment lasted, he would obey; and therefore, when the burden of our sins lay sore upon him, to whom doth he address himself but to the Father? He laid it on, and he alone could take it off: Mat. 26:39, 'He fell on his face and prayed, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' Though it were a deadly cup, yet Christ would not have it any way to pass from him, unless it were the Father's will. He had such an interest in him, that he would stoop to that: no other could have gained Christ to such a service but the

Father.

2. Because if God should not lay iniquity upon Christ, it would be to no purpose; for to him it belongeth, because against him was the offence committed. Ps. 51:4, see what David saith there with eyes brimful of tears, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.' He had sinned against Bathsheba and against Uriah, yet 'against thee only have I sinned.' His sin was not known to many, for the plot was closely carried: 2 Sam. 12:12, 'Thou didst it secretly,' as the prophet Nathan told him. But how should he do to get it expiated by him against whom the offence was chiefly committed, and who knew it well enough? Ps. 41:4, 'Lord, be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.' Against whomsoever else the offence be, the chiefest aggravation is that it is against God, and therefore he must have all the ordering how the iniquity must be forgiven: Isa. 43:25, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' God would have you to look to him as one that only hath to do about the guilt of his people's sin: 'I, even I, am he.'

Use. Is to inform us what abundant matter here is for your faith to work upon. Jehovah laid the iniquities of us all on him. God, whom you most fear, God the Father, he is first in the design, and he layeth the command upon the bowels of Christ. Do but lay it abroad in some particular considerations before you pass over this circumstance: *the Lord.* Certainly all the triumph of faith cometh from it.

1. The Lord, to whom belongeth forgiveness. It is not the business of others to lay it upon Christ, it is not their right, it is not what they say, but what the Father saith; you must look to that. You see when Christ prayeth for pardon he addresseth himself to his Father, as if it were not in his own single power: Luke 23:34, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' The Son prayeth, there is hope: 'Father, forgive them.' If it passeth with God the Father, the matter is ended. So 1 John 2:1, Christ is said to be 'an advocate with the Father.' And so you shall see frequent places, as John 14:16, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter.' Forgiveness and mercy and comfort, they all proceed from the Father. It is true, we read Mat. 9:6, that 'the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins,' but it is by commission from the Father,

and as having the mind of the Father in it; as it is said, John 5:22, 'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son.' So the immediate dispensation of all censures is given to the Son by the Father, whose will passeth for a law. God the Father, in all the work of salvation is to be considered as a superior wronged. And what an encouragement is it to a poor soul, in the matter of its faith, to understand that God has laid its iniquities on Christ! Oh, then, as you would magnify the sufficiency of the Son's merit, so magnify the largeness of the Father's mercy. Look upon Christ as able to save you, and look upon God as willing to give Christ to you. Christ hath fully satisfied for iniquities; the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. Tell me then, where should the soul stick? Usually it sticketh here: they doubt whether Christ be for them or no. No pardon is granted but it first passeth the Father. Why? because the Father is first in the design. God sent the Son. If men would reason thus out of the scriptures, how might they shame their hearts in the sense of their unbelief! Oh, wait then for the Spirit to fix this truth upon you. Though a man should frame never so many deductions without the Spirit, it would not do. Therefore, I cease to wonder why men do not believe, though they can object nothing against the free grace of God.

2. The God whom you have wronged. Sin is against all the persons of the Trinity, but it is chiefly against the Father. You may despise the Son, and grieve the Spirit, but the chiefest injury is against the Father, because he is the fountain of all; nay, all that is done to the other persons redounds to the Father's dishonour. Thus our Saviour often reasoneth with the Jews, 'He that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.' And the injury to the Spirit, it is called a vexing of his Spirit: Isa. 63:10, 'They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.' Therefore the prophet inquireth, Isa. 7:13, 'Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?' Oh, what a grievous thing is this, to do all this despite to God, that you have vexed and wearied God by your stubborn resisting of the motions of his Spirit! Why, yet this God puts Christ upon this task, the Lord hath laid on him our iniquities. He whom you have most cause to fear is your greatest friend. A soul that is sensible of sin is sensible of the wrong he hath done to God. Why, though you have wronged him, he is chief in the design of mercy. You have not only the Son on your side, but you have the Father.

Jehovah laid our iniquities upon him. You shall see the apostle maketh it a great advantage to mercy that we have the Son and Father too: 2 John 9, 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.' He hath one that is willing and one that is able to save him, and therefore the wronged party is of his side and reconciled to him. O Christians! triumph now in this great design of salvation, if you believe you have an interest in the Father's affection, as well as the Son's merit. Nay, to invite you to believe, consider what a remedy here is against all your doubts; it was the Lord that put Christ upon all that he did for you. I use the more words that I may bring you to weigh these things. Why should you stick at your sins? The first motion to pardon cometh from him that should avenge them. You have sinned against Jehovah, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.

3. The Lord, whose will and word is alone to be looked to. It is no matter what Satan saith, or what your hearts say, for it goeth altogether by what God saith, who hath laid our sins upon Christ. See how the apostle rejoiceth that God's hand was in the acquitting of poor sinners: Rom. 8:33, 34, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen.' What a bold challenge is there! Satan may say, I can, and our consciences may condemn us too. The devil is an accuser of the brethren to God as well as men, and a poor soul can go and indict itself at the throne of grace, and bring in many a sad charge against itself, and find its own case liable to death and damnation. I have sinned, and the wages of sin is death. Ay! but who will you believe—God, or Satan and your own hearts? The Lord hath laid your sins upon Christ, and you will believe Satan, and lay them upon yourselves. God would have Christ not only to suffer the death, but to bear the sins; that, as he did take away the condemnation, so he might take away the accusation too; for mark, the apostle saith, 'Who shall charge?' and then, 'Who shall condemn?' Satan *hath* nothing to do to bring in the sad charge, or to collect the doleful inferences. Brethren, keep your ground still. It is God that justifieth, the whole business of your acquitment is carried on by the Lord. Satan telleth you, you have been a swearer,

a drunkard. It is a sad thing that you have been so, but has God

given you a sight of this? Here is your comfort, God hath ordered

all this to be laid upon the back of Christ. Ay! but Satan saith, the soul that sinnneth shall die. But keep your faith on what God has done; he hath less reason to condemn than he hath to accuse. 'It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again.' Thus you see what comfort there is in God's acquitment. It is the Lord hath laid: now, nobody is to be believed before him. It is the great policy of Satan to make you put this high affront upon God, that you should believe him before the Lord: thus he did by our first parents in another case, Gen. 3:4, 'Ye shall not surely die.' Here he telleth a poor distressed soul, Ye shall surely die. The devil acts his part on every hand; but do not you believe him, for it is God that justifieth. Satan saith it shall be laid on thyself; the Lord saith, on Christ. Do not believe the father of lies before the Father of lights.

4. The Lord hath laid, even God, that hath so great an interest in Christ that he can deny him nothing. Look, as God denieth Christ nothing that he asketh him, so Christ denieth God nothing that he commandeth him. Thus you shall see when God commandeth Christ to die for souls, Ps. 40:8, 'I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' It was a gladsome intimation to Christ to be ordained to such a service. There is a law upon the bowels of Christ; he is called to bear your sins; he will be accounted the sinner, and you shall go free. Therefore see what rich matter there is for your faith to work upon, and beg the Spirit to fix it upon you.

Use 2. Is exhortation to glorify God for his goodness. Here are two things I would exhort you to:—

1. To glorify God for his mercy and goodness; and,

2. To glorify him alone.

1. Glorify God. Though Christ effected your deliverance, yet he was sent by the Father; the Lord laid our iniquities upon him. We have experience not only of Christ's love, but of God's; every person of the Trinity hath a hand in it, and every person must have his distinct glory. I will not speak now of what the Son did, or what the Spirit doth, but of the love of the

Father. He showed a great deal of love:—

[1] In deputing Christ to this office, and laying his command upon Christ for it: John 17:23, 'That the world may know that thou bast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. It is a high expression of the love of God to lay our sins upon his own Son, to send Christ to die for our sins. It is an expression of the same love to you that God bare to Christ; it was the same kind of love, though not the same degree, God's complacency in Christ being infinite and incomprehensible, above all the creatures in the world.

[2] In fitting Christ to bear the sins that were laid upon him. God anointed him with a compassionate spirit, so that the Spirit of the Godhead was always with him in the greatest agonies, and also in giving him readiness and strength. Acts 10:38, it is said, 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.' It is usual in scripture to express the powerful graces of God's Spirit by anointing.

[3.] In loving him for it, for taking our sins upon him according to his will: John 10:17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again.' Though God's love to Christ were eternal, yet you see how he expresseth it, as if he were loved the more for his kindness to us. The like expression you have John 15:10, 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love even as I kept my Father's, and abide in his love;' that is, his commandments about the office of his mediatorship. This is a great endearment to God's affection.

[4.] God rewarded him for it: Heb. 2:9, 'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;' so Phil. 2:9, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name.' God restored him to his glory with a great deal of renown in the eyes of men. So Christ prayeth, John 17:5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.'

2. Glorify God alone. Let not other things share with him in your thoughts; do not think it is for your sakes. God can have no higher motive than his own will. The Lord laid it upon Christ, but nothing moved him to

lay it but his own goodness. Now men usually fancy something without God to be the ground of his love; but he expressly saith, Isa. 43:25, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' Mark, his *own sake*. Therefore exalt God, in that, as you see, nothing else could lay it upon Christ: Isa. 2:11, 'The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day;' that is, so separately and so singly, that you may see it was his own mere will that put him upon such a design of mercy. Dr Crisp disputeth at large that nothing else could lay it upon Christ, and so excludeth faith and all holy means, out of a mistake that we think faith layeth it on Christ, whereas faith only apprehendeth it to be laid on Christ. But this we may safely say, Nothing did put God upon it that could be found in us, no good disposition, faith or works foreseen. It is merely his own sovereignty and goodness; and therefore, Rom. 3:24, we are said to be 'justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'

But a little more particularly let me show you how you do not exalt God alone and separately for laying it upon Christ. It is inclusive two ways:—

1. If you have such a secret thought in you that it is because you are less sinners than others, therefore you are pardoned, and your sins are laid upon Christ.

2. If because you are greater sinners than others, you therefore conclude you shall not be pardoned, you do not give God the glory of his prerogative, that he alone should lay your sins upon Christ, but you look for somewhat in the creature.

1. When you think God laid your sins on Christ because you are not so vile as others. Take heed, say not in your hearts it is for your righteousness. God acts according to his own pleasure; he many times leaveth those that to outward appearance are most righteous. You have heard of the heathens, and yet they were passed by, as Cato and Aristides; nay, Fabricius and Socrates, though they did excel in outward honesty of life, yet God did not regard them in his choice. Whereas Paul, who was a persecutor, a blasphemer, and injurious, his sins were laid upon the back of Christ, as were those of Mary Magdalen, and the thief upon the cross, whose whole life was wasted in wickedness. And Christ telleth the

pharisees that 'publicans and harlots should enter into the kingdom of heaven before them.' It doth not go by your works. The apostle Paul doth strive often to remove this conceit out of our hearts: Titus 3:4,5, 'But after that the love and kindness of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.' All that we could bring to God was disobedience, and lusts, and malice, and envy. So 2 Tim. 1:9, 'He called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.' God doth not look without himself, but only to his own purpose and grace. It is good to improve natural light, and to live to the utmost of it; but it is a vain thing to think that by any action of ours we should hope to move God to lay our sins upon Christ. Luther hath a pretty expression to this purpose upon this text: 'Take heed,' saith he, 'of bringing the servants or the ass to God's mountain. They may accompany you thither: Abraham and the lad must go yonder and worship; the servants and the ass must tarry at the foot of the hill. Only go you with faith to deal with the mercy of God; do not any way admit your works to the glory of a pardon.' Therefore, I say, look upon God as laying your sins upon Christ, being moved thereunto merely by his own purpose and will. He saw nothing in you to incline him to lay your sins on Christ more than others'. This is the first way.

2. When you think God will not lay your sins upon Christ, because you are so great sinners, and have committed so much wickedness. We are all apt to say, as Peter, Luke 5:8, 'Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man.' Do not you make God to eye something without himself now to incline him to this? Alas! it is all one to God whether you are great or little sinners. The spring and rise of his love in giving Christ to you is from his own bowels; and if there be any difference in this kind it is in this, that the greater sins comply with God's ends and designs. And therefore it is sometimes an argument used to God, that, though they can bring him no other thing, they can bring him wickedness enough. Thus David saith, 'Pardon my sin, for it is great,' Ps. 25:11; so Isa. 43:24,25, 'Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices, but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, and hast wearied me with thine iniquities.' What followeth? A man would think terrible, thundering words. No; it is a sweet and evangelical

promise; 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out your transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins' So Gen. 8:21, 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth' and Isa. 57:17,18, 'For the iniquity of his covetousness, I was wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him. I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.' God, you see, declares that it is according to his own purpose, and not of our works. He doth quite contrary to the deserts of man, not to debase strictness, but to exalt his own grace. Mark, that place fully setteth forth the covenant of grace, Isa. 54:9, where God saith, 'For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee.'

I come now to the next part, the nature and way of our deliverance: 'The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.' Our sin and punishment is transferred to Christ. The point is-

Doct. That the way that God taketh to acquit poor sinners is to lay the guilt and punishment of sin on the back of his own Son. 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.' What the phrase importeth I did in part discover in giving you the different readings of it in several translations. Four especially you may take to set it off to your thoughts.

1. That of the Septuagint, paredwken auton taiV amartiaiV—*he* delivered him over to our sins. It is hard and sad with a man to be delivered over to be torn by wild beasts, to be delivered to persecutors, to be burned in the flames, to be stretched on a rack, to be broken on a wheel, and other tortures. But it is far more hard and evil to be delivered over to sins. Especially for Christ, who was inflamed with a desire to please God; there is nothing more abhorrent from his nature than the filthiness of sin. And therefore, though you should suppose him to be delivered over to the most exquisite punishments that the world or the wit and malice of man can invent, yet it is nothing in respect of his being given over to sins. So the spittings, scourgings, buffeting, his cross, and all, were but as a flea-biting in respect of his being given over to our sins. God delivered him to Pilate. The Jews could have done nothing if power had not been given

them from above. But to be delivered over to the power of our sins, what a heavy thing was this for Christ! And therefore the expression doth in part reach what is meant here by God's laying it upon Christ.

2. That of Junius and others, *Fecit ut in eum incurrerent peccata nostra.* Our sins did rush upon Christ; they would fain destroy him, as an enemy pusheth sore to destroy their enemy. We read of a company that came out to take Christ with swords and staves, and a soldier that fiercely run him through. Ay! but brethren, there is another company that came rushing, and would fain destroy him, and that was your and my sins. We came forth with swords and lances, and, as it were, run him through.

3. Another version has it, *Traduxit in eum,* or, as with us, he 'laid it on him.' Do but consider what it is to have sin laid upon any. It is to be bound over to death and destruction; it is to put that upon a man that will be his certain ruin: 1 Kings 13:34, 'And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.' When sin is laid upon a man, it will undo him.

4. Others take our marginal reading, *Occurrere fecit in eum:* he made our sins to meet in him; that raiseth it a little higher. Though one sin be enough to ruin a man, yet all the sins in the world were as it were concentred in Christ to overwhelm his soul], and to fill it with a great deal of terror; and indeed he stood in much danger of a great condemnation unless he could satisfy God's wrath. Thus you see, from the several readings, what may be gathered out of this expression. And I the rather note it, because the Spirit of God useth a word here that hath so many significations. Out of all yon may gather a delivery of Christ over to that which was most contrary to him, which seized upon his soul, and settled there, and brought him to the death of the cross, and would not leave him till he had fully expiated and satisfied for it, even our sins.

But I come more particularly to set out the thing that is intended here by the Holy Ghost in this expression: but 'he hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.'

There are two things in it—one implied, which is a taking off sin from the creature; and the other more formally expressed, which is a putting it

upon Christ.

First, therefore, I shall show you how far it is taken off from the creature. But, for the understanding of both, you must know there are three things in sin:—

1. The fault or offence against God.

2. The guilt or obligation to punishment.

3. The blot or sinful inclination, or vicious disposition to sin.

1. I begin with the first. For the offence, it is as if it were never committed. The creature, when justified and sanctified, is as free as if it had never sinned, which is intimated in divers expressions of scripture. I will give you a few places: Jer. 50:20, 'In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and shall not be found; and the sins of Judah, and there shall be none, for I will pardon them whom I reserve;' Isa. 44:22, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.' They are exhaled and dried up by the beams of mercy. And Jer. 31:34, 'I will remember your sins no more.' It is quite gone from the creature: Num. 23:21, 'He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel;' Ps. 51:9, David prayeth, 'Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.' God doth so cover the sin as if it were not at all; his carriage to the soul is as if there were no sin. As a holy and just God, he cannot behold it with approbation; and therefore, as a merciful God, he doth as it were cover it from his eyes. Whereas, on the contrary, when God punisheth sin, he is said to set iniquity before him: Ps. 90:8, 'Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance;' Ps. 109:15, 'Let them be before the Lord continually.' God in love will not take notice of the offence.

2. He taketh off all guilt and obligation to punishment Rom. 8:1, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ' Nothing is done in a vindictive and punitive way, though many things be done in a corrective and chastising way. All God's dispensations are as branches of the covenant.

3. For the blot or sinful inclination; that is more and more taken away by virtue of Christ taking our sins upon him: 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed.' He took away vicious inclinations, as well as the penal obligations.

Secondly, It is transacted on Christ, or laid upon him. We cannot safely say the fault, for that is the guilt that groweth out of the sin inherent; but the guilt was laid upon him, such as groweth out of sin imputed: therefore he is said to 'bear the sins of many,' Isa. 53:12, and to 'bear our sorrows and griefs,' ver. 4.

1. So much sin was laid upon Christ as obliged him to make satisfaction for it to his Father's justice; for having once submitted to the taking of it, he could not recede; there was a necessity that he should clear himself with his Father: and therefore it is said, Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered, and then to enter into his glory?'

2. There was so much sin as put Christ in our stead. Therefore, 2 Cor. 5:21, it is said, he was 'made sin for us.' And in this chapter he is said to be 'numbered among transgressors,' nay, the chief of transgressors.

3. So much sin as made him liable to the infinite wrath of God; therefore it is said, Gal. 3:13, he was 'made a curse for us.' And in the Psalms it is said, 'The pains of hell gat hold of him;' insomuch that he needed justification as well as we: Isa. 1. 8, 'He is near that justifieth me, who shall contend with me?' It is spoken of Christ; this chapter is a chapter of Christ. He needed that God should clear him.

4. So much sin as would have sunk him into eternal misery, had he not been God to escape out of it: Acts 2:24, 'Having loosed the pains of death, because it was impossible that he should be holden of it.' And therefore you shall find faith's chiefest support cometh from Christ's resurrection: Rom. 8:34, 'It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again.' Mark that, *mallon de*; faith looketh to that as the wonderfullest thing, that, having such a weight of sin upon him, he should be able to rise up again. This was a great wonder.

But I come to the reasons of the point.

1. Therefore did God lay it upon Christ, because he was the fittest person to bear it: he was most able. It best befitted the divine justice to choose such a person as might not miscarry in the work and transaction, else we could have had no assurance that satisfaction was given: Ps. 89:19, 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty.' It is spoken of David, but chiefly means Christ in it. The help is laid on one that is most able to go through with it, and Christ was most willing to come to the utmost: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' Christ had not room enough, his heart being enlarged with love, till he had given testimony of it to the world: Luke 22:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover.' Christ knew the date of his days was then at an end.

2. This did suit best with God's design, which was to magnify justice and mercy at the same time. The mercy-seat did but cover the tables of the law in the ark. The law was satisfied by Christ, and yet God is merciful to us. David saith, Ps. 101:1, 'I will sing of mercy and judgment.' God would have his people triumph in both now.

Use 1. To press us to bless the Lord for this wonderful deliverance by Christ.

1. That sin is taken off from our shoulders and laid upon Christ. How miserable would it have been if every man had borne his own burden! Gal. 5:6. How light soever men's sins seem when they are committed, yet they will not be found light when they come to reckon with God, for then sin to an awakened conscience is one of the heaviest burdens that ever was felt. Now Christ hath taken off this burden from us. If God had laid sins upon us, as he laid them upon Christ, they would have sunk us to hell. The little finger of sin is heavier than the loins of any other sorrow. If God give you but a touch of it, or a spark of it light into your consciences, you will groan sadly Ps. 38:4, 'Mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.' When we do but taste of this cup, we cry out presently, 'My heart faileth: You may know it—

[1] By what Christ felt. He lost his actual comforts, felt strange agonies,

insomuch that he sweat drops of blood. We are of weak spirits, and soon dismayed, but his soul was exceeding sorrowful: 'If this be done in the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?' Many times, a little before a shower, falls a gloominess and sad blackness so it was in' Christ's spirit.

[2] The saints, when the little finger of God is upon them, how have they roared all the day long 1 Ps. 40:12, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.' All life and spirit is gone when God sets home but one sin upon the conscience. Job saith, chap. 6:4, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison thereof drinks up my spirits.'

[3.) You may know it by your own experience. When conscience is a little opened, what horrors and disquiets are there! Prov. 18:14, 'A wounded spirit who can bear?' Then for thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil! Cain crieth out, 'My iniquity is greater than I can bear.'

[4] Consider the life to come, and the threatenings of the word concerning those that die in their sins: Heb. 10:31, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' Who can conceive what it is to remain in chains of darkness? 2 Peter 2:4. Sins that now lie asleep like sleepy lions will be then roused up: Mark 9:44, 'Their worm never dieth, and their fire is not quenched.' This is the portion of them that bear their own burden and their own transgressions.

2. When you begin to feel the burden of sin, make use of Christ for ease; remember this burden. is laid upon him: Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' The weight lieth upon us, not to press us down to hell and despair, but to go to Christ, as they were to do under the law to the sacrifice, Lev. 1:4. They were to lay their hand upon the head of the sacrifice—a rite expressing that the sacrifice did bear the burden of their sins. This they were to do with brokenness of heart, acknowledging their offences—acknowledging that they were worthy to die as the beast died—owning the sacrifice of atonement, Christ Jesus Ps. 51:17, 'The sacrifices of a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.' So John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world;' 'Look on him whom they. have pierced,'

Zech. 12:10. This was done to renew the covenant: Ps. 50:5, 'Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.' And they were to promise to walk with God in all humble obedience.

Use 2. Is exhortation, to beseech you to believe this truth, that your iniquities are cast upon Christ. A man hath no benefit by it till he believeth. There is as much need of your believing as of Christ's suffering. Believe in 'the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world.'

1. As soon as you feel sin a burden, ease yourselves by considering it is laid upon Christ. Free grace, as it doth not exclude the merits of Christ, so not the application of faith: Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' The business was transacted between God and Christ before all worlds. Faith gets it copied out to the soul. You are weary and heavy laden with sin, come then to him, Mat. 11:28, with a lively faith; not as if by faith we did anew lay the burden of sin upon Christ, only then we apprehend it to be done for our sakes.

2. After you have gotten an interest in him by faith, renew the sense of your pardon. God seeth as a just God, and so our sins should be matter of humiliation to us; but he covereth them as a merciful God, and so it is matter of comfort. Sins, they were long since laid upon Christ; renew thy pardon again by faith, and strive to get an actual sense of it. Remember, Christ's soul was heavy to the death, that thou mightest go free.

But you say, I could take comfort in these things if I knew that my sins were laid upon Christ; it is only the sins of the elect are laid upon Christ.

Ans. The text saith, 'The iniquities of us all.'

Doct. That Christ is set forth in the gospel, as having all men's sins laid upon him. The word carrieth it in such a general way, that none is excepted, and there are very many other places to confirm it, where Christ is said to reconcile the world: 2 Cor. 5:19, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself;' and to 'taste death for every man,' Heb. 2:9; and to 'die for all.' It is good to mark that: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'If one died for all.' I shall come to the reasons why Christ is proposed so generally.

1. Because all men in some sort have benefit by him. So far Christ suffered his Father's wrath that was due to all men's sins, that in a large sense they have benefit by him. All the common mercies we enjoy we have by virtue of Christ's death. You know how the threatening ran, 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die,' Gen. 2:17; nay, it is 'surely die.' And all mankind might have been lost; but yet you see the absolute accomplishment of the sentence, even to wicked men, is referred to the day of judgment. The worst, at least, enjoy a reprieve by Christ. In this sense it is said, 1 Tim. 4:10, 'We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe.' Such as is spoken of, Ps. 36:6, 'O Lord, thou preservest man and beast;' by a common salvation and preservation. And the word *o swthr,* which is usually applied to Christ as Mediator, is used there to hint that it cometh by Christ; though it be a common mercy, it is from him. Thus it is said, Eph. 1:10, 'That in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all, things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.' Some understand it of collecting the scattered parts of the world, and renewing the creature, which, had it not been for Christ, would have been lost. As an orator collects the heads of a discourse, that nothing be lost, and bringeth it into one sum. So the heathens, all their mercies come to them swimming in the blood of Christ; so. the word, ordinances, covenant, and outward graces to the church. Thus he suffered for the sins of the whole world, that the whole should enjoy these common favours and blessings by him.

2. Because there is a sufficiency in the merits of Christ for all, so that if it had pleased God to give Christ to all mankind, his justice had been sufficiently satisfied. For there is no defect in the Redeemer, and therefore there are so many general expressions in scripture to set out the value of Christ's sacrifice; so that if there were ten thousand times more sins committed than there are, here is enough to expiate them all, the person that suffered being so eminent, and the sufferings so great and infinite. Those that perish do not perish out of any defect or insufficiency in the merit of Christ, as if enough were not done to save them; but out of their own fault, because they did not believe it. Thus it is said, 1 Cor. 15:22, 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;' that is, as there was a sufficiency in Adam, the first common person, to ruin all

his posterity, so there was a sufficiency in Christ to save all that Adam ruined; for it must needs be understood so, for take it literally and it is against all common experience. Many know not Christ, many hate him and will not come unto him: "Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life;' Rom. 5:18, 'Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.' The text proveth nothing but that there was as much sufficiency in Christ to justify, as there was in Adam to condemn. That we may not have too low and undervaluing thoughts of Christ's sufferings, the scripture speaks thus generally: there is enough for me and thee, and all the world. It is a great injury done to Christ to lessen and extenuate him beneath Adam, as if he were not as able to recover as the other to ruin us. 3. Therefore it is expressed thus generally, that all conditions of men might be included. God would not have any enclosure of his mercy within the bounds of any nation, persons, and conditions of men, that he might take off all outward exceptions, and comprise every believer, of what condition and rank soever; and therefore he expresseth himself promiscuously to all of every state, every nation, every order. It is the nature of man to confine privileges to their own nation and order. We would be singular and shine alone, and have none share with us; envy, I say, grudgeth at the commonest mercies. We see in. common things nothing is so welcome to us as that which we enjoy alone. The Romans would be the only civil nation, all else were barbarians. The Romish clergy would have all learning and knowledge confined within their function; and the Jews could not endure to hear of a general salvation for other nations. It was the harshest note that could be sounded in their ears, that Christ died for all. It is much urged by the apostle, because of the rage of the Jews, for the enlargement of the pale of God's church. Therefore I conceive the apostle did inculcate, and so largely insist upon it, to meet with this perverseness of the Jews, as that which they would never hear of. In this sense it is said, Heb. 2:9, he 'tasted death for every man;' and so 1 John 2:2, 'And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;' that is, not only for us Jews, but for all the world, even of all places, orders, and ranks. God would not have the creatures *envy* it to any man, he proposeth it so generally to take away that Jewish indignation against the Gentiles. Therefore the apostles do so

plentifully abound in these expressions.

4. That no man might accuse God as if he had not made sufficient provision for, his soul. Men are apt to transfer their guilt; though they will not charge Christ with it in a way of faith, they will charge God with it in a way of censure; as Prov. 19:3, 'The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.' It is their own folly and unbelief, and we are apt to impute it to God, as if he did not intend Christ to us. Now there would be more occasion offered, if the Lord should have pointed out by name those to whom he intended Christ. God keepeth it secret what he will do with men, that he may provoke them to endeavours after duty, leaving themselves to his good pleasure. No man can plead now, as an excuse for his. negligence, that God left him out; it is we leave out ourselves; and therefore the proposal and offer of Christ is general. God hath expressed enough of his will to show man his duty, though not enough of his will to tell man his pleasure and secret intention. Now the will of God concerning any particular person is hidden. Men would fain excuse themselves of duty by prying into God's secrets. God giveth a check to such curious impudence, by making the proposal and offer of Christ general, though his intentions to give Christ may be particular; yet we must not meddle with that. Foolish curiosity proceeds from an innate desire in the creature to charge God with all its miscarriages: Deut. 29:29, 'Secret things belong unto the Lord, but those things which are revealed belong to us, and our children for ever.' The proposal of Christ in the gospel, that is a revealed thing, and it belongeth to the creatures. God would have it carried so as rather typing out duty to them than revealing his own purposes; he would not give the creature such an occasion to murmur.

5. To denote the multitude that should come into Christ, especially in the latter times; they are as good as a whole world: he 'so loved the world,' John 3:16. It is understood by many of *mundus credentium;* they were but a world when Christ saved them. God's elect, compared with the wicked world, are but a little flock by themselves, but they are accounted in the scripture as innumerable: Rev. 7:9, 'I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb,

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.' Mark, it is a multitude which none can number; the sheep of Christ's flock are so many that it is innumerable: in a sort especially, there shall be a great increase in the last times. And thus you may expound that place: Heb. 2:9, 'He tasted death for every man.' In the next verse it is so intended, 'in bringing many sons unto glory.' So Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' The gospel shall then be spread far and near. God hath given Christ to have and to hold all the world: Heb. 1:3, 'Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.' And it is said in the 10th verse of this Isa. 53, that 'the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.' Therefore the scripture speaketh this generally, to comprise the vast multitude that should embrace the doctrine of Christ.

6. To denote the oneness, or the one way by which all are reconciled to God: all that have it have it by Christ. I say, many times the expressions are general, to show that God disposeth of the sins of all his people one way. Such expressions are rather exclusive of other ways, than inclusive and comprising all persons. God is said to lay the iniquities of us all upon Christ, because all those whose iniquities are disposed in a merciful way, they are disposed this way. Let me exemplify this a little: —The philosophers define good thus *kalon estin ou panta epiJumei*—good is that which all things desire. It is not to be understood as if all things in the world did desire good; for stones and timber, and many other things, have no appetite. The meaning is, all things that desire, desire that which is good. But I will give you instances in scripture: Col. 1:20, 'And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.' Not that everything is reconciled, but everything that is reconciled, is reconciled this way, by the blood of Christ's cross. So Titus 2:11, 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men;' that is, to all to whom salvation is brought, it is brought by the grace of God; it rather noteth Christ's merits than the persons that enjoy it. Divers such expressions there are in scripture. Thus, John 1:9, 'That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' Not that every man that cometh into the world is enlightened, there are many that perish and die in their ignorance: the meaning is, every man that is enlightened, is enlightened by him. As, for example, such a man cured all

the city; not that every particular man was cured, but all that were cured were cured by him: so Christ is the Saviour of all men, that is, of all that are saved. These expressions are exclusive of all other ways, not inclusive of every person. Thus you have the reasons.

APPLICATION.

Use 1. This serveth to clear to us the mistake of the doctrine of universal grace, and to explain those expressions in scripture that are brought to favour this opinion: though you cannot conclude out of them universal grace, yet you may a universal necessity of believing this benefit. Solomon saith, Prov. 24:26, 'Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer;' that is, ingenuous men will mightily prize and be taken with aright answer. Why, here now you have an answer against the patrons of universal grace. You see the reasons why the proposals of Christ are so general, and why there are so many expressions of it to all men: it is because all enjoy benefit by him. He is sufficient for all: God would not have any enclosure of his grace to any particular person; and it is to show the multitude of believers; and that God would have all men look to this, and to no other name, and to but one Christ.

Use 2. Is to inform us what little reason we have, to refuse to come to God at his call, seeing he keeps open-house for all comers; yea, though you have no money for heaven: Isa. 55:1, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.' The publication of the gospel is general to all men—to all kinds of men: nothing hindereth now but unbelief, or the refusal of Christ.

1. Not thy nation. Oh, how are we to praise God that he hath enlarged the bounds of mercy to us Gentiles now, as well as to the Jews formerly! You may look upon your iniquities as laid upon Christ Rom. 15:11, 'Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles.' It is quoted out of Ps. 117:1. All nations now share in this privilege. You know, in traffic or otherwise, peculiar nations have peculiar privileges, but here all alike.

2. Not thy condition. Art thou poor? Christ is as mindful of thee as of the rich. God taketh a great deal of care and knowledge of a poor soul. In the

parable of Dives and Lazarus, the poor man hath a proper name, and the rich man hath an appellative;. and it is a great favour, I can tell you, to be known to God by name. It is spoken as a great privilege that God knew Moses by name: Exod. 33:12, 'I have known thee by name, and thou hast found favour in my sight;' Acts 17:34, 'Howbeit, certain men clave unto 'him, and believed, among which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris.' God took notice of the poor woman at Athens as well as the great scholars. So James 2:5, 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith?' Art thou a poor, neglected manor woman, or a poor servant? Yet your souls may be as dear to him as the richest man's alive, and he is as tender over you. You read in the 16th verse of Philemon, that Onesimus, a servant, was above a servant in regard of his spiritual condition. Oh, brethren, it is a great fault in men, they do not look after the poor in the world, especially poor servants; if they mind the good of the higher servants, yet they neglect the other. I speak a homely word, and yet a true one; it may be the soul of the poor scullion-boy in the kitchen may be as dear and precious to Christ as yours. So it may be said of one deformed: Acts 13:1, and 'Simon that was called Niger' was a saint as well as Moses the fair.

3. Not your sins. Make no exceptions where the word maketh none. Christ came to die for the dissolute drunkard as well as for the devout hypocrite. Men in despair look upon their sins as Cain did, and cry out, 'My sins are greater than I can bear.' Why, did Christ upon the cross only except thy sins, thinkest thou? Did he say he would not die for such a one as thou art? Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Those that have committed so many sins that they are even sunk down to hell by them, Christ calleth to himself; yea, the more unlikely it seemeth to you, God may have the greater regard to you Luke 14:21, 'The master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind!

A man would have thought a morsel at the door had been great preferment for them, and of all persons they should never have been invited. There is nothing exempted out of the call of the gospel but the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that is never pardoned, because the

forgiveness thereof is never asked. Take heed of making exceptions where God hath made none; a feast may be intended for thee, though thou hast a poor, blind, lame soul.

4. Not any thoughts that Christ was never intended for us. How do you know that? Reprobation is God's sealed book. It is not for creatures to look into it; you would fain justify your unbelief by God's decree against you, but it argueth an ill spirit. If you can exempt yourself out of the number of them that go astray, you may exempt yourself out of the number of those whose iniquities are laid upon Christ. Let God alone with his secret judgments. Christians are to look to the revealed will of God—to directions in the scriptures, not to the secret that is in God's bosom.

But still the soul replieth, If I knew that I belonged to the election of grace, then I would believe; otherwise, I know that I cannot change his purpose by any faith of mine. Doth God promiscuously intend Christ to every one? I reserved the discussion of this doubt, that I might answer it the more fully. I shall endeavour it in these propositions, by which I shall lay open the whole matter:—

1. Certain it is that there is enough in Christ's death to merit pardon for all men in the world, though there were ten thousand times more men than ever there were or shall be; and so they would find it if they did believe. It is good to determine that first, for the defect is not on Christ's part; but this I spoke to before in the reasons.

2. Though Christ's death be sufficient for all, yet the efficacy and benefit of it is intended only to believers—to those that enjoy it by faith,—not only applied, but intended only. Mark, I say, that not only the efficacy of it is to believers, but the efficacy of it is intended to believers. See some proof of this from scripture: John 10:15, 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' There was the intent of God and Christ, that Christ should die only for those of his own flock; and therefore many times, where you find the expressions of God's love very general, you shall see the intention of it is restrained to those that believe. As John 3:16, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' God intended him to the world of believers: whoever amongst them do believe, let him be

whatever he will, or whatever he was, he should not perish. So Rom. 3:22, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.' Though it be to all, it is with this restraint and limitation, 'to all that believe.' And there is good reason for it; for if God intended it, he would effect it: Ps. 115:3, 'Our God is in heaven, and doth whatsoever he will.' If ever God willed it, certainly he would accomplish it—man cannot frustrate it. And if God intended the giving Christ to the whole world, Christ would have prayed for it. A man cannot know what was God's will or the Son's duty better than by taking notice of his solemn prayer when he was about to offer up the sacrifice of himself: John 17:9, 'I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of the world.' Christ was given for none but for those that were given to him; and for them he prayeth, ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' Christ prayed only for those for whom he died, and he died only for believers.

3. God no doubt intended him such a sufficient sacrifice to the world. Christ did nothing but by the Father's will, as was largely confirmed in the beginning of this discourse: John 5:30, 'I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me.' It was the Father's intention as well as the Son's. So far, then, we may safely say, God intended Christ as a sufficient sacrifice.

4. Though the efficacy and benefit be certainly intended to believers, yet God's offer of Christ, and the publication of the gospel, is general Isa. 55:1, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters;' Rev. 22:17, 'Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' Such commands being rather an intimation of what he would have us do than what he intendeth we shall do; of the creature's duty rather than of God's will. It is the will of God's pleasure that they ought to seek after an interest in Christ. So it is said, 1 Tim. 2:4, 'God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;' *voluntate praecepti,* by the will of his command: and by virtue of this we are bidden to preach the gospel to every creature, Mark 16:16. To the making it effectual, there is required not only God's will, but God's grace, still reserving to God the power of his own secret judgment.

5. God is serious and in earnest in these offers and publications of Christ to all. That he mocketh no man you shall see: do but try him, accept him, and he will be as good as his word. It is not made to you fraudulently, and with an intent to deceive, but God is serious. God is bound to no man, and wicked men refuse him out of their owns perverseness. And indeed we should rather admire his mercy that he giveth Christ to any, than quarrel at his justice that he doth not give him to all.

That God is serious and in good earnest in these offers, appeareth—

1. By his entreaties. He beseecheth you to take him as well as offereth him: Ezek. 33:11, 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from, his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?' 2 Cor. 5:20, 'Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.' So God useth all these entreaties to show that he is sincere and in earnest with all men.

2. Because it suiteth more with his delight that you should take hold of these offers and not refuse them. God bindeth himself with a strong oath: Ezek. 33:11, 'As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.' Merely as it is the destruction of the creature, so God doth not any way approve of it, though, as a just punishment, he delighteth in it. If you look to God's approbation or delight, your accepting grace more suiteth with it than your refusal.

3. Because he is angry that you do refuse: John 5:40, 'Ye will not come to me that you may have life.' He is grieved that men, through their own folly, neglect that which should do them good: Mat. 23:37, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?' He meant by his outward ministry, though not inward call. He was mighty solicitous and earnest in that. So though God use all the means with us, and give us all the light that possibly can be into his will, except saving light, we turn unto our own way.

THE SEVENTH VERSE.

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.

THE main drift of the prophet in this chapter, as I have showed, is to remove the stone of stumbling and the rock of offence which lay in the way of the Jews because of Christ's meanness and sufferings. They looked for a Messiah to come fluttering with the pomp and royalty of an earthly prince; and therefore, when they found nothing but a mean outside, a despised branch, and a withered root in a dry ground, a man of no splendour, but of much sorrow, 'they did easily dash the foot of their faith, and split all their hopes upon this rock, as if there were nothing worthy of the arm of God to be found in Jesus. Against this scandal the prophet maketh many defences, and showeth the several reasons why the excellency of Christ was to be hid under the veil of meanness and miseries; and therefore what a slender ground there was why it should be turned to the blemish and disrepute of Christ.

1. His first argument was, because it was for our good, and for our sakes that he did put on this disguise; and so being found in appearance like us, he might be taken in our stead: 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' And what foul ingratitude were this, not to know a friend because he hath put on a disguise of meanness and misery for our sakes! Having fully traversed this argument in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses, he proceeds to another, a second defence against the scandal, and that is—

2. The voluntariness and willingness of Christ to undergo these sufferings. He was not compelled to it unless by his own spirit. He might have come in the lustre and glory of the Godhead. Or if not so, yet being a man, he might have hid himself secretly from the malice of his adversaries; or, when seized upon and taken, he might then have vouched his innocency, and have pleaded the matter with them;. or have made a party among the people, and so, one way or another, rescued himself from the ignominy and bitterness of that death that he was to suffer. No, saith the prophet, here is nothing but patience and a willing subjection to

his Father's design: 'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.' And, indeed, you had need ,observe these words, for they were the occasion of the eunuch's conversion; for he was reading this very place in Isaiah: Acts 8:32,' And the place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb before the shearer, so opened he not his mouth: And God sent Philip to join with him. And usually such scriptures have been of greatest account that have proved effectual to the converting of a sinner; as that place in Rom. 13:11, 'And that knowing the time, that it is high time to awake out of sleep.; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' This scripture was the occasion of Austin's conversion, as John chapter one was of Junius's conversion, and this of the eunuch's. God sendeth the same Spirit to speak to you as to Philip, and you are to hear with the same affection. These words are the second argument to take off the scandal of Christ's death and bitter sufferings. And it is taken from the willingness and ready patience wherewith he underwent those sufferings. I may observe in the verse two parts:—

1. The nature of the sufferings: *he was oppressed, and he was afflicted.*

2. The carriage of Christ under them: *he opened not his mouth;* which is amplified and illustrated by two similitudes, of a lamb going to the slaughter, and a sheep before her shearers.

The points hence may be many; but because the prophet doth so often double and redouble expressions about the sufferings of Christ, and I have spoken so much of almost every circumstance considerable in them already, I shall be enforced now and hereafter to touch only upon the main thing held forth in every verse. Notwithstanding, I shall endeavour to draw out the strength and sweetness of every phrase in the comment and explication. Briefly, then, to go over the parts.

1. As to what was done to Christ, or the nature of his sufferings 'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted.' There is a great deal of variety about the rendering of these words, because of the diversity of the Hebrew pointings. The vulgar readeth, *Oblatus quia ipse voluit* —he was offered because he would. Symmachus renders it, *He was brought, and he obeyed.* But these do not follow the best pointed Bibles, though they do

not much vary from the sense intended in the verse. Those come nearer that render, *He was punished and troubled;* for the first word signifieth, to exact a thing with rigour and molestation, and is applied to this case: as if a man should come and molest a surety for the debt of another for whom he is engaged. I find most of the best interpreters going this way; and Junius rendereth it, *exigitur poena,* our punishment is exacted of Christ: the creditor came upon him for our debt; as if the word did point to that great truth which is held forth in other places, that Christ died for us as our surety. And therefore he is called 'the surety of a better testament,' Heb. 7:22. Mat. 20:28, he is said '.to give his life, *lutron anti pollwn*, as a ransom for many.' He laid down his life to set us free from the debt and engagement; so that they that are Christ's need not fear that the debt will be required of them again: Luke 12:58, 'Lest the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison, where thou shalt remain till the uttermost price be paid.' I say this is a very comfortable truth for God's people, that the surety had paid the debt for them, so that they need not fear the officer or the prison; God hath exacted it of Christ. Or you may, if you will, read, as generally our translation, 'He was oppressed,' as the Seventy render both words by one, he was evilly dealt with and evilly entreated and so our translation maketh it to be read with an emphasis, 'He was oppressed and afflicted;' that is, it was such an affliction as did amount to an oppression, and yet he bore it patiently. 'Oppression,' saith Solomon, 'maketh a wise man mad,' Eccles. 7:7. A wise man, that is a man that hath the greatest command over himself. The heart stormeth and rageth when it meets with such usage as it did not expect, or hath not deserved. But Christ was oppressed and afflicted, and he opened not his mouth. And indeed the sufferings of Christ, in reference to man, do best of all come under the notion of oppression; for the other word 'afflicted,' it is well rendered, and therefore I will not criticise upon it.

2. How Christ bore it, or his carriage under it. It is given first in general: 'He opened not his mouth;' and then it is particularly amplified by two similitudes.

First, In the general: 'He opened not his mouth.' 'This shows two things: —

1. The great patience of Christ. When all this was upon him, not an impatient word dropped from him, either against God or his enemies. And, indeed, you shall find in scripture that holy patience is many times expressed by holding our peace. Discontent easily breaketh out into daring and provoking language. The tongue and lips speak unadvisedly against God, therefore the bridling the tongue is a great sign of patience. Hence it is said, Lev. 10:3, that 'Aaron held his peace' when a remarkable judgment was upon him. Stormy hearts will soon boil over; but Aaron held his peace. I conceive it was not out of the greatness of his sorrow—as, indeed, griefs are not always utterable—but out of the greatness of his patience. As David, Ps. 39:9, 'I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.' He sweetly acquiesced in Providence. And so in the person of Christ, Ps. 38:13, he saith, 'I as a deaf man heard not, and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth;' as if he had been either deaf or dumb, not sensible of the injury, nor willing to speak of it. Thus Christ suffered unjustly for our sake and in our stead, yet spoke not a word. This showed his great patience.

2. His great love to man, showed in his wonderful silence, even then when he might justly have spoken in his own defence, but would not seem to interrupt the design of God. It is witnessed in many places that Jesus held his peace when they asked him questions about his innocence, as I shall show you by and by out of several places. I conceive it hinteth that great silence that Christ manifested upon all his accusations.

But some may object, and say, How can this be, since Christ did sometimes open his mouth? Did not he say to the soldiers, 'Are you come out against me as against a thief and a robber?' And he said to Pilate, 'Thou hast no power unless it be given from above.' And he prayed for them, Luke 23:34, and rebuked him that smote with the sword, and forbade Peter to use it. How, then, doth this suit with these words, 'He opened not his mouth'?

I answer—He never spoke to hinder our redemption, neither railingly nor revilingly; for so Peter explaineth it, I Peter 2:23, 'Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.' He used no threatening, no reviling—no, many times not a modest reply, when a man would think he might very well have made it. Thus you see the meaning of the phrase, 'He opened not his mouth.'

Secondly, Now for the particular resemblance; as—

1. That he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. The scripture often useth this similitude; for, indeed, it was not a casual similitude, but a standing type of Christ; as the lamb in the daily sacrifice, Exod. 29:38, which was offered to God daily, morning and evening, for pardon—we being only accepted through his mediation; and the Paschal lamb in the Lord's Supper importeth Christ's being offered to God, for Christ is called a lamb in scripture, I conceive, for three reasons.

[1.] As it is an emblem of innocence, meekness, and patience, as the lamb was to be without spot and blemish. Therefore, St Peter saith, 1 Peter 1:18, 'We are redeemed by the blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot and blemish.' A pure, harmless, undefiled lamb.

[2.] As it may import weakness and slenderness of appearance in the world. Christ is nothing in show, though mighty in power: Rev. 6:15, 16, 'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, hid themselves in dens, and rocks, and mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of

the Lamb,' that is, even from Christ. Christ in his weakest appearance was but as a lamb, yet such a lamb as at the last day will make the wolves to shake.

[3.] It noteth the meekness and sweetness of Christ, willingly yielding to be a sacrifice for us. Christ, when he cometh to judgment, is expressed in Hosea and other places to be as a lion; but when to save, then as a lamb. When he cometh to destroy men, he cometh as a lion; but when he cometh to destroy sins, he cometh as a lamb. Thus here, and John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.' This was the Lamb the prophet Isaiah foretold, and the sacrifices prefigured that Lamb, 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' Rev. 13:8. Well, then, you see the force of the expression here, that Christ went as sweetly and readily to the work of our redemption as an innocent lamb to the slaughter or shambles.

2. The next similitude is, 'As a sheep before her shearers is dumb.' Of all creatures the sheep is the most silent. Hogs whine and hout, but sheep are dumb before the shearer. Christ did not open his mouth, unless to pray, instruct, and reprove, as before mentioned. Many points might be observed, but I will sum up all in this one.

Doct. That Jesus Christ underwent cruel and bitter sufferings for us with a great deal of willing patience.

For this I take to be the intent of this verse, to show how ready Christ was to accomplish the office of the mediatorship: Rev. 1:5, he 'loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' For in all his conflicts with malicious accusations and opprobrious speeches, he would do no violence, nor express anything that might be an occasion to divert him from his purpose; but, as a lamb is brought to the slaughter, so he opened not his mouth. I shall prove the point:—

1. By some scriptures that assert it, and show the willingness of Christ: Phil. 2:8, 'He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.' With a great deal of willing patience he complied with the sorest 'and most bruising act of the mediatorship. He was 'obedient to death, eves the death of the cross.' So it is said, Eph. 5:25, 'Christ loved

the church, and gave himself for it.' And in other places: Heb. 10:7, with its parallel, Ps. 40:7,' In the volume of thy book it is written of me, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.' Christ doth, as it were, exult in the command, and rejoice over the work of redemption: 'Lo, I come to do thy will 1'

2. By several passages in the history of Christ's life.

[1.] His longing for it before it came. When a man desireth a thing, he is impatient till he obtain his desire; every minute is tedious till he doth enjoy it: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' That baptism was the laver of his own blood. Earnestness of expectation straiteneth joy, and a man cannot let out his spirit upon other things till he hath what he waiteth for. 'How am I straitened!' saith Christ. He consulted with himself, that thou, and I, and others, have souls to be saved, and therefore he would not do otherwise: Luke 20:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.' The earnest and vigorous bent of his desire is shown in that expression, 'With desire have I desired.'

[2.] In not preventing it when he knew it. Many are cast unawares upon danger, but Christ knew it, and foretold it before he came to suffer: Luke 18:32, 'Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished: that he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on.' He knew which way the divine decrees and predictions ran, yet he went to Jerusalem. He could have kept himself safe from danger, yet he offered himself to it. It was in his power to have commanded twelve legions of angels, but the scripture saith it must be so. He could have kept himself and his disciples safe too, for he had power enough John 10:17,18, 'I lay down my life, no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.' Unless he had been pleased to lay it down, no man could have taken it from him. Voluntarily he submitted to it. Creatures do things out of necessity, because they cannot do otherwise, but Christ might have prevented it, for he knew it before: John 18:4, 'Therefore Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and saith unto them, Whom seek ye? '

[3] His cheerful casting himself upon it: John 14:31, 'Arise, let us go hence.' Presently, upon the end of that sermon, Christ went into the garden, where he is taken. So he saith to Judas, John 13:27, 'What thou doest do quickly.' Not to encourage him to the evil in his treasonable fact, but to show how willing he was to undertake our redemption.

[4.] In submitting to his Father's will in his highest agonies and conflicts: Luke 22, 'Not my will, but thine be done.' Here was no murmuring, but a sweet submission and acquiescence at the appointment of God. Many may seem to submit to God till they come to be pinched with the soreness of the trial. It is then you may discern and try your readiness in submitting to God's will.

15.] By his silence. When he heard the false witnesses, he held his peace and answered nothing, Mark 14:61; so Mat. 27:13, 'Then saith Pilate unto him, hearest thou how many things they witness against thee? and he answered him never a word;' so Mark 15:5, 'But Jesus yet answered nothing, so that Pilate marvelled and he questioned him in many words, but he answered him nothing.' Christ holdeth his peace, that we might speak and have boldness with the Father, and taketh the accusation patiently, that he might break it off from us. His not answering was to show our guilt; and yet he carried it so that nothing could be clearly proved to impeach his own innocency: Mat. 26:62,63, 'And Jesus held his peace, and the high priest arose and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? 'Not as if his silence did (as it doth in others) come from suppressed anger, or scornful stubbornness, but patience and meekness: 'He opened not his mouth.' Not a malicious taunt, or proud reproach, nor angry threatenings; nothing but silence, nothing but what argued oppressed innocence.

[6] By forbidding all violence that might seem to hinder this intention: Mat. 26:52, 'Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place.' If he opened his mouth, it was to forbid violence, and to pray for his persecutors: Luke 22:51, 'And he touched his ear, and healed him.' Every one of these things showeth a sweet submission, and readiness, and willingness in Christ to suffer for us.

Now the reasons why it must be so are these:—

1. That he might be fit for the Mediatorship, that all things might come freely and sweetly to you from his Father. He offered himself willingly, that thou mayest have mercies willingly. All wicked men's blessings seem to be extorted from Providence; they have them, as it were, *invito Deo* (reluctantly from God)*:* Hosea 13:11, 'I gave thee a king in mine anger.' So the murmuring Israelites had quails in anger: Ps. 78:31. Now Christ went willingly, that his own people might have everything from the heart of God as well as his hand: Jer. 32:41, 'I will rejoice over them to do them good.' One of the conditions, as divines observe, how it may stand with the justice of God to punish the innocent for the nocent, is, if he be willing; for God could not have extorted our debt of Christ, unless he had been willing. When Paul would take Onesimus his debt upon himself, Philemon might justly require it of him: Philem. 18,19, 'If Onesimus hath wronged thee aught, put it upon my account, and I will repay it' It would not stand with God's justice to force the obligation upon Christ, but Christ voluntarily engageth himself; if these souls owe thee aught, put it on my account—I will repay it. There was not only an ordination of God the Father, but a voluntary susception and undertaking of. God the Son; he cheerfully and willingly submitted to have sin translated upon him, and to be liable by engagement; put that on my account, and I will repay it.

2. That he might set off the worth of his love to us. Willingness and freeness commendeth a kindness, extorted courtesies lose their value. Therefore it is said, 'He loved us, and gave himself for us.' We see among men it would be ill taken to do a thing grudgingly. Decius rode cheerfully into the gulf for the good of his country; nay, in some men it is a kind of corruption to be over-forward with their favours: Prov. 17:18, 'A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend;' that is, before his friend desires and seeks for it. Many men, rather than lose the praise of their kindness, undo themselves, their stock being, soon spent. It is folly to be over-lavish and easy in such kindnesses. Therefore much more now would Christ commend his love to us: this ocean and overflowing of comforts being in Christ, it was the commendation of his love; he strikes hands and becometh surety before he is asked; it is the enhancement of Christ's love, and therefore he willingly submitted to it.

But you will object, How did Christ do it willingly? did not he pray that the cup might pass from him? and did he not fear and stagger at it? Heb. 5:7, 'Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.'

I answer—1. Briefly, Christ's prayers are rather for our example and comfort, and that he might leave us a pattern where to go, and to whom to apply ourselves in all our straits, than to declare his willingness to decline this hot service: he would be tempted in all things like us, except sin, Heb. 4:15, that he might be 'touched with the feeling of every infirmity.' He would be touched with such a conflict as came nearest to a sin of infirmity, but without sin. Jesus did it that we might know ourselves in the like case, when we struggle with the sense of guilt and the apprehension of divine wrath.

2. To show himself truly man. Christ prayed against the cup, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass.' He doth not contend with instruments, but beseeches God. Christ's prayers against the cup were as the prayers of a private man; and so Christ would show all the passions of our nature; for if he had not prayed that the cup might pass, he must have put off all natural affections, because Christ, as a private person, looked upon it as a mere suffering, it being the nature and duty of man to decline all those things that are grievous and painful to him; and Christ having the same love, and hatred, and fear that we have, as a private person, he would manifest it at this time.

3. As a common and public person, namely, as our Mediator and surety, so he was extremely willing and desirous to do this great office of love for us. For so it followeth, he sweetly submitted to his Father's will: 'Father, not my will, but thine be done: Not my will as a private person, but thy will, which is more to a public person, let that be done; it was not in reference to the work, but how he should go through with it.

2dly, For his fears: these were not a shrinking from the work, but only a natural consternation and retirement of the spirits upon so ghastly an apprehension as he then had of his Father's wrath against him for our sins. When the cold hands of death were put into his bosom to pluck out

his heart, no wonder if there were a struggling; it is natural to be moved with things that are nigh. These fears were a part of the fire in which this sacrifice was to be burnt and offered to God. No wonder, therefore, if the Spirit of the Godhead did freely give 'up the manhood to be scorched with these fears: Mark 14:38, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' The willing spirit giveth up the flesh to this weakness.

3dly, For his tears: they were such an eruption and overflow of his love; a part of that deluge by which he would drown the world of sin and wickedness.

Divers inferences may be drawn from hence.

Use 1. Is consolation, and that more generally. Here is comfort for believers, for your faith to feed upon. You may be sure that God accepted Christ for you, for he willingly offered himself to be a sacrifice for you. He went as a lamb to the slaughter, and this lamb taketh away the sins of the world. You have it twice proclaimed from heaven that God was well pleased with Christ—at his baptism and at his transfiguration: Mat. 3:17; and Mat. 17:5, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' God is pleased in Christ with you. Your willing sacrifices are acceptable to the Lord; God had no respect to Cain and his offering, because it was offered with a grudging mind. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Christ gave himself cheerfully and willingly for you; therefore the Lord loveth him, and loveth you for his sake. Among the heathens, a sacrifice that came unwillingly to the altar was thought ominous, as when the beast did show much reluctance, or did roar, or bleat much. O Christians! your sacrifice came willingly; he was not haled to the altar with rigour, but he went as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb. Go and urge it to God; willing sacrifices are pleasing to him; Jesus Christ did not offer himself with a grudging mind.

2. More particularly, there is comfort against sad thoughts about sin. The great aggravation upon which the soul doth so bitterly reflect is the willingness of it; and, indeed, here lieth much of the evil of sin. It was that which heightened Ephraim's guilt, that he willingly walked after the commandment, Hosea 5:11; that is, so readily complied with Jeroboam's calves; and, indeed, the foulness of the fact is not so much to be gathered

from the grossness of the acts of it, as from the propension, and inclination, and disposition of the heart towards it, and the fulness of the will to it, a deliberate ready—giving ourselves to it. Wilfulness in sin maketh the heart very sad when it cometh to see it. But, blessed be God, here is an answer to it—you have a willing Saviour. Though there be in you much reluctancy against God's will, and much readiness to offend, yet you could not be so ready to sin as Christ was willing to die for you: 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover.' How earnest was he to show his love! Have you felt the rage of lust in your bosoms? Christ felt the rage of love. He was straitened till he were baptized with blood for your sakes. This is the true reflection upon Christ, when we see enough in him to stop the mouth of conscience 'Who shall condemn? it is Christ that justifieth.'

Use 2. Is exhortation to bless and praise God. This was the endearment of his love, the willingness of it. Oh, how much are we indebted to him! The very argument that faith useth in the heart is the willingness of Christ to serve us in this business: Gal. 2:20, 'I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me, and gave himself for me.'

Use 3. Is instruction. It giveth out divers lessons, for Christ's life is a praxis of divinity, and the rules of religion exemplified.

1. To show us how we should give up ourselves to the service of Christ, how we should come with the sacrifice of ourselves and duties with a ready and cheerful heart. When you feel any reluctancy and regret of spirit, oh, remember Christ offered himself willingly. The Socinians would make Christ's sufferings to serve for some other use, only to be exemplary; but certainly they were not only to leave us an example: 1 Peter 2:21, 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps;' but he died in our room and stead, and for our sakes. And therefore we should give up ourselves to him. The scripture speaketh often of the free-will offering of the saints: Ps. 119:108, 'Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will offering of my mouth, O Lord;' Ps. 110:3, 'They shall be a willing people in the day of thy power.' Bernard saith, Lord, I will willingly sacrifice myself to thee, because thou wert willingly sacrificed for me. Christ was sacrificed willingly, not for his own gain but your benefit; and will you not give up yourselves to God, when it is better you

should be given to him than left to yourselves?

2. It showeth us what we should do in all our straits, wants, and calamities that befall us. The saints are as lambs in the midst of wolves, Luke 10:3: show yourselves lambs in suffering, as well as like lambs in danger, not like swine that whine and yell. You should not open your mouth against God. Do not please your own carnal mind by murmuring, but rather resign up yourselves to God's disposal; this is somewhat hard to do. The saints have been troubled with carnal reasonings, as Job, and David, and Jeremiah, and Habakkuk; but learn of a higher instance, Jesus Christ, who, though innocent, did not murmur under his sufferings, but bore all with a ready and willing patience. Oh, therefore yield up yourselves to God with great patience, both in life and death.

3. It teacheth us not to use reviling and threatenings words to men. You may be wronged, so was Christ; he was more innocent than you can be, for it is impossible but something of the flesh will discover itself in us; but what a sad thing is it to see the people of God bring a railing accusation against others! Consider, Christ opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb.

THE EIGHTH VERSE.

He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off *out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

WE now come to the third defence to take off the scandal of Christ's meanness and sufferings; and that is taken from the glorious issue and end of these sufferings. It was an ignominious death, but there followed a glorious resurrection: he was not detained and holden of death, he got clear of it, and then lived for ever. The text saith, 'He was taken from prison, and from judgment,' &c.

There is scarce a verse in the scripture that hath been so variously expounded as this hath been, not only by others, but by the same men.

Scarce a man hath agreed with himself positively to determine of the sense of it, the phrases looking so many several ways. However, difficulty provoketh endeavours. According as I apprehend them, you may divide them into two parts:—

1. The scandal itself, laid down in the most aggravating terms—prison,' 'judgment,' 'cutting off from the land of the living,' and a 'stroke upon him for transgression;' as if the prophet had said, Grant all that you will charge upon him, prison, judgment, strokes, cutting off,—express it the worst way you can, all this will not impeach the glory of his excellency.

2. We have the defence in other terms: 'He was taken' from those things, and 'who shall declare his generation? 'If you think it is not enough to say that he died for others, and that he was stricken for the transgression of my people, yet he did not as every man that dieth for others; he perished not in this expression of his love, as others do he was taken from prison, and from judgment, and now liveth gloriously. There are two things in the defence:—

[1.] His resurrections 'He was taken from prison and from judgment;' he got out from under it.

[2] His life and duration in that state: 'Who shall declare his generation?' These are the parts, which will be the better made out to you by going over the phrases, as they lie in the order of the words, clearing this scripture from a wrong sense.

1. He was taken from prison and from judgment. These words have been variously translated and variously expounded. Some read 'by prison and judgment he was taken away;' but that doth not suit with the scope: others, 'after distress and judgment he was taken into glory,' that differeth not from the proper sense: others, 'without prison and judgment he was taken away in a violent, wrongful, extra-judicial manner;' but the Hebrew words do not so easily signify that. Now the main thing is to reconcile scripture and scripture, though it is impossible to reconcile interpreters. Therefore to dance after their pipe would perplex a man with much uncertainty, seeing they knew not which sense to take themselves. The Seventy translate it otherwise than it is read here, and

the words are quoted in Acts 8:32, *en th tateinwsei, &c.,* 'In his humiliation his judgment was taken away;' for that place hath the sense, though not the same words; for in or after his humiliation his judgment was taken away, when he was taken from it: in the middle of death he was a conqueror. Others now follow our reading, and give the sense thus: 'He was taken from prison and judgment to the cross;' as soon as bound and condemned, presently crucified. But that mistaketh the sense, and the following words show it is wrong, for they declare the glory of his resurrection, as these do his resurrection.

Thus for the different opinions. The true sense briefly is, that Christ was taken and assumed into glory from the prison of the grave. Prison is taken metaphorically for any distress, or it may be taken properly for the prison of the grave, and that judgment and condemnation that was passed upon him by God and men: by God, as our surety, condemning him in our stead; by men, in an unjust and violent way. Thus, after much traversing the variety of senses, I find this to be best and most approved.

2. It followeth, *Who shall declare his generation?* The Seventy, and Luke out of them, have it, *thn genean autou tiV dihghsetai;* Who shall declare his generation?' Some apply this to his eternal generation, as the fathers generally do,—as if the scandal of his misery were excused by that: others to his incarnation,—who can declare it how he was begotten of the Virgin? But these are wide of the scope, and the word will not bear it. Others refer it to the wickedness of that age, Who can tell it? Oh, the wickedness of such a generation, who would put to death such an innocent person as the Messiah (Who can declare the wickedness of the people of this generation? But that is but arresting the place, and a harsh sense. Others more properly interpret it thus: Who shall declare his generation? that is, the numerousness of those converts that shall be gained to him, the race or issue that shall come of the gospel? But this is the matter of another verse, and such a thing is never expressed by *dor* or *genia* properly, but by other words. The sense is, then, who shall declare his generation? that is, his age or duration: *dor is* often for that, and *genia* too: Acts 13:36, 'David, after he had served *(genia)* his age, or his generation, he fell asleep' The like in other places. So that the

meaning is, though he were a short time under distress and judgment,

some two or three days; yet, when he was taken from it, who shall declare his generation? who shall be able to count the number of his age, or the date of that time? You may easily count the number of a man's age and the date of his generation: Ps. 90:10, The days of our years are threescore years and ten.' But who can tell those many thousands of thousands of years, those endless ages that for ever Christ shall live? You can tell David's or Jacob's generation, but can you tell his? Theirs is soon reckoned, but who can find out a sum that can reach eternity? Thus for this phrase.

3. It followeth, *For he was cut of out of the land of the living:* for, or though he were cut off; that is, though he were by a violent death cut off, yet he shall be taken thence and translated into glory, where he shall have a long and lasting age. Or you may take the particle causally, as we render it, *for:* here is a double reason, he was but cut off as a slip, and it was not for his own sins; and therefore there is reason why he should not miscarry under it: this will appear in the exposition. 'He was cut off' is a metaphor taken from plants or trees, that do not fall down of their own accord, but are slipped and plucked off. The same metaphor is used, Dan. 9:25, 'The Messiah is out off, but not for himself.' To which metaphor Christ himself seemeth to allude, Luke 23:31, 'For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in a dry?' The meaning is, if Christ himself be taken off, who was cut off as a green tree, and not planted again,—was taken from the land of the living; that is, from living and conversing here upon earth: and it is so called, both by way of opposition to the land of the dead, or the grave; and by a condescension of the Spirit of God to our weakness, because we count that none live but those that are before us. This phrase is often used: Ps. 27:13, 'I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.' So Isa. 38:11, 'I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living.'

4. *And for the transgression of my people was he stricken;* or by *the transgression,* by the wickedness of Israel. He bringeth in God speaking it, as taking notice of their sin: Acts 2:23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel of God, have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' You may take both; it is like this may be the scripture

Paul meaneth when he saith, 1 Cor. 15:3, 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;' either sense is good. The sum of all is this, that though Jesus Christ was so cruelly and despitefully handled for our sins, yet at length he was taken from all this suffering, and reigneth for ever with God in glory.

Many points may be raised from these words; but having promised only to hint at the main things in these following verses, I shall take notice but of these few.

Doct. 1. That by the divine appointment there was a formal process against Christ. He was made guilty, he was cast into prison, he was condemned. Sin was translated upon him in the former verses. Here God had him to prison, and let all his distresses come upon him; and so the grave especially he was condemned to; there was judgment passed upon him. And therefore, the next time you see your surety without sin; here you see him as under your sin in misery and distress: Heb. 9:28, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.'

What comfort is there for believers in this, to support and strengthen their faith?

1. In that whatsoever should be done to them, is done to Christ in their stead. It is comfort that Christ hath made full satisfaction, that he' hath been in prison and under judgment for our sakes. God will not exact twice, of Christ and you too.

2. It yieldeth them instruction as well as comfort, not to think it much if they be imprisoned, and be under judgment for Christ's sake. Christ hath been so for theirs, and you may be glad you are conformed to your head: Luke 21:12, Christ told the apostles, 'They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.' So it may be with you; but remember he was taken from prison and from judgment.

3. Christ had a long reign for a short death. Christ's glory was in the midst of his sufferings, in his humiliation, that is, when most humbled. Christ

did not recover glory till in the prison of the grave. We can easily count the time of his suffering, but his generation who can declare? 2 Cor. 4:17, 'This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' An hyperbole, which is an expression greater than the truth, will not declare the glory. Hyperboles of hyperboles are not high enough; who can declare his generation?

4. Those that are cut off from the land of the living may live again to glory. So the church, when buried as it were under its ruins, there will be a resurrection; and therefore the glory of the churches is called 'the first resurrection,' Rev. 20. Death is but a transplanting to glory to the godly; they are but a slip taken off from an earthly root, that God may set them in the field of glory. Alas t this life is nothing to the age and generation that we shall have with Christ in heaven; a man may die, and yet be saved from death.

5. All Christ's sufferings were from men or by men. If there be anything shameful in the cross, blame the Jews for it, and yourselves for it. Many blame the Jews, and are ready to fly in their faces; but do you blame yourselves? It is hard to know which is meant by 'the transgression of my people,' or' for,' or 'of my people.' God would have us reflect upon both. Christ, that died for the sins of men, was taken away by the sins of men, that so he might at the same time discover his personal innocency and assumed guilt.

6. Oppressed innocency will get clear again: 'Who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people.' It was not a just debt in regard of men, and therefore not a lasting death; and it was not for any fault of his own. It plainly hinteth the unexpected restitution of glory to the people of God in their greatest humiliation; their judgment is taken away: God can never come with help too late, but men can. In his humiliation, in his judgment, Christ showeth the meaning of that riddle, 'Though he kill me, yet I will trust in him.' There may be victory in death; the matter is never past help with God: Jonas in the whale's belly was recovered. We can never sink below hope and prayer. Our interest thrives best many times when the case is dead and desperate as to all appearance.

These things having been observed, I now come to the main things intended in the text, and that is the glory of the resurrection, and the duration and continuance of that glory.

The points are two:—

1. That the Lord Jesus was taken from prison and from judgment, i.e., he rose again out of the pit of distress, to which he was condemned for our sakes.

2. That Christ being risen, liveth a numberless date of years, even for ever with God in glory.

These two points, then, the resurrection of Christ, and the life of Christ: the first is from that clause, 'He was taken from prison and from judgment;' the other from that, 'Who can declare his generation?'

I begin with the first point, that the Lord Jesus was taken from prison and from judgment, and rose out of the pit of distress, to which he was condemned for our sakes. He was taken from prison and from judgment; he did rise as Mediator, and could not choose but rise; he was not suffered to miscarry in it. The scriptures testify abundantly that he rose again: 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 'That he died for our sins, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.' And in other places, that he ought to rise again: Luke 24:46, 'And thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.' This Christ proveth out of the scriptures.

Therefore I shall show you—(1.) Why he rose, by reasons reflecting upon the efficient cause; (2.) Why he ought to rise, reflecting upon the final causes and ends of God in Christ in it for our good.

First, I shall show you why he rose, giving you the reasons for it; as—1. His own prayer. Christ's prayers were all granted, but especially those that were put forth with such vehemency and strong pouring out of his soul to his Father. He prayed for it with a great deal of holy fear, that he might not miscarry in the work. Therefore he was taken from prison and from judgment. The apostle saith, Heb. 5:7,

He was heard in that he feared; he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death.' He did not so much pray that he might not die, as that he might be saved from death; that having taken so much guilt upon him, he might not sink under it.

2. God's power was put forth upon his prayer to support him. He had a Father to look after him, whose tenderness would not let him leave Christ in the grave, nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption. And therefore the resurrection of Christ is applied to God the Father; as here in the text, 'He was taken from prison and from judgment.' And Acts 2:24, 'Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.' He helped the grave to disburden herself, easing it of its pangs and throes Rom. 8:11, 'But if the Spirit of him that raised tip Jesus from the dead dwell in you,' &c. The apostle speaketh of a mighty power of God, that is, of God the Father, which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, Eph. 1:20. God the Father put forth his power to take off the pains of death and the chains of the grave.

3. There was the power of his own Godhead; he had in himself a divine virtue to quicken his body. I distinguish this from the former, because God did not only raise Christ, but he raised himself, so as his resurrection might be a discovery of his Godhead. And therefore you shall find in scripture, that he is not only said to be raised by the power of God, but by himself, by his own person: Acts 2:24, 'He loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.' The grave was to give up this hot morsel, as a man that hath swallowed down a hot bit was not able to hold it. The scriptures do not only ascribe the resurrection to God the Father, but. to the Godhead of the Son too: John 10:17, 'I lay down my life, that I may take it again.' The words speak of Christ's taking up his life by his own power. He so laid down his life, that he might reassume it again by his own power. It is said, 2 Cor. 13:4, that 'though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; for we are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.' And it is very like that expression of St Peter, 1 Peter 3:18, 'Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.' The apostle's scope in that

place of the Corinthians is to prove that Christ and Christians are both alike in some respects: there is visible weakness, and inward power; he died through visible weakness. That which you could see in him was man's form, and so he was crucified; that which was not seen was his divinity, through the power of which he liveth. His resurrection was a glorious instance and manifestation of his own Godhead.

Secondly, For what end Christ was raised. And here, that I may show believers the fountain of their comfort, why it ought to be that Christ should be raised from the dead, since all the comfort of the soul dependeth upon his getting above the grave, and shaking the powers of death, I will here a little refresh your spirits with the water of this well-spring of salvation; I will draw it up and pour it forth in three considerations. In regard of a moral necessity which I call conveniency, the good that we attain by Christ's getting the upper hand of the grave, and the confirmation of our souls in all the benefits of his purchase; for without his resurrection they had been nothing to us.

1. Generally the resurrection is made to be the chiefest ground of comfort to Christians in the scripture; and therefore you shall find in scripture that this is made the great article: Rom. 10:9, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Mark, that is put as the main thing of Christianity, that God hath raised him from the dead: 2 Tim. 2:8, 'Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.' Above all truths we must clearly preach that, and press that as if it were the life of all religion. Remember Christ is raised from the dead; and therefore it was a usual salutation among the Christians, THE LORD IS RISEN. The apostle maketh the triumph of faith chiefly to arise from this, Christ's resurrection: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' If Christ had not risen, there would be but poor comfort to believers: 1 Cor. 15:14, 'If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' All would be to no purpose without this great seal and confirmation. It is a point of so great importance, that it is generally made the corner-stone in religion, the main hinge upon which gospel comfort hangs.

2. More particularly to show you the benefits of it.

[1.] All your spiritual enemies are subdued: Eph. 4:8, 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;' that is, those things that usually captivate the spirits of Christians, they were forced to set off the triumph of Christ's ascension; he seized upon the spoils at his resurrection, and rode in triumph at his ascension to glory. Death is unstinged; death shall he served as Haman, when it thinketh to hurt believers, and shall honour them as he did Mordecai. You may die, but you are saved from death: 1 Cor. 15:55, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' It followeth, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' You can no more be held of the grave than Christ could be holden thereby. Hell is unarmed and subdued, and the powers of darkness triumphed over. Though the devil mustereth temptations against you, you can see all conquered by faith in Christ's resurrection 'Your life is hid with Christ.' Then for sin, that is subdued: Christ gave it its death-wound upon the cross, and at his resurrection got above it. Then for the world, remember what Christ says, John 16:33, 'Fear not, little flock,' 'I have overcome the world;' that is, so conquered and triumphed over the world that it shall not hurt them. As for the devil, he trode him underfoot, and so shall Christians shortly: Rom. 16:20, 'The God of peace shall tread Satan under our feet shortly.'

[2.] All spiritual blessings are procured for us. The blessedness of a Christian lieth in these three things: in pardon, grace, and glory; in justification, sanctification, and glorification. And all these are confirmed by Christ's being risen, and taken from prison and from judgment.

(1.) For pardon or justification. If any one sin had remained unsatisfied for, Christ could not have risen; every sin must be expiated with death: Rom. 6:23, 'The wages of [every] sin is death;' and Christ would fulfil every tittle of the law, Mat. 5:18. But seeing he is got free, you may be sure he hath paid the wages of every sin 1 Cor. 15:17, 'If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.' While the surety is in prison, it is a sign the debt is not satisfied; but your surety is taken from prison and from judgment. Be of good comfort, all is paid: Rom. 4:25, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' God had him to prison for the debt of the creatures, and took him from prison

and from judgment for their comfort, and that they might be persuaded of his satisfaction.

(2.) For the grace of sanctification; he rose that he might purchase the Spirit to raise us from the death of sin to the life of grace: Rom. 6:4, 'That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' By the same glory of the Father both is done, that is, by the same glorious power that raised Jesus from the dead: Phil. 3:10, the apostle speaketh of the power of Christ's resurrection, that is, the virtue that goeth out from it unto believers.

(3.) Glorification. Christ rose before us to open the way; and therefore he is called 'the first-fruits of them that slept,' 1 Cor. 15:20. Others rise as a single ear of corn, but Christ as the first-fruits. The first-fruits were consecrated in lieu of all the rest; so is Christ in your stead: Col. 1:18, Christ is called 'the first-born from the dead;' that is, the chiefest, and one that rose for us all,—the first that entered into heaven as a common person. There was a resurrection of some before the glorification of Christ's body, but he was the first-born that stood for all: Heb. 6:20, 'Whither the forerunner is for us entered.' Jesus Christ is our forerunner, his resurrection doth make way for us to rise after him; he is our harbinger that is gone before.

[3.] Consider what special thing there is in the resurrection of Christ above the other acts of the mediatorship, since the scripture layeth so much weight upon it. What is it that it contributes to the comfort of Christians above his death? It will be necessary to inquire after that, because the scripture speaketh so much of this circumstance, the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

I answer—First, By way of confirmation: it confirmeth the heart in the expectation of salvation by Christ. By this it appeareth that the whole contrivance of salvation was a true thing; you have God's seal for it. It therefore confirmeth the heart in two things:—(1.) The person of Christ; and (2.) The office of Christ, upon which all hangeth.

1. The person of Christ. There can be no greater proof of his divinity than the resurrection: 1 Peter 1:21, 'Who by him do believe in God, that raised

him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.' And, indeed, there our faith beginneth upon Christ's being God; as Peter saith, 'Your faith is built on God.' Well, then, here is God's seal to the heart, about the person of the Messiah.— Rom. 1:4, 'Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' There the case was plainly and mightily decided that he was so, so as no man could contradict it: 'Truly this was the Son of God,' as the centurion cried. All were forced to say so by this instance. So Acts 13:33, he is said to be 'begotten of the Father.' He proveth it there to be at his resurrection, that *is, declarative;* then it was evidently shown that he was begotten of the Father. Well, then, though the mercies of pardon, grace, and glory were merited by other acts of the mediatorship, yet they are confirmed and sealed by this, because this establisheth the soul in the ground of it—in the truth of the person of Christ.

2. It sealeth to us the truth of his office, that this was he that was sealed to be Mediator. When the Jews taxed Christ for usurpation, he would confirm his office to them by no other sign but the resurrection: Mat. 12:39, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;' that is, that which answereth to the type of Jonas; and what was that but his lying three days and three nights in the grave and rising again? As if Christ had said, If you will have a miracle and a seal from heaven, that is all that I will give you. So you shall see upon another occasion, in John 2, when the Jews saw him authoritatively purging the temple, and acting as an extraordinary person, ver. 18, 'What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?' What confirmation hast thou from heaven to be the Messiah, that thou takest upon thee to reform the temple? Ver. 19, 'Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; meaning the temple of his body,' ver. 21. There was all the sign he would give them, viz., his resurrection; this was the most proper confirmation of his office.

Secondly, There is something by way of evidence,—it is a clearing and justifying of the merits of Christ. The benefits purchased by his death are evidenced to us in his resurrection; God must not only be satisfied, but it

must be discovered to the world that God was fully satisfied, or else we should remain under doubts and perplexities still. Now the resurrection of Christ is the full discovery of that satisfaction that is made by his death. This is that that the fallen creature hath to show for it, that God was satisfied, even Christ's resurrection. You know, among men, when they pay debts, they look that the book be cancelled, and that they have an acquittance to show, if they should be challenged that the debt is not paid. Now, what have you to answer the challenge? What have you to show Satan when he impleadeth you before God? Why, by Christ's resurrection you may even challenge the challenger: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' Why should God let him out of prison, if he had not paid the utmost farthing? He was taken from prison and from judgment. If Christ had been still 'in the prison of the grave, you must have looked for another surety that must make up his defects and satisfy where he could not 'If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins;' ye have nothing to show for your discharge. How could ye have answered Satan then, if your surety had miscarried? Thus by way of evidence.

Thirdly, Something by way of pledge to us. By Christ's resurrection God giveth us a pawn and earnest, as it were, that we may expect the raising of our own bodies. You may plead it to God, and you may argue it for yourselves to God: Christ is raised, therefore raise me. And to yourselves, Therefore shall I be raised, because Christ was raised. Christ was acquitted from sins and received into glory: therefore, Lord, for his sake acquit me from my sins. Or shall I say, this is a pledge to us, that our persons shall be raised, justified, sanctified, glorified, because our head is raised? The apostle thinketh it is a good argument to prove the resurrection of our bodies by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15; and 1 Thes. 4:14, 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' The meaning is, that Christ's resurrection doth not only manifest a possibility, but a necessity of our rising with him. God hath in him given you an earnest of the resurrection, so as through Christ you may humbly challenge it at his hands—Lord, I believe thou wilt raise me to life everlasting. The wicked rise by the general power of God, but Christians rise with reference to Christ's resurrection; that was a pledge to them of theirs: and, therefore,

it is observable, that presently upon the resurrection of Christ's body, there followed the resurrection of the bodies of some of the saints, that it might not only be a pledge, but that we might look upon it as a pledge to us: Mat. 27:52,53, 'And the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared to many.' There the virtue wrought immediately, that others of God's people might look for it, and the rest of Christ's mystical body expect their turn; not only the head, but some of the members rose too. Therefore, here is our comfort, because it is the great pledge and earnest that God hath given to the saints, namely, that, as it was done to Christ, so they may expect it shall be done to them.

Fourthly, Something you may expect by way of influence. Every well of salvation hath its proper stream, and every thing in a believer's heart hangs and depends upon some proportionable thing in Christ Jesus; our death to sin upon his death, our life upon his life, our holiness upon his holiness: John 17:19, 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth.' For whatever Christ had in himself as Mediator, he had it and did it for us. So that from these special things there is special causal influence on the hearts of believers. As from the resurrection of Christ our resurrection; from his death, the death of sin to the life of grace, or to the life of glory. There is causal influence from Christ's resurrection upon our hearts, which is the donation of the Spirit of God upon this act of Christ's resurrection, to raise us to grace and glory. And therefore we are said, 1 Peter 1:3, to be 'begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' Regeneration cometh from the virtue and influence of it, that passeth into our hearts for the conquering of sin, and begetting the new nature and the raising us to glory. But there is another benefit you are to expect by way of influence from the resurrection of Christ, even the gift of the Spirit, to conform you to your head. Christ by his resurrection being made a fountain of super-natural life, will send out vital influence. Wait for it, then; he will renew and heal you, and he will carry on the work to the perfection of glory. Head and members must be conformable, as far as the model of the creatures will permit. Therefore, as sure as Christ is risen, you shall be raised with him to holiness here, and to heaven hereafter. That you may wait for this

influence—

1. Labour to get your union with Christ cleared to you. The passing out of virtue and influence from Christ depends upon that; the head doth not guide and act foreign members. Oh, say, then, if I were sure of my union with Christ, I should have this rich comfort. As the woman said, Mat. 9:21, 'If I might but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole.' The least evidence of an interest and union with Christ would fill us with wonderful comfort.

2. Value it. Think it worthy of the best of your endeavours, and your greatest self-denial: Phil. 3:10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.'

Now this appeareth to be from the resurrection of Christ, for these

three reasons:—From its influence—

1. Because this is the most proportionable and suitable act in the creatures; and I take it for a spiritual principle that every act of grace hath a necessary dependence Upon that work of Christ that is most suitable to it. Observe it, Christians, faith is mightily helped when you know that special well-head to which you must repair for the refreshment of your spirit in every exigence. It is not enough to know in the general that Christ must do all for you, and that he is the fountain of all mercies; but you must know particularly what is the spring of your comfort on such and such a needful occasion. In times of knowledge God will have our thoughts more explicit; and if you observe it, you will find that general and indistinct considerations do not work so effectually to the stablishing of the spirit. God would have you to see the provision he hath made for every need. Christ died for sin that you might die to sin; and Christ rose to glory that you might rise to grace and glory. The dependence and looking up of the creature must be to the most suitable act and work of the Messiah. Whole Christ carrieth in himself the complete work of our salvation, and the several acts and conditions of Christ are proportioned to the several acts and conditions of salvation.

2. Because the same power that raised Christ raiseth us from death to life; and therefore clearly such influence is from the resurrection of Christ. This is evidenced in many places of scripture: Col. 2:12, 'You are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' It is the same operation of God. The meaning of that place is, that the life of faith was created in our souls by the same almighty efficacy of God by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. For the apostle proveth three things there That whoever is in Christ is risen from death to life; and that this rising is by faith; and that this faith is wrought by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. See another place, Eph. 1:19,20, 'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.' It was the same power, because it was the same power that procured it for us. God raised him up, that he might be a fountain and root of all supernatural life to us, that the power might work in his as well as him. So Rom. 8:11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you. Mark, it is the same Spirit. The power of the Spirit is put forth to raise Christ, and the power of the Spirit is put forth to raise you. This is not done by the consideration of Christ's resurrection, but by the power of the Spirit accompanying it. It is the Spirit that doth effectually apply this raising and begetting power.

3. Because the Spirit worketh always with reference to this act and work of Christ. It raiseth you with respect to Christ's resurrection;, and that is the meaning of these phrases which do abound in scripture, that couple the soul and Christ together in all his works, as crucified with him, raised with him. For the latter, take these places Eph. 2:5, 'Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together.' So Col. 2:13, 'So you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him;' so Col. 3:1, 'If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above.' Divers such kinds of expressions there are in the word, which make out the soul's sharing with Christ in the virtue of these works. The Spirit revealeth to them that they are not only to be raised with Christ, but that they are raised, and so make it a powerful argument to heavenliness, or

any other part of the new creature. This is done already in the root and mystical notion, and therefore it should be done in the effectual application. I say, the Spirit revealeth to the soul the resurrection of Christ, and that he is our head, and the fountain of our life; and therefore we should live and be conformed to our head. And by such considerations the Spirit leaveth a great virtue and force upon the soul, which is called 'the power of the resurrection.' And thus I have a little opened this difficult matter to you. Take but one place more and I have done: Rom. 6:10,11, 'For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.' There are Christ's acts. , Now in the next verse you shall see how the Spirit maketh the soul to share in them: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Dead by the death of Christ, but alive by the life of Christ. The Spirit cometh to the heart, and revealeth this to it. Lo, this is done for you in Christ, and so bringeth the soul by the same efficacy to a likeness to Christ.

Use 1. Is consolation. Here is comfort for those that have an interest in Christ. Believers, know the ground of your privileges. Christ is risen, and thereby declared mightily to be the Son of God. So shall you be declared mightily to be the sons of God at your resurrection: Ps. 37:5, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' Oh, what comfort is there for their spirits in that word, 'Christ is risen.' It was the comfortable message Christ sent to Peter, when he was ready to faint under the sadness of his own apprehensions, 'Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is risen, and goeth before you into Galilee,' Mark 16:7—Go to Peter, and tell him by name. O poor Peter! he is weeping and ready to break his heart; go and comfort him, be sure to tell him I am risen. Christians, here is comfort for the saddest believer. Among the primitive Christians their usual salutation was, THE *LORD IS* RISEN; as if that were as much as wishing them all peace and grace.

But how shall we do to draw out these comforts?

Ans. Act faith, which bringeth in the virtues of Christ upon the soul.

But how must we act faith in this matter of the resurrection of Christ? It consists in reasoning and waiting. There is something you must collect *by*

way of inference, and something you must expect by way of influence.

First, Set faith a-work, or arguing by way of inference. You must collect somewhat that you may extract the quintessence of it. As a surety, as a common person, and as a pattern of providence and church dispensations, in all these respects you may fetch comfort from Christ's resurrection. I shall a little clear these three considerations of Christ, though the two first be somewhat common among divines.

1. As a surety, and one that undertook for us; that is clear, because Christ is called 'the surety of a better testament,' Heb. 7:22. Now your surety is risen, then draw out the comfort thus Surely sin is satisfied, for the debt is paid. A man is never the richer for gold in the mine till it be digged out; no more is a man the better for comforts in the lump; dig them out by holy reasoning. Say then, Christ, that undertook all, he is got free again; surely then I am discharged, I have something to show to God. Go and urge it to the Lord—Why didst thou suffer Christ to rise again, if thou wilt charge poor creatures with their guilt? And urge it to Satan too—Dost thou condemn me, and tell me what I have done, and wherein so often I have sinned?—Why, Jesus Christ is risen. As Paul: Rom 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' Surely the whole business is accomplished by Christ. Thus dwell upon such thoughts; only take heed you rest not in your own reasonings—look for the success of all from the Spirit. O Lord, didst thou not let thine only-begotten and well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, go free, after he had been in the prison and in the grave? Did not he undertake for us, and hast thou discharged him and not us? He is our surety, he hath paid our debt for us. Therefore reason with your souls as David reasoned with his soul: Ps. 42:11, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'

2. As a common person, Christ may be said to be all of us; for as Adam, in a sense, was all mankind, so Christ had all the elect in his own person, and so represents them: so that what he did we may, in some sense, be said to have done. Thus, a burgess in parliament, that represents all the town or corporation that sendeth him, his act is their act: it is grounded upon what the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15:22, 'As in Adam all died, so in

Christ shall all be made alive.' As Adam was a common person representing all mankind, so Christ all the elect. Therefore the apostle saith, Rom. 6:11, 'Reckon ye also yourselves dead indeed unto sin, 'but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' You must do two things:—

[1.] Interest yourselves in the acts of your common person. Reason thus—If we are united to Christ, then we shall share in all his purchased benefits: 'I am crucified with Christ,' Gal. 2:20; and I am risen with Christ. You are instated by virtue of your union in all Christ's acts: Christ was raised, therefore I shall rise; Christ was taken to glory, therefore I shall be so. Urge it to God—O Lord, did I not rise out of the dust in Christ? Lord, didst thou not take me out of the devil's power when thou tookest Christ out of the grave?

[2.] You must reason from this privilege against present distress—Is it the evil of sin? Rom. 6:2, 'How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?' Am not I dead to sin in Christ, and alive to this grace in Christ? Then reason from your privileges; I am above this cross, for Christ is, and shall I sink under it? I am in this glory already, as united to Christ, who is there, and shall I despair of it? Is not my head there, and will the head be severed from the rest of the members in the mystical body?

3. As a pattern of Providence: for God meant to copy out all his dispensations to his people in the life of Christ. There is not a providence happeneth to the church or to believers but there is something therein conformable to the life of Christ. For look, as all dispensations typed out Christ, as the children of Israel's going out of Egypt did, for which see that of Hosea, 'I called my Son out of Egypt,' Hosea 11:1, which is cited, Mat. 2:15, 'Out of Egypt I called my Son;' and as Jonas, being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, did; so Christ is the type of all providences after him. There is no misery but some passage of Christ's life is parallel to it. Out of all these considerations you may fetch a great deal of comfort. Reason then against all the depths of misery into which you may be cast; I shall get free, for Christ got free; I see the success in the story of Christ's life. Is it the depth of inward misery? Ps. 18:5, 'The sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death compassed me.' So they did Christ, yet he got free of them, as the apostle saith, Heb. 12:2, '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.' Is it outward misery? None could have more distress upon him than Christ, yet he was taken from distress and judgment. Is it death? Christ died and rose again. Either God will preserve you from the evil, or he will order it so that it shall not hold you. Christ could not be holden of death when it seized upon him. Is it reproaches? It may be you are buried in the scorn of the world, and crowded under disrespects and abasures—so was

' Christ before you.

We now come to the second considerable circumstance in the text, and that is the life of Christ: 'Who shall declare his generation?' As Christ saith, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' that is, the cause of both; for Christ did not only rise, and not only live, but he was the resurrection and the life. He rose as a resurrection, and he liveth as a life. And therefore all our spiritual rising and living is from his rising and living. But having spoken of his resurrection, it will be necessary to inquire into his life.

Doct. That Christ, being risen, liveth a numberless term of years, even for ever, with God in glory.

Who shall declare his generation t That is so long that it cannot be reckoned. Those that have the best skill in numbers cannot rise high enough to reach his age. By what sum will you express eternity? Thousands of thousand thousands can scarce be admitted to be a shadow of it: Heb. 7:3, 'Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;' which is to prove, not that Christ as God should live for ever, but Christ as Mediator, as God-man, under which notion he is considered here.

1. Because at his resurrection he was cleared from sin, and so was no more liable to death. The apostle saith, Rom. 5:12, that 'death entered by sin.' It did so upon Christ as well as upon us when he took our guilt: 1 Peter 4:1, 'He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin,' being cleared at his resurrection. When he ceased from suffering he ceased from sin. Therefore the apostle saith, 1 Tim. 3:16, He was 'justified in the Spirit,' and manifested to the world in the flesh; that is, they saw him, but because of his miserable appearance, they could judge nothing but that

he was a sinner; but when his Godhead came to be discovered at his resurrection, then he was justified in the Spirit. Therefore now he is no more liable to death. Christ was not justified, neither by God nor men, till that time. Now he is raised, he is exempt from it, as the apostle urgeth, Rom. 6:9,' Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.' Death can lord it no more over Christ, as it seemed to do for a while; but now Christ hath destroyed death: Rev, 1:18: 'I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death' Death and hell thought to make sure of Christ, and to have him under lock and key, as it were; but he could not be holden by them. But now Christ hath the power of death and hell, so that none goeth there but whom he pleaseth. *Amen;* it is very certain it is so. This is the first reason; having fully cleared the debt wherein he stood engaged to divine justice, he is no more liable to death.

2. That he might become a principle and fountain of life to us. Whatever Christ hath as Mediator, he hath it for us. He lived for us upon earth, and he died for us; and he liveth for ever for us in heaven: I Thes. 5:10, 'Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.' His life of glory is our life, as well as his life of grace; and therefore he is said to be 'the Resurrection and the Life:' 1 John 5:11,12, 'And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; 'that is, the testimony of God's bounty, eternal life, which is by virtue of his life. And so Christ is said to have life in himself: John 5:26, 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself;' that is, to have an original fountain of life. No creature in the scripture notion hath life in itself.

3. That he might perform all the other acts of the mediatorship, and so be doing something continually in heaven for the elect of God, that he may apply the merit of his sufferings, death, and resurrection. Past acts would not satisfy the spirit; they are more immediately for the comfort of those that have some evidence of their right in Christ. The soul saith, Here is much done, but what was this to me? This was done for those that have interest in Christ, as his sufferings, dying, and resurrection. Ay! but Christ liveth; there is something a-doing still—there is something a-negotiating in heaven for you. Therefore, he not only negotiated for you

by the past acts of his life upon earth, his death, burial, and resurrection, but he yet liveth to be doing for you. His office required this Heb. 7:16, 'Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.' The meaning is, the Levitical priests were by the law of carnal rites for a while, but Christ for ever. As a judicious divine observeth, present acts do most satisfy such doubtful spirits. Christ's life in heaven is for the effectual application of his merit, and other the great offices of the mediatorship.

But what doth Christ in heaven for us?

1. He intercedes for us: Heb. 7:25, 'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.' That is the end of his life, to beseech the Father for such as come to him; he intercedeth for the application of his merit. Christ is a continual remembrancer in heaven, as it were, to God the Father; he is praying that you may believe; he is our soul's solicitor, as it were, to appear and plead our cause in heaven for us: Heb. 9:24, he is said to 'appear in the presence of God for us,' as our agent in heaven. He proveth the matter, he prayeth for what thou prayest for, and liveth to appear before God for you in all your straits.

2. That he may seize upon his kingdom, and administer it to the destruction of his adversaries. Christ's life is their death: Ps. ex. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' Christ must live, that they may fall and be under the feet of Christ. So the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15:25, 'For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.' At the time of his ascension Christ was solemnly inaugurated into the regal office, that so he might destroy his adversaries: Rev. 17:14, 'The Lamb shall overcome.' It is Christ shall fight against them. Isa. 58:8, 'Thy righteousness shall go before thee.' That which is comfort to God's people, is terror to the adversaries; if they could make sure work of him, their business were at an end; but Christ is alive to destroy their persons, and blast their designs. Some of the people of God may fall before them, and all visible supplies may be dead, as Sarah's womb; but' the Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted.'

3. That he may dispense all necessary supplies to the needs of his servants: Eph. 4:10, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts to men; 'that is, all necessary supplies for his servants. As a fountain of living waters continually feedeth the stream, so you have a living Christ who will continually supply the streams of grace; he knoweth your needs, and can supply them. And therefore the apostle maketh the main business of salvation to hang upon the life of Christ Rom. 5:10, 'For if when we were enemies we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life;' that is, can we want anything necessary to salvation, that have a living Christ to go to? You may be sure, if by his death he could bring you into such a glorious estate, now he is alive he will not be wanting to you.

Use 1. Is information. Learn hence divers truths:—

1. What is the fountain of spiritual life, to wit, the life of Christ; and, therefore, it is called the life of God, and the life of Christ, in many places of scripture: 'Alienated from the life of God,' Eph. 4:18; It is God and Christ that liveth, and liveth in us, Eph. 3:17; and Col. 3:3, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God,' and 'Christ that liveth in me,' Gal. 2:20. Again, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,' Col. 3:4. As things are hid in their causes, flowers in their root, till their appearance at spring, so the glory of spiritual life is hid in its cause and fountain.

2. That true believers cannot wholly fall away. Christ liveth for ever, and, therefore, they shall live for ever; the life of Christ cannot wholly be abolished in them. When you can dig up the spring and fountain, then grace may wither, and you may be lost in a seducement and a temptation, but now you are kept by the power of an endless life. The perpetuity of the saints, if it had no other ground but this, would remain unshaken; therefore, it is said, 'We are preserved in Jesus Christ,' Jude 1. Christ's life is their life, and Christ's life is such a numberless age, that none can count it.

3. That Christ is a fit object for worship and service. Every being is the more noble, the more life it hath in it; the life of things is the commendation of them: Eccles. 9:4, 'A living dog is better than a dead lion;' better, that is, more noble. Now, since Christ hath the noblest and

the highest being, he liveth for ever. The scriptures often call upon us to trust in the living God: Ps. 13:2, 'My soul thirsteth for the living God.' Who would go to the dead cistern, and leave the living fountain? Alas! what is a man the better for a dead idol? All the satisfaction of the spirit lieth in the life of him whom we worship. Now Christ is not only living, but living for ever. Your hopes in him will not run waste. A prince, whose breath is in his nostrils, may uphold his favourites during his life, but upon his death they may be brought from the crown of their excellency to the dust of scorn and ignominy; but Jesus Christ never dieth. As Bathsheba said to David, 1 Kings 1:21, 'When my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' All their care and cost is lost; but it cannot be so with Jesus Christ; he liveth to make you everlastingly happy.

Use 2. Is for the discovery of hypocrites, that pretend to Christ, but live as if Christ were in the grave still, as if he were a dead Christ, as if there were no life nor virtue in him.

But how shall we know what is the life of Christ? I answer—By three things: there will be freeness, and there will be power, and there will be likeness to Christ.

1. There will be freeness towards God. The heart is sweetly drawn out to comply with the mind of Christ. Christ doth not live in you, if there be not a willingness in you to be like him. The Spirit of Christ supplieth the place of a law in such a soul: Rom. 8:2, 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' Outward letters and the rule could not make him free, and disentangle him from his corruptions, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus evangelising the law of God, did. The law is made gospel by the Spirit in the life of Christ; it giveth the heart a sweet liberty and freedom towards God. The tears of those that pray are sweeter than the joys of the theatre.

2. There will be power, there will be something besides cold forms and slight pretences: 2 Tim. 3:5, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power.' That which the apostle calleth the power and force of godliness is a real impression and operation upon the heart; there will be somewhat besides empty profession and barren speculation; there will be somewhat

that you may call power and 'mighty working,' as the apostle calleth it everywhere. Now, when there is no working upon the spirit answerable to knowledge or pretences, what a dead Christ do such make him!

3. There will be likeness to Christ. Christ as surely liveth in believers now, as he once lived upon the earth in his own person. And you know three things were eminent in the person of Christ when on earth:—Obedience to his Father: he often professeth that he came to do the will of his Father: John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' But we drink in iniquity like water; our meat and drink is to sin against the Father. That is the meaning of that phrase before mentioned, Job 15:16. Then for his humility: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart,' Mat. 11:29. He could have given the world another pattern: Learn of me, for I made the world; I can do wonders. But Christ would teach this lesson, Not as I am mighty, but meek: Phil. 2:5, 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ.' What was that? A humble mind, as you may see in the context. And then usefulness: that was eminent in him; he went about doing good. Laziness and selfishness were abhorred by him. If Christ would make Christians more useful, he would still act according to his old copy, and live over his life in their hearts again. Search then; is the living God a dead thing to you?

Use 3. For reproof to the people of God, that do not draw out this life of Christ. Believers, Christ should not only live in heaven, but he should live in you also: 'Not I, but Christ that liveth in me,' Gal. 2:20. Christians are to blame especially in their conflicts with sin, and the difficulties of duty, and the hardships of the world, and they faint under miseries, as if there were not a living Christ, whence they might fetch comfort. A Christian should say, The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock. You should make his power useful in your worst condition; your lives should be nothing else but a discovery of the life of Christ in yourselves: 2 Cor. 4:10, the apostle saith that he suffered terrible things with a courageous heart,' That the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our body.' Noble actings of grace hold forth the life of Christ, as effects discover the cause. And by your conversations it should appear there is one liveth in heaven.

Use 4. Is consolation in all conditions. Is it sin that is grievous to you? doth it leave a wound upon the soul? There is one that liveth in heaven;

that prays for the binding up of your souls, and for the healing of the wounded spirit; he is negotiating the matter with God for you. Is it death? Christ liveth, though you die; and though you were dead, yet shall you live: Hosea 6:2, 'After two, days he will revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.' Are friends dead? Remember your Friend in heaven liveth for ever. Are your hopes dead as Sarah's womb and Abraham's body? Yet Christ is alive still, Succours may miscarry, supports may fail, violence may cut off your comforts; but no hand of iniquity can reach Jesus Christ. He liveth for ever with God in glory.

Use 5. Is exhortation to believers:—

1. To wait for the like privileges. Oh, who shall count your generation when you shall come to share with Christ? You know the longings of Christ's heart towards you, and that you shall behold his glory: John 17:24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me may be where I am, that they may behold my glory.' You are to enjoy the same endless life of bliss and glory. Oh, groan, and wait for the consolation of the saints in heaven. For the present you have rich privileges, but alas! this is nothing: 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,' 1 John 3:2.

2. Possess your souls of this life of Christ, and by faith see yourselves in him: Rom. 6:10, 'Reckon ye also yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.' Dead first in his death, then raised in his resurrection, and at last glorified in his glory. All these acts of the Mediator must pass out into your souls; first I was dead to the law, dead to sin, dead to the curse; but then, shall live and die no more.

3. Strive to be conformed to your head. He is to die no more; do not you die any more in sin. There is in every action of Christ influence and matter of imitation: influence, of which you must possess yourselves; but matter of imitation is that to which you must be conformed. Oh, strive to keep in the same condition with your dear Lord and Saviour. If death hath no more dominion over him, 'let not sin reign in your mortal bodies,' Rom. 6:12. From the same enforcement the apostle urgeth it; and indeed

for a motive you can have no better than what the subject offereth. Christ would not only suffer for you for a time, but lives for your sake for ever. Christ spendeth all his time to do you good.

THE NINTH VERSE.

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

THE prophet goeth on with the account of Christ's sufferings, and showeth that he should at length be humbled to the grave, and brought thither in a most ignominious manner. Yet, however, there was no cause why the Jews should stumble at it, and dash the foot of their faith against this rock, for God had made provision ample enough against this offence and scandal. Even his grave, that seemed to obscure his glory, did in some measure illustrate it: 'He made his grave with the wicked, and, with the rich in his death, because,' &c.

Here are in this verse, as in many of the former, two parts considerable:—

1. The Jews' scandal: *he made his grave with the wicked.*

2. The prophet's defence, which you have—

[1] By the circumstances which made for the glory of Christ: *and with the rich in his death.*

[2.] By asserting his innocency—

(1.) In respect of open and gross sins: *he hath done no violence.*

(2.) In respect of secret and hidden sins: *neither was any deceit found in his mouth.* All these parts will more plainly appear in the explication. There are no verses have been so severally expounded as this and the former. I should perplex your thoughts too much to give you the differences. Some distinct senses there are: I shall only give you what I conceive to be the positive and plain sense, by going over the phrases.

And he made. There may be a question to whom this *he* must be referred, for the number being so often changed, we can have no relief from, the context. There are three persons spoken of in the chapter: God the Father, God the Son, and the Jews. If this *he* be applied to God the Father, then the sense is, he disposed and ordered it so by his providence that his grave should be appointed among the wicked; and so it points at the divine decrees, which implied that Christ should be executed as an offender, and be buried in an ignominious manner, as other offenders are, for aught could be discerned at first. This suiteth with the Seventy, who bring in God the Father speaking this clause, though they read the sentence a little otherwise than we do: *dwsw touV ponhrouV, &c.,* 'I will give the wicked for his grave.' Or it may be referred to God the Son, his patience, who submitted so, as it seemed to hold forth nothing but as if he were to have had the burial of an ordinary malefactor, he submitting to it till a further declaration of God's pleasure; a man could have guessed nothing else. Or, *he made,* may be referred to the people of the Jews; they did as much as in them lay that Christ should have the burial of a wicked man: 'He made,' that is, by their ordination. You may take either or all very commodiously. It followeth, 'and with the rich in his death.' There is a great deal ado about what is meant by rich. Some understand the term, as Calvin, equivalent with the wicked; because riches puff up men's minds and dispose them to injury and violence. Junius understands Pilate; others have different apprehensions of the place. I shall take liberty to recede from them; for by this phrase, 'the rich in his death,' I understand Joseph of Arimathea; and the meaning I conceive thus, that though at his crucifixion his grave was intended to be with ordinary malefactors, yet God ordered it so that he should be honourably interred by a rich person, Joseph of Arimathea: 'With the rich in his death,' that is, after his death. And my reasons for this interpretation are two:—

1. Because the word for rich, *aasir,* in the Hebrew, is in the singular number, and so noteth some eminent rich man that had to do about the grave and sepulchre of Christ; and that was Joseph of Arimathea.

2. Because the evangelist Matthew seemeth, as with a finger, to point to this place when he saith, Mat. 27:57, 'When the evening was come, there was a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus'

disciple, and he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus.' And besides, the place is most sweetly and without wresting opened. And, indeed, the following words yield us a twofold reason:—

[1.] Because God would right his innocency in the midst of calumnies and reproaches. God would not have an innocent buried among malefactors; and, therefore, by the care of Joseph and Nicodemus, he would have it testified to the world that there were some thought him innocent and worthy of an honourable burial.

[2.] It may well be to show the suitableness of it. He would have a new kind of man laid in a new grave, in which no man was ever laid. It could be said of no man but Christ that no iniquity and guile was found in him; and therefore he was put in a sepulchre in which no man was laid. For now God began to honour Christ because he had done no violence. In Peter, it is, 'Who did no sin;' for indeed the word must be taken so generally, *anomiaV*. It is meant, no gross fact could be charged upon him; neither was there deceit in his mouth; that is, he was guilty of no secret evil: for no guile in the mouth argueth there was none in the heart —there being a swift intercourse between the heart and the tongue: James 3:2, 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body.'

Thus for the phrases. The sum of all is this, that though the Messiah was taken away by a shameful death, and therefore likely to be looked upon as an eminent instance of divine wrath and vengeance, yet the Lord provided for his glory in the midst of this ignominy, by procuring such a sepulchre and burial for him as might set out not only his innocency but his honour; for he indeed was without fault and blame.

There is not much to be observed out of this verse, yet that which is, is very comfortable, and therefore in the general take these notes.

1. There is a sweet harmony and accord between the Old and New Testament; they agree in the least things. Isaiah saith, 'He made his grave with the rich;' and Matthew saith, 'a rich man of Arimathea came and begged his body.' So in other things you may observe there is an agreement in those things which a man would judge to be of least

consequence.

Note 2. That every passage of Christ's life is considerable; as this concerning the account of his burial. — A man would have thought it had not been so worthy of observation, and yet the prophet speaketh of it as an eminent circumstance, and you shall see much use may be made of it by and by. So, for Christ's name, Mat. 1:23, 'They shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.' So the offering for him a pair of turtle-doves and two young pigeons. Man would easily overlook these things, yet the Holy Ghost thought them worthy the noting. Oh, study Christ's life more; there is no waste passage in it. But what benefit is there in the text? I shall not here give you doctrines, as I did from the other verses, but direct you, for your comfort, to look upon Christ under a threefold notion, viz., as our surety, as a pattern of providence, and as a great example.

1. As a surety; so there are two clauses that afford comfort to believers:—

[1] That 'he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.' That expression, 'He made his grave with the wicked,' holdeth forth the payment of the debt, and full evidence of his satisfaction. Your surety suffered in your stead. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' And the Lord Christ was accursed to redeem us from the curse of the law. But I shall chiefly take notice of this circumstance, 'And with the rich in his death.' After Christ had once died, God began to honour him: full satisfaction being made to God, and the reproach and shame due to sins taken away; after death he had an honourable interment. Of all people, the Jews did most look to burials. It was a great threatening that they should die unburied Prov. 30:17, 'The eye that mocketh at his father, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it;' alluding to the shameful death and burial of the disobedient son. And again, Ps, 79:3, There should be 'none to bury him: And Jer. 22:19, 'He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.' But now Christ had not only a decent but an honourable burial. Well, then, Christians, here is encouragement for your faith. Christ was honoured as soon as he died the work is ended—the last act of his humiliation was the first step to his exaltation, and there began

his triumph and glory. Joseph and Nicodemus, two of his devout followers, they celebrate his funerals, and bury him with such solemnities as are due to persons of the greatest honour. Well, then, conclude in faith, that by Christ's death, shame, and sufferings, sin is done away. Christians were wont to solemnise their funerals with psalms of thanksgiving. You may remember Christ's funeral with rejoicing and giving of thanks: there you have the first intimation that the work was finished, sins were satisfied for, shame and reproach began to vanish. O you redeemed of the Lord, go forth and rejoice. God beginneth to take off the ignominy of Christ's death, and thereby your ignominy and your shame. So that now, 'In him we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him,' Eph. 3:12; that is, you may freely have communion and social commerce with God, your shame being gone; God hath branded sin with shame. Adam hid himself; the captains and great men called to the mountains to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb, they could not endure the sight of God. Guilt maketh a fallen countenance, and causeth a shyness of God. Now you may lift up your heads, your shame is taken away.

[2.] From that clause, 'Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.' Your surety was a pure person—he had no guilt of his own to satisfy for, and so it yieldeth not only an encouragement to faith, but an endearment of love to Christ. All these sufferings were for you, there is nothing that can argue a need for himself to do it. The scriptures everywhere urge and testify this: 1 John 3:5, 'And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.' All his sufferings were for some cause there was nothing to occasion them in himself, it must therefore be for our sins: I Peter 3:18, 'For Christ hath also once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' It was for sins he suffered, and therefore certainly for ours, for he had none of his own. Urge it then upon your hearts, both as an encouragement to faith and an endearment to love. It was a pure Christ that suffered, and therefore certainly for such an impure wretch as I am—the just for the unjust. Reason thus: Surely God is just; Christ undergoing so great sufferings, and yet possessed of great purity, certainly died for great sinners.

2. As a pattern of providence. God meant to copy out all dispensations in

the life of Christ. Learn then:—

[1] That we must not always look upon the face of providence and eye present appearances. 'He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.' A man would have thought that Christ should have had an ignominious burial, and that none would have contributed to his glory; but the rich man begged his body from the cross, and God turns his grave into his glory. Oh, do not look to present appearance; you know not what a mercy may be couched under the frowns of providence. John 2:7, Christ calleth for waterpots when he meant to give them wine; and John 11:6, when he meant to restore Lazarus from the dead by a miracle, he would not vouchsafe to go and see him; he abode still two days in the same place. When God designed to honour Christ with a funeral, he meant to order it so that the Jews looked for nothing else but the burial of an ass. Thus God many times seems to hide himself, and when we seek for him, he is not to be found: Eccles. 11:4, 'He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.' If you look always upon the face of outward things, the heart will be discouraged with the frowning of Providence.

[2] Learn what reason you have to wait upon God when things are at the worst. There was no appearance for Christ till things came to the worst. Joseph begged his body when dead upon the cross: 'He was with the rich in his death;' Job 13:15, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' God can of a sudden turn things, and disappoint the devices and counsels of wicked men, even when they think all is sure. Therefore wait upon God, and see what event he will give to things. When the Jews thought every one would be ashamed of Christ, up start Joseph and Nicodemus, and boldly begged his body. There was death first before God would do him honour.

3. Look upon him as the great example; so there is benefit in the last clause: 'For he had done no violence, neither was there deceit in. his mouth.' This is your pattern: 1 Peter 2:21,22, 'Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' Oh that we could write after this fair copy that Christ hath set us, that we might be 'holy as he was holy in all manner of conversation,' 1 Peter 1:15, in every turning of our lives. I

would not that you should lose the benefit of this instruction for want of making it particular. I shall set home this pattern by the two words of the text, *violence* and *deceit*. None of this was found in Christ.

[1.] *Violence*. Take heed of that. There is violence in the spirit, manifested by wrath, revenge, boisterousness of passion, affection. Oh, what an unbecoming thing is it for men to deliver themselves over to the sway of their own passions! James 1:20, 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.' The meaning is, such a heart is not fit to serve God; it will not reach righteousness. God must have always service proportionate. God, that is a spirit, must be served in spirit and in truth; the God of peace with peace, with a peaceable, calm spirit: 1 Tim. 2:8, 'Lifting up holy hands without wrath and

doubting.' Then there is violence in the tongue, showed in bitterness, reviling, reproaches. This was far from Christ; he did no violence. This becometh the sons of the world rather than the sons of God. Surely such wolfish dispositions do ill become them that are related to the Lamb, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Where is your warrant for this in the life of Christ 9 Gal. 5:15, 'If ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another.' You learn it of the wolf or the old dragon, not of the Lamb. The apostle useth such a word as implieth such bitterness as is brutish. Then in practice, by oppression, invading of another's right and property. There was no such thing in Christ. He would not intrench upon the magistrate's office: John 8:11, 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.' Not in respect of guilt, for he saith, 'Sin no more.' But the meaning is, he would not meddle with her punishment; it was none of his office, and therefore he would not in the least manner encroach upon another's right. Learn of Christ, who did no violence.

[2] There was no *deceit* found in his mouth. Take heed also of that. Be like Christ. It is said of Nathanael, John 1:47, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.' Why an Israelite indeed? Because, like old Israel, like old Jacob; for it is said of him, Gen. 25:27, 'Jacob was a plain man, and dwelt in tents.' So here; we are Christians indeed when without guile, when we are like Christ, for no deceit was found in him. There is deceit in heart, which the scripture calleth guile of spirit: Ps. 32:2,

'Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.' Take heed of this deceitful heart. We must take heed we drive not on a self-design in all our respects to God and men; and when we pretend to zeal in worship, that it is not to serve ourselves of it. Rev. 14:5, it is said of the Lamb's followers, that 'in their mouth was found no guile;' they are without fault before the throne of God, Heb. 4:12, Wait upon the word, for that is 'a divider between soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intention of the heart;' that is, between fairness of pretences, and vileness of affection and baseness of intents. And there is deceit in the mouth when men dissemble for advantage. You did not learn this of Jesus Christ. As Doeg deceitfully flattered David, to tell Saul of it: Ps. 120:3, 'What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?' Though he told the truth, yet he flattered with David, that he might observe his carriage, and relate it to Saul: Ps. 52:4, 'Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.' Then for practice, many give out specious pretences, as if they were what indeed they are not. Be what you would be accounted to be. It is hypocrisy that overacts to the world. We know counterfeit gold because it looketh so yellow: 2 Sam. 15:6, Absalom stole hearts of the men of Israel by flattery, and fair but false pretences. But we should eye our pattern. That is true religion, to imitate him whom we worship.

THE TENTH VERSE.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

THE prophet is still dealing with the Jews' scandals. Unbelief will easily take up any pretence to justify itself. And therefore when there was so much ground for their prejudice against Christ, as such meanness and so many sufferings, these vain pleas could not easily be removed out of their minds; and that is the reason why he speaketh to it again in this verse, that he might further discover their folly, because they would suffer their thoughts to stay in the outward appearance of things, not considering

how God bringeth about many times his greatest designs in a riddle and mystery, and wraps up the good and salvation of his people under a veil of contradictions. God the Father is the wronged party, and he that hath to do with pardon Rom. 3:26, He is 'the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.' The prophet telleth them in this verse that Christ should live by dying, gain by his bruises and sufferings; that which was likely to disaffect the world against him, should draw them into his obedience. Where the work of the Lord seemed to miscarry, there it should prosper in his hands. The great expectation was that the Lord should bruise the head of the serpent; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Christ. Look to the design of God, and you shall see sufferings are not matter of scandal, but admiration. It is no good rule to measure the intents of God by the looks and face of things. Whilst you look only to the outward meanness and sufferings of Christ, you overlook the design of God in him. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief,' &c. The words contain divers arguments and defences against the scandals taken up against Christ by the Jews.

1. The will of God: *it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief;* that is the cause of his sufferings.

2. The nature of his suffering: *when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.*

3. The fruits of his suffering, and they are three:—

[1.] The propagation of his spiritual seed: *he shall see his seed.*

[2.] The prolongation of his life: *he shall prolong his days.*

[3.] The promulgation of the will of God in his hands: *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.* This will be clear to you by going over the phrases.

Tremellius has it, *Delectatus est Dominus,* the Lord delighted to bruise him. The Seventy, to mend the harshness of the phrase, render it, 'It pleased the Lord to cleanse him:' but that is' a mistake of the word, which among the Chaldees signifieth to cleanse; and there is no reason why we

should fear to say that the Lord designed to subject his Son to bruisings and to grief, since the great comfort of Christians dependeth upon it. That these things did not happen by chance, or against the will of God, as something that he did not care for, or would abhor. The Lord's pleasure was fulfilled in all these sufferings, though these wicked men that brought them upon Christ had other intentions. And that decision of Lombard and other school-men is very derogatory to the truth of the gospel and the comfort of believers, when they say, God would only discover the virtues of Christ, and the fruits of his sufferings, and the malice of the Jews; as if the sufferings of Christ were beside God's intention and design. But the acts of their malice are ascribed to the ordination of God: 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief.' And suitable to this, it is very observable in the New Testament, that those words which imply their malice do also imply God's appointment. Pilate delivered him, Judas delivered him, and God delivered him Mat. 27:2, *papedwken,* 'And delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.' And then it is said of Pilate, in the 26th verse, that he 'loosed' or 'released Barabbas,' *paradwken,* and delivered Christ to be crucified. And Judas delivered him: Mat. 26:15, 'I will deliver him to you.' And Christ, speaking of Judas, says, John 19:11, 'Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.' And the same word is used of God's disposal of Christ, Rom. 8:32, 'He spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all.' And again, of the Jews, Acts 3:13, *paredokate,* 'Whom ye delivered up.' The priests for envy, Judas for gain, the people in blind zeal, and Pilate to keep up his esteem among the Jews, but God to make out his own ends for the salvation of his people. And always delivered or betrayed is expressed by the same word, which is the rather to be noted, because the scriptures, not in one place only, but in many, use the same action and expression. And therefore, without any stain or blot upon divine justice, we may say, 'The Lord delighted to bruise him and to put him to grief;' for he had a great hand in all that was done to Christ. It followeth:—

'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;' or, as it is more properly in the margin, 'When his soul shall make an offering for sin: 'this clause being to be referred to God the Son; for the Lord Christ was not unwillingly subjected to bruises and griefs, but voluntarily submitted himself to the pleasure of his Father's will, and gave himself to die for us:

Gal. 2:20, 'He made his soul *(ascham)* sin,' as it is in the Hebrew, it being a usual property of scripture-phrase to call the sin-offering sin. Thus it is said, 2 Cor. 5:21, 'For he hath made him to be sin for us; 'that is, a sin-offering. And thus you may understand that of the apostle, Rom. 8:3, 'God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.' By a sin-offering, which was Christ, be abolished and took away sin. I should pass over this phrase, but that I cannot choose but note to you the conditionality of this expression, 'When he shall make his soul an offering for sin.' *Erab* some read it—if thou wilt do thus and thus. It implieth the covenant between God and Christ. There is not only a covenant between God and believers, but between God and Christ; as I shall show more fully hereafter, when I observe the abundant usefulness of that consideration. But it followeth in the text:—

He shall see his seed. This is the third reason why the death of Christ should not be accounted infamous and ignominious to him. The meaning is, he shall beget to himself a great many children by the immortal seed of the word and the power of his Spirit, which are called his seed; and it is said he shall see them, he shall live to see how the word is propagated throughout all ages. I conceive in this expression the prophet alludeth to the desire of the Hebrew fathers, who were for living so long as they might see a numerous issue come from their loins. And therefore it is spoken of as a very desirable blessing Ps. 128:6, 'Thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.' Or, if you will, this expression may refer to Isaac, who, though God commanded to be offered, yet he promised that 'his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven and the sand on the sea-shore;' and all this upon his death. That which seemed to cut off other men's hopes should increase Christ's. As he saith himself, John 12:24, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' So Christ by his death, like the root in the ground, perisheth, that he may bring forth fruit. But it is added:—

He shall prolong his days; that is, he shall live for ever. Some refer it to his seed,—he shall prolong the days of his seed: so the Seventy. But probably it is to be referred to Christ, though the comfort also belongeth

to the faithful; their days shall be prolonged in the life of Christ, and they shall be eternal in his eternity.

The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands; that is, the will of the Lord. The will of the Lord for your redemption, justification, sanctification, the conversion of the world, the collection of a church, whatever you may call the will of God. Any design of his shall prosper in the hand of Christ; anything in the grand design of reconciliation; that is, by his strength, or by his ministry and dispensation: both these are called a hand in scripture; as it is said, Num. 36:13, God published the law by the hand of Moses; 'These are the commandments and judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel.' So 'prosper in his hand;' that is, by his ministry and dispensation.

Thus I have gone through the phrases. I have been the larger, because I shall a little stay upon this text. I do not find a verse in the scriptures that doth yield more consolation and comfort to Christians than this doth. Here is the Father's ordination the Son's voluntary susception, God's covenant with Christ; Christ is a sacrifice for sin. Here is the promulgation of the gospel, the life of Christ, and the pleasure of the Lord. Oh, what a heap of sweetness is here, if we had the skill to draw out the comfort of it!

I begin with the first: 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.' The point is, that all the sufferings of Jesus Christ were laid on him by the ordination and appointment of God the Father.

It was the Lord bruised him, and put him to grief; that is, it was by the Lord's appointment and decree. This appears by scripture, which asserts —

1. The choice of Christ's person, and the designation and deputation of him to the office of Mediator. As Isa. 42:1, 'Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him.' God would show election in Christ first: the cause of his appearing in our salvation was God's choice: John 6:27, 'Him hath God the Father sealed;' that is, expressly appointed, marked out for such a design. So it is set forth, Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a

propitiation for our sins: So 1 Peter 1:20, 'Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.' The plot of the gospel was long since drawn in heaven, and lay hid in God's breast, till he was pleased to copy out his eternal thoughts, and give the world a draught of them.

2. The bestowing the person of Christ upon us, so that he was made ours, as it were; which is expressed in scripture by God's sending his Son: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son:' He disposed of his person, to be handled so as might make most for your good. And, therefore, in other places he is said to send his Son: 1 John 4:10, 'He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' God dispatched him on that great errand. And in this sense is the apostle's phrase, Rom. 8:32, He 'spared not his own Son.' He would not dismiss him from serving his design, though it rendered him liable to wrath and sufferings. *Gave, sent, would not spare;* all these words imply the execution of the decree according to the design of God.

3. The determining of all the sufferings of Christ; not a sorrow, but God had it in his thoughts before all worlds. Every bruise and stroke was a further discovery of his eternal counsel: Acts 2:23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' Mark it, *wrismenh boulh kai prognwsei.* There was an express counsel for that, even the greatest mischief their wickedness could execute upon Christ; they had other thoughts than to conform to God's will, yet they did but discover it, and draw it out to the world: Luke 22:22, 'The Son of man goeth as it was determined.' Which checketh our laziness, that we do no more consider the several actions of Christ, they being all appointed and ordered in much counsel by the Father Acts 4:27,28, 'Of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' What Herod and the Jews, and Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles did, was all that God would have to be done. Every particular was conceived and devised in the decree of God, and so necessary to be fulfilled; 'For who hath resisted his will?' Rom. 9:19. God will cause the decree to bring

forth, and the world shall see what is conceived in the womb of his counsels.

4. There are some expressions which seem to imply as if there were more than a bare knowledge and permission in this great affair, as if there were some kind of action in Christ's sufferings. As here, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief;' Zech. 13:7, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' God is said to awake and stir up the sword against Christ, which implieth more than a bare suffering, some kind of efficiency and concurrent act of God to the bruising and grief of Christ. For that place is meant of Christ, my shepherd and my fellow; there is no shepherd that is God's fellow but Christ. Besides, Christ applieth it to himself: Mat. 26:31, 'For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.' It will be worthy the inquiring, then, what acts of God, what efficiency there was from him towards the sufferings of Christ?

1. Thus far God concurred, by a withdrawing of his presence and the sight of his favour; so God might be said to put him to grief indeed, for so Christ complaineth, Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' That was the greatest torment that could be upon Christ's spirit. His humanity would not have been sensible of all the other sorrows, if there were not a suspension of that joy and comfort which otherwise he might have taken in the union of the Godhead. I say, in this sense God may be said to put him to grief, by the withdrawing of his love and presence of grace from his apprehension.

2. By sustaining the wicked instruments in their natures, beings, and actings, whilst they were drawing out their spite and violence against Christ: Acts 17:28, 'In him we live, and move, and have our beings.' It is by his concurrence the action is brought forth. God could have blasted the hand of violence, blown them all into nothing, even in the heat of their fury against his Son; but the Lord upheld them in their beings and actings. As Christ said to Pilate, John 19:11, 'Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.' If there were not some leave and concession from heaven, they could do nothing. God can suspend the actions of the creature at his pleasure, as he did the fire from

burning when the three children were in it. And therefore so far God concurred to the supporting of the creature in acts of violence and sin against Christ men have not a power of themselves, separate from a providential assistance, to operate or exercise any power in them. Though God doth not take away their power, yet if he doth not co-operate with their power, nothing will be done; as the beasts stood still when the wheels stood still, Ezek. 1:21. When God stands still, all second causes are silent, and move not at that time. And though he does not dissolve their beings, he can suspend their motion, if he will not work with them. There is his concurrence to the action, though not to the pravity and wickedness of it. I conceive that is dangerous and unsafe to say.

3. By serving his love and glory by their wickedness, that bruised and afflicted Christ. God would not have permitted it if he did not know how to make good use of it, and how he might reduce it by his goodness and wisdom to his glory. So far he would uphold them in their actings as to serve his purposes of salvation, and to cause his pleasure to prosper. It pleased the Lord to bruise Christ, that he might bruise the serpent. His aim was at his head, though Christ's heel was bruised in the enterprise: Gen. 3:15, 'It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' God doth make sin itself to turn to his own glory. As Gregory said of Adam's fall, it was llltt*foelix culpa* (the fruitful sin), because it made way for such a Redeemer as Christ, because it made way for his redemption; as the apostle said, Rom. 3:5, 'Our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God.' And such efficiency there was about evil, though not of evil, that God might bring good out of it, and dispose of it for the advantage of his own counsels and intents. And so he may be said to awake the sword against the shepherd that was his fellow, as justly pursuing the effect of his own decrees.

The reasons of this point are:—

1. Because all things fall under his decrees and the care of his providence, and therefore certainly this matter of Christ does. See that place, Eph. 1:11, he 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;' the meaning is, there is nothing done in the world but God may be said to work it; he doth it by counsel and by the counsel of his own will, in a wise order and freely, as God pleaseth and as he seeth best. God's will and counsel is the

ground of all things. Mark the generality of the expression, all things; nothing so low and frivolous but God's will taketh cognisance of it; nothing so wicked but God will order and dispose it for good: Mat. 10:29, 'Not a sparrow shall fall upon the ground without your Father; and every hair of your head is numbered.' Nothing so sinful as Judas's act and Pilate's, yet it was determined; God's hand and counsel intended it. Whatever is done is done in reference to some foregoing decree.

2. Because this was the special design and contrivance of heaven to bring forth Christ into the world; all other dispensations looked this way. Adam's fall, God's providence through so many ages, did but tend to help on this great birth, and therefore this design of Christ is called by the apostle, Eph. 3:10, 'The manifold wisdom of God.' All that variety and intermixture of providences was but in pursuance of his design: 1 Tim. 3:16, 'Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' This was the great contrivance, the masterpiece of heaven, that discovered most of God to the creatures. It was much when God made man after his own image and likeness, the wonder of nature; yet it was more when God made himself after our image. That is a wonder indeed. The apostle would have it carried above all exception by all Christians. Therefore, it was especially in heaven designed by God.

Object. How is the creature to blame, then, for smiting and bruising of Christ? Or if to blame, how is God clear? It was by his ordination and appointment.

Ans. 1. For the creatures' blame; they are faulty:—

[1.] Because God's secret thoughts and intents are not their rule. Hidden things belong to God; and it is he that worketh according to the counsel of his own will. You must look to the counsel of his word. Though God got a great deal of glory, yet that was no thanks to them that crucified Christ; for because they crucified him, the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, to their ruin and desolation, 1 Thes. 2:16.

[2] They had other ends, though God turned it for good: Acts 2, 'With wicked hands ye have taken, and crucified, and slain;' Isa. 10:7, 'Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to

destroy and cut off nations not a few.' Judas's end was gain, Pilate's to please the people, the high priests' to wreak their malice; but God had other ends in it, the salvation of fallen man.

[3.] God's decrees did not compel them to evil; it implieth things will be, though it doth not effect them—there is no necessity of constraint and compulsion, though there be of infallibility. God taketh not liberty from the creatures, nor contingency from the second causes; they act their own way, though God turneth it to his own ends; they were carried to it by their wickedness. This is the plain decision of the matter.

2. For the justifying of God when he judgeth. His justice cannot be impeached, because he infuseth no evil, enforceth to no evil, only ordaineth what shall be; his goodness cannot be impeached for suffering things which he can turn to such advantage for his own glory and the creature's good. And, therefore, as the sun shineth upon a dung-hill without having his beams polluted by it, so God's ordination taketh in the sin of the creatures without any blemish to itself. God's decrees are immanent in himself, working nothing that is evil in the creatures. Other things might be said, but I would not perplex the matter.

APPLICATION.

Use 1. It serveth to give check to curiosity. Men are bold in their inquiries, and cavil at such dispensations. Though you cannot see the reason of them, yet rest in God's appointment: 'It pleased the Father to bruise him.' You shall find in scripture this is made to be the last result of all difficulty, the pleasure and will of God: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' If you would know the reason why the second person should be chosen, and enriched with the fulness of the Godhead, it pleased the Father. So for God's liberty in dispensing mercies to babes, passing by wise men: Mat. 11:26, 'Even so, Father, because it pleaseth thee.'

Use 2. Is consolation to believers. Here is ample encouragement for your faith: every grain in the life of Christ should be weighed. Now this is a material consideration, that he was ordained by God the Father.

1. That the offended party beginneth first to think of a remedy: 1 John 4:19, 'He loved us first.' Certainly it is a great relief and support to our thoughts; God thinketh of a pardon before we could think of the sin. It pleased the Father to take the sufferings of Christ into his eternal thoughts. Oh, then, when you have offended the Father, think you have a Christ to present to him, one that he thought of before all worlds.

2. Here is encouragement. Christ is a sacrifice of the Father's ordaining. He was pleased to bruise him. Therefore, rejoice and triumph in believing. You have found him who is acceptable to God the Father. This is the great inquiry of men, how to appease God. When they are filled with fears, and a sense of divine wrath, what would they give to redeem their souls from guilt? You shall see the offers of the creature are very large: Micah 6:6,7, 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings and calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' Thus, you see, they bid high. Oh, this will be your disposition when you are scorched with God's wrath. Anything for a pardon, for a testimony of his love. How shall you please him? Though he will not accept of thy first-born, yet he will of his own Son, whom himself hath given thee. It is not the creature's shift, but the Lord's appointment. You may be sure here is somewhat will please the Father; you have it from heaven: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' But God will have all believers know it. Oh, say with joy then, Job 33:20, 'I have found a ransom.' God will say so too; it was his ordination for reconciliation.

3. Here is comfort against sins of deliberation. It may be you have catered for your lusts, and devised wickedness upon your beds. It is sad when so much of your hearts hath gone out to the ways of sin. Sins of counsel and premeditation do most sadly wound the Spirit; but here, is your balm and comfort. Christ was the result of God's eternal thoughts. The Lord was devising the remedy as well as we the sin.

Use 3. Is information. It informeth us of divers things.

1. The greatness of God's love: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world, that he

gave his only-begotten Son.' Christ himself speaketh of it with admiration. *So loved!* as if there were not an expression great enough to show how much: 1 John 4:10, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' If you speak of love, this is love indeed. When Abraham offered Isaac, and would part with his son, how doth the Lord make him promises upon it? Oh, then, consider what it was for God, of all persons, to choose the second person in the Godhead, his Son, and to give him up for you—to determine so great sufferings against him, to awaken the sword against the shepherd his fellow—and all for your sakes. Consider of it in your thoughts, and let these thoughts of God be sweet and endearing to you. He was not bound to it; you could oblige him by no merits, by no satisfaction you could make him,—only it pleased him. Oh, study this his love, the dying love of our dear Redeemer.

2. The ancientness of God's love in Christ. The oldness of love is the commendation of it; therefore God saith, Isa. 54:8, 'With an everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' His pleasure in Christ was conceived before all worlds. Christ manifested in time was the effect of an eternal love. You shall see the scriptures voucheth the ancientness of the promise often: Titus 1:2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.' A promise that went before all time.

3. It teacheth us to bless God the Father for giving and appointing of Jesus Christ. It is good to look what endearment every person hath upon our spirits, that so we may keep them up in our thoughts as a proportioned object for our worship and respects. Here is the great endearment:—The election of the Father caused the donation of the Son: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' Bless him not only as your creator and preserver, but as the God and Father of Christ.

4. It teacheth us not to look upon the face of things, but upon God's counsel and intents in them. The foulest acts that ever were in God's design may serve most holy purposes. Providence is like a double-faced picture—a monster and a woman: Gen. 45:5, 'God sent me before you to preserve life.' So in all that befalleth you, or what others do to you out of

ill ends, God may work good out of it.

I come now to the second argument—why Christ's death should not be looked upon as infamous and ignominious to him; and that is taken from the manner of his sufferings: 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;' or 'When his soul shall make an offering for sin.' I shall take notice—

1. Of the form or manner of it.

2. The matter, or what is contained in it.

1. For the form or manner of it. It seemeth to be conditional and federal, that when Christ would do thus and thus, God would perform his part to him, and he should enjoy such and such privileges. The point is—

Doct. That the business of man's salvation was transacted by way of covenant between God and Christ.

Here is the form of it, that in case Christ would make his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hands. That this point may be fully made out to you, I shall use this method:—

1. Show how it may appear that there was such a covenant and formality of agreement between God and Christ.

2. What this covenant is, and the several, ways whereby it doth appear in scripture.

1. I shall show how it may appear there was such a covenant.

[l.] By such titles given to Christ as do infer it, because he is the effect or result of it; as Mal. 3:1, 'I will send the angel (or messenger) of the covenant, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.' This *him* whom by covenant I have designed to such an office, him whom by virtue of the compact and agreement I have made with him, I shall send to you. So you shall see he is called a covenant: Isa. 13:6, 'And give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;' Isa. 49:8, 'And give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth.' Because of the eternal agreement between God and Christ, he is said to be a covenant; that is, the foundation of a covenant between God and believers. His being given for a covenant, is to be a means to redeem and reconcile them.

[2.] By the words that passed between God and Christ, that are recorded in scripture. It is very observable that the scripture, for the relieving of our thoughts and apprehensions, does make all the passages and debates between God and Christ to pass by words: so in this business: Ps. 110, 'Thou art my Son, sit thou at my right hand;' Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' But to this affair in hand, you shall see how God breaketh the matter to him: Ps. 89:19, 'Thou spakest in vision to the Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty, and have exalted one chosen out of the people.' Thou speakest in a mystical way to thy Christ; God revealeth himself to his Holy One, and said thus, Lo, the creatures are weak and miserable, never able to recover themselves into my favour, but thou art mighty; therefore I shall lay this charge upon you, to help them. And thereupon you shall see Christ's answer: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.' Christ accepted of it, and agreed to the terms, and was willing to do, and conform to the pleasure of God the Father for poor sinners. So in this place, if he will do thus and thus, then he shall see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.

[3.] It appeareth by the carriage of Christ. The scripture showeth everywhere that it was according to the covenant God made with him: he undertook to do all things according to the will of the Father John 4:34,

'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;' and therefore he would punctually keep to the laws of the covenant. And accordingly he is said to look up to God the Father for the accomplishment of his promise to him: John 10:18, 'This commandment I received of my Father, that I should lay down my life:' I have agreed to it. John 12:49, 'For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father that sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak:' according to the instructions he received from God, and the tenor of his commission; he would not vary from it a tittle. And he goeth to the Father, and urgeth it to him: John 17:4, 'I have glorified thee upon earth, and have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. He did all that he was bound to do. So in many other places.

2. What this covenant is. I shall here show you the whole draught of this transaction. To a covenant there belong four things—two on the part of the proposer, and two on the part of the undertaker; and so in this covenant you will find the scriptures fully discovering these four things—two on God's part, and two on Christ's. On God's part, there is the work proposed and the encouragements promised. And then, on Christ's part, the work is undertaken, and the terms and promises expected to be fulfilled.

[1.] To begin with that which is God the Father's part, who being the first in order of persons, is the first covenanter. In the motioning of a thing, something is required and something promised.

(1.) See what is required then, and what charge is given to Christ. Help is laid upon the shoulders of Christ. It may be referred to two heads:—

(1st.) He was to do something by way of merit and impetration, that so he might satisfy the creatures' engagement, and merit the favour of God for them, which they had forfeited; and there were divers steps in this. He was to divest himself of his glory, to strip himself of all appearances of the Godhead. And therefore he is said to be employed as an instrument and servant in the execution of God's decrees. Hence it is said, Isa. 53:2, 'He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness.' Before him; that is, before God the Father ver. 11, 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify

many:' Isa. 13:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold.' To this end he was to take a body: Heb. 10:5, 'A body hast thou prepared me.' And to take flesh of a woman; and therefore it is said, Gal. 4:4, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.' He was to take an office of service and obedience, and then to work all our works for us. It is said he was made under the law, subjected to the first covenant of works. He was to be holy, and harmless, and undefiled, to be exercised with divers sufferings, reproaches, and injuries; therefore called 'a man of sorrows,' Isa. 53:3. And it became God in this regard to make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. Then at length to humble himself to the very death, and in great consternation and agonies to lay down his life, and to pour out his soul as an offering for sin: and all by the command of the Father; that is, by the charge laid upon him by God. And thus far the merit. He left his glory, taking our nature, our works, our debts upon himself, and subjected himself to the wrath of God the Father, that he might make an atonement for the sins of the world, sufficient for all mankind.

(2dly.) God gave him something touching the application of his merit. God gave in the names of divers persons, and bade him have a care over them. Therefore it is said, John 10:3, 'He calleth his own sheep by name.' He hath such a special care over them, as if every distinct name were given unto him, and there were a charge committed to him to have a care of that soul. And the elect of the Father are said to be given to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' Now what was he to do to them, i.e., to those of the world whom God had chosen as his? He was to enlighten them; he was to bring them into covenant with himself by enlightening them. God saith of Christ, Isa. 13:6, 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles;' that is, to shine in upon them in the darkness of their natural estate, to bring them home to himself: John 6:37, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and them that come to me I will in no wise cast out.' And the reason is given in the next verse; it is 'the will of my Father.' And then he was to comfort them by the glad tidings of salvation Isa. 61:1, 'The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim comfort to all that mourn, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening the prison to them that are

bound.' And after this to bear with their weakness and waywardness; for that is a part of his charge: Isa. 42:3, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.' Lovingly to bear with the ignorance and weaknesses of his children, and supply all their defects by his Spirit and strength: Isa. 40:11, 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.' He shall have a special and certain care of his tender flock. Besides, where they want strength, he shall lend his own strength, and so sweetly lead and guide them by his counsel, till he has brought them to his glory, that is in his commission and charge: John 6:40, 'And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' This is the Father's charge, who doth as it were say thus to his Son, If you will engage yourself td me, here is the work you are to do; you must leave your glory and become my servant; I have fitted a body for you, and you shall fulfil the law, and live in meanness and misery, and then yield up yourself to an accursed death, that so you may merit my favour for these persons whose names I give you: and then you shall oblige yourself to enlighten and quicken them by your Spirit, that their bondage may be removed and then you shall cherish them, and comfort them, and support them, especially the weak ones among them, until you have perfected them, and brought them to glory. This is the sum, and this was the will of the Father, and the charge given to Christ: so that whatsoever Christ acted as Mediator, he acteth as God's servant.

2. Now, the work being proposed, God promiseth what he should expect by way of encouragement and reward for it; and that is this,—that in case Christ will undertake all this, he shall not want help, he shall have the Spirit:, Isa. 61:1, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;' and that he should have the Spirit without measure, not by drops, as the creatures have. And that he should have all countenance; God would not forget his relation in the meanness of his disguise: 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son,' Heb. 1:5. And because empty relations are nothing worth, God would not only be a Father in title, but dispense all fatherly care and respects to him, so that though he meet with opposition and discouragements, he should be borne up against the brunt of them: Isa.

13:4, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law.' He shall still have the best. His judgments and law shall be set up; and sorry, impotent men shall but express their malice; they shall not wreak and satisfy it, for the Lord will be with him: Isa. 13:4, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged;' the meaning is, he will mightily come in for his assistance. And then, after all this, he shall be full of success and triumph: 'He shall see his seed,' and God's pleasure shall thrive in his hands. He shall have anything, a kingdom that knoweth no end and no limits: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.' He shall have power over his adversaries to use them at pleasure, to dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel is shattered into pieces by an iron mace. Alas! what is an earthen vessel to an iron mace? And then the bowing and stooping of all creatures before him: Phil. 2:9,10, 'Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.' God hath promised not only to break the stoutest back, but to bow the stiffest knee; and wherefore? because he undertook this work by covenant. And then, after all this, an entrance into glory: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into glory? 'So was he thus engaged to do by covenant. And besides, Christ was encouraged by promises not only to his person, but for his people. As a sufficiency of grace: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell.' And also a power to justify them: 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' To sanctify, enlighten, and glorify them: 'All things are delivered me of my Father,' Mat. 11:27. So that you see what God would do for Christ, in case he should take that burden and charge upon him. Thus you see the matter proposed by God the Father. Secondly, Now you shall see that this is accepted by God the Son; the work is undertaken with reference to those terms. 1. The work is undertaken. God the Son, being equal to the Father, could not have been commanded and overruled to any service without a voluntary susception and concurrence of his own; and therefore, upon this discovery of the will of God, Christ sweetly concurred and consented to it: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God.' And he; professeth in another place, John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' It was a

gladsome thing to him, as the hours of repast are to an ordinary man. As for the impetration, God would have him lay aside his glory. And it is said, Phil. 2:7, 'And made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men,' incarnate; 'He was found in fashion of a man.' It was his Father's will that he should endure reproaches and injuries: Isa. 50:5,6, 'The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Christ offered himself to all these indignities, being bound to it. He would not be rebellious against his Father's motion. Then to do our works; therefore he is said to be obedient. And then to pay our debts; and therefore he is said to be obedient to the death of the cross, Phil, 2:7. Then for the application of the merit; he inviteth the weary, Mat. 11:28. He enlighteneth the blind, dispossesseth Satan, sets the captive free, Mark 5:18. Pitieth the faint: Luke 15:5, 'And when he had found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing.' He bringeth home the weary upon his own shoulders, and at length bringeth them to glory: John 6:40, 'And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him at the last day.'

2. Christ looketh for the donation, and the accomplishment of God's terms upon it. As for help and assistance: Isa. 50:9, 'Behold, the Lord will help me.' So Isa. 49:5, 'And my God shall be my strength.' It is spoken of Christ in many places. And Isa. 49:7, 'Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhor, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, and princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.' He comforts himself with the promises of success and glory, that though the nations should despise it, yet kings should see it, and rulers worship him. The apostle, quoting a prophecy of Christ, saith in his person, Heb. 2:13, 'I will put my trust in him;' that is, for his seed; 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me.' So for his people: the Spirit is called the promise of the Father, Luke 24:49, 'And, behold, I send the promise of the Father unto you,' that is, the Spirit which my Father hath promised, he will give you. And he pleadeth for his own glory upon this ground, because he had submitted to

God's terms: John 17:5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.' So for his people, ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, and that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' Thou didst promise this glory to me, and to them in me, in the everlasting covenant. And thus I have given you a taste of this matter.

The reasons are these:—

First, That God might found another covenant upon it; therefore God would make a covenant with his Son before he would make a covenant with his creatures; for indeed Christ's covenant is the foundation of another covenant. Unless he had been bound to Christ by this, the other would not have been sure, if God had not obliged Christ to the oversight of it. That this reasoning may be looked upon as the more cogent, do but eye the several differences between both these covenants.

1. This was made with Christ; he is the only federate or person in covenant with God: but now, in the other, Christ is indeed a main federate, the prime federate or chiefest person in covenant, but not the only federate. That he is the prime federate is clear: Gal. 3:16, 'To Abraham and his seed were the promises; but he saith not seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, as to one, which is Christ;' that is, Christ mystical; the whole church, head and members, are called Christ in scripture: 1 Cor. 12:12, 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.' It is true, the promises are mainly pitched upon his person, but from him descend to the rest: for the covenant is not made with Christ only, as appeareth, Heb. 8:8, 'I will make a covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah.' It is made with all believers. This is made to Christ mystically, whereas the other we speak of now is made to Christ personally.

2. This made with Christ is a covenant of works in the very formality of it, and obliged him to subject himself to a covenant of works, to fulfil perfect obedience for the creatures, and to satisfy for the debts of the creatures, and to buy out their peace by the price of his own blood; but now the

covenant made with believers is a covenant of grace. God dealt with Christ in justice, that he might deal with us in mercy: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' God dealeth with us freely, though he satisfied his justice upon Jesus Christ. The yoke of the old covenant is not upon the neck of believers, because the stroke of it is upon the back of Christ.

3. This covenant made with Christ is eternal, before all worlds; the other, the covenant of grace, is made with us in time, and we enter into it in time. I confess in itself it is very old, ever since the first promise dropped from God's mouth: Gen. 3:15, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Though since that it hath been renewed, and we come to have share in it at conversion, yet I say it is very old, ever since the fall; however it is not so old as the covenant with Christ, that was before all time: Titus 1:2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,' that is, to Jesus Christ. Before any succession of time Christ received promises for you, and undertook to bestow eternal life upon believers: 2 Tim. 1:9, it is said, 'According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;' that is, it was given to Christ for us. And this it may be is the meaning of that, Heb. 13:20, that 'Jesus Christ is the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant;' the blood appointed to be shed to be the everlasting covenant between God and him.

Second reason, That Christ might be inaugurated into his office with the more solemnity, and greater endearment to the creatures. That which is done by a covenant is done more solemnly and surely; you have not only a decree and purpose, and promise and types, but the discovery of a covenant: Ps. 110:4, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' There you have God's oath for Christ's priesthood, which noteth an. irreversible sentence. Though the creatures play fast and loose with him, yet God thinketh himself never enough bound to them. And, therefore, he would tie himself in such ways as are most solemn and obliging amongst men, as by oaths and covenants. He would fain stablish the hearts of sinners, and make things certain to them; and, therefore, he giveth this account of his eternal

transactions for your good, they were ordered by way of covenant.

Third reason, This is a way that yieldeth much comfort and satisfaction to the people of God. This is the most comfortable representation of Jesus Christ that can be made to you, and that for two reasons:—

1. You have a double engagement upon God; he is engaged to Christ, and he is engaged to you. Oh, that is it that makes all sure to our souls, that God was engaged to Christ first. If God had only dealt with particular persons, the business had been in danger of miscarrying. In the covenant of works the burden lay upon every one's person; if thou do this, thou shalt live: Gal. 3:10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' But now there is a covenant made with Christ: indeed God hath taken every one's person into covenant, but God hath given Christ the oversight of it; he hath founded a covenant upon a covenant. The covenant was made to him before it was made to you. Nay, in the covenant made with you, it is made with one seed, which is Christ: there to Christ mystical, here to Christ personal; still Christ is taken in with you, and therefore the business is more sure and satisfying: 2 Cor. 5:19, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' There is great comfort that he would transact the matter with Christ before he would meddle and deal with the world.

2. You have double promises; the very promises that are made to Christ's person, they are your promises as well as Christ's, so far as they are compatible with your state and condition. Your Mediator will be nothing but what you shall have the benefit of; nay, it is very observable that we have glory not only by virtue of the promises made to ourselves, but by virtue of the promises made to Christ; that we should have glory, as Christ prays, John 17:23,24, 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me from the foundation of the world.' God promised to be his God and Father, and therefore you may be as confident he will be yours as if the promise had been directed to your persons. For Christ reasons thus, John 20:17, 'Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' he hath engaged himself to be mine, therefore yours; you are what I am. So that besides

the promises directed to sinners, you have Christ's, personal promises so far as they concern your state. So you shall see God promised to acquit Christ from all the sins he should take upon him, and to free him from the reproaches that should be cast upon his person, because of his miserable appearance in the world: Isa. 50:7,8, 'For the Lord God will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded. He is near that justifieth me; who shall contend with me?' If all the world count me a sinner, God will justify me. As the apostle applieth it to believers, Rom. 8:33, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth.' God dealt with Christ as the first believer: if Christ had the Spirit put upon him, you shall have the Spirit by virtue of the first promise: Isa. 13:1, 'I have put my Spirit upon him; and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.' Isa. 44:3, 'I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.'

Use 1. Is exhortation by way of inference to two duties:—

1. If there be such a covenant, meditate upon it. Oh, it is the most comfortable subject that you can spend your thoughts upon! Consider the form of it, that the divine decrees were laid in the way of a covenant, and that God and Christ should article one with another. You may fetch a great deal of comfort and support for your faith out of this.

[1.] It occasioned God and Christ to become both believers, and to trust one another; and Christ is a believer to this day: Heb. 10:13, 'From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.' God promised Christ, and Christ promised God, and they took each other's word for the salvation of all the world. Oh, what an encouragement is it to believe when you have such high patterns! If you will not believe God upon his oath, believe him upon his engagement to Christ. It is an honour to be a believer, because God and Christ were both believers: as great personages among men are an honour to the society and fellowship into which they come. You may fetch a reason hence; they trusted one another, and shall not I trust them both? Now you have a willing God and an able Saviour, and they both in covenant with you. Christ would not let go the assurance that he had of God's love by this covenant in his agonies: Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Though there were a suspension of the discovery of love, yet he could say *my* God, *my*

God. Oh, why should not we believe now, and silence all doubts? Who would not believe God with his surety?

[2.] Consider the manifold engagements that are upon God. God is bound to Christ, and God is bound to you; the heart should not be loose in believing when God is thus bound. You have his purpose, his promise, his oath, both covenants. Is it not a high affront put upon God to distrust him now? God was angry with Sarah for laughing, when she had but a bare promise, Gen. 18:13. Certainly, then, he has just cause to be angry with you for unbelieving, when he hath so deeply engaged himself to you. Num. 23:19, it is said, 'Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and Shall he not make it good? 'So I may say much more, Hath he not sworn, hath he not covenanted, and will he not make good his engagement to Christ?

[3.] Here is comfort against the sense of our unworthiness: you are vile wretches, you can expect nothing; but consider, Christ is not unworthy: God made the promises to him; he hath the oversight of the covenant of grace: God hath a bond, a covenant with him; and though you have given him occasion to break with you, yet he will not break with his own Son. Jesus Christ did not fail in his undertaking with God, but fulfilled the will of his heavenly Father, even to a tittle. Therefore God will make good his word to Jesus Christ for you, though humble and vile in yourselves. No matter though you be base in your own eyes; consider the truth of God plighted to his Son, who was not unfaithful.

[4.] Against fears of apostasy. Oh, you shall not keep faithful with God! Why, consider God doth not deal first with you as with particular persons, but with Jesus Christ. The covenant is not committed to the indeterminate freedom of your wills, and the wanderings of your hearts, but to the care of Jesus Christ; and there is no breach likely to be on Christ's part. It is a dishonour to God to think we are out of favour upon every offence. In the state of innocency we had perfect peace, but it was such an estate as was capable of enmity, because the covenant was made with ourselves; but now it is made with Christ, that is a firm foundation. If we were still left to our own free will, it were not certain that any should be saved.

2. The matter of the covenant; this yields ground of comfort also. Do but consider what Christ was bound to, or what God promised Christ.' Do you struggle with unbelief, and you cannot tell how to settle upon any comfort? If you belong to Christ, God hath given him a charge to look after your souls, you shall not perish; Christ is bound to apply the virtue of his sufferings, as well as to merit by them. Are you feeble? God hath provided a place for you in Christ's bosom. Christ's shoulders are for lambs that cannot go of their own feet. Do you want knowledge? It is one of the things given Christ in charge: He shall be 'a light to the Gentiles.' Do you want freedom and liberty towards God? Christ is to preach freedom to the captives. Still study the covenant between God and Christ, and you shall see the Lord Jesus received a charge to supply your wants. Is a nation stubborn and averse from Christ? Is it not said, 'He shall set judgment in the earth, that the isles shall wait for his law'? Is there opposition against Christ, his glory, and servants? Is it not said, 'He shall not fail, nor be broken in judgment'? Alas! these adversaries can do nothing; like angry bees, they may sting, but they leave their life behind them. God will still uphold the hand and head of Christ. This is the first part to meditate on.

2. If there were a covenant made with Christ, oh, then, get an interest in him, and be united to him, that so you may come within the compass of his care and commission. Everything belongeth to you according to your interest in Christ: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'The promises are in him yea, and in him amen.' Still a man's hope is in the covenant of grace: and you shall see Christ hath all to do in the covenant of grace.

[1.] In this covenant between God and Christ he is only federate; he hath taken the whole business upon himself, to discharge you out of the covenant of works, to destroy the powers of hell, to bring you into favour with God. We cannot do it with our prayers and tears: Hosea 13:14, 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.' Christ undertook this when God the Father and Christ entered into a formal, solemn compact, for so the apostle explaineth it, 1 Cor. 15:55.

[2.] In the covenant of grace made with believers, Christ is every way concerned in it: he taketh several relations upon himself, which seem

otherwise to be contradistinct.

(1.) He is called the testator or author of the covenant: Heb. 9:16, 'For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.' It was built upon his purchase, confirmed by his death. He undertook to make up all controversies that might fall out between God and us; and so the whole is ascribed to him; therefore he is said to be 'the author and finisher of our faith,' Heb. 12:2. Our faith is built upon that covenant, and peace with Christ is surely ordained for us. We are said to be his people: Mat. 1:21, 'And he shall save his people from their sins.' And therefore there are many promises in scripture that pass in the name of Christ. Somewhat he will do to us, which shows him to be joint-author together with God in the covenant; he, being heir with his father, is heir to the promises. So that you see there is no likelihood of right to the covenant but by union with Jesus Christ. It is his covenant as well as the Father's.

(2.) He is called the Mediator of the covenant: Heb. 12:24, 'And to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.' He is the middle person that goeth betwixt God and us, to make up all breaches that may be on our default; he mediates with the Father when he is provoked by our sin, and mediates with us by his Spirit, to bring us upon our knees before God. The old covenant needed no mediator, for God and man were not fallen out; but now they are so, and therefore Christ is the fittest person to mediate; for partaking of the nature of both parties, he is the fittest person to come between them.

(3.) He is called the surety of the covenant: Heb. 7:22, 'By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.' One that is to see it performed on both sides, so as God will challenge Christ for our part, and you may challenge God for Christ's part. He is to see all wrought in us which God hath required; to see that the Spirit writes the law in our hearts, and inclines us to obedience; and then to see that we yield up that obedience, and that God be satisfied. He is to do all our works for us, and all our works in us; so that God calleth upon Christ, and we call upon Christ. All is done in him, and therefore God calleth him his witness, Isa. 54:4, 'Ye are my witnesses, and my servant whom I have chosen,' Isa. 43:10. He is my chief witness, that I am faithful, and true, and able. Christ will

undertake for him, and he will undertake for you, for you need a surety most.

(4.) In the covenant of grace Christ is the prime federate; the promises are mainly pitched upon him, and he receiveth them for all his brethren. He is mainly intended: Gen. 3:15, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Mark, the covenant is made to all in general, but so as it reflects upon Christ especially. There is an enmity between all the holy seed and the serpent's, all the spawn of Satan, though chiefly Christ be concerned in it, as if the whole seed were Christ's. And in the covenant renewed with Abraham, the promises are mainly pitched upon Christ, or else the expressions would not agree; for he it is that stands as the prime federate, to receive the promises for all his brethren: Gen. 12:3, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' The covenant of works was made with Adam and all mankind, and Adam received it for all his race: so does Christ. Well, then, you see the necessity and benefit of union with Christ, that you may be entitled to his care as he is the only federate, that you may receive his bequests and legacies as testator and ordainer of the covenant, that he may mediate for you, and go to God for you; and as he is Mediator, he may undertake for you; and as a surety he may bestow blessings upon you, as your head, as the chiefest of the body that is called Christ.

3. To love God. You have the greatest experience of the love of the Godhead that possibly you could have, that there should be a covenant between the persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that they would mutually engage one another for your good. It is the highest endearment you could have from them, that God should ordain you his Son to carry on the work of your salvation; therefore engage and give up yourselves to God again: seeing the Lord should devise such a way, and Christ effect it, give up yourselves by covenant to God.

But I come now to the matter, or to handle the words absolutely, and not considered under that conditional and federate form: 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,' or, as it is in the Hebrew, When he shall make his soul sin' *(ascham),* the sin or the trespass-offering. His soul,

that is, himself: 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Mat. 16:26; that is, himself, body and soul. So his soul, that is himself, shall he make an offering for sin. His whole man was offered up. He could not sacrifice his divinity. The apostle Peter saith, 'He suffered in the flesh.'

Doct. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the only true satisfactory and expiatory sacrifice for sin.

1. Because it was of God's own ordaining. God will be pleased with nothing but what he appoints. Foolish man would fain give laws to heaven, and think to please God with what liketh himself best either in worship or in sacrifices; as if God would be enticed by their own lure. Christ is the only *ascham:* God requireth not ten thousand rivers of oil; and all things else are nothing to God's will. Christ was of his own appointment, and therefore expiatory: Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation;' 1 John 4:10, 'God hath sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' It is not expiatory, if God, the party offended, did not accept of Christ Eph. 5:2, 'He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour;' that is, for an acceptable sacrifice all other sacrifices were an abomination to this.

2. Other sacrifices were but types of this, they could not make the comers to them perfect, as the apostle proveth, Heb. 9:9. There was expiation, but not real, except Christ was eyed in them. They could not make him that did the service perfect, as appertaining to the conscience: that is, they could not satisfy the conscience. The sin was not forgiven through their worthiness, they could not have any solid ground that justice was satisfied; this is a thing that naturally troubleth a man, how to satisfy ,justice, and to appease the revengeful deity. Naturally there is such a sense in guilty man, and that was the reason why they would have somewhat above sacrifices, because still there was something that stuck with them, that this was not enough. And therefore they in Micah added their first-born, Micah 6; 2 Chron. 33:6, 'And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. There was somewhat that caused parents to be so unnatural besides the example of the heathens. And truly it was because their consciences were not perfect. They had not the good answer that Peter speaketh of, they could not be

persuaded God was appeased by the killing of a beast.

3. No other thing could be satisfactory and expiatory besides the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah bringeth in God as saying, 'He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor, therefore his arm brought salvation. Man could have had no other person to interpose for him. Therefore Christ, who is the arm of the Lord, he brought salvation to him. All the angels in heaven were not able to lay down a valuable consideration; there was no intercessor, no intervener, none that could come between man and wrath. No creature can stand before infinite wrath to countermand it; man was not able, nor all his tears available. The law taketh no notice of sorrow for sin. It is true, the creature was easily inclined to think of merit in that which is dolorous and costly; but it is but a vain thought, the law is satisfied only through full and complete obedience. Your prayers would not do. Christ doth not barely pray to God, but offer himself also. His entreaties alone would not have been sufficient: Heb. 9:22, 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission.

4. Christ sacrificing of himself complied with God's design, which is double:—

[I.] To discover the glory of the Trinity, his love to the souls of men, and the Spirit's efficacy. These things would not have been drawn out for the creatures' benefit, had it not been for this design. The Father is glorified in being the contriver, the Son in being the Mediator, the Spirit as the applier and settler of comfort in the hearts of Christians. This was a high honour to Christ, next to that personal glory that he had with the Father before all worlds. When Christ was about to die, he saith, John 13:31, 'Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.' The Son especially; and not him alone, but the whole Godhead; the Spirit is glorified in your sense and experience of him.

[2.] To magnify his justice and displeasure against sin: Rom. 3:25, 'God set out Christ to declare his righteousness in the remission of sin.' God would have us be reconciled, not only by way of entreaties; but satisfaction. You can as well stand before the seat of judgment as the throne of grace, if God forgives sinners. God's justice is more glorified in

punishing sin in Christ, than if all the world had been lost for sin. This appears by the impartialness of it, that God should not spare his own Son; but the merit of it is full, here is room for acceptation through the worth of his person that did all. If men had been damned, God would be glorifying his justice, but never be said to be glorified. It is more to the creditor to have his debt paid at once, than always a-paying. Ten thousand pounds is a long time a-paying by a poor man in shillings, but a rich man layeth it down in a little time, and pays all.

Use 1. Then disclaim other satisfactions, your tears, your duties, your repentance; do not think to please God with these. Alas! you will never know when the work is done fully. Men make their way to God *easy* through these. Naturally we trust in our works and duties; these are rather fruits than causes. Look higher than your prayers and tears, to Jesus Christ.

I now come to the third reason why the death and sufferings of Christ are not ignominious to him; and it is drawn from the fruits of his sufferings, which are three:—The first is a propagation of his spiritual seed: 'He shall see his seed.' *By seed,* usually the scripture meaneth posterity; he shall see his holy posterity; that is, those that are begotten to Christ by the word. Observe here two things:—

1. That believers are the seed of Christ.

2. That Christ shall live to see his seed.

Doct. That believers are Christ's Seed.

By purchase and covenant he hath obtained it of the Father, that you should be his generation and his posterity. The whole world in some sense is God's offspring, Acts 17:28. The apostle quoteth it out of a poet-ggg*tou gar kai genoV esmen;* but the special seed, the spiritual seed, that is appointed to God the Son. Eph. 3:15, it is said of the Lord Jesus, 'Of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named.' Saints militant and triumphant are named from him. As the parents give the name to their posterity—as Jacob to Joseph's sons, and Zacharias to John the Baptist—so Christ to believers. It is just here as it was with Abraham:

Gen. 21:12, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called.' Abraham had another son, but that should not be counted his race; not in Ishmael, but in Isaac. So here; every son of Adam is the son of God, Luke 3:38, but in Christ shall thy seed be called. Men cannot be God's sons, but by being Christ's Seed. You have no spiritual right to God's fatherhood out of him.

Object. But you will say, How are believers Christ's seed, since it is said everywhere that we are born of God, and especially it is said, 1 John 3:1, 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God'? And in other places it seemeth we are the Spirit's seed: John 3:5, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' And we are said to be 'born of the Spirit:' 1 Cor. 4:15, 'Yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the gospel.' My answer shall be in these reasons:—

1. By reason of the gift of the Father, who made over all dispensations and all relations to the Son: John 5:22, 'He hath committed all judgment to the Son.' So 'All things are delivered to me of my Father,' Mat. 11:25. So that quickening, life, and all cometh from the Son; and God the Father worketh nothing in us but in reference to the Lord Christ; and he hath given over all his interest and relations to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' They were God's sons, but he made them over to Christ, so that all the relation that we have to God the Father is through the Son; he is our Father, as he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we come to have interest in the love of the Father by the love of the Son: for it is said, John 1:12, 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' It is Christ gave us that power and prerogative. So Gal. 4:5, 'That we that were under the law might receive the adoption of sons.' So that you see, through the gift of the Father, we are Christ's seed. He worketh nothing in us, and doth own us no further than we belong to the Son: for, as he is Christ's Father, so he is our Father; and as his seed, we are God's sons born to him.

2. Because the Lord Christ did so much to purchase them and gain us for his seed.

[1.] He died for them. Christ, like Rachel, dieth, that he may bring forth.

Perit dum parit—he perisheth that he may bring forth. You *are Benonis,* the children of his sorrows: John 12:24, 'Except a corn of, wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,' not else. Isaac had not a promise of increase and a numerous issue till he was ready to be offered. When in this chapter the prophet had spoken of the sufferings of Christ, he comes to say, Isa. 54:1, 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.' Christ liveth to make you fruitful: Heb. 2:10, 'To bring many sons to glory, the captain of their salvation was made perfect through sufferings.' God would not have his birth exempt from the fate and lot of all bearings; even Christ did bring forth in sorrows.

[2.] Because he sendeth forth power and efficacy to beget them.

(1.) He provideth the word, and blesseth it with power and efficacy; as you may see, 1 Peter 1:23, 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever;' and in the 25th verse you see what word, to wit, 'The word which by the gospel is preached unto you,' the word preached in Christ's name, this word begets us. Therefore ministers are said to be instruments in the hand of Christ, as he is pleased to bless their endeavours. It is said in Ps. 110:3, 'From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth.' The meaning is, that believers should be born to Christ like dewdrops in the morning of the first dawning of heavenly light: 1 Cor. 4:15, 'For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.' Others were but schoolmasters; he was their father in Christ. God provideth nurses and subordinate parents, to whom he conveyeth his own honour. It is by Christ's blessing upon their care and ministry.

(2.) By his Spirit. It is Christ's Spirit that bringeth you to be new creatures. He worketh so as he may glorify Christ. The efficiency of the Spirit is the seed of Christ. Therefore it is said of one that is born of God, 1 John 3:9, that 'his seed remaineth in him.' The power of the Spirit is a seed by which we are made new creatures, Titus 3:6, 'The renewing of the Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour.' The true virtue is from the Spirit shed on us through Christ Jesus. All that

are new creatures are begotten by his word, actuated and quickened by his Spirit, and therefore they are called his seed.

3. The next reason is, because all that is done to believers is to form the image of Christ upon them: Gal. 4:19, 'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.' The work of conversion is but the stamping and drawing out the lineaments of Christ upon the soul. So it is said, Rom. 8:*29, summorjouV thV eikonoV,* 'Whom he did foreknow, he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.' God intended us to be his seed, because the new creature is most like him. The acts of Christianity are expressed by our being 'planted into the likeness of his death and resurrection,' Rom. 6:5. The acts that pass forth into the soul for the subduing of sin, for quickening of grace; it is a planting and forming Christ's image and likeness: and the whole carriage that passeth from us, it is through the Spirit, it is but a discovery of Christ's life. Therefore, the seed, likeness, form, and features are an argument of parentage: children are but the parents multiplied, and new set forth to the world.

To apply it.

Use 1. Is a word to the careless world. Look to it whose seed you are.

There are divers seeds in the world.

1. There are some that are only the offspring of God in a large sense, have no other claim but by the first Adam. Ignorant men look upon themselves under no other notion than that of God's creatures. Oh! consider your happiness lieth in your relation unto God through Christ. You shall see the main encouragement to prayer, or any address to him, is when you can come and call him Father. God is sweet to you when you can call upon him as sons and daughters. But, alas! what a sad thing is it when men have no other title to God but their creation! Isa. 27:11, 'He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.' Ignorant people say, God that made them shall save them. No; such an interest and claim to God will not avail you; he that made them will not save them; God will reckon his seed in Isaac, that is, in Christ. There is no privilege in claiming by Ishmael.

2. There are some that are yet worse, by the virulence and bitterness, and rage of heart against the ways of God; they are possessed with an opposite seed—the seed of the serpent: Gen. 3:15, 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed.' There is a seed that is full of envy and enmity against the people and ways of God: Mat. 3:7, 'O generation of vipers! 'the very spawn and seed of vipers.

3. There is the holy seed, against whom all the powers of darkness are armed: Rev. 12:17, 'And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.' The generation of men that worshipped God in Jesus Christ, those are they that are hated by the world, and yet they are the pillars of the earth, Isa. 6:13. Therefore, look to yourselves whose seed you are. If the Spirit of Christ hath not been shed out upon you, to new form you through the word; if you are not formed more and more into the image of the Lord Jesus, you are none of his seed. Consider who is your root; your fall lieth in this. God doth not deal with single men, but with the common root and author of the whole seed. Adam was a miscarrying root, but Christ is not.

Use 2. Here is a word to the seed of Jesus Christ, to believers. You may say indeed, Ps. 100:4, 'It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.' You are of the Lord's making, and therefore of the Lord's keeping. The seed of Jesus Christ are preserved in him. The whole work of Christ is the workmanship of God in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:10. Therefore, look up to him. Children's dependence is upon the parents, and yours is upon the supplies of Christ, for your heavenly Father knoweth what he hath made. Here is—

1. Direction to you to whom to look for increase of grace. It is the rule of nature, all things are nourished by those things by which they are begotten. God maketh the next causes to be the conveyances of support to his creatures. God begetteth you by his Spirit, actuating and quickening the word, and so he keepeth you: 1 Peter 2:2, 'As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.'

2. Exhortation to press you to conform to Jesus Christ. You are his seed, and therefore it is an engagement to likeness: children are to bear and

show forth the image and likeness of their parents. Christ makes imitation an argument of parentage: John 8:37, 'I know, that ye are Abraham's seed, but ye seek to kill me.' A degenerate offspring are a shame to their ancestors. They were children of God, that came of an ancient royal family, but yet were unworthy of their extraction, 1 Chron. 4:22, 'Who had dominion in Moab and Jashubilehem: and these are ancient things.' Base powers came of them that preferred sordid drudgery work to the king of Babylon before working in the temple. What doth it avail to speak of the ancient honour of our family when we are degenerated from it? Oh, take heed you be not a stain to Jesus Christ. You came of a noble seed, the whole family of God is named of him. Ishmael came of Abraham; but 'cast out the bondwoman and her son.' God will have no bond-slaves to inherit this honour. To be enslaved to sin, and to pretend sonship by Christ, will provoke to a casting out. Children, unless degenerate, will hold out the honour of their parents, and walk in the high steps of their ancestors; and so must you show from whose loins and life you came by a worthy walking before God.

Use 3. Here is a word of consolation. A great deal of comfort it is to be of the seed of Christ; as-

1. Consider what an honour is done you. By this you have a title and claim to the whole Godhead: 'He gave you power to become the sons of God.' You belong to his care, being the seed of Christ. As some living fathers among the emperors did make their children co-partners with them in their dignity, so are you sharers with Christ in all his privileges: Rom. 8:17, 'And if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' Our Saviour saith, John 20:17, 'I ascend , to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.' As if you were in the same rank with Christ. And therefore it is said, Heb. 2:11, 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren.' Christ doth not think it a disgrace to him that they should be invested in his honours and privileges.

2. This relation engageth affection.

[1.] It engageth Christ's delight to Christians. As parents' joy is in their seed, so is Christ's in your thriving and welfare. God hath made love naturally descending and running down to them that come from us.

Christ is brought in as a type of Isaiah, Heb. 2:13, rejoicing over his children: 'Behold I and the children which thou hast given me.' Believers are a pleasure and glory to him. To look upon the numerousness of the saints is a pleasant sight to Christ; as to a father to see the increase of his loins: Isa. 62:4, 'For the Lord delighteth in thee.' Christ rejoiceth over his seed. It is promised as a privilege that he should see his seed, implying it should be a delight to Christ. And what a comfort is this, that we should be Christ's joy! Therefore Paul saith, Phil. 1:8, 'God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ;' that is, as the bowels of Jesus Christ did yearn after you, with such like bowels do I yearn for you.

[2] It engageth Christ's care of you. He shall see his seed; and you are his seed, and therefore he will look after you. He watcheth these great births, that they may not miscarry; and is as it were bound that we may lack nothing. All his care is about his seed: Cant. 2:17, Christ walketh in the gardens to look after the green figs and tender grapes, that he may apply himself to them. The apostle saith, he is 'worse than an infidel that provideth not for his own;' not only beneath grace, but beneath nature. And certainly Christ will have a more tender regard to his own seed. The greatest expression of love that Christ would have spoken to Peter was to feed his lambs, John 21:1.5. We may look to him for provisions: Isa. 49:15, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child? She may, but I will not forget thee.' Men, by debauching their spirits, may wear out the impressions of natural affections, but Christ cannot forget his own seed: 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure.'

I come now to the second point.

Doct. That Christ shall see his seed, or an increase of the faithful through his word and Spirit. It noteth two things:—First, The life of Christ. Many leave seed that do not see it, being snatched from their children and comforts as soon as they grow into any hopes: but Christ's seeing his seed implieth he should live to see it propagated throughout all successions of time.

First observation, That the seed of Christ have a living parent 'He shall see his seed.' God's children can never be orphans. We say by many that

their parents died too soon for them, because they were but young, and exposed to the hazards and uncertainties of the world. But believers cannot be left as orphans: John 14:18, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you again.'

Well, then, to apply it: Lay up this comfort, though Christ be ascended and gone out of your sight, yet he seeth his seed, he liveth to take care for you. You have not his corporeal presence, but you have the presence of his Spirit to direct you: John 16:7, 'It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you.' Christ cannot die too soon; his absence in the flesh is abundantly recompensed and made up in the Spirit. That more generally and more particularly is the comfort that you have by the life of Christ as you are his seed: and therefore I shall not handle it at large.

1. You may be sure you are still an object working upon his affections. The sight of things worketh more vehemently upon us than the conceit of them. Imagination hath a great force upon the spirit, but not so great as the senses, as tasting, seeing, and the like. As you shall see in impure love: Gen. 39:7, she 'cast her eyes upon Joseph, and said, tie with me;' Mat. 5:28, Lusting cometh by looking. So in pure affection love is enkindled by the presence of the object. You may discern the workings of nature in these instances. As you shall see in another case; when God would stir up or provoke the rage of his justice, it is said, 'And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt' It is spoken after the manner of man. It is true of the man Christ Jesus, who, looking upon us, and seeing our state and case, is the more touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4:15. It is said in Mat. 14:14, Christ saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them. Christ's eye presented objects to his pity; therefore the prophet speaketh to Christ: Isa. 63:15, 'Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory.' Christ shall see his seed; not only know their state by imagination, but live to look into their particular wants: 'Though Abraham be ignorant of us,' yet Christ liveth to see the several states of his seed.

2. You may be sure that he is able to give you a constant and sufficient supply. Parents, that only leave a portion, cannot provide against all

hazards. Christ doth not only leave you a portion, and so let you shift for yourselves, but you are still under his eye and care Rev. 2:2, 'I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience.' That was the ground of Christ's pity to her: he ever seeth his seed. It was the prodigal's comfort, that though he had spent all, yet still his father was living: Luke 15:17, 'There is bread enough in my father's house.' God doth not give us a stock of grace, and leave us to ourselves; we are still in the family, and under the Father's eye and care. You have a parent that liveth for ever, that dispenseth his grace to you, and teacheth you how you may manage it without impair and loss. A father, whilst living, will not put the whole out of his own hands; it is best that our stock is still in Christ's keeping.

Secondly, *He shall see his seed,* noteth the increase that is implied in the phrase *seed* put indefinitely: it is put for a multitude, such a seed as is worth looking after. Observe then—Second observation, That Jesus Christ hath a plenteous seed and numerous offspring. In the exposition I showed you it is plural, 'He shall see his *seeds.'* It is parallel with that, 'He shall see his children's children.' A seed propagated through many successions of ages. This appeareth by the promises made to the types of Christ; as—

1. To several of the patriarchs, &c., viz., Isaac, Ham, Jacob, David, whose posterity was a shadow of it: Jer. 32:22, 'As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.' Great shall be the number of those that are grafted into Christ, and made kings and priests to him. So to Abraham Gen. 28:14, 'And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' It is meant principally of the holy and spiritual seed: Gen. 32:12, 'I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' Balaam says, Num. 23:10, 'Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?' It is meant of Jacob's sons that are propagated; and it is meant of Israel's sons among the Gentiles principally, though not with exclusion of the other Hosea 1:10, 'Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor

numbered; and it shall be said to them, Ye are the sons of the living God;' which is applied by the apostle to the church among the Gentiles.

2. To the church: Isa. 54:1,2, 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and, let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.' It is said, the land should grow too little: Isa. 49:19, 'The land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants;' Isa. 40:8, 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to the windows?' Doves fly in flocks, so that they even darken the air.

3. To Christ; as here, that he should see his seed: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' Rev. 7:9, 'After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.'

Use 1. Be not discouraged at the church's, paucity and fewness. Men say they are popular, and go against the whole world: Gen. 19:9, 'This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge.' Elijah was zealous alone. Do not be discouraged. A grain of mustard-seed will grow into a tree, Mat. 13. A little flock may increase, so that you must stretch forth the curtains, and strengthen the stakes. The little stone hewed out of the mountain filled the whole earth, Dan. 2:35; and Job 8:7, 'Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.'

2. Wait and pray for the increase of it, for the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles, Rom. 11:25. Pray that the waters of the sanctuary may go out to the former and latter sea, Zech. 14:8.

We are now come to the second fruit of the sufferings of Christ 'He shall prolong his days;' that is, though he die, the term of his life shall never be the shorter for it; he shall live forever. Some apply this to the seed of Christ before mentioned; as if the sense were, He shall prolong the days of his seed. And the Seventy favour this sense in their translation, for they render this clause with the former, 'He shall see his seed to be long-lived.'

I confess the result is the same; for if Christ be long-lived, we shall be long-lived; our life and glory hang upon his life and glory. But I conceive this phrase more expressly and properly doth concern Christ himself. The point is then—

Doct. That the days of the Lord Jesus Christ were not shortened by his dying, but rather prolonged and lengthened out to eternity.

I cannot give you the full discussion, having spoken much concerning it upon that place which I shall now quote as the proof of it Isa. 53:8, 'Who shall declare his generation?' that is, who can count the number of his age and duration? The reason is—

Because, after suffering, Christ was to return to the glory of his God-head: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?' He was to put off meanness and death; these things could have no more dominion over him. He returned to all the other glories, and therefore to the glory of his immortality. And hence the apostle saith of our Lord Christ, 1 Tim. 6:16, 'Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light;' that is, in opposition to the creatures. He only hath it to dispose of it, and in himself; for otherwise we are immortal in our souls; but it is only by his benefit and promise, and as we live in his life. Well, then, you see the reason is, because Christ is in possession of glory and immortality.

Use 1. It maketh for the comfort of believers: your Saviour liveth for ever. As the second person in the Trinity, he is immutably glorious; and as the Mediator, he hath eternity made over by grant and covenant to him. It is for your comfort divers ways; besides what I have spoken to before, take these:—

1. If Christ be eternal, then his love is eternal, his care and his mercy are eternal, his kingdom is eternal: Isa. 9:6,7, 'Of the increase of his government and peace there is no end.' Everything in Christ is prolonged to you. As you find Christ to you now, so he will be to you for ever. It is true, there may be some withdrawings of love and grape as to our apprehensions. And so Job saith, Job 30:21, 'Thou art become cruel to me.' Saints may think they have lost God and lost grace, when it is only through the weakness of their own apprehensions; there may be a

different appearance of Christ to the creature, but his heart is the same to them still; like children, that think the sun doth not give light but when they see it breaking out in glory. There is light for you in Christ, though you cannot see it through the darkness that is upon your spirits.

2. Here is relief against all our enemies. Is it the shortness of life? Ps. 102:11,12, 'My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass; but thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever.' It may be you are assaulted with weaknesses, you carry about you a sickly, crazy body that is ready at every turn to drop into the grave. This is a trouble to you: God having placed in the creature naturally a desire of immortality, the vanity and perishableness of their being is a trouble to them. But consider, Christ is long-lived, and therefore your glory shall not be left in the dust, nor God's holy ones left to corruption and rottenness. Christ's life was not shortened by his death, but prolonged; so shall yours be that have an interest in him. Oh, see that your lives are made long in the prolongation of Christ's life; for as the body liveth in the life of the soul, so shall we live in the life of Christ. See bow the church draweth out this comfort everywhere: Hab. 1:12, 'Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die.' We cannot perish if we have an interest in one that is everlasting: Ps. 102:27,28, 'Thy years shall have no end; therefore the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.' It is taken for a good consequence, that if God continueth, the saints shall continue: 'Thy! years have no end, *therefore* their seed shall be established.' What a privilege is this, that creatures that are in their own nature but of a day's standing, as it were, should have their lives prolonged to the continuance of their Maker!

3. This will support and settle the heart in doubtful times, in days of misery and violence. Your hearts are ready to be overcome, to see the thriving of wicked men; and you know not how dangers may grow upon you. Consider, the days of the Lord Christ are prolonged; let them flourish never so long, he will outlive them. A man would comfort himself in this, if he knew that the interest of religion would thrive to a long continuance. Why, you may be sure Christ will take care of his church: Ps. 9:6,7, 'O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end; but the Lord shall endure for ever.' Their enemies are such as must die, but

Christ will never die; his days are prolonged, but their days are shortened: Ps. 55:23, 'Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.' You may see an end of Christ's enemies, but never of the life of Christ. Alas! who would fear them? You may be sure when they perish, Christ will remain Ps. 92:8,9, 'But thou, Lord, are most high for evermore. Thine enemies shall perish, all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.' Still you have an eternal God, and an everlasting Christ, that will live beyond your enemies.

4. It is comfort in the loss of outward enjoyments. Alas! their nature is vanishing, even the most glorious of all the creatures. The heavens shall be like a scorched scroll: Ps. 102:26, 'They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.' But you have an interest in a more lasting comfort, in a Christ whose days are prolonged, though all things else perish before you.

Use 2. Is advice to the world, first, to get an interest in Christ; his friendship will last. Make a friend of him, that you may be sure will abide by you to the last. This is Christ's argument for improvement of wealth: 'They will receive you into everlasting habitations,' Luke 16:9, to wit, those whose bowels you have refreshed. Make friends of the saints, but especially 'of Christ, that when other things fail, you may have an eternal God to stand by you. Christ is a friend that can never fail. Barzillai commended his son to David, 2 Sam. 19:37; but David must yield to the fate of all men, and was forced to leave him to Solomon, 1 Kings 2:7. Oh, commend your souls to Christ, and he will not leave them to another. His days are prolonged, and he doth not yield to the fate of the creatures. Well then, choose him. Those are not friends that beguile you in your hopes (and then are not able to stead you), as the creatures do. Christ is a friend that is able to stand by you in the worst of times; he will confess you before his Father in heaven.

2. He will give you long life, which is the great desire of the creatures: Ps. 34:12, 'What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?' What man is there that doth not desire to live long? that is the meaning of it: Prov. 3:16, 'Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour,' Length of days is the right-hand blessing of

wisdom; it is the blessing of Jesus Christ. Therefore it is said, Eternal life is in the Son: and he that hath the Son hath life; his days are prolonged, and he will prolong and lengthen out yours to eternity.

Having showed the things most proper to this phrase, I come now to the latter clause, that 'the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.' The point is, that all the will and pleasure of God shall prosper and be effectual in the hands of Jesus Christ.

Reasons—

1. Because be is the choice instrument of God, the special servant of his decrees, therefore everywhere called his servant: Isa. 42:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold.' He is God's servant as Mediator, therefore God will uphold him, and bear him out in his work Isa. 53:11, 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' Certainly God's will and work will thrive in the hands of Christ. When God raiseth up any special instrument among the creatures to accomplish his pleasure, they are successful. Nebuchadnezzar, that was but a remoter servant of God's decrees, and one taken in by the by to do God's will, he was prosperous: Jer. 25:9, 'Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and will make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolation.' So the Medes and Persians, when called to the service of God's decrees, they were successful: Isa. 13:3, 'I have commanded my sanctified ones; I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.' They are set apart for that work. The lowest servants of the decrees cannot miscarry, much less, then, can Christ, the choicest instrument of God's decrees.

2. Because the Lord Christ is so qualified that the will of God must needs prosper with him.

[1] He is willing and ready to comply with the will of God the Father. It is motive sufficient to Christ that it is the Father's pleasure: John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' It is

Christ's pleasure, as much as God's, to work out the good of the creatures. Work is best done by a willing servant; now Christ is willing. As God gave Christ, so Christ gave himself to die for man. The Father's delight is to you, and so is the Son's; and therefore the business is not like to miscarry, Prov. 8:31. Christ is brought in speaking as the Wisdom of the Father, 'rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights are with the sons of men.' Christ's delights were with men; it was a pleasure to him to do them good. The pleasure of the Lord will prosper in any hand, but especially in the hands of Christ, for it is his own pleasure.

[2] He is able and mighty, so as he must needs effectuate the will of God: Ps. 89:19, 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty.' It is an able Christ that the work is committed to, that can break through discouragements, overcome difficulties, remove lets. Alas! there is no mountain that is anything before this Zerubbabel: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' He wanteth nothing for the accomplishment of this work, there is a fulness and supply of all things: Col. 2:3, 'In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: There is an unexhausted treasury of grace and knowledge to be found in Christ; it was hid, the world does not easily see it, but there is a rich magazine of grace, and sufficiency to effect all the will of God; but our weakness measureth things by appearance, and till God bringeth us within the veil we cannot see it.

But you will say, What is this pleasure of the Lord?

I answer—It is the whole decree of God about the good of the creatures; more especially, that I may open your hearts to the view of some cases, these comforts work best when they are drawn forth into particulars.

1. There are some more general, that concern the universality and body of men; and so the pleasure of the Lord is that Christ should gather churches out of the world, out of all kindreds and nations in the world; and then give them his laws; and this Christ will do, notwithstanding the rage of tyrants, and the malice of evil men 'The isles shall wait for his law.' And it is said, Isa. 9:7, 'The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.' The Lord hath sworn he will maintain him against all the attempts of the world; that the gospel shall get ground and prosper. Now, see if

Christ's hand miscarried in these general works: Acts 2:4, three thousand were converted by one sermon; one apostle preached the gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and that was some thousands of miles, Rom. 15:19. These general works prospered by the good pleasure of the Lord.

2. Some more special, as the reconciliation of sinners to God. This will thrive in Christ's hands, for it is God's pleasure: Luke 4:18, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives; 'Col. 1:20, 'It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.' The conversion of a sinner is the will of God: James 1:18, 'Of his own will begat he us, by the word of truth.' Do not doubt, then; there may be discouragements, but the will of God is for your regeneration. So the sanctification of the creatures: 1 Thes. 4:3, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.' This is one of the wills that shall prosper in the hands of Christ, your preservation and keeping in a state of grace: John 6:34, 'And this is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.' You my have many assaults, but it is God's will you should be kept. Nay, it is his will to glorify you: Luke 12:32, 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

Use. What an abundance of encouragement to faith is there from every word that is here used!

1. That all the work of Christ for your good is called *chephets,* the Lord's pleasure. We may come to men for things with greater confidence when we know it is their pleasure to give them to us. It was an encouragement to Joab to set the woman of Tekoah at work to bring home Absalom, because the thing was pleasing to the king 2 Sam. 14:1, 'When he perceived the king's heart was towards Absalom.' So when we perceive God's heart towards a thing, we may the better urge him to it. Among men we easily speed in an errand that is pleasing to him to whom we go: Ps. 35:27, 'The Lord hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants: All that can make for good to you, it is the Lord's pleasure; your welfare is his delight; nay, to those that are without, for them to come in to be recovered and accepted to mercy, it is the Lord's pleasure. So it is in

prayer, when you come with such requests to the throne of grace; you speak to God's bowels when you ask for such things as are acceptable to him as they can be to yourselves. We have two hints of God's *pleasure—chaphets,* it *pleased* the Lord to bruise him; and *chephets,* his *pleasure* in Christ's bruises was our good.

2. *It shall prosper*. It goeth in the way of a promise; it is part of God's covenant with Christ to relieve your souls from doubts and fears; you may go and urge it to him—Lord, was it not thy covenant that thy pleasure should prosper in the hands of Christ? This is thy pleasure. Christ urgeth this covenant, and therefore you may urge it: John 17:4, 5, 'I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.' Tell him Christ observed his ordinances to a tittle; you may plead promises though not performances; you may plead Christ's merit, though not your own. But to the word, *shall prosper*. This signifieth to break through, or pierce through. Alas! all difficulties are nothing. They are but as a fly upon the wheel, that cannot hinder the motion. Rage and opposition will not hinder the collection and gathering the church of Christ. The devil, sin, and all the powers of darkness, shall not hinder the reconciling of a soul to Christ. The will of the Lord shall break through. Death nor the grave shall not hinder the glory of Christ. Mountains are nothing to Christ. God's pleasure is not retarded by difficulty; it breaketh through all.

3. *In his hand*. Our hands would fail us, nay, be withered and decay. What is the reason discomfort seizeth upon men? They would have the will of God prosper in their own hands, like the monk that hopes to subdue corruption by his own vows, *nihil videt prosperum* (nothing he sees will prosper): Gal. 2:20, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' It is not in our hands, but in the hand of Christ. Oh that our souls would look up to him in the sense of our own weakness! Christ's hand is a strong hand: John 10:28, 'No man shall pluck his sheep out of his hand.' The sheep are safe when in the hand of Christ, especially when upheld by God: Isa. 13:6, 'I will hold thine hand, and keep thee.' It is not Christ as than only, but as upheld by the power of the Godhead. As a man, he himself is subject to agonies and consternations: Ps. 89:21, 'With whom my hand shall be

established, and mine arm shall strengthen him.'

THE ELEVENTH VERSE.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

THE prophet goeth on in describing the glorious effects of the covenant of God with Jesus Christ, and his obedience and humiliation answerable thereunto. God the Father's part was to bestow privileges, grace, and glory, and every good thing upon believers; and God the Son's part was to obey, and suffer, and die, to submit himself to all kind of labour and travail of spirit for our sakes: for God being about to deal with us in mercy, would first deal with Christ in justice; and the state of the work of redemption was so laid, that, as Suarez proveth well, our grace and glory was due to Christ in justice, as the reward of his merit. Much was spoken before what God would do, and what Christ might expect in case he would lay down his soul as an offering for sin; he should 'see his seed, prolong his days, and God's pleasure should prosper in his hands.' And the prophet here goeth on in repeating the same thing, only addeth words more particular and significant, that he might more fully and expressly draw out the sense and meaning of the former privileges to your apprehensions: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.'

In these words three things are asserted:—

1. Christ's travail of soul in the work of our redemption.

2. The certainty of success: *he shall see;* that is, reap the wished and expected fruits of his labour and sorrows, which is the comfort and salvation of poor creatures.

3. His contentment therein: *he shall be satisfied.* He counts the salvation of lost sinners to be satisfaction enough for all his pains. You may take the words as relating to God's decree, or to the execution of it.

[1.] As to God's decree, the foregoing verse intimateth the compact and bargain between God the Father and the Son; there were articles of agreement stated between them. Now when Christ came to consider what he should give, and what he should gain, he professeth he is satisfied, and abundantly pleased with the terms propounded. Our Lord Jesus made no blind bargain. He knew from all eternity what it would cost him to save sinners; he had leisure enough to cast up his accounts. And when he foresaw the temptations of the wilderness, and the agonies of the garden, the ignominy of the cross, the vile usage of his body, and the travail of his soul, yet saith our dearest Redeemer, I will go down and suffer upon these terms; I am ,satisfied out of all this, if a few broken-hearted creatures may be brought home to God.

[2.] To the execution of God's decree. When sinners are brought to accept of mercy, I count my blood well shed, my bitter agonies well recompensed: here is wages enough for all my toil. There is joy in heaven, in Christ's heart, when a sinner is converted. I begin with the first; the travail of his soul. The word for travail noteth the highest degree of labour, such as is tiring and wearisome. The *soul* is often put for the whole man; so many *souls* came out of Egypt, that is, so many persons. So Acts 27:37, 'There were in the ship two hundred threescore and six *souls*.' So that the travail of his soul is his whole labour and travail. Or properly it may imply his soul-troubles, which were the passion of his passion, the bitterest part of his sufferings: 'Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?' John 12:27.

The *doctrine is,* that our salvation cost Christ much travail of soul. He was afflicted in his whole man, but chiefly in his inward man.

1. As a kind of imaginary person: he suffered in his reputation, which is another kind of being in the hearts and opinions of others. They accuse him of the two highest crimes in either table, blasphemy and sedition; blasphemy against God, and sedition against Caesar, Luke 23:2. They mock him in all his offices; his kingly office, by putting a soldier's coat upon him for a royal robe, a reed for a sceptre, and thorns for a crown, and floutingly saying unto him, 'Hail, King of the Jews,' Mat. 27:29. In his prophetical office; when they had blindfolded him, they smote him on the face, saying, 'Prophesy who it was that smote thee;' scoffing at those who

honoured him as a prophet. When he was upon the cross, offering up himself for our sins, they wagged the head, saying, 'Save thyself,' and 'He saved others, himself he cannot save,' Mat. 27:39,42. There they scoff at his priestly office, while doing the part of a Saviour.

2. Nearer they come to his real person. In his body he suffered in every part, and afflictions were poured in upon him by the conduit of every sense. His feeling was exercised with weariness, and wounds, and scourges; his ears with their railing and the clamorous noises of popular outrage; his taste with vinegar and gall; his sight and smell with Golgotha, the place of skulls and dead men's bones. We have made all our senses inlets of sin, and therefore in Christ they were inlets of sorrow.

But the consummation of his bodily sufferings was at his death, which consisted in the separation of the soul from the body, though both still remained united to the divine nature; otherwise for a while he would not be God-man, and his resurrection would be a new incarnation; though separate from one another, yet they were both united to the Godhead. As a man drawing his sword holdeth the sword in one hand, and the sheath in the other; there is a separation between the sword and the sheath, but the same man holdeth both. O Christians! do we believe this, and wonder no more that life itself should die, and Christ be free among the dead? If any had cause to love his life, Christ had; every man's life is valuable, much more Christ's, which was enriched with the continual presence of God. We are often a burden to ourselves; we wish for death; but that Christ should die, whose soul dwelt with God in a personal union, is a wonder.

His death was not a naked death, but the painful, shameful, and accursed death of the cross. The law pronounced the death of the cross accursed: Deut. 21:23, 'He that is hanged is accursed of God.' In the account of all nations it is ignominious. It was cruel and painful, to show that he came to bear not only our curse but our sorrows: Gal. 3:13, He was 'made a curse for us;' Isa. 53:4, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' If you follow him to the grave, it was a continuation of his abasement, though not of his pain. Thither Christ went to shut and seal up our sins, that they should no more come into remembrance, as Abraham buried his dead out of his sight. If we look only to what was

visible, Christ was a man of sorrows; his life was full of sorrows, his death violent, and bloody, and ignominious.

But all this doth not answer the expression, *travail of soul*. Our souls sinned, and therefore Christ must lay down his soul as an offering for sin, Isa. 53:10. In Christ's soul-sufferings we may take notice of two things—his desertion and agonies. These have some correspondence with the *poena damni et sensus* (the penalty of the loss and it's feeling).

1. His desertion: Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Christ's desertion cannot be meant of outward *a*fflictions, of being left to the rage and violence of men. The word f*orsaking* implieth God's withdrawing: 2 Cor. 4:9, 'We are persecuted, but not forsaken;' though given up to the will of men,— yet still enjoying the presence of God: but Christ was both persecuted and forsaken.

But how could he be forsaken, who was God-man in the same person?

Ans. *As* the personal union gave way to the death of the body, so it gave way to the troubles of the soul. Christ, by virtue of the eternal covenant, was to yield up the whole human nature, both body and soul, to suffer according to the will of God. Now, he declined no part of the service; as he offered his body to the pains of death, so his soul to the trouble of desertion.

But what was this desertion?

[1.] The personal union was not dissolved—the two natures united, *acwristwV,*—his inherent holiness not lessened, for then he should have been less fit to be either priest or sacrifice. God's love to him was not abated; he was now doing his, work, and in the height of obedience: John 10:17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.' This was a new argument and reason of love.

[2.] Assisting and sustaining grace was not wholly withdrawn:. Isa. 42:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold;' and John 16:32, 'I am not alone, because the Father is ever with me.' What was that, then, which Christ lost? It was the sense and actual comfort of his Father's love, the want of

a sensible consolation, those effects of joy and solace which he used to have. Now, this was a very grievous loss to Christ. He complaineth of it. The disciples were fled, his friend and lover was afar off, but he doth not complain of that: Disciples, why have ye forsaken me? Peter, why hast thou denied me?—but, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' It was a greater loss to Christ, because it was more natural to him to enjoy this comfort and solace than it can be to any creature. To have a candle put out, is no great matter; but to have the sun eclipsed, who is the fountain of light, that sets the world a-wondering. Christ, as God-man, had more to lose. We lose drops; he an ocean. The greater the enjoyment, the loss or want of it is the greater.

[3.] He knew how to value the comfort of the union, having a pure understanding, heavenly affections, excellent contemplations. God's children, that have tasted of his love, if anything of it be shed abroad in their hearts, they would not part with it to gain the world. They know how to value it, and so none are so sensible of the loss of it as they. Now, Christ was best able to apprehend the worth of communion with God, having such a clear understanding, and such tender affections.

[4.] So near an interest and relation to God: Prov. 8:30, 'I was by him as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 'Col. 1:13, he is called 'his dear Son.' Creatures that have any interest in God, how mournfully do they brook his absence! As Mary Magdalene: 'Woman, why weepest thou?' 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' She sought for Christ, and found a grave.

[5.] Christ's trouble was more than a believer's, because it was to be satisfactory. Our desertions are for trial or correction; his from vindictive justice, and the revenging hand of God for our sins, that met on him: Isa. 53:6, 'The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all.' He was forsaken for a time, that we might be received for ever.

2. There is something positive, or the apprehension of his Father's wrath, which he was to undergo for man's sins. There is the trouble of a guilty conscience, that is proper to the sinner himself; and there is a penal disturbance, which was found in our surety. He was to stand in the sinner's stead, and the great burden of sin he was to undergo was an

amazement to him that had such a delicate and tender spirit as Christ had: Mat. 26:38, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' He was 'sore amazed,' Mark 14:33. He had his 'fears,' Heb. 5:7. The effects were sensible in his bloody sweat. These were a part of that fire in which our sacrifice was to be roasted. It was not the fear of temporal death that caused these agonies. Christ had not a childish, womanish spirit; not to say anything of the fortitude of the martyrs, many of whom kissed the stake, and thanked the executioner. And we see in malefactors what a courage and stubbornness men of a stout heart will put on. No; it was the apprehension of his Father's wrath, which he was to undergo for man's sin, when 'made a curse for us,' Gal. 3:13. We have slight thoughts of sin, and the wrath of God deserved thereby; but Christ had other thoughts of it. When God cometh to deal with him in our stead, we, that know not the power of God's anger, are not affected with it. But when the Father shall fall upon him with all his weight, this was properly the travail of his soul: Isa. 53:10, 'It pleased the Father to bruise him: he hath put him to grief.'

Hence learn:—

1. The heinousness of sin. You see it is no easy matter to reconcile sinners to God. It cost Christ a life of sorrows, and afterwards a painful, shameful, and an accursed death; the loss of actual comfort, and a terrible feeling, or an amazing sense of the wrath of God. We jest and sport away our souls, but Christ found it hard work to save them, and recover them to God. Surely they that sin freely in thought, and foully in act, have low thoughts of the blood of Christ. You count it common blood: Heb. 10:29, 'And have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.' When you make it a light thing to sin, you do in effect say so. When a precious vessel cannot be mended or repaired but with the cost of a thousand pounds, you would be careful how you break it. You slight the sufferings of Christ when you break with God for every trifle. Is it nothing for the Son of God to come down from heaven to die for poor sinners? He calleth to you, 'Behold, all ye that pass by, is any sorrow like unto my sorrow?' Is it nothing to offend your heavenly Father, and to lie under the burden of his displeasure? By his dealing with his dear Son, substituted into the room and place of sinners, God would convince all wicked and hard-hearted sinners what it is to break his

commandments. Dare you, after all this, to go on pleasingly and delightfully in an evil course, as if God made a small matter of our sins? Now he is satisfied for them by a Mediator.

2. Learn hence the terribleness of God's wrath. It put Jesus Christ upon dying, yea, upon much travail of soul. Christ knew before all that he was to suffer, and yet he is amazed when it came upon him. Many roar upon their death-beds when the anger of the Lord breaketh in upon them like an armed man. They never thought of their danger before, and were not prepared for it; but Christ knew it before. Besides, Christ had no personal guilt to weaken his strength; you have wounded consciences. Christ had all graces in him to the height; but you have none or little patience and fortitude. Christ was God-man, you are poor creatures. Christ knew what glory his sufferings would bring to God, what good to man; and yet he feareth what he was to undergo; and Christ knew they would be short, yet he prayeth, 'Father, save me from this hour:' but yours are to endure for ever. The Lord Jesus is lifted up as a sign of salvation to them that trust in him, and is a pledge of what shall light upon the wicked to all eternity—an instance to all others of God's wrath. God will make you see what it is to lie under his wrath. If a spark of it light upon the conscience, what a burden is a man to himself!

3. We learn hence the greatness of our obligations to Christ, that he willingly condescended to endure such hard and bitter things for our sakes. He would be deserted and submit to soul-troubles; he knew well enough what it would cost him, yet he willingly undertook the business: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Then Said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart.' Divine justice is there introduced proposing its demands: Son, you must take a body and suffer in it. Man's blood is tainted, and you must be formed in fashion like one of them, and stand before me in their stead. You must expect to be tempted by the devil, hunted and baited by men,—to be responsible to my justice, to bear my wrath, and to be handled as if you were the sinner in law. And Christ Said, Heb. 10:7, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;' I am satisfied and well pleased with the terms. Oh! woe unto us, if after all this we should slight Christ, and will not come at him, though it cost us travail of soul. To pray, wait, meditate, is tedious, and to

break our hard hearts we are hardly brought to; yet how willingly and readily did Christ undergo all his sufferings for our sakes!

4. We learn hence what reason we have to be willing to suffer anything for Christ, and to yield obedience to God at the dearest rate. We are called upon in the gospel to take up our cross and follow Christ, and when he invited us first to engage with him, be gave us warning of it; yet most men hope to shift well enough for all this, and are not troubled, and out of the impatiency of the flesh repine when it cometh really and actually to their share to take it up and bear it. Certainly, in the general, we should not desire a better lot than Christ himself had; for the disciple is not above his Lord: 'If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also,' John 15:20. He stooped to more than ever we were or shall be, put to. But, in particular, we should be as willing to suffer for his sake as he for ours. He left the bosom of his Father to suffer for you, and will not you leave the bosom of your dearest relations to suffer for Christ? There is a great disproportion between the persons, and his sufferings and ours. Christ suffered as an evil-doer, and we suffer for well-doing; otherwise, it is the cross of Barabbas, not of Christ. His name was rent and torn with reproaches; and though he never did anything worthy of blame, yet he bore the taunts of the world, as well as the curse of God that was due for our sips, and suffered not only in his person, but in his name and reputation, and foul crimes were unjustly laid to his charge. It is an honour to suffer for Christ, and for his interest, and can be no disgraceful thing. He was the innocent Son of God, completely just and righteous—not only as God, but as man, being wholly freed of that original contagion wherewith others that come of Adam are defiled, Luke 1:35; fully conform to the law of God, both in heart and practice, Mat. 3:15; and by just deserving lovely in the eyes of God and men, for he did all things well. But we, how innocent soever of those things which the world chargeth upon us, yet we are faulty before God, and cannot altogether justify ourselves before men. And so far as God's hand is in our troubles, we must keep silence. Therefore, in the sense of our sinfulness in other things, we should the sooner submit: Micah 7:9, 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.' Again, he hath taken the sting out of our sufferings, and borne all the wrath due for our sins. Our crosses are not a satisfaction to his vindictive justice; he is but trying our

sincerity, not pursuing his vengeance upon us. And we have our comforts allowed us; his were suspended. In short, since he endured the anger and wrath of God for us, shall not we endure the anger and wrath of men for his sake? So that, upon the whole matter, our murmuring and impatience under the cross show that we have not a due sense of Christ's sufferings, but too slight a value of them.

The next thing offered in this scripture is the certainty of success. *He shall see;* that is, enjoy, receive the fruits of it. The prophet speaketh of some that travail in vain; as if they went but with the wind: Isa. 26:18; 'We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind.' And of others we read, that when the child came near to the birth, there was not strength to bring forth, Isa. 37:3. But the fruits of this travail should be a plentiful harvest of souls, or a numerous issue of believers begotten unto God.

Doct. That Christ will infallibly, and without miscarrying, obtain the end of his death.

What was the end of his death?

1. The salvation of all such as belong to the election of grace. Christ died not at uncertainties, nor laid down his life at a venture, that some might be saved if they would; but his intention is fixed. He laid down his life 'for his sheep,' John 10:17; 'for his church,' Eph. 5:26; 'for his people,' Mat. 1:21. These expressions are exclusive; these, and not all.

2. He effects and procures the conditions by which this salvation is

brought about:—

[1.] In effectual calling.

[2.] By final perseverance.

[1.] Effectual calling. Christ died not only to procure privileges for us, but to purchase faith and repentance: Acts 5:31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of Sins;' Heb. 12:2, '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;' and Heb. 13:21, 'Working in you what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;' Phil. 1:29, 'For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake,' *uper Cpistou,* that is, upon Christ's account. He merited faith and holiness for us.

[2.] Final perseverance. He is both the author and finisher of our faith: John 10:29, 'My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's band;' Heb. 10:14, 'For by one offering he perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' i.e., set apart for God. He hath made them fully and perfectly happy.

But briefly to show why Christ cannot miscarry in his ends from the eternal covenant: Isa. 53:10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.' Look to the undertaking of the Father and the Son, and the salvation of the elect is secured; both are intimated in that phrase of being given to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' All souls were God's in one sense; now they are given to Christ two ways:—

1. By way of reward: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.'

2. By way of charge; and of this charge Christ is to give an ac count: John 6:37,38, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out for I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' And they not only may, but they shall come: John 6:39, 'And this is the Father's will, who hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.' Otherwise Christ would lose part of his reward and part of his charge: Heb. 2:13, 'Behold I and the children whom thou hast given me.'

Use. Is to persuade us to wait for this power, and observe how the whole good pleasure of his will is fulfilled in us. Doth your salvation thrive and

prosper in the hands of Christ? Do you come on kindly in a way of faith? You seek to put your Redeemer to shame,—to hinder Jesus Christ of the fruit of his travail, when you are vain, and careless, and obstinate. As a moral agent, so all his travail may be in vain, though not as Mediator. He complaineth as a minister of the circumcision: Isa. 49:4, 'Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.' When a people that have the means of grace will not be reclaimed, they seek to rob Christ of his purchase, and to make all his labour of love to be in vain. Christians are co-workers with God: 'We therefore, as workers together with him, beseech you to receive not this grace in vain,' 2 Cor. 6:1. Oh, when shall Christ be formed in you? There is travailing in pain till that be done, Gal. 4:19: Will you be shut out from the blessing?

Use 2. Here is comfort to God's elect, and an engagement to make your election sure. How shall we know it? Do you ratify God's decree by your consent? Consecration answereth giving by way of reward, and committing by way of charge.

1. Consecrate and set apart yourselves for the use and service of the Lord: Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Employ whatever is bestowed upon you for his glory; live according to his will: Ps. 119:94, 'I am thine, save me.' Lord, I would not be my own, unless I be thine. Thus we should do when God seemeth to put us off.

2. Commit yourselves to him in well-doing, and in the course of your obedience venture your souls in Christ's hands without trouble 2 Tim. 1:12, 'For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day;' 1 Peter 4:19, 'Commit the keeping of your souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator;' Ps. 31:5, 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.'

I come to the third thing in this scripture, and that is the satisfaction Christ took in the salvation of men; it was that which gave him full content for all his pains and travail: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul

and be satisfied.' The gaining and recovering of lost sinners was a great satisfaction to Jesus Christ: John 4:34, Christ saith unto them, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' When the disciples asked him whether he had eaten anything, it was satisfaction enough to him that he had gained a soul. See Luke 15:5, 'And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.' He rejoiceth at the return of a poor wandering sinner; after all the refusals of grace, and despising of offers, Christ is glad if he may at length get him home to himself. It is a welcome work to Christ to carry home his lost sheep upon his shoulders.

Doct. That Jesus Christ taketh an infinite contentment and satisfaction in the salvation of sinners.

I shall give you—(1.) Evidences of it; (2.) The reasons of it.

1. For the evidences:—

[1.] Christ pleased and entertained himself in the thought of it before the world was: Prov. 8:31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' But why the habitable parts? The inhabitable are also the work of God's hands. There are objects of wonder —there is the great leviathan, and there is the sun, moon, and stars; but no men there with whom he was to dwell, or whom he was to save. Next to the complacency he took in God the Father, this was the delight of Christ, that he should come into the world and recover a people to himself.

[2.] This was the end and aim of his coming into the world; and it is pleasant when a man hath attained his end, especially if it be greatly desired and much laboured for. For delight is according to the degree of the desire and labour.

(1.) Desires: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' Luke 22:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover;' that was immediately before his death. And it is remarkable, when Peter dissuaded him from suffering, Christ rebuked him with the same words that he did Satan tempting him to

idolatry: Mat. 16:23, with 4:10, 'He turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan.'

(2.) Labour. According to the labour in the means, so is the joy in the end: 'God hath made me forget all my toil,' saith Joseph, Gen. 41:51, when advanced after all his hardships and sorrows; Ps. 128:2, 'Thou shalt eat of the labour of thine hands, and happy shalt thou be.' These were the wished, longed, laboured-for fruits of his mediation: no such sorrows as his sorrows, therefore no such satisfying joys; things that are the purchase of his blood—things dearly bought, are highly prized. Rachel is brought in mourning because she had a son in sorrows, Jer. 31:15; John 16:21, 'A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more her anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.' This was Christ's travail, and the end that he pursued the salvation of poor, lost, and undone sinners.

[3.] Now, in heaven it is his rejoicing to see the work thrive Lure 15:7, 'Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth;' and ver. 10, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth;' that the lost sheep is found, and the lost son returned: John 15:11, 'These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' There is our joy and Christ's joy; these are distinct things, joy in us and for us. It is not only matter of rejoicing to us to be taken to grace, but a rejoicing to Christ. When he seeth the gospel prevail, when sins are pardoned, hearts are sanctified, their spirits comforted, he is more pleased in this, and rejoiced in this than you can be, when he heareth in heaven and knoweth how it is with your souls on earth.

[4.] When he shall come from heaven to judge the world, oh, with what triumph and rejoicing will he come, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father! 1 Cor. 15:24; Heb. 2:13, 'Behold I and the children which thou hast given me.' He will present them and show them to God as the fruit and proof of his death. See what joy and rejoicing Paul had as a subordinate instrument: 1 Thes. 2:19, 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?' They are the fruit of his ministerial labours. Paul had not such an interest in them as Christ had; the main virtue came

from his death.

But to determine the point, what this contentment and satisfaction is—negatively and positively:—1. Negatively. It is not only that complacency which God taketh in acts of grace and mercy: Micah 7:18, 'He delighteth in mercy.' It is a native act. Justice is as natural to God as mercy; yet the exercise of justice in a punitive way presupposeth a foregoing act of ours; and the due desert of the creatures' punishment is wrested and extorted from him, and therefore called his 'strange work,' Isa. 28:21: but mercy, like live honey, droppeth of its own accord; the exercise of it is more pleasing to him: Lam. 3:33, 'He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' It is not from his heart; for when the rod is in his hand, tears are in his eyes; but, on the other side, Jer. 32:41, 'I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole heart and whole soul.' It is an act most suitable to the nature of God, which goeth before, and is done without any regard to the creatures' desert; this is part of it.

[2] It is not only that complacency which he taketh in the holiness of his people. In the holiness of his people there is *amor benevolentiae, a* good-will and happiness to the unconverted; and there is *amor placentae,* his delight in them as they are holy, because of the suitableness of their nature: Isa. 62:4, 5, 'Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee. And as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' When we are drawn into a near relation to God, there is another love, for we are in another state; and Zeph. 3:17, 'He will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love.' His love putteth a comeliness upon his people,—there is the ground of Gods delight. So, for their prosperity, it is said, Ps. 35:27, 'Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.' He is glad to see when they are holy, and when they do well.

2. Positively. The formality of the expression implieth more: he is satisfied, he accounts our well-being a sufficient recompense for all his pains, and all the travail of his soul well bestowed, though he hath been at that expense for it. It is natural and kindly for a good man to do good, and to rejoice in others' good. But now for Christ to count it a saving bargain, if with the expense of his all he may promote the welfare of others; this is the delight and the contentment here spoken of. Christ did not reckon of

the charges, so he might gain sinners to God.

The reasons of the point:—

1. Because this was his work, his personal work; every person of the Godhead is refreshed in his work. God the Father, his personal work is creation,—the first mercy we received, and so proper to the first person. Now, it is said, Exod. 31:17, 'In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh he rested and was refreshed;' not in point of weariness, but in point of delectation. It was a refreshment to God the Father, to see all the creatures disposed into their apt cells and places, as the fruit and effect of his goodness, wisdom, and power. He delighted himself in the survey of his work. So God the Spirit is grieved with the resistance and opposition he meeteth with in our hearts, Eph. 4:30, but gratified and delighted with our obedience to his sanctifying work. And likewise the second person, when he seeth of the travail of his soul, what a numerous increase his death will bring in, he is refreshed and satisfied. Christ ,bath his rest as God hath his rest: he took great complacency and delight in the salvation of poor sinners, as the fruit of all his labours.

2. His love was the cause of all: his love to the Father, and his love to the saints.

[1.] His love to the Father, to see him fully glorified. When Christ came into the world, it was sung by the angels: Luke 2:14, 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men;' John 13:31, 'Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.' Our comfort is not only concerned in the salvation of the elect, but God's glory. He would have been but half discovered to the world if we had only been created and not redeemed: we should have known but half his goodness, for that goodness which was manifested in creation was in order to some other thing. God did not create us merely that he might create us, but that he might communicate himself to us, and manifest more of his glory, and that we might see more of his wisdom, and goodness, and power. These were in part discovered in making the world, but much more in the gospel: there is much of his wisdom seen in making the creatures, but much more in the mystery of redemption, in bringing God and man together—justice and mercy together, 'which the angels desire to look

into,' 1 Peter 1:12. We see his power in making us out of nothing, in dissolving the works of the devil, loosing the bands of death, raising the dead. His goodness is seen in giving the world, in giving Christ, in giving eternal life. Christ saith in love to his Father, I am satisfied; I see it will be a way wherein the glory of God will be much promoted.

[2.] Love to poor lost sinners.

(1.) They are dearly bought: they are his own; and having loved them so as to buy them, he will love them to the end. The saints are the purchase of his blood, and therefore they are called 'the purchased possession,' Eph. 1:14. Things dearly bought are much esteemed and valued. The church, which he hath purchased with his precious blood, he paid dear for it—expended his royal blood for it. The Lord Jesus forgets all his agonies and sorrows, because this was it he travailed for, and the end which he pursued.

(2.) They are his own, his interest is concerned in them: John 17:6, 'I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' He hath not only undertaken a charge concerning them, but received them as a reward at the hands of God: John 13:1, 'Having loved his own.' Propriety endeareth a thing. They are his, and therefore his heart is made glad when they thrive and do well —when his work doth prosper in their hands. He is the owner of the saints; and as a man is dissatisfied when his bargain turneth to no good account, so is Christ when you do not grow in grace and make a daily progress in your heavenly journey.

Use 1.Let us consider our obligations to Christ. It was wonderful love that the Son of God should lay aside his glory and willingly come down from heaven, and undertake the business of our salvation. He needed us not; God was alone from all eternity, and yet happy from all eternity, when there was nothing besides his divine majesty. If he had any happiness by making the world, he might have made it sooner; he wanted not us, we are of no worth to him. What can we, that are less than the dust of the balance, contribute to the perfection of our Redeemer? Yet that he should take pleasure in our welfare, and count himself satisfied, so we may be saved! Oh, the greatness of this love! How shall we answer it but by loving

Christ again, by imitating him? Let us be satisfied in Christ; let it be enough to, allay our cares, and fears, and worldly distractions, that we have an interest in him. Say with the psalmist: Ps. 73:25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee.' Let this draw us from outward comforts and worldly satisfactions: if Christ did so much for you, that are not worth the having, oh, how should your souls be satisfied in him! The merchant sold all for the pearl; but what doth Christ get by us creatures, of us sinners? We can give a reason of our love to Christ, because of his excellency and our obligations to him: Cant. 6:9,10, 'My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they blessed her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?' But 'Lord, what is man that thou regardest him? and the son of man that thou makest account of him?' Let all worldly contentments be as nothing to you, so you may win Christ, Phil. 3:8. And when you have him, you should say, It is enough. He that hath God for his portion may say with the psalmist, Ps. 16:5,6, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.'

Use 2. It is a ground of comfort in the work of faith. We may plead with you not only from your own interest, but from Christ's contentment: he hath chidden many for not coming, but never any for coming to him. Nay, in point of gratitude, thou hast long grieved the Spirit of God with thy stubbornness and impenitency, taking liberty in fleshly delights, and running after vanity and folly. Oh, come now, and make glad the heart of thy Redeemer! When Isaac longed for savoury meat, a profane Esau would take his bow and arrows and go and kill. Go and try how thou canst mourn over an unbelieving heart, what thou canst do in compliance with Christ's desire. So, in point of hope, when he seeth you begging pardon, you speak to his very heart; he will join issue with you, and sue out the fruit of his. labour. He rejoiceth in our justification and salvation. It will be accomplished by his desire and contentment.

Use 3. It giveth ample encouragement to faith to come to Christ. It maketh his heart joyful when you come; the Lord Christ counteth it worth

all his pains. People question Christ's willingness; would any be against their own joy and satisfaction? You have high thoughts of an interest in Christ, and Christ hath high thoughts of our interest in him; and therefore the saints plead it reciprocally Ps. 13:5, 'Why art thou disquieted, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.' They speak to their own hearts. Again, Ps. 119, 'I am thine; save me.' It is your gain, and yet Christ counts it his joy. Why should we stand back, when Christ crieth earnestly to us? Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you 'rest.' Pray come; he chideth earnestly for not coming: John 5:40, 'Ye will not come unto me, that you may have life.' But he never chid you for coming. It is hard to distinguish whether Christ be more willing to take the soul, or the soul to take Christ. We cannot desire it more than Christ will delight in it. If you are afraid of seeking self in it, consider it would not be for your contentment but Christ's; when he seeth the travail of his soul he is satisfied. Your souls are enough to him. You are vile creatures. It is no matter; your Spouse thinketh it worthy of all his pains and entreaties to gain a daughter of light into his embraces; your comfort is his privilege.

Use 4. It yieldeth fuel to increase the flame of love. There are three circumstances offered here as matter of this divine fire:—The impatiency of his desires; the painfulness of his endeavours; and the sweetness and fulness of his contentment, intended for the good of our souls.

1. The impatiency of his desires. The whole life of Christ was but a thirst after our good, spent in the heat of love and desire. And when he died, he said, John 19:28, 'I thirst.' No doubt, in such agonies, his natural moisture was turned into drought; but especially it was a thirst after the good of souls, the good of the creatures; it was a thirst that the prophecies might be fulfilled. Paul, that had the Spirit of Christ by measure, see what longings he expresseth Gal. 4:19, 'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.' This was but a taste, a drop of what was in Christ. Phil. 1:8, 'For God is my record, how greatly I long for you in the bowels of Christ' All Paul's longings were but a glimpse or specimen of those bowels in Christ. The impressions upon his spirit were more pure and powerful.

2. The painfulness of his endeavours, such as could not be expressed by a lower term than the travail of his soul; and do but remember all the hardships of Christ's life, the woes of the garden, all the conflicts and assaults of hell upon his spirit; you shall see Christ's love did not dwindle in a wish, nor die away in a cold desire. The sparks of the creature's love may soon languish, but Christ's love did not leave him till it got him out of heaven into the womb, from the womb to the wilderness, to the garden, to the cross, to the grave. All these waters could not quench it. The apostle expresseth the common acts of the creature's love by labour: 'The labour of love,' Heb. 6:10. But here was higher labour in the utmost degree, yea, travail: 'He shall see the travail of his soul.' Paul maketh it an endearing circumstance 1 Thes. 2:9, 'Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail, labouring night and day.' But what was it for Paul to part with his allowance, when Christ parted with his glory? Well, then, consider it was no lazy love, no idle wish, but such as ended in restless endeavours for your good. There are pains on the cross, and pains in his spirit.

3. The sweetness and fulness of contentment. Still the Lord went on till he took the last sour draught of vinegar; then he said, 'It is finished,' John 19:30. Christ's spirit was restless, but then satisfied; it was enough if he could gain souls. O vile wretches that we are, that God should think our souls enough! Alas! what can we bring to him that Jesus Christ should set up his rest in the good of our souls? The merchant sold all for a pearl; but alas! we are but an ill purchase. What doth Christ get by us so as to be satisfied when he gaineth sinners?

Use 5. It holdeth forth a high pattern for our imitation.

1. To ministers. All the toil and travail of Christ's spirit was to, gain souls, and he thought that a good purchase. He did not mind other things but for our good; heaven, that we might be glorified in his glory. He was head over all things, that he might be so to the church; otherwise he did not mind dignities and honours. Oh that our spirits did act thus purely, that we would not drive on a selfish design in such a weighty calling! God's work must be done to God's ends. Oh that the joy of our hearts might be the good of souls, and not a thriving in our own concernments: 3 John 4, 'I have no greater joy than to hear that thy children walk in the truth.' Oh, that should most affect our spirits! Many mind the gain, but not the soul,

and rather oppose grace than further it; and as the dragon sought to devour the man-child, so they to nip the early blossoms of grace.

2. To all. If Jesus Christ seek you, that are not worth the having, oh, what should you do to serve him, who is all desire, as the spouse calleth him, Cant. 1:16, enough to invite me and others!

[1.] Desire him: Ps. 73:25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee: Christ, that had no need of you, thirsted after you; and who would not but pant for Christ? Disclaim all other things, they are nothing to his gain. What is it, so I may win Christ? Phil. 3:8, all is nothing, all is but dung and dross. Who would leave the pearl of price, to trade for dung?

[2.] Pursue hard after him. The Lord Christ sought you with bruises in his body and travail in his soul; and will you begrudge him an hour in duty, a little time in prayer? When Augustus refused the petition of one of his soldiers, he told him, I did not serve you so at the battle of Actium: so may Christ say to us. Though you gain him by meditation, prayer, hearing, great endeavours against the unbelief of your souls; though you search for him about the city as the spouse doth, Cant. 5:2, which is spoken in allusion to Jerusalem, where God was worshipped in his ordinances; though you go from duty to duty, yet still seek him; Christ will recompense all the endeavours that are laid out in the pursuit of him.

[3] Value him in the enjoyment. Alas! your travail is nothing to your gain: if Christ be satisfied, you should much more be satisfied. Say then, as Jacob, 'It is enough, I have seen Joseph;' so say, It is enough, I have Christ: Ps. 16:5,6, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance: the lines have fallen to me in a pleasant place; yea, I have a goodly heritage.' It is like the trade with the Indians, you have gold for a toy, a glass, or a basin. Therefore you may well be satisfied; this labour is well spent, these carnal desires well renounced: Oh, it is all made up abundantly above whatever I could part with for it. Therefore say as the psalmist, Ps. 103:2, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,' as it is in the Hebrew. You may say, Here is a wonderful recompense indeed.

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.

We are now come to that clause wherein one particular glorious effect of God's covenant with Christ, and his obedience answerable thereunto, is mentioned; to wit, justification, which is here set out to us by most of its considerable causes. Here is the efficient cause; the instrumental cause on God's part, the doctrine of the gospel. On our part, the knowledge of God; for it may be taken either way, *by his knowledge,* or *by the knowledge of him*. The meritorious cause; and that is the satisfaction of Christ. The subject of it, *many*.

The first thing that is offered to us in the order of the words is the instrumental cause of justification: *bedaato,* 'by his knowledge.' There is some little difference about the opening of this word. The Septuagint do plainly pervert the sense of it, while they reflect upon the person spoken of in this chapter, and render it thus: That God would show him light, and form his mind with knowledge, and justify his righteous servant that served many. But we need not stay upon that among Christians.

1. Some take it actively, for the knowledge which he shall give out concerning himself, the doctrine of the gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, because it containeth the revelation of the righteousness of Christ: Rom. 1:16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' And it is contradistinguished to the law, which holdeth out a discovery of sin: Rom. 3:20, 'By the law is the knowledge of sin;' and so worketh wrath, as it is said, Rom. 4:15; that is, all that we can get out of the law is guilt and wrath; and that will show us that we are in a condition not to be justified, and the sadness and misery of that condition. But now the gospel, that discovereth a way of justification, even for the justification of sinners. 'By his knowledge;' that is, by his doctrine, by his gospel, he shall discover a way of justification.

2. It is taken passively, for our apprehension of Christ; for so it may be rendered: 'By the knowledge of him shall he justify them.' And this I conceive to be most proper to this place, though I cannot wholly exclude the other. The other without this is nothing; the gospel condemneth rather than justifieth, where it is not apprehended and embraced by faith. Christ saith, they had no sin if he had not spoken to them, John 15:22; that is, not so much sin. And it is said, John 3:19, 'This is the

condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light;' that is, the light of the gospel by accident proveth the cause of the greatest condemnation. Therefore you must take in this; and besides, the words will bear it. First, it must be so, for the prophet speaketh not only of a way of justification, but of actual justification. But then all the difficulty will be, why we are said to be justified by knowledge, since everywhere the scripture carries it for faith, and usually faith is made the instrument in our justification. We apprehend the righteousness of Christ for justification. There may be divers reasons given for the expression.

[1.] Because the first radical act of faith is knowledge. There are three radical acts of faith—knowledge, assent, and trust. The first is knowledge; by that God begetteth persuasion and confidence in the spirit. God dealeth in the new creation, and framing of the heart to his own use and service, as he dealt in the old creation and framing of the world. The first creature that he made was light; so in the new creation he shineth in upon the heart, and taketh away the natural blindness and folly of the spirit.

[2.] Because it is the property of the Hebrews to count and apply all words of knowledge and of the understanding to such affections as are suitable and becoming such knowledge; so God's knowing and remembering of us implieth his pity and relieving, and our remembering of God our duty and observance of him; and in an ill sense imaginations are usually put for all those vicious affections following them. What the New Testament expresseth by *lusts,* the Old does by *imaginations;* because the understanding being the great wheel of the soul, the scripture expresseth the good or ill carriage of the soul by acts proper to the understanding. By knowledge is meant such an apprehension of Christ according as he hath revealed himself in the gospel, so as to close with him, embrace him, and rely upon him for salvation, acknowledging and relying upon Christ for justification. To all such as thus know him, Christ will procure a perfect absolution from all their sins. By one act are implied the other acts of faith, it being the manner of the Hebrews thus to express themselves. And therefore you must understand other suitable dispositions and goings out of the heart to Christ as will become such

knowledge.

[3] Because it is no unusual thing in scripture to make knowledge to be the hand to receive the greatest conveyances of grace: 2 Peter 1:2, 'Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ our Lord.' He maketh it to be multiplied, and shed into the heart through knowledge. So eternal life, which is the greatest of blessings: John 17:3, 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' It is made to be a happy fruit of knowledge, even life eternal. The knowing of God in Christ entitleth us to it. Well, then, you see the reason of the expression why he saith 'by his knowledge.'

I shall give you the points:—

Doct. 1. That it is the privilege of the gospel to discover a way for the justification of sinners 'by his knowledge,' or by his doctrine; and you have that only in the gospel of Christ.

Doct. 2. That faith is knowledge, or an apprehension of Christ; and therefore it is expressed by such a term here: 'the knowledge of him.'

Doct. 3. That by faith we are justified. He saith by his knowledge, but he meaneth faith; such a knowledge as is affective, such apprehensions of Christ as cause answerable dispositions in the spirit.

For the first of these, that it is the privilege of the gospel to discover a way for the justification of sinners.

My work shall be to show you:—1. That by no other way, doctrine, or knowledge in the world, can this be done to make a sinner just before God; not by your vain pretences, that may serve to justify you before men, but not in the sight of God: Ps. 143:2, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;' which is quoted by the apostle. The business is to get a righteousness that will endure the eye of God: Rom. 2:13, 'For the hearers of the law are not justified before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.' That is the intent of that verse; that it is not appearances, but exact obedience, not any outward

excellency and privilege, that could endear you to God's acceptance: Rom. 2:11, 'For there is no respect of persons with God, bond or free, Jew or Gentile.' God is not charmed by any outward pomp and glory of the creatures; the wicked may be justified for a reward. Men are apt to prize anything that is pompous. The disciples showed Christ the buildings of the temple, Mat. 24:1. God did not regard Saul for his personage, nor Jezebel for her painting, nor Absalom for his beauty, nor Sodom for her beauty. Not any device of the creatures; men and angels could not find out a way for the reinstating of sinners into the favour of God, and absolving them from their guilt. God himself seemeth to hint that he could find no other way: Isa. 59:16, 'And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation.' No endeavours or contrivance of the creature would serve the turn; our own prayers and endeavours, lashing and punishing others, will not serve the turn; nor the law, which is the chiefest thing that discovereth a way of justification, but not for the justification of sinners, for the making of a man righteous, but not for the making of a sinner righteous: if a man could walk up to the exactness of it, yet how should he do to redeem his soul from guilt, and to expiate sin? Papists fondly dream of a satisfaction in the creature's endeavours. Alas! all will not do: 'The law is weak through our flesh:' Rom. 8:3; that is, we being weak creatures, it were impossible it should be done that way. The law in itself might have done it, were it not that we were sinners; and therefore mere doing will not serve. Doing indeed may make us less sinners, but it cannot make us righteous. But alas! we are weak through the flesh, and we cannot do anything: Rom. 4:5, 'But believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly;' that is the circumstance that maketh it emphatically glorious.

2. Here it is fully and amply done; the gospel holdeth out a clear way: and that it may appear to you, I shall show you what the way is, and prove that it must needs be a sure way.

[1.] What the gospel doth.

(1.) It discovereth perfect righteousness. The drift of the gospel is to discover this righteousness—actively, for the fulfilling of the law; passively, for the satisfying of the breaches of it. For 'therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith.' The apostle proveth that it is

'the power of God to salvation,' for there is a righteousness to be found in it. For that is it which the creature wants, a righteousness to appear just before God: Rom. 1:21, 'But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested.' We must be righteous, or we cannot be saved. Now the gospel discovereth this perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ; for it is by his righteousness that we are justified. And therefore it is everywhere called 'God's righteousness,' and distinguished from our own. Now this is done here; the wrath of God is pacified, and the law fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

(2.) The gospel discovereth a way how this righteousness may become ours: it is made ours by faith, and our union with Christ. When a man hath an interest in Christ, he is possessed of all that is in him you have his. righteousness, and therefore he is so often called *Jehovah tsidkenu,* 'the Lord our righteousness,' Jer. 33:16; and Isa. 58:8, 'Thy righteousness shall go before thee.' You shall have an interest in. what is his: 'Thy righteousness;.' i.e., you have it in Jesus Christ.

[2] This must needs be a sure way, because God's ends are furthered by it.

(1.) God is glorified. God would honour his justice; and whatever that required to be done or suffered was accomplished by Christ; God justifying sinners, and yet being just: Rom. 3:26, 'To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth, in Jesus.' That was the special attribute; mercy shineth forth from it. But the. chiefest was that he might be just; and therefore here you have mercy and justice. shining forth in their greatest strength and brightness.

(2.) The creature is contented and satisfied. God, as he would glorify every one of his own attributes, so he would do that which was most satisfying and engaging to our spirits. Now this is so done that every doubt and scruple is answered. The creature is troubled because he cannot keep the law; it is kept for us: because it cannot satisfy for breaches, it is done for us. If our consciences be scorched with the wrath of God, there is the blood of Christ to quiet them; if troubled with fears, Christ was heard in, what he feared, to allay ours.

Use. Is byway of inference:—

First, To exhort us to bless God for the gospel. Oh, what a mercy is it that such a way is found out for our returning to God! Acts 13:48, 'They were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord;' that is, spake wonderfully and affectionately of the gospel. What so good a word? If we had been to have satisfied the law, we had been miserable. Christians, we are not sensible of the mercy of being freed from the rigour of the law, of being justified by the knowledge of the doctrine of Christ. Do but consider what it would have been with us then, and how it is with us now.

First, How it would have been with us then;, the misery that we were in then by reason of the rigour of the law, which consisteth in two things:—

1. The matter, what was required; such. a burden as we nor our fathers were ever able to bear. See what kind of obedience it was that it requires.

[1] It must be full and entire; so as to take in the inward and outward man. The Pharisees indeed did strive to lighten the law, and would have it only reach the outward part and external acts in worship, and obedience to the commanding part, and the grosser acts in the prohibition. But alas! our Saviour in Mat. 5 showeth that it reacheth the least dissonancy that may be, as a glance of the eye, the roving of the thoughts, looking upon a woman to lust after her, and there all their peace is gone: Rom. 7:14, 'The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.' Paul, when a pharisee, thought that the law was only conversant about externals, but he found it spiritual, and himself carnal. So Ps. 19:7, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' Man's law reacheth the body and the flesh, but God's law goeth to the very spirit and conscience. And alas! upon what miserable terms should we be with God, if this were the rule of our acceptance with him! A man hath some command of himself in these outward things, but who can guide his spirit in an even proportion to the law of God?

[2.] Such as requireth the whole man; so as the soul must be exactly perfect in all the actings of it, or else it could not be accepted with God: Deut. 6:5, 'Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might.' A little failing in the intenseness of the spirit might make you to miscarry. The law knoweth not how to wink at failings; the least deadness and coldness of affection, the least restraint of spirit, would have been fatal to you. It doth not only reach the spirit, but the whole spirit, and bindeth over every faculty to obedience.

[3.] It must be constant and universal, carried on without the least interruption to all the things of the commandments: Gal. 3:10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all, things that are written in the book of the law to do, them.' The least deviation maketh us liable to the curse. So James 2:10, 'Whosoever shall offend in one point, is guilty of all.' Though he keep the whole law, yet the breach of any one point maketh him guilty of the breach of all. And so all your endeavours would come to nothing, and be in vain; one sin would undo your hopes. Well, then, you that have

observed the wanderings of your spirits, and are acquainted with your failings, oh, what cause have you to bless God that justification is not dispensed upon such rigorous terms! Otherwise you might cry out with the men of Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. 6:20, 'Who is able to stand before this holy God?' when fifty thousand were smitten for the breach of a ceremony, for looking into the ark. Or you will be ready to say as David: Ps. 130:3, 'If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who should be able to stand?' There were no subsistence for the creature before the power of his wrath; and if God should deal with us upon these terms, we could not stand in our beings, much less be *recti in curia* (innocent in court),stand in our righteousness and innocency.

2. Consider the manner how this must be done, viz., in our own persons: Mat. 19:17, 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' That is all we can get, the law taketh no notice of a mediator and common person. Adam, that had the knowledge of the whole law, had no knowledge of Christ. Though the law should a thousand times be fulfilled by another, that is nothing to us. The law requireth obedience in our own persons; cursed is every one. And the law is said to be our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. But that is the law ceremonial, which was but a dark gospel, and did hint Christ out of the elements of the ceremonies; a man might spell Christ out of them: Gal. 3:12, 'But the man that doeth them shall live in them.' Well, then, out of all this you may conclude that the creature can fetch nothing from the law but aggravations of his misery; it is not to make us righteous before God, but to make us guilty: Rom. 3:19, 'That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God;' Rom. 5:20, 'Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.' You see then what cause you have to bless God. All that the rigour of the law could do, is but to make the offence more abounding in our apprehensions.

Secondly, But you shall see more cause of rejoicing, O Gentiles! when you look upon the second thing, which is the privilege of the gospel. You have abundant cause to bless God that there is a way found out that sinners may draw nigh to God; that there is commerce between heaven and earth revived again: Luke 5:8, Peter said unto Christ, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.' Alas! what should sinners do with a holy God, or stubble

with everlasting burnings? When the law was pronounced, there were bounds about the mount, Exod. 19:23. And when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off, at the promulgation of the law, Exod. 20:18. And our first parents hid themselves: Rev. 6:16, 'They said to the rocks and mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' Therefore it is much that we may now come nigh to God.

Secondly, We may come with confidence and joy. That which was their terror is our comfort, viz., nearness of converse with God Eph. 3:12, 'In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence.' We do not come like malefactors to a tribunal of justice, but like favourites to a throne of grace. Our greatest confidence is with God: Heb. 10:22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.' That we may be thankful, consider what is done that we may enjoy it.

1. The gospel holdeth out a way how poor sinners may be accepted with God, a way wherein God will look, after sinners: 2 Sam. 19:28, as Mephibosheth said to David, 'For all of my father's house were but as dead men before my lord the king; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that eat at thine own table.' All we were as dead men before God: Ezek. 16:6, 'I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live.' The expression is doubled, because that is a notable circumstance, that God should seek to them twice, that he should look upon them when they were in their blood, that he should think of poor sinners, that could expect nothing but the sentence of condemnation.

2. The gospel holdeth out a way how sinners may be made righteous. If we are vile in ourselves, yet we shall be glorious and comely in Christ: Ezek. 16:14, 'For it was perfect through my comeliness, which I have put upon thee;' Zech. 3:4, 'I will cause thine iniquities to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' If thine own garments be filthy, Christ will give thee the royal robe of his righteousness: Luke 15:22, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.' We have raiment out of Christ's own wardrobe.

3. It showeth a way how God cometh to be delighted in the persons, and

prayers, and services of poor sinners: Prov. 15:8, 'The prayer of the upright is his delight;' Prov. 11:20, 'But such as are upright in their way are his delight' Alas! we do not deserve the meanest respect with God; as Abigail said to David, 1 Sam. 25:41, 'Let thine handmaid be a servant, to wash the feet of the servants of my lord;' Isa. 62:3, 'Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord.' Oh, therefore let us prize the gospel, and never leave till we have gotten a share in it. The corn in Egypt will not nourish us, unless we go and fetch it: Mark 10:49, 'Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee.'

Doct. 2. That faith is a knowledge, or an apprehension of Jesus Christ. So it is called here.

To clear and vindicate the point, and to recover it out of the hands of exception, observe—

1. That the doctrine I have laid down is not convertible; for there is a knowledge, and there are apprehensions of Christ that are not faith; every faith hath knowledge, but every knowledge is not faith.

2. The doctrine is not an adequate and absolute definition of faith; for there is more than knowledge in faith. There is a firm assent, consent, and trust. So that the point is not exclusive of other acts of it, but only to show what is a most necessary and radical act of faith; and the sense of it will be this: In faith there is a knowledge, and that only because of the prophet's word here, and because knowledge is the most necessary and first act of faith; therefore did I put it in this form. So that I do not only make faith to be a knowledge, and an assent to the truths of the gospel, as some do, mistaking the nature of it; nor, with the papists, make this knowledge to be some general apprehension and avowing the articles of religion. But I shall show you by and by what kind of knowledge is here meant.

But to determine the point, or to prove the acts of it; it appeareth that faith is knowledge by these hints from scripture.

1. Because the effects and consequents of faith are given to knowledge: as knowledge is said to justify here, and life eternal is said to be through

knowledge, John 17:3; and 'grace and peace' is said to be 'multiplied through knowledge,' 2 Peter 1:2. And so Luke 1:77, 'To give the knowledge of salvation to his people.' And the work of faith is called 'the knowledge of salvation.'

2. Because the most considerable acts of faith are expressed by words that are proper to knowledge, and belong to the understanding; and yet that barely is not sufficient: Job 19:25, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' for 'I believe:' And Mat. 13:23, 'He that heareth the word, and understandeth it;' that is, understandeth and believeth it. And Eph. 1:28, 'The eyes of your understandings being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling.' But yet more expressly: John 6:69, 'We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.' We believe, and *egnwkamen;* we translate it, 'are sure that thou art the Son of the living God;' 2 Tim. 1:12, 'For I know in whom I have believed;' and that is made the ground of his committing his soul to him, his knowledge of God 1 John 5:20, And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him.'

3. Because there are some objects of faith that are *inter cognoscibilia,* among those things that are only to be known and apprehended by us according to the revelation of God. I say, all that faith hath to do about them, is to understand and apprehend the truth of them, according to the discoveries of the word; as the creation of the world; the making man out of nothing: and therefore the apostle saith, Heb. 11:3, 'Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that the things which are seen were not made of things that do appear.' That was the great riddle to the philosophers, but by faith we understand it.

4. Because faith is opposed to such things as imply a defect and want of knowledge, and therefore there is a knowledge in faith; as to ignorance, darkness, and folly. Therefore Paul maketh his ignorance and unbelief the joint causes of his rebellion against God: 1 Tim. 1:13, 'But I did it ignorantly in unbelief.' It must needs be so, if in unbelief. So Mat. 4:16, unbelief is made to be a state of darkness; 'The people which sat in darkness saw great light' Till men come to believe the gospel, they are under darkness. So Rom. 11:25, the apostle saith, 'Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.' Now the

great sin of the Jews is unbelief, and rejecting the light of the gospel. So Eph. 4:18, the state opposite to faith, or to the learning of Christ, is expressed by 'the vanity of the mind,' 'the darkness of the understanding,' and 'blindness of heart.' Which three expressions note vain principles, corrupt inferences, and want of spiritual wisdom to oversway the affections, and all the inclinations of the heart, into a subjection to the will of God.

5. Because God's work, in reference to the begetting of faith, is plainly expressed to be a work upon the understanding; as by opening the eyes: Acts 26:18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.' The first creature in the new creation is light opening the eyes, and many of Christ's cures were about the sight; as he dispossessed Satan, so he opened the eyes; for I plainly find they had a spiritual signification John 6:44,45, 'No man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him;' 'They shall all be taught of God.' There must be teaching as well as drawing; a work upon the understanding as well as the will. So Mat. 11:25, there is mention made of revealing the things of God: a main cause of faith is this revelation. Thus it is proved.

Secondly, To demonstrate the point, or to show why it must be so, and that for these reasons:—1. Because otherwise faith would not do its work: the work and business of faith is to show us things unseen to sense and reason. The apostle's word is *elegcoV*, the force of which I shall show you by and by. It is to carry us within the veil, to reveal to us the things of God, such as 'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,' 1 Cor. 2:9; that is, such as cannot otherwise be discovered without this light. There is a knowledge for faith and in faith; a knowledge that followeth it, and a knowledge that maketh it up. It is *ojJalmoV thV yuchV,* the eye of the soul. Look, as sense is the light of beasts, and reason of a man, so is faith of a Christian. It is to guide and direct us to, and to ravish us with the beauties of Christ; to show us what is in our beloved more than in another beloved, Cant. 5:9. It is to provoke holy desires and fervent affections towards God. All this cannot be done without knowledge.

2. Because there must be something done to sanctify the understanding,

something to irradiate and enlighten the mind: grace must have influence upon every faculty, upon the understanding much more, for these reasons:—

[1] Because the understanding is the great wheel of the soul, and guide of. the whole man. Usually there the business of the salvation sticketh: either we do not rightly apprehend Christ, or not rightly determine concerning Christ, and therefore we, do not close with him. The rest of the faculties follow that same *dictamen intellectus,* the dictates and decisions of the understanding. It is with men according to their knowledge: the same grace which enlighteneth the mind worketh again to the subduing of the affections. We see men are as their minds are: God giveth men up first to vain minds, and then to vile affections, Rom. 1:28. This is the *primum mobile,* the great and first moving cause, and great wheel of the soul: Eph. 2:3, 'Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' They are the wills of the mind, and therefore of the flesh, of the lower and more sensual soul. A corrupt judgment embaseth the spirit.

[2.] Because all the great opposition against faith is from thence.

(1.) There is great opposition against the working of faith in the soul Mark a few places, and you will easily perceive it: 2 Cor. 4:4, 'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should shine upon them: Satan casteth a veil of carnal prejudices upon the heart, so as natural men cannot see the beauty and glory of the gospel. There are blind minds, dark hearts, corrupt principles, and carnal prejudices and fleshly conceits; so that they scorn the truth, rather than receive it in the love of it: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of God.' Full vessels can receive no more water: you cannot pour in the gospel to such vessels as are full of sin, and flesh, and folly; they scorn it, and dash it over. There are sly pretences and crafty excuses; these are in the understanding and the spirit, and therefore, Heb. 4:12, the word is said to 'divide between soul and spirit;' that is, between vile affections and crafty pretences. There is the pretence of inability and unworthiness; we cannot come, and we are unfit to come. Now the light of the gospel showeth what is inability, and what is laziness; what is pride, and what unworthiness. The word discovereth all the collusions and jugglings of the spirit, so that

we shall not easily excuse duty by affecting inventions to befriend affections, and so to beguile ourselves in these vain pleas and excuses. From all this are those secret persuasions and lying counsels concerning the goodness of our estate, the happiness of worldly comforts and pleasures, the hardships of the gospel, which hinder the soul from coming freely to Jesus Christ. Thus, you see, in the understanding is the great obstruction to the begetting of faith.

(2.) So likewise against the acting of faith, carnal counsels, false suggestions, corrupt reasonings in the spirit and, therefore, the apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. 10:5, of 'casting down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' These reasonings and thoughts are the things that are against the knowledge of God and the obedience of Jesus Christ. What is the reason men are upon such uncertainty, and terms of perplexity between Christ and themselves? It is through some false reasonings. We think Christ will not accept of us, or that we may do well enough without him. Now, this I take for a rule, that graces are seated in those faculties where there is most opposition against them; and there must be something in faith to sanctify the understanding, where it meeteth with such corrupt thoughts, carnal reasonings, dangerous persuasions, and crafty pretences.

(3.) Because this is the main difference betwixt faith and presumption. Faith is a child of light, and presumption a child of darkness the more ignorant, the more presuming. Deceits are best carried on in the dark: groundless conceits cannot endure the light; true faith always goeth upon sure grounds from the word, not upon every vain surmise: Rom. 10:14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' Faith is according as we have heard out of the word. 1 Peter 3:15, we are to 'give a reason of the hope that is in us.' Faith is rational, though we cannot always give a reason of the thing believed. Mysteries surpass reason, yet we must see a reason why we believe. Cant. 5:9, the spouse being asked, 'What is her beloved more than another beloved?' she gives an account of the special excellences in Christ that engaged her affections: 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.' Presumption only taketh up the name of Christ, and talketh of him by rote and hearsay; but

there is not a distinct knowledge and apprehension of his excellences; they do not know any special grounds for their belief. Custom and common illumination furnish the tongue with good words. But they do not, 2 Cor. 3:18, 'with open face behold the glory of the Lord;' that is, most nearly examine and consider the glorious beauties of the Lord Christ.

(4.) To explicate the point a little more thoroughly, you will be ready to ask me what kind of knowledge this is? That is very necessary to be cleared. Of all things men will stand upon their knowledge; they will sooner own a fault in their morals, than a weakness in their intellectuals: John 9:40, 'Are we blind also?' What I thinking men and speaking men, men of study and parts? If there be but any superficial apprehensions and flashy irradiations, then men are quiet; there is a notional light, and there is a spiritual light; and there are also common works and common knowledge; and there are *ta ecomena thV swteriaV,* 'Things that do accompany salvation,' Heb. 6:4,5, compared with ver. 9. Every knowledge then is not the knowledge of faith; wild plants and garden plants have the same name and common nature, though they differ much in their virtues and operations. So it is here; there is a great deal of difference in the workings and influence of this knowledge. Let us a little reflect upon the differences and properties of true knowledge, which are these:—

(1st.) It is considerate; it looketh to the grounds and to the nature of things. False apprehensions of Christ, they are hasty and surreptitious. Men have knowledge of the gospel, but they are loth to ponder and weigh the business of it in their thoughts. We may talk after one another like parrots, and yet never take it into our serious thoughts and considerations; as the apostle saith of some that taught the law, 1 Tim. 1:7, 'Neither understanding what they say, nor whereof they affirm.' Men talk of things by rote, after others, and out of books and sermons; reason of matters of which they have no spiritual understanding: many prophesied in the name of Christ that knew him not. Nicodemus, though a teacher, was ignorant of the doctrine of regeneration. As Aristotle observed of young men, that they attain to the height of mathematics, and there ponder the reason of everything; but when it cometh to morals and matters that should do them good, *ta men ou pisteuousin oi neoi*

legousi, they rather recite it by rote, than believe it. Men talk of the mysteries of Christ, that are only revealed to the saints, but they do not seriously consider with what disadvantages the doctrine of Christ is represented to carnal reason, and, on the other side, what may be the benefits of it. Contrary desires and carnal inclinations will not suffer us to pause on those things. When we begin to think on the gospel, there are jealousies, discontents, reluctations, and distractions: such things as exasperate the affections, the soul cannot easily get leave to pause upon. Felix had some apprehensions of the doctrines of temperance and judgment to come, but he could not easily bring his heart to think of them Acts 24:25, 'When I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee.' A man may hear the sound of music, but he is not affected with the melody till he hearkeneth to it. We suffer ourselves to be cumbered with other cares, carried aside with other desires, and therefore cannot stay upon these things that are most necessary, and so are not taken with them. It is the commendation of Mary, Luke 2:19, 'But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.' Truths work with us usually when we take them into our serious thoughts. All false knowledge of Christ lies in trivial and slight apprehensions. Christ often calleth upon his disciples to let things sink into their hearts; then it is best.

(2dly.) It is convincing; that is, it is such a knowledge as maketh us to subscribe to the truth and good of things, humbling us for former misapprehensions and misconceits, causing us to smite upon the thigh, as being thoroughly sensible of the vanity of them; and maketh the heart thoroughly to determine concerning them. Many men have some knowledge concerning the gospel, but they are not fully convinced of the truth of the gospel; it is mingled with much doubting, unbelief, error, and ignorance; they think it a vain fable, and a false or a fruitless doctrine, invented perhaps for a good end, to make men live an honest and orderly life: or at least, there is some fear that it may not prove true. They are not brought thoroughly to subscribe to the truth and worth of it: Heb. 11:1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;' not a knowledge, but an evidence, an evidencing knowledge, when the heart is made to yield to such discoveries, and the word is received and lodged in the heart with much assurance, as the apostle speaketh, I Thes. 1:5. They were convinced that it was the only good and true way.

Others have only some conjectural persuasions, or some opinionative thoughts; they apprehend the gospel with a loose heart: John 16:9, 'The Spirit convinceth of sin, righteousness, and judgment,' *elegxei*. The Spirit dealeth by way of conviction, so as to overcome all gainsaying and contradiction of the spirit, of sin without excuses, and grace without suspicions and jealousies, of judgments without crafty pretences and evasions; conviction draweth the mind to a full consent. As Paul, when he was convinced, consented to the law that it was good, Rom. 7:16; so they consent and yield to the goodness of the word: it is a true word, and the best word in the world; all former vain thoughts are gone, and the force of vain, carnal reasonings are broken, and the soul is brought to a full consent.

(3dly.) It is a wise, a prudent, and a directive light. You shall see unbelief is opposed to folly, as well as to ignorance: Luke 24:25, O ye fools, and slow of heart to believe! 'Many have faith, but they have not wisdom. Faith is a spiritual wisdom.; it is a grace that hath judgment in it; not only apprehension, but judgment. There is a foolish knowledge that puffeth up, loose apprehensions of the doctrine of the gospel that feed pride.: 1 Cor. 8:1, 'Knowledge puffeth up.' Knowledge goeth the wrong way when it gets up into the tongue and the head only. But this is a knowledge in which there is wisdom, which teacheth us to make the best choice for ourselves. Wisdom implieth something more than bare knowledge and empty speculations; it is a directive light, not only an idea or model of truth in our brains, which the apostle calleth *mopjwsin thV gnwsewV,* a form of knowledge, a platform of knowledge gathered into some compendiums or method for their own or others' good, able to branch out things, and talk well of them, a map and perfect system of all the enjoyments of the saints; for alas! such things may be easily learned from others' experience; but such a knowledge as is able to guide us in all the actings of our spirits, such a knowledge as aimeth at a right frame of affections. We shall easily discern knowledge by the ends and use of it. It is not merely that we may conceive distinctly of the Godhead, to better our art and skill, and to be able to discourse of Christ, but that we may glorify him, that we may honour him in our lives, that is the end and the aim. Some desire to know God, as a painter desireth to know a man that he may take his image and likeness, and so draw his picture, and set it out

in paint upon a table. Others know Christ as a child doth his father, that he may become the lively image and resemblance of him, that men may read their heavenly Father in their conversations Mat. 5:16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Not that we may paint out God and Christ in words, but that we may become a lively representation of him in our lives. Faith is wise, it doth not aim only at abstracted conceits of God, but to know him so as we may live by it.

(4thly.) It is affective; that is, it is such a knowledge as, besides the representation of the object, leaveth an impression upon the affections, and stirreth up desires and delights: as Prov. 2:10, 'When wisdom entereth upon thy heart.' The heart, in the scripture dialect, is the seat of the affections, of esteem, desire, and delight; it stirreth up trust, and embracing of Christ and his righteousness to salvation, when there is heat as well as light, if it provoke affections and suitable inclinations, and there is a powerful sway upon the whole spirit. As the church saith, Lam. 3:51, 'Mine eye affecteth my heart' There are proportionable affections stirred to the apprehensions that we have of Christ; and the gospel as a light, by the further concurrence of the Spirit, breaketh the force of contrary inclinations, and causeth yearnings and languishings in the soul after Christ. This must be understood rightly, for the most abstract speculations do suppose some inclination in the soul; but it must be answerable. And besides, in the first work of the Spirit upon the heart, there is not only an enlightening, but some impressions of joy. The stony ground received the word with joy, Mat. 13. There may be some flashes of joy in the apprehension of Christ, though it be but a conditional proffer, some slight apprehensions of happiness in having Christ, when we look upon it as a probable way for salvation, and yet have no interest in him. As the Jews mistook John for Christ, so many mistake these preparations for grace or a real work, Heb. 6:5. This is called a 'tasting of the good word,' a causing of contentment in the joy the word holdeth forth. Therefore' it is not to be understood by these flashy joys and transient glances, but by the settled and serious constitution of the spirit towards God, when the whole frame, stream, and bent of the soul goeth that way. As it is not a few thoughts and affections that make a man bad, but the frame and bent of his thoughts and affections, so here, it is not some

glancing desires, or some slight wishes, but the general bent and delight of the spirit. Saving knowledge begets standing affections and gracious dispositions, that are as the chariots of Aminadab to carry out the soul towards Christ.

(5thly.,) It is practical, as it doth not stay in the brain, but goeth down to the affections; and it doth not stay there, but gets out into the conversation and into the actions. When men pretend to know much and practise little, it is a sign their knowledge is but slight and trivial; and it is so far from being a privilege, that it obligeth us to many stripes: Luke 12:47, 'That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.' There is a knowledge that doth not end in doing, but alas! that is but a fancied knowledge rather than true: 1 John 2:4, 'He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' Saving light and true apprehensions of Christ will end in practice: 3 John 11, 'He that doeth evil hath not seen God.' A true sight and apprehension of God is renewing and transforming; false apprehensions cannot work it: therefore the apostle saith: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.' God's glory maketh us shine like Moses's face when he talked with God. The greater acquaintance with him, the more holy, and heavenly, and spiritual; the life will be according to the light, and the light of Christ will carry the glory of Christ into the heart, and make it shine out in the conversation. Like windows that shine in the day when the sun is risen, so we may arise and shine, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon us, and holiness of conversation is made to depend upon the clearness of the apprehension of Christ: Eph. 4:2, 'But ye have not so learned Christ;' that is, to walk in such looseness as the Gentiles did. A true sight of him maketh us the same that Christ is.

(6thly.) It is spiritual: I mean, such as is begotten by the power of the Spirit, not a taking up of reports of Jesus Christ, but a closing with him upon the revelation made of him; not upon the reports of men, but the Spirit's testimony: John 4:42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' They would not take him upon the common

report, but had heard his own voice; not only upon the belief of the church, but upon Christ's own voice, that maketh it sure to the soul: 1 John 5:6, 'And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.'

Use 1. Serveth for information, to show us the misery of those that are without knowledge. Without knowledge, without faith; and without faith, without God, without a promise. It was a great reproach that Nahash would lay upon Israel, that he would put out their right eyes: 1 Sam. 11:12. And the great design the god of this world hath upon the men of the world is to blind their eyes, that they may not come to the knowledge of the truth. Ignorance is one of God's sorest judgments; when he hath left off threatening of other things, then he threateneth a blind heart and a vain mind. Oh that we could be sensible of it! Ignorance is twofold: either-

1. Necessary; or

2. Negligent.

1. Necessary ignorance, which is otherwise called the ignorance of pure negation, when men do not know God in Christ, because they have not heard of him. And it happeneth in two cases—either in the total want of means, or the want of due means. I shall a little examine the particulars, that you may not think they do not concern you, or that you may make this use of it, at least, to affect your hearts with pity and compassion towards them that want it. When Christ saw the blindness of the Jews, he wept over them, because 'the things which belong to their peace' were 'hid from their eyes,' Luke 19:41, 42. Oh, how may we weep over many corners of this kingdom, where Jesus Christ is not so much as named: Rom. 15:2, 'Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.' Arid not only that, but that we may be sensible of our mercies, and bless God for our enjoyments. When Christ had told his disciples of the gross ignorance of others, he presently added, Mat. 13:16, 'Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear'! Oh, what a mercy is it that it is otherwise with you! So far you may reckon yourselves blessed, as you have more advantages of increasing your knowledge, and bettering your apprehensions of God in Christ. Therefore consider how ill it is with them

that want means, or the due means. 'Faith cometh by hearing;' God dealeth with us in a way suitable to our intellectual nature, and beginneth with knowledge. How should they know? and yet their case is very sad.

[1.] As to those that want the means. God leaveth no man without some witness of himself. Those that have not the word and Spirit, they have showers of rain and fruitful seasons; God is not wanting to them. If they have not those larger and clearer discoveries of God, yet their ignorance is deadly and fatal to them: Prov. 29:18, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Oh, think of such unhappy times, when frequenting of ordinances was counted a crime, the want of which will be your undoing; for the apostle saith Christ cometh 'to render vengeance to them that know not God,' 2 Thes. 1:8. Men think if their lives be not vicious, and they have good meanings, it will be well with them; they are not troubled for their ignorance. I tell you, Christ will come in flames of fire to them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. A vain mind is as bad as vile affections. The blind and the lame, they were equally an abomination to God; and it is every way as dangerous to want knowledge as obedience. Oh, consider the sad state of such souls and places where there are no means! Our Saviour saith, 'He that knoweth not the will of God shall have few stripes;' he doth not say *no stripes,* Luke 12:48. Ignorance will not excuse them. What a sorry privilege is it that they shall have a cooler hell?

[2] That want due means. This is as bad or worse than the former. Men rest in that which carrieth the face of an ordinance; and usually it is harder to teach them who know something in religion than those who know nothing at all; for a little knowledge does but prepossess the mind with carnal truth and prejudices, and the real truth is rejected with more stubbornness. Consider the sadness of such an estate. Men think to cause all the blame to reflect upon their teachers, they have been taught so; but what saith our Saviour: Mat. 15:14, 'If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.' Ignorant, misled people will perish with their blind guides: Isa. 9:16, 'For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed.' And indeed it is but just. Men make them their darlings, and humour them in the way of their lusts. Ill instruments would be cast out if cast out of the people's hearts: Jer. 5:31,' The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by

their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will you do in the end thereof? What will be the end of this? It is the property of this blindness to love those that do increase it. If naturally blind, we would have a good guide. Elymas, the sorcerer, sought for one to lead him by the hand, Acts 13:11. But oh, how sad is their case that dote upon their blind guides! These are the people's idols everywhere. Thus for necessary ignorance; I mean, that which must needs be so.

2. Ignorance that ariseth from negligence; that is, when men have means and do not improve them. This is sad, and increaseth the sin, when you have the gospel, and do not suffer it to shine in upon your souls: John 15:22, 'If I had not spoken unto them, they had not had sin;' that is, not so much sin. The great aggravation of sin is from the advantages and opportunities you have to do better. All your privileges do but heighten your offence if you neglect to improve them. If you have but the witness of sense and reason, you are left without excuse; how much more when you have the word and Spirit. Christ often threateneth heavier judgments to those places that were privy and conscious to his mighty works, and more glorious discoveries, and the testimonies of his Godhead. Look, as it will be a great vexation to the men of the world at the last day, that the saints' Saviour will be their judge; so the gospel, the word of salvation, will become a killing word to them that have it preached, and yet do not benefit by it. There are divers degrees of this negligent ignorance, which I shall name.

[1.] When men have not any proportionable measures of knowledge to their means,—men that have sat a long time under the word, and yet their foolish heart is darkened within them, and they know little of the mysteries of salvation, and scarce get rid of their natural thoughts and apprehensions of God; this is sad, and yet this may in some measure befall the people of God: John 14:9, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?' Have you had so many conferences and sermons, and are yet to seek? Heb. 5:12, 'When for the time ye ought to be teachers of others, ye have need that one should teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.' After all the pains taken with them, men must still be kept to their milk and first rudiments, and still we must be forced to press you from things odious to

mere nature. And when we should go up to spiritual evils, unbelief, resting in duties, want of making the most of Christ, want of communion and commerce with him; we find that we must deal with you about drunkenness, and surfeiting, and excess in sensual things, you being in the lowest form of godliness, scarce brought to a seemly pitch of morality, so that sublime discoveries do but amuse you or harden you, and are certainly lost upon you. When the apostle could not by all his endeavours bring them off from their ceremonies, he sadly complaineth, Gal. 4:10,11, 'Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.' All the choice discoveries of Christ were to no purpose. If they were at that pass, oh, what a sad thing it was that notwithstanding all the pains the apostle had taken with them, they would still stick at a ceremony, when there is so small a proficiency, that we can scarce bring them to the low things of Christianity.

[2.] When men have some knowledge with the means, but it is flashy and superficial. Men do not know God as they ought to know him, as the apostle's word is. All their knowledge ends in speculation; their lives do not answer it: Titus 1:16, 'They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.' Superficial and slender knowledge will not reach the heart, and go down as low as the conversation. Some are like toads, that have a jewel in their heads, when their whole bodies are poison; like the devil, that taketh Christ to the top of the pinnacle, that he might throw him down again. Some men have light in their understandings, when their conversations are foul and defiled. Oh, consider, mere knowledge will not profit when you know only to aggravate your wickedness. *Quid prodest,* &c. What will it profit to be dignified with learning and knowledge, and to perish at last? The name of the evil angels is *daimonia,* because of their knowledge;. they are intellectual natures. The good angels know the will of God, and do it: Ps. 103:20, 'They do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word.' Christ leadeth us to heaven for a pattern of duty: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' You shall find the saints of God drawing out their knowledge into practice, as David prayeth for it upon this ground: Ps. 119:34, 'Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law.' That was his end, to know so as he might be guided in his way: Ps. 119:11, 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.' He had laid up, some principles

that he might argue from them, and draw them out to every case; and upon every temptation might bring out these truths, and enforce them upon his heart. It is true, sometimes the people of God may be too backward, and too often cherish an empty knowledge and naked apprehension, which the apostle calleth a being 'barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ,' 2 Peter 1:8. They know his plenty, but do not make use of it; his comforts, but are not refreshed by them; his will, but do not do it. This is a being barren and unfruitful; but it, should not be so. Therefore, bewail that your affections are not heated, your conversations bettered and amended by what you know.

[3.] Those that have knowledge of Christ, but abuse their knowledge to countenance their lusts, and to defend their sins. Oh, this is sad! The Gnostics were so called from their knowledge, and yet were the impurest heretics. These are those who, as the apostle saith, Gal. 5:13, 'Use their liberty as an occasion to the flesh,' and make the knowledge of Christ the ground of looseness and laziness: Jude 4, 'Turning the grace of God, into lasciviousness;' that is, the knowledge of the gospel. Carnal hearts are like the sea, that turneth everything into the nature of itself, even the sweet influences of heaven into salt waters. The learning of Christ, and the looking upon Christ, is made the great ground of holiness everywhere in the scripture;, and they make it the ground of carnal liberty and a loose life: like the devil, the more cunning the more wicked;. the more knowing, the more hurt they do to their own souls, and to the souls of others.

[4.] When men grossly affect their ignorance. And this is seen in two things:—

(1.) By the unteachableness of their hearts. They are not knowing or tractable; the plainest truths of God are riddles to them. A child of God may. be ignorant, but a child of God cannot be unteachable. There is a suitableness and cognation between his spirit and divine truths; there is something in his heart that answereth to it, though he never heard it before. When God regenerates the heart, he introduceth a frame of truth, something that is of kin, and answerable to everything. that is revealed. But now it is not so with wicked men; they are carried aside with, contrary inclinations, that their spirits bear no proportion, with, truth. As the apostle saith of silly women laden with sin, and led away with divers

lusts, 2 Tim. 3:7, they are 'ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;' that is, they make not use of the advantages, occasions, and opportunities of learning; for otherwise it might be the description of a godly man; they never reach the uttermost truths of the spiritual life, though always learning. Oh, it is a sad thing this untractableness and unteachableness of heart! Men cannot tell what to make of divine things: Isa. 28:9, 'Whom shall I teach knowledge, and whom shall I make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts;' that is, he were as good go and prattle with poor infants as teach them. Men have unsavoury, injudicious minds that do not relish the things of God.

(2.) By downright opposition, raging against the light. As the Ethiopians, that are said once a year solemnly to curse the sun; so their hearts rage against knowledge, because it reviveth guilt: Job 21:14, 'They say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' They did not desire knowledge. This is the perverseness of man's nature, to love his own blindness, to refuse the means of helping and relieving his soul. We are not only blind, but mad; when we cannot keep out the light, we rage against it: Jer. 44:16,17, 'As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth.' Who would not pity such mad persons as these? Here is the result of blindness and ignorance, desperate opposition against the word. They will have their old ways, their old principles, their old customs. Oh, the malignity that is in their hearts!

Use 2. Is exhortation, to press you to get knowledge. If faith be knowledge, there lieth a great necessity upon you to get it. You can as well be without the sun in the world as without knowledge and light in the heart.

1. To get knowledge. Shall I press it in the general,—the knowledge of divine things, and the knowledge of God in Christ?

[l.] The knowledge of divine things. in the general. And here consider:—

(1.) You cannot be well without it: Prov. 19:2, 'That the soul be without

knowledge, it is not good.' Men will plead thus: We are ignorant, but we hope we have a good meaning: the spirit cannot he good without knowledge. This shows the goodness of your spirits.

(2.) It is your excellency above the beasts: the more knowledge, the more manly; and the more ignorant, the more brutish: Ps. 49:12, 'Nevertheless man, being in honour, abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish.' In all communications of grace, God beginneth with the understanding. The perfection of man is his angelical nature: Job 24:11, 'Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.' Common light is man's excellency, but to have a mind to know God distinguishes you from other men. Others may go beyond you in other things, but this will be your excellency, to know him: Jer. 9:23,24, 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord.' If you will glory, there is our glory. It is not who is most wealthy, or who most mighty, or who most wise; this is your excellency above other men, that excel in wisdom and knowledge. They maybe able, with Berengarius, to dispute *de omni scibili* (all that can be known), from the cedar to the hyssop, from the highest star to the lowest mineral, yet yours is a better knowledge: 1 Cor. 1:20, 'Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?' The great prejudice against divine knowledge is, because men do not know the excellency of it. The Gentiles refused the gospel, because they would fain be conversant about the nobler sciences, and because those would enrich their senses with wisdom, which they seemed to want in the gospel: 1 Cor. 2:6, 'Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of the world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.' Oh, if you had eyes to see it, you would find this to be the greatest wisdom; here is your excellency.

(3.) You cannot serve God without it. The papists say, ignorance is the mother of devotion, whereas it is the great hindrance of it 1 Chron. 28:9, 'And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind.' There is the method and order: first, know him, and then the heart and the will must follow. God

doth not love blind obedience. Christ reproveth the Samaritans for worshipping they knew not what, John 4:22. And Paul calleth it superstition in the Athenians to build an altar to the unknown God. Simple credulity may be very awful, and the light may work upon our fear, but rational service is performed most with love and delight.

2. Above all things know God in Christ: John 17:3, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Not only to know the true God, but Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. 2 Cor. 4:6, it is said, God 'giveth the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' He being the express image of the Father, there is the express representation of him. I am afraid Christians do not prize the knowledge of God in Christ so much as they should. Oh, consider, there you have the most comfortable representation of him: Ps. 116:5, this is David's rejoicing, 'Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.' Oh, that you could see both together, that is most beneficial. Remember it is said, 'by the knowledge of him,' or 'by his knowledge,' in the text. The knowledge of Christ carrieth the image of Christ into the soul: John 1:14, 'And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' And then in the 17th verse, 'Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' All the good of your souls cometh this way. The more particular discoveries your hearts have of him, the better it is for you.

Secondly, Grow up in the knowledge of Christ: 2 Peter 3:18, 'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Search out more of the particularities of his love. When men think they have knowledge enough, they know nothing: 1 Cor. 8:2, 'He that thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know.' You have not knowledge enough to see your ignorance: 1 Cor. 14:20, 'In understanding be ye men.' Do not think that you know all things that can be taught; you cannot so easily go through all the dimensions, height, breadth, depth and length.

The means are these:—.

1. Be conversant with the word, in reading of it. Therefore it is said, Ps. 19:8, 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the

commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' St Austin calleth the scriptures his chief light.

2. In hearing, wait upon God in it: Isa. 2:3, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways: Wait at the doors of wisdom, that God may cause your souls to lie under the power of truth.

3. Pray instantly and earnestly: Jer. 31:34, 'They shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.' It is his covenant promise to give understanding, therefore ask it of God. The blind man would not hold his peace, Luke 18:39-41, 'But cried so much the more, Lord, that I may receive my sight.'

4. Meditate often upon the love of Christ, search out all the particularities of it. The Indian gymnosophists would all the day be gazing upon the beauty of the sun; oh! view the Sun of Righteousness in all his glorious beams and influences with more delight and pleasure.

5. Lay aside your own prejudices and misapprehensions, for they will lead you aside, and you will gravel yourselves, and run into great uncertainties and contradictions: Job 23:8, 'There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.'

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

I shall now apply this first circumstance, the instrument, specified in that word *by his knowledge,* to the act in the other word, *justify*. For the word of the instrument, *knowledge,* we showed you it importeth faith—an effective knowledge—such as causeth the soul to embrace Christ, and receive him for our comfort. The other word is a little to be opened, and then we shall the better match these two together. To justify, in a scripture notion, is to absolve and acquit. It is a judicial and court word, and signifieth not so much to make righteous as to account so. The papists would have it that it signifies a righteousness infused, not a reckoning of the wicked as if they were not guilty. But the word is used otherwise, Isa. 5:23, 'Woe to them that justify the wicked for a reward,

and take away the righteousness of the righteous from them;' Luke 18:14, 'This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.' To be justified, then, is to be acquitted before God of that condemnation and censure which we had deserved, and to be accepted as righteous in his sight. Well, then, the point from both these linked together is this:—

That by faith we are justified; or, Jesus Christ justifieth poor sinners by their faith. The prophet meaneth faith, though the saith knowledge. For scriptures to prove the point, take these, that are full to the purpose:— Rom. 3:28, 'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith.' The apostle had been labouring throughout all the three chapters to bring the discourse to that issue; and at length there was the result of all, that we must be justified by faith. So Rom. 5:1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' You. see these scriptures are express enough without any improvement; therefore I go off to the reasons why faith, of all other graces, is deputed to this service.

1. Because it is the most receptive grace, and so most fit for the needy condition of the creature. Other graces are more operative, but faith is most receptive. It is the right hand of the soul, to take in the fulness of Jesus Christ. Nature liveth upon alms, and the continued bounty and supplies of heaven, since the fall; and therefore those graces are most serviceable that are most receptive. Love giveth, but faith taketh. All God's stars shine with a borrowed light. We are beggars now, rather than workers. The blessing of life is not in ourselves, but in Christ. Faith standeth in a passive receptiveness to take the conveyances of grace: 1 John 5:12, 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life.' It is all in having Christ. We must be beholden to another. God will trust us no more with the keeping of it, but hath placed our support in Jesus Christ. Our safety is like the ivy, or those weaker strings that are strengthened by cleaving about the oak. Now faith serveth for that, for relying on Christ to clothe us with his righteousness.

2. Faith is most loyal and true to God. It giveth him all the glory, it looketh for all from him; therefore the apostle saith, Rom. 3:26,27, The grand condition of the new covenant is faith, to exclude boasting. God would have everything carried in a way of grace, that if we glory in anything, we may glory in the Lord, 1 Cor. 1:31. Our boasting must be in

the glorifying of grace. God honoureth those graces that honour him most. It is said, Rom. 4:20, of Abraham, that he was 'strong in faith, giving glory to God;' so doth God to faith. And faith is most abasing; it casteth down all the excellence of the creature. Man had rather be doing than borrowing: we cannot endure to hear of going out of ourselves; therefore God ordained this grace.

3. To make the way more sure: Rom. 4:16, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.' Now things are not so floating and uncertain as when we were left to working graces. Now we have a sure Christ for the foundation: Isa. 28:16, 'Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.' It is sure in Christ, and we have Christ too by a sure tenure and claim: 2 Sam. 23:5, 'Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.' We may be uneven and unconstant with God; and though we be so with him, yet we have a sure, unvariable promise to hold by. And now here is faith, that taketh a sure hold upon this promise: Heb. 6:19, 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast;' a sure faith, a sure promise, a sure Christ. Things are not left upon doubtful terms; God hath deputed all to faith, which hath a sure ground, a sure claim, and a sure hold.

4. Because God would bring us back again in the same way that we went off and departed from him, that so the return might be the more satisfactory, that we might see the defects of nature repaired and made up in Christ. We went off by unbelief. Eve distrusted the truth of, God, and therefore God will bring us about again by faith. To this day the heart is loosened from God by unbelief. Diffidence Is the first step to apostasy: Heb. 3:12, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' And faith is a drawing near to God, even to such a degree of nearness as a union. We are not only made like to Christ, as by other graces, but one with Christ. Thus the point is proved.

I shall now a little clear the point to you by dispatching these two questions —

First, What faith is that justifieth?

Secondly, How it justifieth?

First, What faith is? It is not every faith,—not a general assent or loose acknowledgment of the articles of religion; but there is a faith which, to distinguish it from all others, is called justifying faith. It may be defined thus:—It is a grace wrought in our hearts by the Spirit, by which the soul doth rest and cast itself upon Christ, tendered to us in the offer of God, for pardon and acceptance. I will not stand examining every part of this definition, but shall endeavour to discover to you the nature of it by the several acts and effects of it, beginning with the lowest, whilst it is but a seed, as a grain of mustard-seed, in some small and weak beginnings, planted in the heart. St Mark saith, chap. 4:31, 'The kingdom of God is likened to a grain of mustard-seed.' Very small and inconsiderable is the first work of grace; but we must not despise the day of small things, nor neglect the soft waters of Siloah. And therefore—

First, To begin with the acts:—There are some implicit acts, and some explicit and formal acts. Since I am willing to give you the whole nature of faith, it will not be amiss to reflect upon these things.

1. The implied acts of faith are two.

[l.] A sight of ourselves, which faith supposeth, and the curse of God due to us. Man is a lazy creature, and will not apply himself to any religious care till he be spurred on by his need of Christ. Christ saith, 'The whole need not the physician,' Mat. 9:12. The stung Israelites looked up to the brazen serpent; and those that were 'pricked in their hearts' cried out, 'What shall we do? 'Acts 2:37 'I sat alone because of thy hand, for thou hast filled me with indignation,' Jer. 15:17. It maketh the soul sensible that it is no easy matter to deliver ourselves from the wrath of God. Men slight mercy till they need it, and are careless of the great salvation till God affect them with a sight of their sin and his own wrath. We are like Israel in Egypt, not easily weaned from the flesh-pots, till the burdens be doubled, and wrath presseth to anguish.

[2.] A sense of our inability to help ourselves. Believing implieth that a

man hath given up all his vain confidence. How should we lean upon Christ, whilst we fancy we have props and' supports of our own to bear up the soul? The Corinthians did not care for Paul when they were full, and 'reigned as kings without him,' 1 Cor. 4:8. No more do sinners for Christ that are full of self; they can be merry and happy, and keep their church, and do no harm, and all without Christ: Hosea 14:3, 'With thee the fatherless findeth mercy,' i.e., those that were destitute of all helps and supplies. Paul could not look upon Christ as gain till he saw the loss that was in his carnal endeavours, Phil. 3:8. His care to relieve his soul was a greater incumbrance to him.

2. There are formal explicit acts of faith, and they are:—

[1] Knowledge of Christ, his goodness and excellency; how satisfying and how proportionable an object he is to the soul: John 4:10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that speaketh unto thee,' &c. The first act is an apprehension of Jesus Christ; but I have spoken of that largely.

[2.] There is desire. The soul thirsteth after Christ with such a restless desire as will not be satisfied but with an enjoyment. It is compared to the panting of a chased hart: Ps. 13:1, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' In the Hebrew it is the chased she-hart, appetite in females being most impetuous and impatient. And it is expressed by hungering and thirsting; Mat. 5:6, 'Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' They are such voluminous and large desires that can in no wise endure check and restraint. Nothing in the world can give quiet and content to the mind possessed with them. The soul is sick of love for Christ, till it be stayed with his flagons, and comforted with his apples, Cant. 2:5; the soul desireth him in the night season, Isa. 26:9. And it is said, Ps. 63:1, 'My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.' They would have him rather than all things in the world.

[3.] There is a seeking of Christ, as the spouse sought her beloved, Cant. 3:1-3. This is usually expressed by coming, which is one of the lowest degrees of faith, whilst the soul is in the way, and in the pursuit of Christ,

but hath not fully closed with him: John 6:35, 'He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.' He that is coming—*qui se dat in viam* (he who puts himself in the way)*, so* Beza—shall never hunger nor thirst. It is like the poor prodigal returning to his father. Though Christ and the soul be not as yet brought to close together, yet the souls of believers will adventure upon Christ; yea, though they are not so comfortably persuaded of acceptance with him; as said the king of the Ninevites, Jonah 3:9, 'Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger?' So Joel 2:13,14, 'Turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?' There is encouragement, a cable-rope cast out to save a sinking soul; though they cannot so comfortably apply Christ to their case, they are resolved to seek him.

[4.] The soul resteth upon him; there is a receiving of Christ John 1:12, 'To as many as received him;' which noteth a higher degree than coming to him. It implieth an apprehension, and particular application of the promises for our use; as when the prodigal and the father were fallen upon each other's necks, and joined together in mutual embraces. It is the welcoming of Christ into the soul, the clasping him about with the arms of faith; as old Simeon took the child in his arms and said, 'Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' And so the faith of the patriarchs is described: Heb. 11:13, they 'embraced the promises.' The word is *aspasamenoi,* they hugged and embraced promises. I conceive it hinteth the practice of the patriarchs, who upon every new hint of Christ went and worshipped; which was a testimony of the joy of their faith and their cleaving to Christ in the promise. And when faith is once come to this, it is no longer a seed hidden in the earth, but it springeth up in all the happy effects and fruits of it. Therefore the next thing I shall speak to is the effects of a justifying faith.

Secondly, The effects of faith; there are many. I shall name those which I conceive to be most essential and proper; and they are of two sorts:—

1. Such as concern faith itself.

2. Other gracious constitutions of spirit.

1. For those that concern faith itself, and they are two:—

[1] It is always renewing its own acts. God doth not delight in dead and useless habits. It is not faith that will profit us, but the exercise of it. God delighteth in the work of faith, that we should 'with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation,' Isa. 12:3; that we should not only have faith, but act it—that is, as we should make Christ ours, so we should possess ourselves of all that he hath, and that we should maintain our lives out of the supplies of his grace Gal. 2:20, 'I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me,'—that we should not only have Christ, but live in him. The perfection of graces is in their acting: James 2:22, 'By works was faith made perfect;' that is, strengthened and increased; as the right arm groweth stronger and full of spirits by frequent action.

[2.] It aimeth at the increase of itself. Therefore a weak faith may grow into assurance. The first thing faith struggleth against is doubts and fears: Mark 9:24, 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.' Graces are much tried by this opposition against the contrary inclinations of spirit. Graces in pretence do not exasperate opposite propensions; and therefore the soul enjoyeth a great deal of quiet and calmness under shows. False graces do not aim at growth, and so exclude care; and do not exasperate doubts, and so exclude fear. There is not such a struggling with the relics and remainders of unbelief. The children of God believe that they may believe: 1 John 5:13, 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.' They would grow up into greater measures. David checketh distrusts: Ps. 13:5, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.'

Gracious hearts are troubled at their evil imaginations. Others are drawing back, till God hath no pleasure in them, Heb. 10:38.

2. The effects that concern other gracious constitutions: so justifying and saving faith hath four effects:—

[1.] It humbleth and melteth for sin. The passover is to be eaten with sour

herbs. A man cannot look upon Christ but with a bitter remembrance of his own guilt: Zech. 12:10, 'They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son.' Even our best actions to a believing soul cause grief. Like the ancient Israelites, who had seen the glory of the first house, when, they saw how unlike the last was to the former, Ezra 3:12, 'wept with a loud voice.' So these, when they have such a perfect model before them as Christ's love, and being like to make such weak returns, it humbleth their hearts. As the queen of Sheba, beholding the glory of Solomon, had no spirit left in her, 1 Kings 10:5, thinking her own glory nothing to his, so doth the soul at the contemplation of the excellences of Christ.

[2.] It purgeth the heart from sin: Acts 15:9, 'Purifying their hearts by faith.' The apostle speaketh of the Gentiles: if they had not the ceremonial purgings, they have that which is better—their hearts are purified by faith. The blood of Christ cleanses from sin. It doth not only allay the burning of the spirit when it is upon it, but also doth away the defilement. Faith and lusts are like a poison and a preservative, they cannot lodge quietly in one soul. Apprehensions of grace, even in the Gentiles, are the keenest arguments against sin. A man never learned how to deal with sin to purpose till the appearance of grace. Therefore the apostle saith, Titus 2:11, 12, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, appeareth to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.'

[3.] It sets a high price and value upon Christ, so as to part with all for his sake. Love is not to be measured with respect to the intenseness of the object, but the valuation of it: Mat. 13:46, 'He parted with all for the pearl of great price.' See whether you can part with worldly comforts, or with Christ. Let lusts go, and sin go. Our Father's house is the least thing that we can quit for him: Ps. 45:10, 'Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.' A small contentment. It was Abraham s commendation that he did not withhold his son, his only son, Gen. 22:12. God trieth us sometimes by things that are great in our esteem, to see whether we will hazard the comforts of Christ, or the loss of our own contentments. Alas! there should be no worldly respect but should be sacrificed upon this account. Many profess Christ, but they do not prize him; they are apt to

be scandalised with the least suffering for his sake: Luke 16:26, 'If ye forsake not all, ye cannot be my disciples.'

[4.] It worketh by love: Gal. 5:6, 'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love.' It aboundeth in all holy duty out of love. Mercies are such an argument as leaveth a constraint upon the soul: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' Terrors and fears cannot urge the spirit so as love will. Carnal affections make us lazy, but faith begets in us love, and love maketh us labour. Those that love much, will do much. Now by this you may discern the nature of justifying faith.

Secondly, My next work is to show you how it justifieth. There being mistakes in this matter, I shall endeavour to lay the truth before you.

1. Faith does not justify as a mutual cause together with works, as if they did cooperate together; but we must distinguish. There is a first and second justification, the one ascribed to faith, the other to works. This opinion maketh as if we were beholden to grace only for some courtesies, where we cannot engage God of ourselves. It is true James saith, 'Not by faith, but by works;' but that is only to justify faith. It is a false faith that doth not end in works; but works have nothing to do in justification. God abhorreth such a profane medley; he would have it wholly of grace. The papists exact an imaginary faith, and so are put upon a necessity of eking it out with works.

2. Not as an act and grace in us. Faith justifieth *relativè,* not *effectivè et formaliter:* not as if the act of believing were instead of perfect obedience to the law, and as if it were grace in us, and not an apprehending of Christ's righteousness. But it is in reference to the object that it is said to justify, only because of its necessary concurrence as an instrument. Christ's righteousness maketh us righteous, only because it cannot apprehend this righteousness but by faith, therefore it is said faith doth it. The hand may be said to feed and nourish the body, but the nutritive virtue is not in the hand, but the meat. There are divers reasons to sway you to believe this:—

[1.] Because faith is always said to justify as complicated with its object,

from whom it receiveth all its virtue.

[2.] Because the righteousness of faith is always contradistinct and opposed to that which is in ourselves: Rom. 10:3, 'For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness.' Now how anything in us can be called God's righteousness, judge ye. So Phil. 3:9, 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Rom. 1:17, in the gospel, 'the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;' Rom. 3:22, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe.'

[3.] Because the apostle speaketh of imputing righteousness for faith, as well as faith for righteousness: Rom. 4:6, 'Unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.'

[4] Because we are never said to be justified *propter fidem,* but *per fidem;* not because of faith, but by faith. But I shall speak to the matter of imputation in the next point.

3. Faith doth not justify, that is, merely receive the witness of our justification, as those that make it assurance; that is a thing that followeth faith. We are not justified before faith, for then actual unbelievers would be subject to no condemnation; whereas 'he that believeth not is condemned already,' John 3:18.

But to show affirmatively how faith justifieth, as an instrument which God hath deputed to the apprehension and application of Christ's righteousness, the whole order is thus:—

[1.] By effectual calling God begetteth faith, and uniteth us to Jesus Christ. Faith is the grace of union, and we are said to 'live in him by faith,' Gal. 2:20. And he is said to 'dwell in our hearts by faith,' Eph. 3:17.

[2.] And being united to Christ, we are possessed of all that is in Christ; so that whatsoever he hath suffered or done becometh ours 2 Cor. 5:21, 'For he was made sin for us, that knew no sin, that we might be made the

righteousness of God in him.' As Christ had our sins, so we have his righteousness. So that we find imputation a real thing.

[3.] Then God looketh upon us as righteous; and so—

(1.) He absolveth us from all sin by a free and full pardon, and we are as if we were not sinners in the sight of God: Jer. 50:20, 'The iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found;' Ps. 103:12, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.'

(2.) He accepteth us as righteous to eternal life, so complete as we cannot be challenged: Rom. 8:32, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;' Rom. 5:21, 'That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Use 1. It showeth us the excellency of faith. Cod hath put a high honour upon it; all the conveyances of Christ come into the soul this way, but especially of justification; and what a mercy is it that God would require nothing of us but faith.

2. It presseth us to get faith; it is the instrument of justification, the grace that maketh all sure to the people of God. The world liveth by guess or random; and alas! what a misery is it to have only our own contrivances and good meanings! Faith is designed to clothe us with the righteousness of Christ, and that is the best robe. Oh, labour only for that! Take heed it be a justifying faith. To this end take two cautions:—

[1.] Get such a faith as will endure the sight of God. If you be justified it must be by faith, a righteousness that will endure that Ps. 143:2, 'For in thy sight shall no man living be justified.' And that is the reason why the deeds of the law are excluded. Nay, get such a faith as will endure the appearance of Jesus Christ, even his terrible appearance in judgment. Graces are true when they can endure that brunt: Luke 21:36, 'Watch and pray, that you may be able to stand before the Son of man at his coming.' 1 John 4:17. 'That we may have boldness in the day of judgment;' that is a sensible proof of the truth of graces. 1 John 2:28, 'And now, little

children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, you may have confidence, and may not be ashamed at his coming.'

[2.] Let it be such a faith as taketh Christ out of God's hand, such a faith as will stand with knowledge and more discoveries of Christ. The more ignorant any are, the more presumptuous. It must be such a faith as apprehends Christ in the use of all the means appointed. To talk of faith while we contemn or neglect the means, is but an idle fancy, an imaginary persuasion, not faith, and will easily discover our folly.

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

I am now come to the next circumstance in the order of the words, and that is the efficient cause in justification, which is Jesus Christ, expressed here by God's 'righteous servant;' for so he is to be considered in the business of justification, or else it were ill for the creatures. What this expression will amount to we shall see by and by. The point is:—

Doct. That Jesus Christ justifieth as God's righteous servant. I shall—

1. Explain the point.

2. Prove it.

3. Apply it.

For the explaining the matter to you, consider these two things:—

1. How Christ was God's servant.

2. How Christ was God's righteous servant.

First, Christ was said to be God's servant, partly as he subjected himself to the condition of man, and because he lived among men in a needy, servile, and abject state of life, not like a prince, but a servant, which is the lowest form of rational creatures. And it is expressed by 'taking the form of a servant' upon him, Phil. 2:7. Angels are called sons, and man a servant; 'The sons of God shouted for joy,' Job 38:7. In the family of

heaven they were to God as servants.

And partly as he was a choice instrument for the executing of God's decrees. Those that are taken into any degree of subserviency to God's counsels have this badge of honour put upon them, to be God's servants, as Nebuchadnezzar is called God's servant, Jer. 27:6. Now, because Christ submitted himself to the office of the mediatorship, and so to a subserviency to God's decrees, he is called a servant: Isa. 13:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold;' Isa. 49:3, 'Thou art my servant.' And this being an instrument of God's decrees, is called service, because whosoever is employed in it is to sequester himself for the uses of God, and to divest himself of all self-respect, and like a servant to be at the command of another, and wholly to give up himself to the profit and benefit of his Master. So Christ, not aiming at himself, accomplished the work of God to God's glory and the salvation of man. And—

Partly as he subjected himself to the law of God and the covenant of works, which was a covenant of servants. A servant expects his hire as the reward of his work, and therefore the state of the gospel is called a state of sonship: Gal. 4:5, 'To redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons.' So in the 1st verse of that chapter, 'The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant;' that is, those that are under the covenant of grace did very little differ from those that are under the covenant of works, in the time of the church's infancy and ceremonial dispensation, because it was a ministry of condemnation. Everywhere the covenant of works is made as the covenant of an hireling, and implieth bondage and service. And therefore Christ, because he submitted himself to such a covenant, and seeing he was to be judged of God according to all extremity and rigour, things were carried between God and Christ in a way of justice, and our grace and glory were due to him. So that in all these respects Christ was God's servant.

Use 1. Is to commend to us the service of God. It is a glory to a society when princes are of it: you count the order or company dignified when they will come into your fellowship: You have Jesus Christ in your fellowship. Oh, certainly the service of God can be no disgrace to you! God calleth him my servant. This was David's choice: Ps. 84:10, 'I had

rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.' The meanest employment in God's service is a greater honour than any sinful dignity. Christ did not honour kingship and lordship, and the dignities of the world in his person here upon earth, but only meanness and obedience. Think it no reproach to be engaged in such services with David as are most mean and low in the world's eye. Your fellow-servant is Christ.

Use 2. To commend to us the love of Christ, that he should divest himself of all his glory, and appear in the form of a servant.

1. It was love that he should submit himself to our nature. Do but consider what an infinite distance there was between the Godhead and us, and then you may guess somewhat what a strange condescension there was in his love. How many degrees it came down to meet the creatures for their good. There are divers things to aggravate it. That Christ should take our nature, when he left equal glory with the Father. It was a great abasement for Adam to fall from his excellency by sin to meanness; for us to stoop is no such matter, but it was most amazing in him that 'thought it no robbery to be equal with God,' Phil. 2:6. Then that he 'took upon him the form of a servant,' not of angels, which is a higher degree of natures, and would have been a fitter form for a Son, but of a man, and that the form of a servant—he went to the lowest rank of rational creatures. Then how he took it, not of the highest order of men; he came not in the pomp, equipage and appearance of a king and prince. The Jews looked for a mighty monarch. Christ had right to all the world, but he would not hold by that tenure. It was the form of a servant, not ,only in respect of the angels, but in respect of men. He was found in the lowest rank of men, poor and destitute, therefore called *chadall ishim:* Isa. 53:3, 'despised and rejected.' In the Hebrew it is the leavings off of men; man just left off there where Christ was found if he had gone lower, he could not be man: Ps. 20:6, 'I am a worm, and no man;' rather found among the rank of poor despicable worms, than of men. Then, what were the effects of it? Even upon this he was refused of those for whose good he came; they rejected him, nay slew him, because he came in this disguise of meanness for their sakes. He gained no honour by it, neither did the world know him the better: John 1:11, 'He came to his own, and

his own received him not.' In short, this was the great cause why he was the object of the Jewish scorn and rejection. Nay, further, consider this was not only an accidental event, and a thing that was not aimed at, but the very end of Christ. He was found in the form of a servant, that he might

be handled in a. despiteful manner, and that the decrees of God might be accomplished upon his person. He could have shown himself in majesty, and have prevented his sufferings, as he saith, Mat. 26:53,54, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray unto my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how, then, shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?' Well, then, you find a great deal of matter to be offered to your thoughts for the commendation of Christ's love.

2. There is more in Christ's being a servant. He subjected himself to your covenant—the covenant of works—that lay upon all men naturally: Gal. 4:4, 'Made under the law'—not only the moral law, which is not a slavery, but a freedom; whereas, on the contrary, the satisfying of our corrupt desires is the greatest slavery in the world 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.' But that he should put himself into such a condition as to make himself liable to his Father's wrath, to take our curse upon him, yea, to be 'made a curse for us,' Gal. 3:13, that is a high instance of the love of Christ—that he, that was the beloved of his Father—the apostle calleth him 'the Son of his love,' Col. 1:13; —we translate it 'his dear Son '—that he, I say, should become the receptacle of his Father's wrath, and that all his anger should as it were be pitched upon him,—what a circumstance is this! Thus you see Christ is God's servant.

Secondly, In the next place, you must look upon him as God's righteous servant; and thus he hath taken our work and burden upon him. There is a threefold righteousness of Christ:—

1. Essential and divine, which is that infinite and surpassing perfection which is in him as he was God. That is not to be considered in this place, partly because he speaketh here of the righteousness of Christ as a servant; but this is the righteousness of Christ as a Lord. And besides, this

is not communicable to the creatures. It was the dream of Osiander that the Lord should, in justification, communicate to us his essential righteousness. But hear what the prophet saith Isa. 42:8, *'My* glory will I not give to another.' God saith expressly he will part with none of his essential glory. His creatures are not vested with that.

2. There is his absolute and personal righteousness, as he is Mediator and God-man, and is able to make others righteous. And so it is said, John 3:34, 'God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him.' He had as a man the Spirit without measure, not sparingly, but poured out with a full hand and in abundance. And so it is said, Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;' and Col. 2:9, 'For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Christ's soul is filled by the union of the Godhead with all created and habitual graces. Though these things are for us, and God hath made Christ a storehouse of sufficiencies for the elect, yet they are not imputed to us. It is true, though we are full of sin, and Christ came into the world full of righteousness, and so it is a just remedy against the sinfulness of our natures, and it qualified the Lord Jesus to be a fit person to do us good; yet here we speak not of the righteousness of Christ as a servant, but of his service; and we have not this fulness imputed to us so as that we may become saviours to one another. Christ was by these things fitted to do us good, and to be a continual magazine of comforts and graces, to which the creatures might have recourse in all their troubles: Eph. 4:7, 'But unto every one of us is grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.'

3. There is a dispensative and relative righteousness, which is called *justitia fidejussoria,* the righteousness that Christ performed for us, and in our stead, as our surety, even the righteousness that he manifested in the work and service of our redemption. And so chiefly he is to be considered as God's righteous servant. He showed it in two things:—

[1.] In exact obedience, even to the least tittle of the law, for our sakes. We could not possibly keep in with God, therefore Christ did: Rom. 8:3, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh;' Mat. 3:15, 'It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.' He doth that for us which we could not ,do in ourselves. And therefore Christ is

said to be 'the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,' Rom. 10:4. The end of the law is perfection of obedience, and Christ is that to us by having fulfilled it in his own person. The scriptures do everywhere avow this righteousness of Christ and exactness of keeping the law Isa. 53:9, it is said, 'There was no deceit in his mouth.' It was not a pretended show. As to the holiness of his conversation: 2 Cor. 5:21, 'He knew no sin;' that is, he had no experimental knowledge of it in his own soul: 1 Peter 2:22, 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' There could be nothing justly charged upon him as to his conversation. Farther, it is said, Heb. 4:15, 'He was in all points tempted like us, yet without sin.' Men usually miscarry in their temptations. Jesus Christ was tempted, his soul was assaulted even to a consternation; but there was no sin in it; like a glass of pure water that is jogged, but it stirreth up no mud. Thus you see what a righteous servant Christ is. God ordained him to the suretyship of the creature, and be was faithful in it, and did all things well.

[2.] His passive obedience. And it is that sacrifice and offering of himself that Christ made for the sins of the world, bearing our curse and punishment, and so satisfying for our transgression: 1 Tim. 2:5,6, 'The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all.' He suffered so long till he had satisfied God's justice, and engaged the very righteousness of God to the good of the creature too, and would not expire his soul till all were finished and made sure. See John 19:30, 'It is finished,' and then he gave up the ghost. The scriptures everywhere speak of this, and therefore I shall be more sparing in it.

You see now how Christ was God's righteous servant.

To apply it:—

Use 1. It holdeth out a pattern for us to imitate God's righteous servant as well as we can, and to enjoin us to write after this copy. Several things are remarkable in the righteousness of Christ; I shall only instance in two:—

1. The sincerity of his spirit.

2. Innocency of his conversation.

1. The sincerity of his spirit. There is no guile in Christ, and there should be none in those that have benefit by him: Ps. 32:2, 'Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.' Be not for appearances and shows. Corrupt aims and self-advantages, and desire of esteem amongst men, argue a false spirit, which is all for appearances. They do not care what God thinketh of them, for they are all for repute: 1 Cor. 4:3, 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.' Gracious hearts count that nothing; their desire is to approve themselves to God.

2. Innocency of conversation. It became our High Priest to be harmless and undefiled; so should we be: Phil. 2:15, 'That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.' Be righteous in your ways, be faithful to your work. Christ knew no sin; it is a holy simplicity to be simple in evil. Christ was tempted, yet without sin. Watch over your spirits in temptations, that they may not encroach upon you to the betraying of yourselves into any unbecoming or unworthy walking.

Use 2. Is comfort to poor broken-hearted sinners. Christ was God's righteous servant, and, so fitted to make a Saviour for sinners, and to plead with God for you. You say you are sinners, but Jesus Christ is righteous. You are all ill servants of God, compassed about with daily infirmities. Ay! but Jesus Christ was a righteous servant—he was righteous in our stead: 1 John 2:1, 'I write unto you that you sin not; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' Sin not; that is, do not allow yourselves in sin; but if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Though God will not hear you, he will hear Christ; he never offended him. It is very observable that all comfort usually in scripture is made to flow from the righteousness of Christ: Zech. 9:9, 'Behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation.' He bringeth salvation with him, for he is righteous. So Dan. 9:24; the Messiah was to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness. You may be confident he is gracious with God, and he will make you gracious. There is righteousness to satisfy justice. Christ's righteousness is fit to satisfy, for there is no sin

in it. And there is righteousness to make up your defects—to make you righteous in his righteousness. But that is the work of the next inquiry.

And, therefore, I now come to show how Christ is said to justify as God's righteous servant. I shall open this matter to you:—1. Negatively. He justifieth as a servant, and therefore—

[1.] He doth not exclude God the Father from being the first eternal moving cause of our justification. It hath its first rise at his mercy in ordaining Christ: Rom. 3:24, '.Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' It was the pleasure of the Father. Grace is most sure and free when we look upon his contrivances for your good. He gave Christ, and pre-destinated you to enjoy the benefits; he elected you rather than another: Eph. 1:5, 'Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Therefore, it implieth that Christ was not the first moving cause of justification. He only is a righteous servant. There was some antecedent love and mercy that deputed him to that service.

[2.] It doth not exclude the grant and sentence of the Father; and the sentence is passed by the Father, though it be procured by Christ as the servant of God's decrees in this matter. Rom. 3:26, the Father is said to be 'the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.' 'We have an advocate with the Father,' 1 John 2:1. Sin is committed against him; his will is the rule of justice; and by nature, right, and office, he is the supreme judge.

2. Affirmatively. So Christ is said to justify two ways:—

[1] By meriting that righteousness which will serve for justification. His obeying and suffering have procured such a righteousness as will stand us in stead, for Christ's righteousness is ours. We have share in whatever he had, for he was our surety; as he saith, John 17:19, 'I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified;' and Eph. 1:6, 'He hath accepted us in the beloved.' We are beloved in his love, sanctified in his sanctification, and so righteous in his righteousness. I shall prove it more by and by. And then it is the best way, in procuring such a righteousness by his life and death as should avail the creatures in their acceptance with God.

[2.] By meriting the Spirit that constitutes and gives us an interest in this righteousness: 2 Cor. 5:20, We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.' All the entreaties of the word are from Christ. He offereth grace in the word, and conferreth it by the Spirit. He justifieth them as a righteous servant, because it is his righteousness which is the matter of justification, and it is his Spirit that effects it in us, and interests us in it. His righteousness and his Spirit, though imputed and bestowed upon us by the Father, yet they are merited by Christ, and bestowed upon us by the Spirit of Christ.

To apply this.

Use 1. Is to check those that deny the imputation of Christ's righteousness. He justifieth as a righteous servant, as having procured righteousness for us by his own obedience and suffering. He causeth us to be absolved as righteous before God by his own righteousness; made ours by virtue of our union with him.

1. Some deny the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, either active or passive, as the papists and Socinians, who both deny that we are justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. But what a strange thing is it that the papists, who in other doctrines establish the imputation of the righteousness of a man, of a monk, or a dead man, in their works of supererogation, should yet deny the righteousness of Christ! They say there is no such expression in scripture. But to both these I oppose these places:—The apostle speaketh of the imputation of righteousness, Rom. 4:6, 'Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works.' And the prophet calleth Christ 'the Lord our righteousness,' Jer. 33:16. And Christ is said to be 'made to us of the Father righteousness,' 1 Cor. 1:30. And we are said to be 'made the righteousness of God in him,' 2 Cor. 5:21, as he was made sin for us, and both by imputation. And he addeth this as an argument, that it would not stand with the justice of God—take it for the exact tenor of righteousness, which is essential to his nature, or his will revealed in his word—to constitute a wicked man righteous, unless there be some righteousness to make him so. Now, none will serve the turn, but Christ's, for that is exact and regular. For the former, see Prov. 17:15, 'He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they

both are an abomination to the Lord.' And God saith, Exod. 20, that he will not hold sinners guiltless. And you may add, that still the righteousness whereby we are justified is opposed to that which is inherent in us. Certainly we are made righteous by imputation; for by the same justice that Christ is made a sinner, we are made righteous.

2. There are others that deal with the robes of Christ's righteousness as the king of Ammon did by the garments of David's messengers; they cut them off by the middle, they exclude the active obedience of Christ, but upon slender grounds. In opposition to these consider:—

[1.] The need of both his active and passive obedience. By his passive obedience, by death, the punishment of sin is taken away; and by his active obedience the law is fulfilled for us: so that we have not only pardon but acceptance; so that there is not only a restraint of vengeance, but pardon obtained. The guilt and punishment of sin is done away by his death; the other benefit, favour and acceptance, is procured by his obedience. There must be something done by way of satisfaction to divine justice and to appease his wrath, and something by way of acquisition of favour: these are the two things procured by Christ. Absalom was pardoned, but he saw not the king's face. We are God's creatures, bound to his law, as well as his prisoners, liable to his wrath; and there must be the expiation of sin and the fulfilling of all righteousness. There are two blessings obtained by Christ—freedom from death, and the benefit of eternal life.

[2.] We are expressly said in scripture to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ, which is exactly opposed to the disobedience of Adam: Rom. 5:19, 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' We are condemned by Adam's actual guilt, and made righteous by Christ's active obedience.

[3] In the very passive obedience of Christ, the, active part is the chief; for the sufferings of Christ do not simply justify us, but as they are the sufferings of Christ, voluntarily yielding up himself in obedience to his Father's will. For Christ was to be considered as the sacrifice or the priest: as a sacrifice, so passive; as a priest, so active Phil. 2:8, 'He became

obedient to death, even the death of the cross;' and Heb. 10:10, 'By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.' He willingly undertook to do for us what we were bound to do.

Use 2. Is to press you to go to Christ, that you may be interested in his righteousness: it cometh by union.

The rules are these:—

1. See the insufficiency of your own righteousness. The creatures' fig-leaves will never cover a naked soul; there must be first a sight of your own vileness, and of your own inability to help yourselves out of it. It is observable in John 16:8, that the Spirit doth first convince of sin and then of righteousness. Christ doth not seek us till we be lost, and we cannot seek Christ till we are lost. The soul doth most truly seek Christ when loosened from all other things, from all false props and expectations, and seeth plainly that it shall perish if it have not an interest in Christ. As Simon Peter said, John 6:68, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.' Whither should we go? thou hast the only righteousness.

2. Consider your own filthy rags, and then you will long, desire, and groan for change of raiment. Alas! your persons are covered with your own guilt, and your natures are full of sin; what will you do to appear before God? Alas! you can scarce keep tip a fair show before a discerning man; what will you do before a God of pure eyes? Job 15:15, 'The heavens are not clean in his sight.' The holy angels in comparison of God are nothing, yea, less than nothing. But do you think to help yourselves by your services, your duties, and good meanings? Alas! as long as you stick there, no good will be done the saints blame themselves in the sense of their duties; their best performances are poor, worthless things: Isa. 64:6, 'But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' They will not make your souls amiable: Phil. 3:9, 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness.'

3. Consider the willingness of God to clothe you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ; Christ was appointed to this very end: Rom, 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to

declare his righteousness.' Gods design was to lay open his heart to the creatures, and to show how willing he was that you should come unto him in this way: 1 Cor. 1:30, 'Who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.' If we had framed it, it had been more doubtful, but God appointed a righteousness of his own making; and therefore it is everywhere called in scripture 'the righteousness of God,' not only because it was the righteousness of God-man, Christ Jesus, but God's righteousness, that is, of his appointment.

4. Consider the worth of this righteousness; it is better than if we had stood in our innocency, and had procured it in our own persons. Luke 15:22, it is called 'the best robe;' better than we should have had if we had stayed in our father's house; far better than that we lost in Adam. Our repair is more excellent than our first make, and it contents God better; the creature is most humbled, and God most exalted: this is as it should be, when we have nothing in ourselves, and fetch all from God. It is as good as the best of the saints have; you are as righteous as David, and as righteous as Abraham and all the worthies of God: Rom. 3:22, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe, for there is no difference.' In this case there is no difference indeed: Rev. 19:8, 'And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.' The saints have one common righteousness; as it was with the Israelites in point of the manna, none had more than another, none had over or under; nay, higher, it is as good or better than the righteousness of angels, for they are confirmed in their own righteousness. Isa. 6:2, the seraphims covered their faces as being abashed at the glorious holiness of God; and before him they are not clean, they cannot stand before the holiness of God. And in Job 4:18, 'His angels he chargeth with folly;' that is, comparatively, and in respect of himself, they might be accused, rather than accounted righteous. But now we may have access with confidence and boldness, as the apostle saith, Eph. 3:12, because we do not come in our own holiness, but Christ's. Nay, further, in some sort, it maketh us an righteous as Christ himself; therefore it is said, 1 John 3:7, 'He that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous;' that is, he doth truly show forth that he is righteous in Christ's righteousness; nay, this is a righteousness that will

endure God's sight. You must needs obtain the blessing in the garment of your elder brother.

5. Seek it in Christ's way; then you are like to obtain it, at least you shall be sure not to deceive yourselves. Many conceit themselves to be in a good estate, and that Christ is theirs, and all his righteousness theirs, when they never sought it in his way; you must therefore look to this. This way of Christ respects two things:—

[1.] The manner of obtaining.

[2.] Our ends and aims in it.

[1.] The manner of obtaining it must be by union; this righteousness is not gotten by an assent to the truth of any promise or proposition in the word, but by an union with Jesus Christ. We are not united to any promise, but to Christ. Many take a promise, and go away with it. But alas! you are to take Christ in the promise, for there is no promise that appertaineth to any till they are one with Christ. Therefore there must be union before you can take any comfort in him; for all the promises are his, and you have not right in them till you have a right in him: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen.' So they will be true and certain to you. Many flatter themselves in this kind. They go away with the words of a promise, but do not care to carry out their faith to the person of Christ tendered in the promise. You cannot close with Christ without a promise, so not with a promise without him. Look, as it is in the spiritual life, many think to live upon a comfortable word or a promise of God, whereas they should live upon Christ in a promise; as men do not live upon their conveyances and leases, but their lands: so here, you do not come to a promise for righteousness, but to Christ in it.

[2] The ends and aims in it; both the subordinate and the ultimate ends must be right.

(1.) The subordinate end, which concerneth ourselves and our own good. Be not contented without the king's face, the grace of God, and the light of his countenance. Many desire to allay the burnings of their consciences, and to cool the heat that is in their spirits through guilt, and

would fain shun hell and horror, but do not care for communion with God, and to be in a state of favour and amity with the Lord. Alas! a pardon is nothing without acceptance; it were hell enough not to enjoy God. In justification there must be both done, an allaying of wrath and procuring of favour. Zech. 3:4. The filthy garments must be taken away, and we must be clothed with change of raiment. 'I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee;' but that is not enough: 'I will clothe thee.' There must be a charming of wrath and a being accepted in the beloved, Eph. 1:6. Hypocrites they are altogether for removal of punishment, but do not care how they stand in God's favour, so as they may receive the communications of grace. Oh, do not you. rest in that, and only make it your care to get the punishment off.

(2.) The ultimate end, which concerneth God's glory. God's end in the covenant of grace is to exalt mercy; and therefore it is said, Eph. 1:6, 'He hath accepted us in the beloved;' that is God's end in the covenant of grace, to exalt the glory of grace,: Isa. 48:9, 'For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.' There is God's end in all: and when our end and God's end are the same, then our desires are the most regular. Now what is your end in desiring the righteousness of Christ—God's glory, or your own good? The natural inclination and propension that is in us to our own good may work a desire to have sin forgiven, and to be saved from wrath, or that conscience, may be pacified; but to desire that we may be accepted in the beloved, to the praise of the glory of his grace, that is a heavenly frame of spirit; not that you may be exalted, but grace in you. Seek the righteousness of Christ with the same mind that God offereth it in the covenant.

Use 3. It serveth for instruction to us, to make Jesus Christ, as. he is Mediator, God-man, the object of our faith. We may do it, and we ought to do it. Whosoever justifieth me becomes the object of my faith. Now not only God the Father justifieth, but also Jesus Christ, God's righteous servant. And therefore, in the work of our faith, we are not only to reflect upon God the Father, but Jesus Christ as Mediator. And indeed we ought to do so, for much of the comfort of believing dependeth upon our taking of him into our thoughts: John 14:1, 'Let not your hearts be troubled; ye

believe in God, believe also in me.' It easeth us much of the trouble of our hearts when our souls have recourse to Christ, when we believe in him who was God's righteous servant.

I shall here handle two questions, and so despatch this use:—

First, What it is to believe in Christ as God's righteous servant? It is not only to believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; not only to have distinct and explicit thoughts of the Trinity; but to believe in Christ as Mediator. You have a willing God, and you have an able Saviour. It is to reflect upon the whole carriage of Christ's mediatorship, as a sufficient help for poor creatures; there is enough in God's righteous servant to become a sufficient bottom and ground for our faith. Though faith is not to rest in Christ, it is to begin in him, that by him we may the more comfortably believe in God. And this is the reason why many times there is no other object of faith expressed but Jesus Christ: John 1:12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.'

Second question, What special comfort and privilege doth there come to faith by it?

1. By this you have a double claim. An interest in God by virtue of the covenant of grace made with your persons, and the covenant of works made with Jesus Christ. It is due to you as it is all of grace, but to Jesus Christ it was a due debt; he satisfied justice and merited mercy: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through 'the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;' that is Christ's claim, and your claim by virtue of your interest in him. So the 26th verse, 'That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.' When you reflect upon Jesus Christ, your claim is not disannulled but strengthened by the justice of God. Christ hath satisfied justice and merited mercy; Christ hath satisfied the covenant of works by suffering what was due in point of transgression, and by discharging what was due in point of obedience. You see satisfaction as well as imputation.

2. It ministereth matter of glory and triumph of faith, considering every scruple. You have not only a proof of the Father's love, but the Son's

merit: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died.' And therefore faith speaketh of glorying in the cross of Christ, Gal. 6:14. There is matter of glorying in the cross of Christ, in his obedience and death, that there is so full satisfaction and such exact obedience. Oh, plead it to your souls; he fulfilled every tittle. Alas! we have but little cause to boast; we know but in part, and do but in part; but in Christ we may glory; nay, you may glory in God the Father: I Cor. 1:31, 'That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.' Why? because Christ is made all to us by the Father—wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: an object fully satisfying, so that now you may make your boast of God all the day long.

3. It ministereth joy, in that you see God in your own nature, and he is your kinsman. Affinity begets obedience and hopes of speeding. Your hearts would tremble and quiver at the sight of God's back parts in his own glorious nature;. and therefore, because you cannot converse with God in his own nature, there is Christ to help to relieve you; in believing God in your own nature, that is an object of our faith. Hence it is said, Eph. 3:12, 'We have access with boldness through the faith of him;' and Heb. 10:19,20, 'Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.' The manhood of Christ is the means to bring God and us together; otherwise, there was a flaming sword against us every way, and we could not come near but we must die. The mere God-head was incensed against us; and therefore, till God became man, there was no hope left unto us to see him; but when he became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, it was matter of great encouragement to the creature. There are other considerations, but these are enough to persuade you in believing, not only to look upon God, but to look upon Christ, to look upon God's righteous servant; not only upon the mercy or grace of God, but upon the mercy and grace engaged to you by the sufferings and obedience of Jesus Christ. Thus you see you have a double claim to God, and you have an excellent remedy against the doubts of your own hearts; you may see God in your own natures. The Lord grant you may have a right sight of these things, not that you may abuse them to looseness, and to the cherishing of presumption, and so turn Aaron's rod into *a* serpent, but that you may be helped in the great

work of believing.

I go on in the text to the next circumstance, and that is the object or subject of justification, that is *many*. He shall 'justify many.'

1. It is put here exclusively, to shut out the universality of mankind; it is but many that he justifieth, it is not all.

2. It is put inclusively, to take in the whole company of the faithful. Look upon those that are called of Christ in all ages, and they will come to such a number.

I shall handle the first acceptation, as it excludeth the greater part of the world.

Observe, then, that all are not justified by Christ. The privilege that God bestowed upon Christ was, that he should justify many.

The reasons of the point are:—

1. Because of his sovereign pleasure, to pass by some for their sins, and for the glory of his justice; and not to bestow upon them the grace of election; he may do with his own as it pleaseth him. And indeed, usually in this matter, the scriptures make God's pleasure to, be all in all. There are some whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Some translations read it, 'Whose names are not written before the foundation of the world in the Lamb's book of life.' God never gave Christ a charge to save such men whose names are not in the Lamb's book. God dealeth out of absolute sovereignty: Prov. 16:4, 'God hath made all things for himself, and the wicked for the day of evil.' You would overlook that, but it is for the glorifying of his justice. It is observable, he doth not say he made the elect for the day of evil. There are many who grant that the wicked are for the day of evil, who do not grant eternal reprobation and preterition; these cavil at God's prerogative: Rom. 9:18, 'Whom he will he hardeneth;' i.e., withdraws the influences of his grace from them. They are hardened as water is freezed by the absence of the sun. The preterition of God is not the cause of sin, but the antecedent: 2 Tim. 2:20, In a great house there

are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.' And Jude 4, speaks of 'some who were of old ordained to this condemnation, before the world was.'

2. Because all do not believe. It is a visible argument that all are not justified, because all do not apply themselves to Christ for justification. The righteousness of Christ will bear this limitation, none have a share in it but believers: Rom. 3:22, 'Even the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe, for there is no difference.' All they, and none but they. Now, all are not believers: 'All have not faith,' 2 Thes. 2:12, 13; Mat. 20:16, 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' The preaching of the gospel doth not work upon all; they have the outward means, but not the inward grace. Scarce all have the outward means.

Use 1. This checketh that wild charity that was in Origen, who thought that all should be saved at last, even the devils themselves. And this opinion was revived in Germany by a man of an obscure name, and by some in our days. Now, consider that the general drift of the scriptures saith, 'Depart from me, I know you not,' Mat. 7:23. That there are goats as well as sheep; some to whom Christ will say, 'Go ye, cursed,' Mat. 25:41. Some that are without: Rev. 22:15, 'Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.' The main places whereupon they build their conceit are these: Rom. 5:18, 'Wherefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came unto all men to justification of life;' where Christ and Adam are compared together, and the one's sin and the other's sufferings are made equivalent: 1 Cor. 15:22, 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' But in these places Christ and Adam are compared as two common roots, and the one should be as able to save, as the other to ruin those that belong to him. The other place is 1 Cor. 15:28, 'That God may be all in all,' which they understand of God's presence and glory in all. But the apostle speaketh there only of those holy ones who shall have a glorious manifestation of the presence of God, so that God will be all in all to them. But I shall no longer rake in this dirt.

Use 2. Is to teach you:—

1. Not to be contented with those common privileges which all men may enjoy, for you may have all these and not be saved. All men are not justified, and therefore not saved. As in creation, because God bestowed a human form upon you, therefore you think he will save you; but God doth not save all those he hath made: Isa. 27:11, 'It is a people of no understanding; and therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.' It is ill trusting to that. Men will say, I hope to be saved as well as others, and the like. The covenant of works was made with all men, as being in Adam's loins; but not that of grace, that is made to those that are given to Christ. Hath he given you a mind to know him? Heb. 8:10, and a heart to receive him? John 1:12; then it is well. It is no privilege to be an intellectual creature, only to be wiser than the beasts to our own destruction. So for an estate; surely God loveth and favoureth me, because he blesseth me with worldly good things: Eccles. 9:1, 2, 'No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all, and there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked.' This all men may have, but you must have some privilege that is distinct. So for good meanings; they thank God they have a good heart towards him, and ever had, and that they know they have done their best; as the young man said, Mat. 19:20, 'All these have I kept from my youth.' I tell you, whatever you have by nature, every man may have; and therefore, till you have faith and other graces, it is as nothing.

2. It teacheth you not to flatter yourselves with the universality of grace and mercy. Many live and die, and rot in their sins, and think Christ will save them, and mercy will save them. You see Christ will not save all, and God gave him no commission to justify all: Deut. 29:19,20,' When he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man: Mark, it is said, *against that man*. God hath a special quarrel at him that abuseth mercy: there will a time come when they shall see his justice; as the thief said on the cross, Luke 23:41, 'And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds.'

Use 3. Is to the people of God, that have had any sense of their justification by Christ—any inclination to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh: Rom. 8:1, 'There is no condemnation to them.' Man is most taken with anything that is appropriate; it is a privilege that is mine, —it is not given to others. This exhorteth you to the greater sense of this privilege; it is not every one's mercy. The apostle showeth this is one of God's reasons in passing by the reprobate world: Rom. 9:23, 'That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.' Your mercies are mightily aggravated by their want. Respects are not favours when they are bestowed promiscuously. Oh, consider this is the mercy of God's own people: Ps. 119:132, 'Look upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do to those that love thy name.' Alas! what should engage God to you above others? Oh, consider and admire the goodness of God, that hath passed by millions, and yet manifested himself to thee, in whom there was no desert! 'This was an endearment to the Israelites: Ps. 147:19,20, 'He hath showed his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation;' Deut. 7:7,8, 'The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, but because the Lord loved you.'

THE TWELFTH VERSE.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

IN this last verse, as in most of the former, you may observe a scandal, and a provision against it; for the prophet still continueth his method. As in the life of Christ, there was no passage or occurrence that did deject him to such a degree of abasement but that he showed forth some glimpse of his power and Godhead; as when they came to take him, he forced them to go backward and fall to the ground, John 18:6. So here, the prophet never giveth a single scandal, but addeth some glorious event and effect of it. Observe, then, two parts:—

First, Christ's conflict.

Secondly, Christ's conquest. The conflict is last in the order of the words, but first in order of nature and time.

There observe that the scandal of Christ's conflict is reduced to four heads:—

1. His death: *he poured out his soul unto death.*

2. The ignominy of it: *he was numbered with the transgressor.*

3. The cause of it, both of his death and ignominy: *he bore the sins of many.*

4. The prayer, meekness, and patience of Christ, together with his desire of the application of this remedy: *he made intercession for the transgressors.*

Secondly, For the conquest; there it is first hinted in the promise of the Father: *I will divide him a portion with the great.*

2. The possession and enjoyment of the Son, what the Father would give, and what the Son shall enjoy: *I will give him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong*. Or, if you will have it more particularly, you may consider it thus:—

1. The ground of the conquest, implied in the causal particle, *therefore.*

2. The donor or author of it, God the Father: *I will divide.*

3. The reality of it, it was done; God the Son shall find this promise accomplished: *he shall divide the spoil with the strong*.

4. The nature of the conquest; it is expressed *by a portion with the great,* and by *dividing the spoil.*

5. From whom he shall take them: from *the great* and *the strong*.

6. Others add the persons whom he shall admit into co-partnership in the conquest and spoils, as implied in that word, *with the strong;* how justly, we shall see by and by. Though you may now guess at the sense of the words by this explication of them into their parts, yet I shall give you some better satisfaction about the phrases before I let them pass.

At this time, I shall insist upon the conquest, which, as I have observed, is last in nature and time, yet first in the order of the words. I shall pitch upon that now; and my first endeavour shall be to open it to you; for indeed, though most interpretations in their result and effect come to the same thing, yet I find they do not make it out one and the same way; so that the phrases need a vindication. Consider, then, that the intent of the prophet here is to set out the victory and triumph of the Messiah, which victory and triumph is here set out by terms proper to the triumphs of man. A general, when he hath scattered the enemies and driven them out of the field, securely seizeth upon the prey, and divideth it amongst his followers. The dividing of the spoils is a sign of conquest. Pharaoh, when he promised himself success, Exod. 15:9, you know what he saith there: 'I will pursue, I *will* overtake, I will divide the spoil.' That is the custom of conquerors. So one of Sisera's mother's ladies: 'Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey?' As soon as they had borne down the enemies, and had any leisure, they were for distributing the booty. So the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the glad tidings of the gospel, saith to those that hear them, Isa. 9:3, 'They joy before God according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil: So Christ is here set forth as a conqueror, taking his portion, and dividing the spoil.

I confess there is some difference in reading the words. Junius reads *it, Partem ei dabo, ut cum robustis partiatur praedam—* 'that he may divide the spoil with the strong.' Others, 'I will give him the part of many, and he shall divide the spoil of the strong.' Others, in many, and over the strong, as a great man, or as a strong man useth to do after battle. I shall not intricate the discourse with these things, but by going over word by word make all plain; though for my part I conceive the phrases are put here as common and in general, and only implying a triumph. 'I will divide him a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong;' that you shall see him as a great conqueror, and like the kings and

potentates, and the great and strong ones of the earth, having a part in dividing the spoil.

But it may be better to go over the text more particularly. 'I will divide him a portion with the great.' He is spoken of in the former verses, I will divide him a portion, or give him a part with the great, *barabim,* with many; so it may signify, and implieth the numerousness of those that Christ shall gain to himself among the nations; or the great, that is the powerful, whose power ruled the world. Not as if Christ and they should divide the world between them; that they should have a part and Christ should have a part: as some think, it implieth that Christ should have the elect, and Satan the rest. No, that is not the force of the word; but that Christ should come to parting; that is, to spoil Satan, for he is intended by 'the great' and 'the strong,' though it also noteth and implieth all his instruments, who usually have the dignities and pomp of the world. Therefore, it is said, Col. 2:14,15, that 'he spoiled principalities and powers;' Eph. 4:8, 'He led captivity captive; 'and Luke 11:21, 'He disarmeth the strong man, and divideth the spoils.' I cannot conceal from you that some by this latter sentence, 'divide the spoil with the strong,' understand the godly, those that are called the violent, Mat. 11:12, that with a great deal of fervour of spirit follow him, love him, confess him, and cleave to him, and will not give over for any dangers, lets, and difficulties. But, for method's sake, and reverence to those learned men that affect that sense, I shall take in that in the last place.

The points, then, are:—

1. From the causal particle, *therefore*. Observe—

That the ground of Christ's triumph was his sufferings. Therefore—why? Because he laid down his soul an offering for sin, and hath borne our iniquities, as in the former verse; and it is again amplified in the latter end of this verse. And it is worth our observation, that always the sufferings and exaltation of Christ, when spoken of together, are expressed causally; as Ps. 110:7, 'He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore he shall lift up the head;' that is, drink up the lake of curses that divide between God and the elect. Mark the particle *therefore*. So John 10:17,' *Therefore* doth my Father love me, *because* I lay down my life: Therefore prevail: mark the inference, because. Phil. 2:9, 10, 'He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: *wherefore* God hath highly exalted him.' And John 12:32, it is there expressed conditionally and federally: 'If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me;' that is, if I be lifted up upon the cross, then I shall have power to work the hearts of men to my obedience. So that you see Christ's exaltation did not only imply his humiliation, as in some places it only doth; as Eph. 4:9, 'Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?' It not only necessarily implieth and presupposeth it, but was caused by it, and merited by it. So Rev. 5:9, 'Thou art worthy 'to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy' blood.' To open the seals; that is, to open dark promises, and to do what was necessary for the illuminating of the church. Christ's humiliation and exaltation was not only an antecedent and a consequent, as some divines expound these places, and I myself formerly have done among you, but as a cause and effect, as merit and reward. Calvin indeed judgeth it a curious question whether Christ merited his conquest and triumph; and his reasons were, because there is no express scripture for it. But what shall we say then to those causal particles? But this he saith is a great derogation to the love of Christ, to make him eye himself in his sufferings; since it is said, 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself;' he eyed our good in it, and not his own.

I answer, it maketh much for our comfort, that Christ had his conquests, and the privileges of his mediatorship in a way of justice and merit; that though all things are dispensed to us freely, yet to Christ justly. It is true,

as it hath been handled by divers schoolmen, and as it is referred merely to the glorification of Christ's humanity, so it is a curious question; but as it importeth the carriage of all things appertaining to our comfort and salvation between God and Christ in a way of rigour and justice, so it maketh much for our comfort and consolation.

Use 1. Here is a sealing of your comfort, it was merited by Christ you can do nothing to merit it, but Christ did. What is free grace to you is due debt to Christ. Alas! what can you do to find so much grace with God as to prevail over Satan or your own spirit, to lift up the head in triumph, so as to be raised to glory? Though you cannot tell how, yet Christ did. God is bound in justice to Christ to do all these things for you. You have a double claim in God; you can lay hold of his mercies engaged by his promises to you, and of his justice engaged by the merits of Christ for you. Things are not now uncertain; Christ hath merited such a capacity as to bestow grace and glory and every good thing upon you. You cannot hope to prevail over Satan, but God hath indented with Christ; 'Therefore he shall divide a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong.' You cannot hope for glorious privileges; alas! you are poor; vile, worthless creatures: but 'He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he shall lift up the head,' and your head too. You cannot look for the power of the Spirit to draw you to Christ these are great comforts, but not for you: 'But if I be lifted up, I will draw all men after me.' Christ merited that privilege by his sufferings. You cannot open the book, neither can you find anything in yourselves to encourage you to hope for such a privilege; no more indeed you should not find any merit in yourselves, but seek it in another. Christ was worthy, for he was slain; and if you are Christ's, and Christ be yours, you are worthy, for you have his merit, though none of your own.

2. If the ground of Christ's triumph were his death and sufferings, then here is great comfort to you in all your inward and outward abasements. Here is a double comfort, one to allay fear, and the other to encourage hope. To allay fear: be not dismayed, great abasements usually go before glory. And then to encourage hope; the greatest abasements will turn to the greatest glory. Christ's death and sufferings were not only the antecedent, but the cause of his conquest and exaltation. 'Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great.' Consider with yourselves:—

[1.] Great abasements often go before glory. This was the dispensation God used to Christ: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and then to enter into glory?' and will not you take it well at the hands of God to drink of Christ's cup, to be first crowned with thorns before you be crowned with glory, to be humbled before converted; to be slurred with the bishop's coal-dust before you be shining platters upon God's shelf, as that martyr said; to be full of wants before you be full of Christ? What is your abasement? If you look inward, you have a vile heart, a destitute, naked soul, no grace, but much corruption; therefore there are some hopes of crumbs when you find yourself a dog; as the woman of Canaan maketh it a motive, Mat. 15:27. Oh, be not discouraged! Blessed be God, he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. There is no sentence re*p*eated so often in the New Testament as that, Prov. 15:33, 'Before honour is humility.' This is the Lord's course, to make us poor in spirit, and then rich in grace. But is the trouble outward? Are you low in the world,, of base account and esteem? Oh, remember, Jesus Christ was first accounted a glutton, a wine-bibber, one that had a devil in the eye of the world, and then had a name above all names. Mordecai was first envied for sitting at the king's gate, and then honoured by his adversary with sitting upon the king's horse. Job was brought from a large estate to the very dust, because God would bless his latter end more than his beginning, Job 42:12. As Samuel saith to Saul, 1 Sam. 15:17, 'When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel?' It may be God hath more eminent providences for you after your great abasement.

[2.]. This should be so far from being a discouragement, that it is a ground of hope. Usually we get great advantage by our sufferings. Consider the conflict of Christ, upon the cross, his cross was his triumph; like Sampson, he destroyed more enemies at his death than in all his life; his cross was his chariot of triumph: Col. 2:15, 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' 'Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great,' because made so small: James 1:9, 'Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.' Your abasement is your preferment and exaltation: 2 Cor. 1:5, 'As 'the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation aboundeth in Christ.' The greatest grace meets with the greatest conflicts,

because it is the greatest grace. This is so sure a truth, that even their spiritual abasements, their falls, their sins, do work for their good; the soul groweth the more humble, holy and watchful. Paul was the more fervent and frequent with God in prayer because of the messenger of Satan, 2 Cor. 12:10. David came to number the people, and by that means came to know where the temple should be built, which he so earnestly desired to know. Hezekiah was the more humble for his fall, 2 Chron. 23:31; he knew all that was in his heart. But especially it holdeth good in outward abasements; they are cause of more good to their souls. The setting of the day-star maketh way for the sunrising, and the loss of some petty comfort for their abundant consolation in Jesus Christ.

I shall now come to the author and donor, God the Father: 'I will divide a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong.'

Doct. That the power and majesty whereby Jesus Christ overcame his enemies was by the gift and appointment of the Father: Ps. 110:1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thine enemies thy footstool;' that is, God the Father said to Christ. And Ps. 2:6, 'I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.' Christ was a king of God's making. So the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, John 5:22. All the supremacy, power, and majesty that Christ had as Mediator was derived from the Father. So Mat. 28:18, 'All power is given to me both in heaven and earth.' Christ's power was given to him, and it was meet it should be so.

The condition on God the Father's part was to honour the Son for the elect's sake; and the Son had glorified the Father, John 17:4, by virtue of the compact and agreement between them. And besides, we could not take so much comfort in the advancement of Christ unless we had the consent of the Father. The love of every person was to appear to the creature, especially the love of the offended person; sin in its last result being against the Father: hence it is so often said that he hath 'given him a name above all names;' that he hath 'put all things in subjection.' And therefore it is a mighty pledge of God's love to the creature, and of what God will do for us, now our nature is advanced to such high and glorious privileges. Not only God the Son was willing, who assumed our nature in his own person, but God the Father was willing to do it.

Use 1. To direct us to stick to God's choice and appointment. He hath honoured Jesus Christ to be the king of his church: Luke 22:29, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom.' And therefore we should honour him, and acknowledge no other. God chose Adam a wife in paradise, and he chose a husband to the church, who is bone of our bone:. and therefore we should honour him as the captain of our salvation. Now God hath honoured him, and put all things in subjection to him: Hosea 1:11, it is said, 'They shall appoint themselves one head;' Eph. 1:22, 'And gave him to be head over all things to the church.' Thus shall it be done to them whom the king delighteth to honour. Thus shall it be done to the person whom God will honour, that has such faith, dependence, reverence, and confidence. They, appoint him whom God hath appointed. You do as it were anew honour Jesus Christ, when your dependence on him is according to the honour the Father hath put upon him. 2 Sam. 16:18, as Hushai said, 'Whom the Lord shall choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.' God the Father hath chosen him; look to him as your head, king, and husband, as the captain of your salvation, the author and finisher of your faith. God hath divided him a portion with the great.

2. It teacheth us to glorify the Father in our thoughts, expressions, and affections, for the honour that be hath put upon Jesus Christ. The person that is most in our eye usually intercepts all the love and praise of the creature. Though you can never enough honour and magnify the person of Jesus Christ, yet do not exclude the person of the Father. The persons in the Trinity mutually glorify one another, and why should not we? In every glorious manifestation of the power of Christ, send up a thankful thought, some acknowledgment of love and praise to the Father. As Paul: Rom. 7:24,25, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It is accomplished by the power God hath put upon Jesus Christ. Look upon what terms the scriptures do pitch all comfort and expectation upon the person of Christ: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us.' There is the end why all is in Christ. So Phil. 2:11: 'And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Mark, the person of Christ can never be enough in our

thoughts, nor mentioned in our mouths, for be is the Lord; but it is to the glory of the Father. As often as you remember the work of your redemption, remember the work of the Father, and then you will find your. hearts raised in thankfulness and love to him. Christ himself, when he saw poor souls receive the gospel, though he saith there the power of dispensing was committed to him, Mat. 11:25, compared with 27, yet he saith, 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast revealed it to them.' See if your hearts be raised and ravished within you with this eternal and free love of God to the glory of the Father.

3. It is a great ground of trust and confidence, when you go to God in prayer to turn your captivity, for power against your spiritual adversaries, as sin, Satan, fears of death, and hell.; or earthly ones, as unjust and tyrannous encroachments without. Urge it to God, did not he divide Christ a portion with the great? You desire but to exalt the king of his own making, a king upon his holy hill. Was it not thine own grant and donation? When we come and urge God's own acts upon him, and he urgeth it to God, you shall see he will own them. The apostle alludeth to that of the Psalms, in Heb. 2:8, 'Thou didst set him over the work of thine hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.' And why not my sins and mine enemies? But alas! 'We see not yet all things put under him;' it is not yet made good to our sense and experience. Lusts are stirring and Satan busy. Lord, didst thou not say, that all things should be put under him? Go to God, and do but press him with his own appointment.

I now come to the third particular, and that is the reality of this conquest. It was not only promised by God the Father, but God the Son was possessed of it: 'He shall divide the spoil with the strong.'

Doct. That the Lord Jesus was a glorious conqueror.

Dividing of the spoil is the effect of a sure and a great conquest. You may perceive that in all respects it maketh a victory glorious. You know the eminency of it lieth in these four things:—

1. Either in the power of the adversaries. There is no triumph in prevailing over weak things: 1 Sam. 26:20, 'For the king of Israel is come

out to seek a flea, as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.' What honour could Saul get to seek a flea, or hunt a partridge in the mountains,—to chase hares or harts?

2. By the unlikelihood of the means. A thousand men were slain by the jaw-bone of an ass by the hands of Sampson; and a numerous host discomfited by Gideon's pitchers and three hundred lamps. Such things as these make the success memorable.

3. The manner or nature of the victory. Total defeats are most noted. A slight hurt, or some petty brush is nothing, as Amalek's falling upon the weak rear, and putting the hindermost stragglers to shame; what is that? The conquest is not complete till there be a dissipation and dissolution of the whole force that is against us.

4. A conquest is glorious in the effects or result of it. If it be of great importance and consequence to the good of a people, when fears are removed, and privileges are granted and enlarged, spoilers taken, a kingdom subdued,—these things make for the glory of the victory. And, therefore, let us see if such things be not found in the conquest of Christ. There are strong adversaries and weak means, glorious achievements and great effects and fruits of this conquest, for the benefit of the faithful; and therefore he was a glorious conqueror.

First, The adversaries; they are mighty. They are always expressed by such notions as do imply great strength and power: Col. 2:15, it is said, 'He spoiled principalities and powers.' The evil angels, by reason of their power and prevalency in and with the world, are expressed by that name, 'principalities and powers.' So Eph. 4:8, 'He led captivity captive;' that is, he captivated enemies such as are apt to bring us into bondage. It is as much as if it were said, he prevailed over victory,—he led captivity itself captive. And he is called the strong man, Luke 11:21.

But let us a little more particularly consider the enemies, and then we shall see how much they add to the glory and renown of the conquest.

1. There is the devil, who is a powerful adversary. He causeth great disturbance to the people of God, either to the called or uncalled. He

either accuseth us, or soliciteth us to evil. He accuseth the called and converted, and so filleth their souls with disquieting, doubtful thoughts. Ay! but 'the prince of this world is judged,' John 16:11. God hath condemned him for an accuser; God hath condemned him for condemning you: and when he cometh to resist you at the time you are about the work of God, judgment is passed upon the liar who would cause you to misjudge yourselves. Sometimes he soliciteth to evil; injects carnal and provoking thoughts. Ay! but Satan is rebuked: Zech. 3:2, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee.' There is grace to check and oppose him. But Satan chiefly worketh upon the uncalled people of God-men in their unregeneracy and sinful estate; he possesseth their hearts, and 'worketh in the children of disobedience,' Eph. 2:3, detaining them in blindness, captivates and subjects them to the power of their lusts, and so by this means possesseth the most part of the world by ignorance and superstition, or else causeth them to hold the truth in unrighteousness; and erects strongholds, partly by ignorance, partly by error and superstition, and partly by lusts and violent temptations, which he darts forth that he may keep the world in his obedience. But now 'the prince of this world is cast out,' John 12:31. Satan is dispossessed, and his power vacated, his rule disannulled. Great Pan is dead, being like Dagon brought upon his face in the presence of the ark. And so, some stories say, the idols were overturned at the time of Christ's birth. Certain we are, spiritually it is true, if not fulfilled in a literal miracle. Thus Satan is an enemy.

2. The law, that was an enemy, as it condemns us; the law of ordinances was against us. Now Christ hath abolished it, so far as it was contrary and prejudicial to our, acceptance with God, as it made for our discomfort and condemnation, and bound us to wrath, and to such obedience as could not be fulfilled by us: Col. 2:14, 'Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.' Christ contended with the law, and took us out of the hands of it, abrogated the curse and rigour of it. Alas I' we were all a prey to the law, till Christ did arise and plead our cause, and removed the curse and the difficulties of obedience, and made the craggy hill to become a plain to us. He 'slew the enmity by his cross,' Eph. 2:16. Now, as great an enemy as the law was to us, it was by God's

appointment, and it may be thought much that God should abrogate his own law. Christ was not only to deal with rebels, but with his Father's appointments, that he might abolish them so far as there was any enmity and contrariety in them, to our good.

3. Death and hell. I join them both together, because the scripture doth so often. Of all enemies, these are the most potent and severe, yet are overcome by Christ. Christ, conquering the law, must needs conquer death: 'The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: By Christ death is made a friend, as Haman served Mordecai. It doth but help us to honour and advancement: 1 Cor. 15:54, 'Death is swallowed up in victory,'—destroyed and brought to nothing. We may outdare death, it cannot harm us, it doth but midwife us into glory. And then for hell, the mouth of it is shut up, so that it serveth only as an aggravation of our mercies: Rev. 20:6, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over such the second death hath no power;' 2 Tim. 1:10,' He hath abolished death,'—overthrew it. When the fears of death encroach upon our spirits, you may see a stone rolled upon the mouth of hell by Jesus Christ: Rev. 1:18, 'I am 'alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and hell;' and Rev. 20:14, 'Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire.' What comfort is this for those that have an interest in Christ, that Christ hath the keys of death and hell!

4. The flesh. Corruption is a bosom-enemy, that insinuates with us, and worketh upon us in our most pleasing desires: Rom. 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity to God;' and Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit.' It is a great trouble to a gracious heart. Though it be flesh, as dear to us as our own skin, yet it is a thorn in the flesh, a great cumber to a gracious heart. Nehemiah was very much troubled with his adversaries, because divers about him that abode with him held secret correspondence with his enemies, Neh. 8:18. So we carry somewhat about us that complies with Satan Rebellious lusts, and vicious affections, and proud thoughts swarm in our hearts, to the disdain of the yoke of Christ: 2 Cor. 10:5, 'Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' But it is said, Rom. 8:3, 'God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.'

O beloved! sin in your flesh is rooted in your corrupt desires; but it is a condemned thing, and it will be executed. Mat. 12:20, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he bring forth judgment unto victory.' he will make the cross triumphant.

5. The world,—take it either for the baits and allurements, or the concernments and interests of it, anything that may be dangerous to us in the work of our salvation. But Christ hath overcome the malignity of it. Christ would put all out of doubt and danger: John 16:33, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' Height shall not separate no more than depth, neither favour nor frowns. Christ hath taken away the noxiousness and harm of everything that may be propounded to us.

6. All the adverse powers in the world. Stubborn enemies are sometimes armed with power: Rev. 17:14, 'These shall make war with the Lamb;' that is, the kings of the earth. This is a great terror, when a man seeth all the combined force of a nation, all the force, authority, and strength combined against Christ: Ps. 110:6, 'He shall wound the heads over many countries, and strike through kings in the day of his wrath;' and Ps. 2:10-12, 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.' A little wrath will destroy a great person. Sometimes our enemies are enraged with malice. Herod being vexed at the wise men's words, he vowed revenge; but, alas! he could not overcome Christ in his cradle. What will they do now he is in heaven, out of their reach? Ps. 124:3, 'They had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us;' that is, when their courage is heightened by wrath. Ps. 76:10, 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee;' i.e., shall keep an holyday. This wrath shall serve the design of Christ, for God will make every stiff knee to bow, Phil. 2:10. Alas! fear surpriseth us when a provoked enemy cometh with rage and fury, as if like a flood he would bear all before him. But this may occasion a day of praise to God. And then sometimes your enemies are advantaged with wit, wealth, and all outward sufficiencies and supplies: Luke 16:8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light;' that is, more dexterous in the course of their affairs. And Mat.

11:26, the things of Christianity are 'hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.' So Ps. 64:6, 'They search out iniquity, they accomplish a diligent search; but the inward thought of every one of them and the heart is deep.' They may be men of great parts, pregnant invention, full of politic enterprises; ay! but all this is nothing: Job 5:13, 'He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.' Christ hath died to recover the truth, and to free the souls of his servants from such kinds of assaults as these. These are the enemies that are most stubborn, but they are forced to stoop, though they are advantaged with power, armed with malice, and stored with all outward sufficiencies.

Thus you see the enemies whose opposition adds to the glory of the conquest: the devil, the law, death and hell, the flesh and the world, and all the adverse powers and dominations that are combined against Christ. Christ can have no spoil, no prey, no kingdom, no saints, till he had combated with these enemies; their opposition addeth to the renown of the conquest.

Secondly, Let us look to the means. The weapons of this warfare are not carnal; that is, there is little pomp and appearance in them. Look upon them, and the matter will be the more wonderful.

1. As to his death. His very conflict was his triumph. The Lamb overcometh, and Christ conquered Satan, and sin, and the law, when they seemed to have most power upon him; like angry bees that sting others and disarm themselves. When Satan had the greatest hand over Christ, Christ overcame him: Heb. 2:14, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Satan lost his life in his sting. It is observable, that the scripture twice or thrice mentioneth it as a remarkable circumstance that Christ triumphed in his cross: Col. 2:15, 'Triumphing over them in it.' So Eph. 2:16, 'Having slain enmity thereby;' that is, the cross spoken of before, when he was slain himself. His cross is in two places expressed by lifting up: John 3:14, 'Even so the Son of man shall be lifted up;' and John 12:32, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth.' Indeed it was his preferment and exaltation.

2. By the word of the cross, called the foolishness of preaching Ps. 8:2, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength.'

Weak men, whose strength is in their Messiah, may bring men upon their faces by a sermon: 1 Cor. 14:25, 'And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and falling down upon his face, he will worship God, and report, saying, God is in you of a truth.' And recover the world unto his obedience by these arts: Mat. 4:23, 'Jesus went about preaching the gospel of the kingdom.' And his kingdom is gained by that, and it maketh much for the heightening of the conquest.

3. By his Spirit: Zech. 4:6, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' A great force, but secret and undiscerned; mighty to humble, mighty to comfort, mighty to convert and save. The little finger of the Spirit is heavier than the loins of our reasoning, and debates with our souls. Jerusalem is purged by the Spirit: Jer. 4:4, 'Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury come forth like fire.'

4. By his prayers and intercessions: Zech. 3:2, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee.' Christ prayeth Satan into nothing. All the merit of Christ is made effectual by his prayers, and all the efficacy of Christ's death and satisfaction is applied and conveyed to us by the Spirit; and thereby we have the spiritual virtue of Christ's prayers: John 14:16, 'I will pray the Father, and he will send you another Comforter.' All the actual application is by the power of the Spirit, obtained by the intercession of Christ: Luke 17:20, 21, 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, lo there: behold the kingdom of God is within you.' Well, then, these are the arts and engines that Christ useth for the gaining of the world and spoiling of his adversaries; his death, his word, his Spirit obtained by his prayer. Some take in other things, sometimes God ruineth them by themselves, Satan by his own instruments, by their subtilty, and sometimes other ways; but the cause and ground of all are the death, and prayers, and Spirit of Christ; there lieth his strength, and this is a strange and glorious conquest.

Thirdly, The manner or nature of the conquest, how it is achieved and accomplished. See what a conquest it is.

1. The enemies are overcome and terribly broken; there is a total

dissipation of all the powers of darkness. It is expressed in scripture by bruising the head of Satan, Gen. 3:15. Christ received a slight hurt in the conflict; his heel was bruised, but the serpent's head is broken: 1 John 3:8, 'The Son of man came to dissolve the works of the devil.' All the fabric of iniquity is analysed and dissolved,—all the webs and plots of wickedness are unravelled. The dragon is cast out, Rev. 12:9, being combated by Michael and his angels. Sin is condemned in the flesh, Rom. 8:3. Corruptions captivated, 2 Cor. 10:5. The world overcome, John 16:33. Wicked and adverse powers and dominations in the world broken to pieces and grounded to powder, or else gained and forced to yield to the uses and glory of Christ.

2. Not barely overcome and dissipated, though that were much, but spoiled and rifled. Christ hath divided the prey: Col. 2:15, 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' They are spoiled by disarming the strong man, and dividing his spoils, Luke 11:22. God hath spoiled and dispossessed Satan of the souls that were taken captive by him at his pleasure; they are recovered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The nations are got from under his obedience, and subdued to the power of the gospel. So death and hell are under his power; they are, as it were, under lock and key. Satan had the power of them heretofore, and then men were always under bondage: Heb. 2:14,15, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.' They durst not think of judgment and hell, because Satan had them in his power as God's executioner; but now, saith Christ, 'I have the keys of death.' The world is despoiled of all its wit, wealth, glory, and power; these are made to serve the uses of Christ, being recovered out of the chains of wicked men: Micah 4:13, 'And thou shalt beat in pieces many nations, and shalt consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth;' Zech. 14:14,20, 'The wealth of the nations shall be gathered together. And upon the bells of the horses and the pots in Jerusalem there shall be written, HOLINESS TO THE LORD: All this is done so clearly to the eye of faith, that they do even see Christ triumphing Isa. 63:1, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling

in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.'

3. Such a victory as endeth in a solemn triumph; as conquerors in public view carried their spoils and their enemies tied to their chariots, so Christ would expose them to open shame. Therefore, it is said, Eph. 4:8, 'He led captivity captive,' as it were in triumph, as you do manacled prisoners. So Col. 2:15, 'He made a show of them openly;' he put them to open shame. How so?—before God and the eyes of believers. We may see the triumphant chariot of Christ, and Satan, hell and death, and the world haled after it. As soon as the soul is possessed of Christ, and beginneth to have some interest in him, it feels this benefit, and seeth how these things are captivated by the death, Spirit, and power of Christ. Christ doth, as it were, call upon your souls, Come, look! here is Satan disarmed, death unstinged, hell shut up, and I have the keys; sin is manacled, wrath satisfied, the law's curse and rigour taken out of the way, heady enemies despoiled and discouraged, the world subdued and brought to my obedience, or forced to serve my glory. So that you see the conquest is full and absolute.

Object. But you will say, I feel none of these things; why are these enemies so busy and cumbersome about my soul, if totally dissipated by Christ?

I answer briefly in these considerations:—

1. It is true in faith, though not in sense and feeling, that these adversaries received their death's wound at the death of Christ. This was done in the merit of Christ, and in God's decree and ordination. Christ was possessed of this promise of having a portion with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong; all things were put under his feet. The crown was put upon the head of Jesus Christ, though it be not effectually made out to sense. There is the objection from sense: Heb. 2:8, 'But now we see not all things put under him.'

2. Though it be so that these things are left for a while, it is partly to exercise our souls, and to draw forth the life of our graces. Opposition keeps the soul humble and wakeful. Paul had a thorn in the flesh, and a

messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 12:7. It is partly to prove us, to see if we will enter into the battle, and powerfully maintain it, and combat against the enemies of Christ; and partly to make us the more thankful for our deliverance by Christ. Christ was tempted like us, that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and that we might be touched with a feeling of Christ's sufferings, and the greatness of Christ's love to us. Experience maketh us the more sensible how it would have been with us, if we had not been freed by the Son of God. Oh, when we are a little scorched with wrath, when we tug with sin, we may begin to think what it is to dwell with everlasting burning. How would it have been if Christ had not died for us? So when there are difficulties abroad, what should we have done with these mountains, if it had not been for our Zerubbabel? Experience giveth us the best sense of things, therefore the Lord saw fit to continue these things for a season. As it is said of Daniel's beasts, Dan. 7:12, that their 'dominion was taken away,' though their 'lives was prolonged for a season.' So their power to hurt or endamage our salvation is gone: 1 Peter 3:13, 'And who is he that will harm you?' Nothing 'shall separate you from the love of God,' Rom. 8:33. Neither death, nor hell, nor sin, shall prejudice the salvation of the elect; Satan cannot ruin, death cannot disannul it; hell hath no right, and sin hath no reign; the world may kill us, but they cannot conquer us.

3. Though continued, they cannot harm us, rather they may do us good. Even sin and Satan may give us cause to glory in infirmities, 2 Cor. 12:10, to boast of our weakness: they may occasion such supplies and comforts from God; but certain we are they cannot hurt our souls nor hinder our salvation.

4. The work will be thoroughly and completely done ere long; our comforts and hopes in Christ will prove sure: Rev. 12:11, 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb.' 'We do not as yet see all things put under him,' Heb. 2:8. Mark, that as *yet* implies it is at hand. We do not as yet see the god of this world fully cast out and falling as lightning from heaven; we do not as yet find sin fully mortified, Satan subdued, Christ exalted among all the nations; none of these things are as yet completely done. But here is the comfort of believers: Rom. 16:20, 'The God of peace shall

bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' All this will be done, and will not you tarry a little while? As the church saith, Micah 7:8,9, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.' Times will be better and hearts better.

5. If we do find and feel no benefit by the conquest of Christ, it is through our own corruptions. God hath not left us for the present without some sense of it. You will have some rule over your hearts and spirits, more grace to resist Satan, more comfort against the fear of death, and less trouble about the difficulties of obedience: 1 John 5:4, 'Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.' Thus you see we have gone through the third part, that is, a complete victory, even to the spoiling and triumphing over Satan, who shall be totally subdued.

Fourthly, The next and last thing proposed was the fruits and effects, or what special benefit we have by the conquest of Christ.

I answer—It is hard to mention all the rich communications of grace that we enjoy by it. Those that are most proper are these:—

1. The banishment of distracting fear: holy fear remaineth, but that natural fear which would distract and perplex the soul is gone. The apostle speaks, Heb. 2:15, of some 'who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' There is a natural fear in us; though not always felt, yet it is easily awakened, so as we could not think of death, or hell, or judgment, but it filled us with a great deal of terror. But now a child of God hath a great deal of courage and boldness; be may remember it to increase his joy and praise; he can play upon the hole of the cockatrice; death and hell may aggravate his mercies, but cannot increase his fears; so that they are fitted for the worst condition and the greatest duty: Ps. 23:4, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.' They are fitted for the sorest suffering and the greatest service. In the sorest affliction they may be comforted; hell-gates are shut, and Christ hath locked them up. So for the greatest service: Luke 1:74,75, 'That being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might

serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.' It is a mighty weakening to the hands of the soul in duty, when we ponder upon the danger and difficulties, and the powerful opposition we shall meet with in the ways of grace. Ay! but now we may serve him without fear; Christ hath conquered death and hell, lusts and fears. We can the better bear afflictions now they are unstinged, and their venom taken away. We can the better go through duty; the joy of the Lord may be our strength the enemies are fallen before us.

2. It is an encouragement to the spiritual conflict. The difficulty of things amazeth the heart, and causeth the spirit to faint and melt within us. Thus vigorous opposition within, without giants and the sons of Anak, Satan and wicked men, our own hearts and all are against us. Oh! but be not dismayed, you are sure to overcome; you fight against a manacled enemy, a naked enemy, a vanquished enemy. Mice may trample upon a dead lion, and the feeblest creatures insult a dead carcase. Will you fear Satan in chains? He is bound up; he was let loose upon Christ, and hath. been bound up ever since. 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might,' Eph. 6:10. God is at our right hand, and he will assist us in our endeavours against Satan; you may go on with hope and resolution.: Ps. 110:5, 'The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.' Hope of success is a strength and encouragement to an undertaking.

3. Here is joy unspeakable and glorious. Christ's triumphs are our joy. Oh, what a triumph, even to exaltation, is it to see Satan despoiled and trampled upon, sin disarmed, and hell locked up! Luke 1:47, 'My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.' Oh, you may triumph over the powers of darkness: Isa. 51:11, 'Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.' Why? because the Lord hath smote Rahab, and wounded the dragon. Spiritual enemies being destroyed, we may make our boast of Christ all the day long.

4. Hopes of glory: we shall conquer with him, and we shall reign with him. There is nothing that can be noxious and hurtful to our salvation. Christ will not leave till he hath settled us upon his own throne: Rev. 3:21,

'To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.' We shall have fellowship with Christ in his glory, as Christ as Mediator had fellowship with the Father's glory; we shall have the throne of Christ, as Christ has that of his Father. He led captivity captive, and then ascended; so he will cause us to conquer and overcome: Eph. 2:6, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Conquerors enter after the spoil into the secure possession of their kingdoms; so did Jesus Christ, and so shall we.

5. Great comfort accrueth and redoundeth to us by it; the very exaltation of Christ is a great comfort to us. We are happy in the success of our Prince, and we have interest in a great conqueror, in Michael, the great prince, Dan. 12:1. As Joshua put his feet upon the necks of the kings, Josh. 10:24; so our Joshua, our Jesus, calleth to the captains and men of war with him, to come and set their feet upon the necks of their enemies. Nay, the apostle seemeth to express it, as if he did invest us in a surplusage of privileges: Rom. 8:37, 'We are more than conquerors, through him that loved us;' and 2 Cor. 2:14, 'Now thanks he unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.' We have such a glorious Saviour as can help and stead his followers. Therefore, you may be always boasting.

6. There is this fruit and effect of Christ's conquest; it is a token, earnest, and pledge of our victory. Everything is first done in Christ, then in us; he died, rose, and conquered as our common person: John 16:33, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' What is that to us? Christ hath overcome, and that is a sign *you* shall overcome too: 1 John 5:4, 'For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' First Christ, and then your faith. There will something be done proportionably in your souls. God chose him, therefore he is called his 'Elect servant,' Isa. 13:1. And he hath chosen us, John 15:16, 'But I have chosen you.' He calleth him. Christ took this honour when called, then we; Christ dieth, and we die; he was justified in the Spirit, then he riseth and ascendeth, so do we; he conquereth, so do we.

7. What Christ did in this conquest, he did it for our sakes. He will have

nothing but we shall share in it. If God give him a portion with the great, he will divide it with the strong: Luke 22:29, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.' Mark, Christ would have you have the same privileges as he hath John 12:30, 'This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.' Christ eyed us in his actions: John 17:22, 'And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.' Christ would have you come and ride with him in his triumphant chariot, and spoil principalities and powers.

8. Another benefit is usefulness and serviceableness of all that befalls us. Christ doth so effect it that all things work together for good, Rom. 8:28. The crooked sticks help to make the faggot the more decent. You do not only get a prey from Satan and your sins, but they yield you some good, and you may glory in infirmities, and desire to close with him, and cleave to him.

Use. I did here and there interpose matter applicative, but now I shall come to it more formally. The uses concern the people of God, or the adversaries of Christ.

1. To the people of Christ: Behave yourselves towards him as a conqueror.

[1.] Get an interest in him. Oh, who would not strive to get an interest in Christ, that he may have a share in his spoils? Who would not be one of the angels and followers of Michael, the great prince? 'He preserveth the souls of his people,' Ps. 97:10. There is safety under the shadow of his wings. Therefore, apply your souls to this matter. You that think of Christ for a Lord, get your interest cleared. The soul is encumbered with fears for want of clearing up its right in Christ, and entertains these comforts with a loose heart for want of that. The soul is apt to say, Oh, if I were Christ's, then the matter were at end, and therefore, get it cleared up. How sweetly then can you reason and argue, This is my Christ, this is he that died for me: whilst others must be persuaded to seek Christ, and to cleave to him. We all desire to be of the strongest side: consider it, Jesus Christ is a glorious conqueror.

[2.] Believe in him, and depend on him to possess your souls of these

glorious privileges. Luther saith, carnal men hear these comforts *quasi somniantes*—like golden dreams, rare things, but presented to fancy rather than faith. Oh, stir up the large and sure apprehensions of faith. These things require a wakeful and believing soul, to see Christ conquering, triumphing, and spoiling the powers of darkness. Spiritual conquests must be discerned with a spiritual eye: Luke 8:10, 'To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom.' Other men may hear them, but you know the mysteries. Oh, it is a great privilege vouchsafed, that when others only hear the voice, you see the glory; you see him leading captivity captive. It is in your eye that the powers of darkness are put to an open shame. You see the conqueror coming from Bozrah, the blood of his garments that cutteth off his enemies; all this is easily made out to your faith. Oh, therefore, depend upon him in all your assaults and straits; do not think to help and relieve yourselves by your own wit and parts; put forth endeavours, but do not rest in them; disclaim your own strength Isa. 30:15, 'For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' The less the creature bustles, and the more it believeth, the more safe. Pray and wait in quietness and confidence that you are safe. The Philistines placed much confidence in their Goliath: oh! what hopes will you pitch upon Jesus Christ, the great conqueror!

[3]. Check vain fears of death and hell, Satan, lusts, and the world. Alas! there is no more spirit left in these things; they are like the Canaanites which were stung by God's hornets before the Israelites conquered them: 'I will send my hornets before you.' Fear possessed them, and then they were easily vanquished. Christ hath not only stung them, but broke them in pieces. Will you fear shattered forces? Nay, Christ hath not only broken them, but disarmed them, and not only disarmed them, but bound them; and who would fear naked and chained enemies? Children are frightened at the sight of enemies, though bound. Oh, be not such children in grace! You shall find often in scripture that this is brought in as a just inference out of Christ's conquest: 'Fear not, I have overcome the world.' Some are careless, and fear nothing; others, that mind the danger of their souls, are very apt to be surprised with carnal trouble when they think of death, and hell, and wrath; and altogether it proveth a great consternation to their thoughts: but be not troubled, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me,'

John 14:1. When you think of God and Christ together, God satisfying, and Christ suffering, oh! what an amulet is there, what a cordial for fainting souls! Timorousness in a Christian is a disgrace to Christ. Understand what fears I mean; not a circumspect fear to avoid sin, to shun danger, to put us upon seasonable provisions against evil, but a perplexing fear, such as filleth the soul with amazement. Circumspect fear maketh the soul run to Christ, like chickens under the hen's wings; but the other fear undervalueth the conquest of Christ, as if there were no hope for us in our God, and no hope for us in our Saviour.

[4.] It presseth us to praise, honour, and obey him. Conquerors merit of their country; usually some trophy and statue is erected to their memorial. Oh, what honour do you devise for Christ, now he hath conquered for you, now he hath recovered a church, and it may be your souls, out of the hands of death, and hell, and Satan, and defended you against all the malice of the world! When our knees bow to Christ, our months must confess him, Phil. 2:10,11. Fall down like the elders before the Lamb, with the harps of God in your hands, Rev. 5:9, and give him honour, and blessing, and praise. David, when he had rest from his enemies, he thinketh of building God a temple, 2 Sam. 7:2. God hath given you rest, think of a trophy for God. Honour him in your expressions, affections, and conversations. Serve him now—he hath set you free; you are his by right of conquest: pass over into his power and love as Christ's, Rom, 7:14. The apostle speaketh of himself in his natural condition, 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' He alludeth to a custom among the Romans, who, when captives and prisoners were taken in war, they were wont to sell them to one another, as captives, under a spear. Oh, do not live as carnal, and for the uses and advantages of sin, as if you were the spoils of sin, but as the spoils of Jesus Christ. Oh, be not sold under sin; wholly pass over into his power and right, and live to his glory.

[5.] Set against the enemies with the more courage and resolution. Oh, that the joy of the Lord may be your strength, that in all your endeavours against sin and Satan you may look up to the victory of Christ! It is said, Rom. 7:24, 25, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Oh, you are enclasped within the ribs of the body of death: how shall I get free?

Through Jesus Christ there is hope of triumph. Therefore do not fear, but set upon it. You are mistaken, if you think the work was so done upon Christ's cross that there remaineth nothing for your care and endeavours Rom. 16:20. God 'will bruise Satan,' but it is 'under your feet;' implying there is something that we must do. And Ps. 110:5, 'The Lord at thy right hand will smite through kings in the day of his wrath.' God will smite them through, but it will be at thy right hand, which doth imply our endeavours. Christ will divide the spoil with the strong, and the violent take heaven by force; therefore use all due means. Men cherish a lazy wish, a yawning, drowsy prayer; they may read a chapter, and go on in a dead way, perform a cold duty, or make a formal discourse, but they do not stir up themselves to lay hold upon God. They do not pray, with tears and strong cries and supplications, for a share in Christ's conquest. Where is the violence of your spirits, the earnestness of desires, the fervency of raised affections, vigorous and powerful endeavours? Prov. 13:4, 'The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing.' Oh, therefore, stir up yourselves. Who would not put forth endeavours when they are like to be successful? James 4:7, 'Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you.' You shall not only repel him, but chase him. Oh, buckle to it to the purpose, put on the whole armour of God. Christ's death, and Spirit, and prayers aim at this, that he may do it in you; for it should never content you, unless it be done in your souls, that he may destroy death in you: Col. 1:29, 'Whereunto I also labour, striving according to the working which worketh in me mightily.' Not that he did put forth in his own person only.

[6.] Pray to him that he would show himself Lord and King, that he might rule among his enemies. Christ hath taught us to say, Thy kingdom come: desire that he would powerfully and with his own arm work salvation. Christ's conquest is founded on his prayers and intercessions, therefore help on his kingdom. You know where and to whom to go, when you see the church small, worldly powers enraged, Satan busy. Oh, complain to him, the strong get all the spoils. Urge the promises, especially in the latter days, when the kingdoms of the world are to become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ.

2. Here is terror to the adversaries of Christ. His reign is your ruin: Ps.

93, 'The Lord reigneth;' that is as bad a word as David could speak to the enemies. Be wise, you that act contrary designs to the glory, reign, cause, and servants of Christ. The Red Sea, that yielded a passage to the Israelites, proved a grave to the Egyptians. Consider seriously whether it be not against Christ. When your ways are challenged as opposite to God, look more thoroughly into the nature of them.

I come now to the second part of the text: 'Because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and was numbered with transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors: Which is called the conflict of Christ explained, and is set out in four things:—

1. His death.

2. The ignominy of it.

3. The cause of it.

4. The noted circumstance in it: 'He made intercession for the transgressors.'

I shall begin with the first of these: 'He hath poured out his soul unto death.' It doth not only imply the bare death of Christ, simply that he died; but he died willingly and freely, gave up his whole self to death. So David speaks in the person of Christ, Ps. 22:14, 'I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint.' There is nothing left in the vessel, neither sap nor savour; he freely and willingly poured out every drop of his soul, as if he made no account of it, so man might enjoy benefit by it. It noteth both the freeness and fulness of the sacrifice; it was unto death, and it was poured out.

Observe, That the Lord Jesus did freely and willingly yield up himself to die for our sakes. I handled such a like point on verse the 7th, therefore shall be the more sparing and wary in this. For the proof, I shall rather evidence that it was so, than why he desired it: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' He thought the time would never come; he hindered it not: he did not discontinue resorting to the garden, the place of his usual

abode and retirement. Judas knew that he often resorted thither with his disciples: Mat. 26:53, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently send me more than twelve legions of angels?' The violence of man did not take his life from him: John 10:17,18, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: no man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself.' It was not an enforced obedience to the will of God, for God did not only give Christ, but he gave himself: Gal. 1:4, 'Who gave himself for our sins;' and Eph. 5:2, 'He loved us, and gave himself for us;' which appeared by the cheerful resignation of his soul into the hands of the Father in his agonies: Luke 23:46, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.' It is said, 'He cried with a loud voice,' which noteth his confidence and willingness.

Use 1. It serveth to commend the love of Christ, in that he gave himself: 'He poured out his soul,' and that 'to the death.' There are three things to be noted:—

1. The gift.

2. The manner of giving.

3. The intent.

1. The gift. We read of great gifts in the scripture: Zaccheus, when salvation was come to his house, Luke 19:8, says, 'Half my goods I give to the poor.' And Herod proffered half his kingdom to his niece when she pleased him, Mark 6:23. God in the creation gave all the creatures to man; and the devil says to Christ, Mat. 4:9, 'All these will I give thee.' Ay! but here Christ giveth himself, poureth out his own soul, and with himself everything that maketh for the delighting and contenting of the spirit. Oh, it is better than a thousand worlds! At our creation God gave us but the creatures, but here God giveth himself.

2. The manner; 'He poured out his soul;' which noteth a copious and bounteous effusion of his blood for the creatures' good. *Nihil in hoc Christo est nisi profusa liberalitas misericordiae, et remissionis peccatorum,* said Luther—I see nothing in this Christ but a prodigality of love; if guilty of anything, it was of too much freeness: 'He poured out his

soul.' Oh, when you are at the Lord's Supper, and see the wine poured out, remember the death of Christ set out by this notion, 'He poured out his soul unto death;' see how freely Christ emptied his veins. In the garden he did sweat drops of blood; every pore in his body became an eye, and it wept blood for your sakes.

3. The end and intent, why he would pour out himself like water. It was to die for you: 'He poured out his soul to death.' Simeon suffered himself to be bound for his brethren, Gen. 13:24. Lot offered his daughter, and the man in Judges prostitutes his daughter; and the Levite, Judges 19:23, 24, his concubine to the lusts of the men of Gibeah; but saith Christ, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.' That is man's heroic honour, and it may be we may find two or three rare instances in history. But Jesus Christ laid down his life for enemies, for 'dead dogs,' as David calleth himself. Such as we are he poured out his soul for, even to death. Oh, enlarge your thoughts on these particulars.

Use 2. It yieldeth useful inferences and enforcements to duty.

1. To humbled sinners. Take Christ as freely as he offereth himself to you: He poured out his soul, and you will not come to him, you will not receive him. Oh, come and pour out yourselves into the bosom of Christ; he hath poured out his soul to death for you. You that complain as the church, Lam. 2:11, 'My liver is poured out,' there is much faintness and fears. The liver is the seat of blood; it is made there, and dispersed from thence into all the veins: your liver is only poured out, but Christ's soul is so. Consider, all the persons in the blessed Trinity are willing, and are not you? The Father, John 3:16, 'He gave his only-begotten Son.' And Christ gave himself, Gal. 1:4. And the Spirit is willing, he is grieved at your refusal: 'I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.' He wooeth and beseecheth you, and pleadeth for your entertainment of Jesus Christ. Oh, open to him, and be as willing to believe as Christ was to die: Ps. 142:2, 'I poured out my complaint to him, I showed before him my trouble.' Pour out your souls in faith and prayer, as Christ poured out his soul on the cross.

2. To stubborn sinners, to press them to come out of their sins upon this ground—Jesus Christ poured out his soul unto death. Christ parted with

his heart's blood, and will not you part with your sinful delights? Shall we love our sins better than Christ loved his own soul? He laid down his life, and will not you lay down your lusts? Nay, what horrible unthankfulness is this? Christ poured out his soul to death, and we pour out our souls in the ways of death. In the 11th verse of Jude's epistle we read, that 'they ran greedily after the error of Balaam.' In the original it is, 'They poured out in the error of Balaam;' not as water out of a vessel, drop by drop; but as water out of a bucket, in abundance. Hearts set upon the world, set upon lusts and pleasures, are expressed by giving themselves to work wickedness. Oh, should not you give up yourselves to Jesus Christ, when he gave out himself for you? That is an ill requital, to let loose the reins to your vile affections, and to pour out yourselves in sins without restraint.

3. To the people of God. Christ poured out his soul to death, freely and fully offered himself for your sakes: it presseth you to an imitation in your duties and respects towards God and men. Pour out your souls, discharge them fully and freely; they are both expressed by pouring out the soul. In your duty to God: So Hannah is said 1 Sam. 1:16, to 'pour out her soul before the Lord;' to come freely, and draw out her affections and desires before God. And so for duties to man: Isa. 58:10, 'If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as noonday.' Do both freely.

[1.] Your duties and respect to God. Oh, come and pour out your whole souls; the willingness of your services is the commendation of them: 'Call the Sabbath a delight,' Isa. 58:13; and 1 Chron. 28:9, 'Thou shalt serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind;' and make prayer your joy and pleasure, your comfort and your solace: Isa. 2:3, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways.' Let the meditation of God be sweet to you: Ps. 104:34, 'And I will be glad in the Lord.' See that the thoughts of God are pleasing to you. But now, on the contrary, when the Sabbath is a burden, prayer a task, and you cannot wait upon the Lord one hour in hearing or holy meditation; when the commandments are grievous, meditation irksome, holy company and conference a prison; Oh! then, I say, consider the freeness of Jesus Christ in pouring out his blood for you, and you will find the advantage of pouring out your hearts before God.

[2] In your duties and respects to men. In all offices of love and service, do it willingly; for such was the love of the Lord Jesus to you: 1 Peter 5:2, 'Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly;' especially if it be to instruct and teach them, and to take pains with them about the good of their souls: Phil. 3:1, 'To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.' He often speaks how little good was done, but it was not grievous to him to try again. Labour to put off the sluggishness of your spirits with this consideration—Jesus Christ died freely for souls to relieve them, and shall not I be at some pains to persuade them to accept of him? Forced kindness loseth its acceptance; God and man prize the willing mind best. The will honoureth God more than the deed; for it is not our act any further than it is done willingly: 2 Cor. 8:12, 'If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.' The widow's mite was noted; the unjust judge did his duty by constraint; and in so doing we do not only relieve others, but ourselves.

Use 3. To press us to act proportionably to the act of Christ. He yielded up his whole self, and did it with his whole heart; so let your abounding be in believing, and your gratitude in yielding up yourselves with your whole heart.

I come now to the second circumstance, the ignominy of Christ's death: 'He was numbered with transgressors.' It is to be understood of God or man. It is true before God, God looking upon him under our guilt; but it is most properly true in regard of men, who counted him a sinner and a transgressor, and so delivered him to the Gentiles: John 18:30, 'If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him to thee.' But more especially this prophecy is said to be fulfilled in two places of scripture: as Mark 15:27, 28, 'And with him they crucified two thieves, one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.' That is then eminently fulfilled; for it was also at other times, but then especially, being placed in the middle, not only as a companion of thieves, but as their prince and chieftain. So Luke 22:37, 'For I say unto you, that this that is written must be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among

the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end: There he speaketh as if the intent of this prophecy was more general. I told you of all things necessary; for I and you must be accounted wicked persons; it must be so, for it is foretold. You see the sense; now for the points.

Observe, that the Lord Jesus Christ was reckoned among transgressors, especially in his death and sufferings.

For proof of the point, which is general, let me suggest to you that he was so reputed by men; by wicked men, godly men, and by God himself.

1. By wicked men he was counted a glutton and a wine-bibber, Mat. 11:19; and John 8:48, 'Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.' Nay, they accounted him the prince of devils, but this was chiefly at his death. The high priest charged him with no less than blasphemy: Mat. 26:65, 'He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?' False witnesses were suborned to accuse him of sedition against his country, as if he would destroy the temple, and as if he were a seducer and perverter of the people; of disloyalty to Caesar, as if he went about to make himself king, John 18:36. They preferred Barabbas, a murderer, before him. See these things in the Evangelists.

2. By godly men: Luke 24:21, 'We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.' In their distrustful thoughts the disciples began to doubt of him, and so looked upon him as an imposter.

3. By God himself. Christ having taken our sins upon him, was dealt with as a transgressor: 1 Peter 4:1, 'For he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin;' and Heb. 9:28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.' In his first coming he was not without sin by imputation.

Well, but for the reason why God would suffer Christ thus to be numbered with transgressors. I shall not much trouble you with the allegories of the ancients, recorded by Aquinas, why Christ was crucified between two thieves, and so reckoned as one of them, as the chief of them, to typify that distinction that shall be made at the day of judgment, some being put on the right hand of Christ, and some on the left. The

thief on the right hand was received into paradise, so Leo and Austin. Christ's cross, made his tribunal in his sufferings, and a type of his second glorious coming, and he as a judge placed between two others, who are of less avail, implied, as Hilary would have it, that though all did not know the cross and sufferings of Christ, yet some should be placed on the right hand and some on the left. So Beza thought that the thief on the left side signified those that should endure strictness and hardships in Christianity for the praise of men; others for the praise of God, as the thief on the right side. But these are all but flashes of wit. The reasons of the point are:—

1. That these might be sensible evidences of those sins of ours that Christ bore in his body, and had taken upon himself. This reason is in the text, 'He was numbered among transgressors, for he bare the sins of many.' God would give believers this evidence and testimony that he was a transgressor; that you may know all the load of the blasphemies and rebellions laid upon Christ, God gave a taste of it in these imputations—a devil, a blasphemer. God made special use of their malice to direct our thoughts to the guilt transacted on Christ.

2. Because Christ was to make satisfaction by suffering all that we were to suffer. We are cursed, therefore Christ was made a curse, Gal. 3:13. We were to endure the wrath of God, therefore he bore our griefs, Isa. 53:4. We are to blame, and deserve shame, therefore he would undergo that, and suffer in his credit and honour. Our reproach is taken away, because Christ would take it upon himself: he was 'the reproach of men,' Ps. 22:6. We were sinners, and therefore Christ is called a murderer, a thief, a blasphemer, one that had a devil. This was a circumstance that commended the greatness of the satisfaction. What greater satisfaction could we expect or desire than that Christ, who is holiness itself, should not only suffer, but suffer under ignominies—that innocency itself should suffer as a malefactor? This made the sufferings of Christ exceeding great and valuable. Christ would lay aside all his glory, pleasure, and honour, and sacrifice everything for the good of the creature. You have the life of God, and the honour of God, and all. There is nothing that God prizeth so much as his honour, and Christ would suffer that God's honour might not be obscured by these imputations, but repaired.

Use 1. Is information. It informeth us of the great love of Christ; he not only poured out his soul to death, but to an accursed death. Suppose it had been merely for the cause of salvation, would it then have yielded more comfort? No; but he suffered as a malefactor, a thief, worse than a murderer. An ingenious man valueth his good name above all enjoyments. It stood Christ in much stead to have his innocency cleared, that the world might know that he did not die for his own sins, but the just for the unjust. And yet, though it is true there were evident demonstrations of his innocency out of Pilate's mouth, yet Christ would suffer as a malefactor, so as to suffer everything you were to suffer; he would make his sufferings every way valuable. Oh, what a mercy is here!

2. It informeth us that glory and innocency itself may be beclouded. Christ was under aspersions. Do not believe every report of the godly. Wicked men would fain paint them out in ill colours; but we must drink of the same cup with Christ. What foul things were charged upon the primitive Christians, that they were obscene and turbulent in their practices! Always suspect those aspersions that are cast upon religious eminency.

3. It informeth us how unlike Christ the men of the world are. Christ is innocent, but counted a transgressor; they are transgressors, yet would fain be accounted innocent. 'Honour me before the people,' saith Saul, 1 Sam. 15:30. They are more careful of their credit than their conscience; they would not be accounted sinners, and yet do not fear to be so. They are all for man's judgment, though that is nothing to a gracious heart. Christ was innocent, however he might suffer under misrepresentations. You are most like him when you look to your conscience, and trust God for your credit.

Use 2. Is consolation to you. Here is comfort, for the main Christ was counted a sinner for your sakes; that must needs be a great satisfaction, seeing Christ has suffered his own glory to be obscured and eclipsed. You are a great sinner, but urge the sufficiency of his satisfaction. You have deserved great blame; consider God hath laid it upon Christ. Satan accuseth of foul miscarriages, and you must certainly cry out *Guilty*. He cannot commence a greater accusation against you than his instruments did against Jesus Christ. They accuse him of sedition, theft, heresy,

blasphemy—crimes that run highest against God and men. Oh, what abundant consolation is there, that Christ hath borne the blame, and hath made a great satisfaction. As high accusations were commenced against Christ as can be against you.

2. Here is comfort in this. When you are under undeserved reproaches, comfort yourselves thus: This was the lot of Christ. I do not mean merely under the same reproaches, but sufferings not deserved, for Christ's sake. God knew his Son in the midst of the two thieves, and the martyrs in the common goal, and Daniel in the lions' den, and the lily among thorns. The thieves were crucified with him, yet they justly; but if you do not suffer as an evil-doer, take comfort though you be crucified between thieves, yoked with ill companions; Christ was numbered among transgressors. It was an old trick to bring an odium upon the truth, to put it upon ill company. Though you be bound up in ill bundles, yet God will know his jewels.

I come now to the third circumstance, that which is called the conflict of Christ, and that is the cause both of his death and the ignominy of it: 'He bare the sins of many.' This is a circumstance very often repeated in this prophecy, and often mentioned by the prophet in this chapter; so that I need dwell the less on it now. And it is so often mentioned, because this is the great argument that maketh the glory and innocency of Christ to be clear in our thoughts, notwithstanding the scandal of the greatness of his sufferings from the repetition. By the way observe:—

That when we remember, consider, or make mention of the sufferings of Christ, we should also reflect upon the cause of it, viz., the bearing of our sins and iniquities. This is what the prophet doth frequently here, not only once or twice, but again and again, to show you that other reflections upon the sufferings of Christ were not proper and useful.

The reasons are:—

1. Because this is most for the glory and honour of Christ.

2. For the good and benefit of the creature.

1. For Christ's glory. We are apt to judge men mean under sufferings and disgrace. The prophet bringeth in the Jews' saying here, 'We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,' Isa. 53:4. Otherwise men would be apt to think something alien and unbecoming Christ, especially when there were such formal accusations commenced against him. But alas! consider they were not occasioned by any fault of his, either against God's or man's interest. Much was pretended, but nothing proved; nothing to make him obnoxious to God's justice or man's judgment. They talked of destroying the temple, of rising against Caesar; but these were but surmises and malicious jealousies. The person of Christ and the glory of Christ is most clear in your thoughts, when you perceive that on his part there was nothing to occasion his death and sufferings.

2. For the good of the creature. It mindeth us of our comfort and duty.

[1.] Our comfort. When we consider his sufferings under such a notion, we cannot but remember there is our expiation, there is a satisfaction for our sins. God hath found a ransom: 'He died, the just for the unjust,' 1 Peter 3:18. It maketh you mindful of the price and ransom. The price was paid for you: Rom. 5:8, 'Herein God commended his love, that when we were sinners, Christ died for us: Here is a just Christ, that died for poor sinners: remember it for your comfort, mention it for your comfort; here is your expiation and satisfaction.

[2.] It mindeth us of our duty. When we consider these sufferings were for our sins, it mindeth us of our debt of obedience, wherein we stand engaged to his love and liberality; and it giveth us a sense of his love, and so in thankfulness engageth us to obedience. What sufferings are too hard, what duty too great, to go through with for one that hath done so much for us?

Use. By this you may know what reflections upon the death and sufferings of Christ are good and proper; not such only as work a fond compassion, for we are naturally apt to pity those in misery; not foolish anger against the Jews, not a little vain delight—these are effects when you look upon it as a mere story; but the glorifying of Christ and humbling of ourselves, increase of faith, comfortable persuasions and excitations to duty and praise—these show you consider it rightly. I would

but hint these things, because they are obvious.

But to come to the sense of the phrase, 'And he bare the sins of many,' I shall content myself with the assertion of the text, and show you what it implieth. *He bare the sin* importeth two things:—

1. The susception of our guilt: he bare it.

2. The sustaining of our punishment. Both were upon Christ as a heavy burden, our guilt and our punishment. He was made sin, and was under wrath. In one respect sin is made to be laid upon him by God in ver. 6, 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;' and in the other he is said to 'bear our sins in his body on the tree,' 1 Peter 2:24, which noteth the enduring of the punishment of them. Both yield a great deal of comfort to those that have interest in Christ he bare their guilt, and he bare their punishment. It is comfort in three cases:

[1.] When their hearts are ready to sink within them under the multitude and greatness of their provocations: Ps. 38:4, 'Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.' Oh, it is heavy and sad with that soul that is compassed about with innumerable evils! This will cause heart-failing and quaking when our sins, our pride, and haughtiness, are set in order before us. Here conscience accuseth for sins of the highest aggravation, slighting of means, abuse of mercies, wantoning in all manner of provocations, serving divers lusts and pleasures, cursed worldliness, carelessness of the great salvation, neglect of our family duties, ill example, gross omissions, seldom praying, or, when it is done, in a drowsy, dead way, little discussion with your hearts and ways. When these things are mustered up against us, the soul is bowed down under its own fears, and cannot look up, nor scarce groan out a sigh for mercy. Oh, consider you are not to bear your sins, but Jesus Christ; see all this load transacted upon the back of Jesus Christ: Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest' By putting the burden upon his own back, he bare our sins.

But you will say, I have sinned, but God must have satisfaction; the guilt and punishment must be borne by somebody.

Oh, consider it is borne by Jesus Christ. As Aaron was to bear the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, Exod. 28:38, so Christ will bear the sins of your duties. His soul was heavy unto death, Mat. 26:38. A little before the showers there is a gloominess and sad blackness; so there was upon Christ's spirit a little before the showers of wrath were poured out upon him. To lighten you, Christ's own soul is heavy and exceeding sorrowful; he bare your sins. Thus, in the burden of guilt, it is a lightening of the eyes and a relieving of your bondage.

[2.] When you are oppressed with the burden of punishment, fears of death and hell. We are naturally subject to these things: Heb. 2:15, 'Who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death.' Conscience, that convinceth of sin, assureth of judgment Rom. 1:32, 'Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death.' Our hearts and our own despairing thoughts are upon us; then we smell the brimstone and the stench of the pit that cometh up into our nostrils. Oh, what shall we do, for these everlasting burnings will consume as? Consider, the satisfaction will not be required of you 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' Christ, that took your sin, bare your punishment; 'even Jesus who hath delivered us from wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1:10.

[3.] In the case of afflictions. Providence is against us; and then afflictions without raise troubles and discontents within. We think God is against us, and all is ordered by way of satisfaction to divine vengeance; all is wormwood and gall, and the terrors of the Lord possess our spirits. Oh, but hold up the head, and consider nothing is done to a believer by way of punishment and satisfaction of divine vengeance: all that was required of Jesus Christ; he bore that in his body upon the tree. We are not to bear our own sins. Natural men do think that all their misery is formally penal, and ordered by way of punishment, the sting of death, and all afflictions. But yours are not punishments; that is the wormwood and gall of afflictions. The idol priests were to bear their own iniquities, Ezek. 44:10. But Christ hath taken the sins of his people upon himself. You may have the same afflictions with wicked men, or that you had before conversion; but their habit and use is changed to you. Either they are chastisements or corrections, whose use is to instruct or humble.

E To instruct them in their duty: Their 'ears are opened to discipline,' Job 36:10; and Christ 'learned obedience by the things e suffered,' Heb. 5:8.

To show us the vanity of the creature: Ps. 39:11, 'When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth. Surely every man is vanity.' Then they see it to humble them, Job 36:8; and if they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, it is to show them they have been proud. Now, it is a great mercy when we can look upon afflictions under this notion. It is a great mercy to have our afflictions sanctified Ps. 94:12, 'Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law.' Want maketh the prodigal child think of returning, Luke 15. And for prevention, they are an antidote to keep off poison. It would have been worse with me if it had not been so: Ps, 119:71, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' It is a corrosive, like Paul's messenger of Satan, to cure his pride, 2 Cor. 12:7; and to mind them of duty: Hosea 5:15, 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences and seek my face; in their afflictions they will seek me early.' And for the exercise of graces, and to conform them to their head, as patience, obedience, and faith; bruised spices are the more fragrant. So that in all these respects, and many other such like, we may take comfort in the saddest things that befall us: Ps. 23:4, 'Thy rod and thy staff doth comfort me.' We do not fear our iniquities when we bear these things.

It followeth in the text, 'He bare the sins of *many;'* that is, of the elect, not of all without exception. The same was in the former verse, 'For he shall bear their iniquities.' And so in other places: Rom. 5:19, 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' So in the 15th verse, 'The gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many:

Observe, that the merit of Christ's death was not extended to all. He bare the sins of many.

I shall propose these arguments:—

1. Christ died for no more than are elected.

2. The death of Christ is usually restrained in scripture to such a number and such a company that shall be saved.

3. Christ must needs save all that he intended to save.

4. All those to whom Christ intended the merit of his sufferings, they shall have it applied to them.

5. Because Christ's special love was only to few.

6. Because Christ doth not pray for all, and therefore he did not die for all.

7. Christ's offices are of equal extent; those that have Christ have whole Christ.

Use 1. If Christ did not intend the merit of his sufferings to all, and bore only the sins of many, it standeth us upon to see that we be of the number of those for whom Christ died. I shall use a motive or two to you.

1. The misery of those that bear their own sins. In what a sad case are you if you should bear the heavy and insupportable load of your own sins! Consider and look about you for the Lord's sake, and see if you be some of Christ's royal priesthood, and a chosen generation. You may know it by the effects of Christ in the hearts of the faithful, in your own sense and experiences, in the communications of the word, and how it will be with you hereafter.

[1.] By what Christ felt when he took our sins from us. Job saith, Job 6:4, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison thereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.' Christ lost the comfortable apprehensions of God's favour. Wherever there is sin, there will be a separation. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' His soul was exceeding sorrowful, felt strange agonies and passions, which are the more remarkable because of the eminency of the person; had these things been found in us, it had not been so notable. Weak spirits are soon dismayed and terrified at anything that hath but a dreadful appearance. Glover, the martyr, was so affected with the sense of

some backsliding, that for some years he lost the use and pleasure of his senses. But for Christ to be sad, Christ in agonies, Christ to sweat drops of blood, it maketh it the more noted.

[2] By what effects it hath upon the saints. When the little finger of God hath been upon them, oh! how have they roared through their own folly all the day long! Ps. 40:12, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, therefore my heart faileth.' All life and spirit is gone when the soul laboureth under the guilt of one sin. All the racks in the world are nothing to the rack of conscience: Luke 23:31, 'For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?'

[3.] Consider your sense and experience. When conscience hath been a little opened, oh! what horrors and disquiets have they felt, and how sore a bondage has there been upon men, good or bad! Sometimes God giveth his own people a taste what it is to bear their own sins, especially under some great judgment or fears of death. A man can divert other griefs: Prov. 18:14, 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?' Oh, the intolerableness of a conscience wounded with sin! Do not your joints smite one another for fear when you see the handwriting against you? A man hath the best apprehension, of such things in such a case. And then, oh! for thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oil, Micah 6:7. Then ten thousand worlds would he give to set his soul free. What would Spira have done when under terrors? So Mr Democke, under what desertion was he for eating with too much delight and inconsiderate greediness, who, as Mr Bolton witnesseth, crieth out, Oh, the hell of my conscience! So for ungodly men. Cain crieth out, Gen. 4:13, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear,' desperately murmuring against justice. And Judas hanged himself, thinking thereby to be rid of the terrors of his conscience. Even in the experiences of this life, God showeth what it is to bear sin.

[4.] Consider the life to come, and the threatenings of the word concerning those that die in their sins and bear their own transgressions. Oh, how sad will it be to be haled by devils, and added to the rest of the spirits now in prison, and reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day! When sins, that now are like sleepy lions, shall arise enraged and tear our souls, and there be none to deliver, as Ps.

50:22. Oh, this is the portion of them that bear their own burden and their own transgression!

2. The happiness of those whose sins are borne by Christ. No guilt can be charged upon them, no punishment can be laid upon them, no sins, no guilt shall be laid upon them; the scapegoat hath carried them away into a land of darkness Jer. 50:20, 'In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.' So Ps. 103:12, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.' They are quite out of sight; our iniquities are not where we are. No punishment is to be laid upon us; God will not exact the debt twice, of us and Christ too. Something corrective may be done to us, but nothing penal; justice is satisfied, anger appeased, the sting of afflictions is plucked out, and all serveth to make us the more meet for glory. It were but a poor pardon if God should retain the punishment. The rod comforteth.

Let these things then persuade you to consider whether you are of the number of those whose sins Christ bare in his body.

But you will say, How shall we know whether we be of that number?

I answer in these propositions:—

1. Your first care must not be to look to God's election. Hidden things belong to God; man must regard duty: Deut. 29:29, 'The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever.' We are overwise when we would pry into the secrets of heaven. God's secret will hath relation to his own actions, his revealed will to ours. We must not look to what he will do, but what he will have us do.

2. Our duty is to believe till the matter be cleared to us. Beg faith, or act faith. There is a double act: To look upon Christ as bearing the sins of the world, and to see a full satisfaction in Christ, and so at least a possibility for our souls being saved: John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' See him bearing sins upon the cross.

Men bear their own sins when they cannot look up: Ps. 40:12, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.' Oh, be not always poring upon sin; a wound always rubbed cannot be cured. See a satisfaction made by Christ, and so you may have comfort in Christ. Secondly, To present Christ to the Father in your own behalf; show him your surety, lay your hands upon the head of the sacrifice before the Lord: when the debt is satisfied, God looketh that you should come to him for an acquittance. Oh, desire it may be sealed up to your souls; say, Lord, was not thy justice satisfied in Christ? Do not make particular exceptions where God makes none. This is that God hath required of thee, to believe and fetch out your pardon. Oh, there hangeth a weight of guilt upon you, and he invited the heavy laden to come to him for ease and rest. Thus doing, you may haply come to know and to determine that you are of the number.

3. This being done, God is many times pleased to clear it up fully to some of his people, that their names were some of those that were given to Christ, whose sins he was to bear and expiate; thy name is written upon the breast of thy High Priest, and thy sins upon his back. Those that lie in the bosom of Christ, they have the Spirit of Christ, that revealeth the secrets of heaven to them, the purposes and decrees of love; the sealed fountain is broke open, and joys flow in upon their spirits. And there are dispositions by which the soul concludeth her interest in Christ. I shall name two. They are—

[1.] A humble and thankful acknowledgment in the sense of so great a privilege; the soul admireth the mercy, and wondereth that he should look after such poor worms as we are, that he should give Christ a charge concerning us, and trust Christ with the care and good of their souls, the expiation of their sins. I say, the sense of all this maketh them humble and thankful: 1 Peter 2:9, 'That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'

[2.] There will be answerable effects to such a privilege in heart and life: 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.' Corruptions are more mortified, and graces more quickened. If Christ bare our sins, we shall feel his Spirit; he will exchange with us. He felt the. wrath of

God, and we feel the joys of his Spirit. He took our sins, and he will not leave till he hath communicated to us his grace and glory.

And he made intercession for the transgressors.

These words are the fourth considerable particular in Christ's *con*flict, a noted circumstance either at or upon his death. Some make them to be of a more private and restrained sense; others, of a more public and general. I shall exclude neither, for they are one subordinate to the other. Those that look upon them as words of a private and particular concernment, make them to relate to that prayer of Christ on the cross, Luke 23:34, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;' a circumstance that extremely commendeth the love and patience of Christ, when, in the midst of the extremity of his sufferings, he doth not think of revenge and retaliation, but of mercy, and doing his persecutors good. Others look upon them as if the prophet did aim at some greater matter, namely, as implying the whole mediation and intercession of Christ, which as a high priest he presenteth to the Father, and by virtue of it pleadeth to him in our behalf. I shall exclude neither of these senses; for the former is but a part and pledge of this, it is a discovery of those bowels that are in Christ to poor sinners.

From the former observe, that Christ prayed for his persecutors. Our translation inclineth to this sense, as reading in the praeter tense 'He made intercession for the transgressors;' whereas the original will bear, 'He shall make intercession for the transgressors,' as referring it to some particular men, not transgressors indefinitely. The point being historical, the prophecy of the text and the testimony of Luke is confirmation sufficient. I shall inquire under what notion and consideration he made this prayer, and so apply it.

Christ in this and such like actions is to be considered in a double regard: —

1. As a holy, godly man; so he was to fulfil all righteousness.

2. As a mediator and public person, that was to be our High Priest, to satisfy and intercede.

In the first sense the scripture proposeth Christ as an example; in the second, as an object of our faith. His actions are partly for satisfaction, so his mediatory actions; and partly for our imitation, as an exemplary pattern. Which distinction and several references not being weighed, we lose much comfort and instruction which otherwise we might find. You shall see these actions of Christ in scripture are joined both together in one place: 1 Peter 2:21, 'Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.' In the former clause he is to be looked upon and considered as Mediator; in the other as an eminent, holy, and godly man, as a pattern. Both these two must be carefully distinguished, as in all other matters of this nature, so especially in the prayers of Christ; as in that prayer, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' Mat. 26:39. That prayer was uttered by Christ as a private, godly man, for as Mediator he did not desire it. As a private godly man, he was to have such natural abhorrences of evil as we have, and to refer himself to the will of God. And this distinction is the rather to be marked, because Christ's prayers as a godly man, his private prayers, were only a testimony and instance of duty, and so might not be granted. But as to his mediatory prayers, he was heard always, John 11:42; for these were of equal merit with his sufferings, whose fruit and intent could not be frustrated and disannulled.

To apply this to the matter in hand: Was this prayer of Christ for the persecutors uttered as the private prayer of a godly man in obedience to the law, or as Mediator of the covenant?

I answer—You must consider it both ways:—

1. As of a private man, a man subject to the law, and that would fulfil all righteousness, and would exemplify his own doctrine: Mat. 5:44, 'But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' Christ would teach us by his practice, as well as by his precept, to, pray for enemies. For 'knowing what was in man,' John 2:25, that is, the state of men's hearts, whether they would be saved or no, and knowing some of these would not be saved, he could not pray for them as Mediator, but as a private man; his prayers were conditional, that God would forgive them, in case they did repent and believe. As when we pray

God to bless a wicked man, and give him eternal life, we imply by giving him faith and repentance; so did Christ as a testimony of duty and obedience, and so far as he prayed for them he was heard; and therefore to some of the persecutors they were but as the prayers of a private godly man, with a condition.

2. The prayers of a mediator, and so Christ absolutely prayed that God would look upon them in mercy; and so he did, upon all those that did it in ignorance, for they enjoyed the fruit of these prayers. That intercession was the cause of the conversion of the three thousand; for to those Peter speaketh, Acts 2:23, 'Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;' and from the 37th verse downward, you shall see their conversion described, ver. 41, 'There were three thousand souls added to the church;' they began to feel the effect of Christ's prayer. So Acts 3:17, 'And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.' He goeth by that argument that Christ useth in his prayers: the Mediator prayed for the pardon of those that did it in their ignorance. So that you see Christ's prayers were partly as the prayers of a mediator, and partly as of a private person. In the one there is something propounded to our imitation; in the other, to our comfort and faith.

First, For our imitation. Consider this act as the duty of a glorious saint who is gone before us. Christ is a rare and eminent instance of meekness, and patience, and love, nay, even love to his enemies. Oh that we could transcribe this copy, that such instances of obedience might be found in our hearts and ways! We are poor, passionate spirits, that are ready to lose our lives with our sting; like fine glasses, broken as soon as touched. We take up every discontent, and aggravate it, being ready to revenge the wrongs that are done to us, and cannot put up the least injuries and affronts without storming and indignation. Angry spirits will have satisfaction. We think provocation an excuse for passion. The son of an Israelitish woman and an Israelitish man strove in the camp, and the son blasphemed the name of the Lord, for which he was stoned to death, Lev. 24:10-14. Christ was provoked, but he was not passionate, but prayed for his persecutors.

We learn three things in this instance, which we cannot reflect upon without the shame of our own faces. This mirror will kill like the basilisk

when we look on it.

1. Not to retaliate, hate, curse, revile, and pursue injuries with injuries. We cannot come to this: 1 Peter 2:23, 'Who when he was reviled, reviled not again.' It is otherwise with us; rather than take an example from Christ, we take it from our enemies, do as they do to us. Why should a man imitate that which be judgeth evil in others? Revenge and injury differ but in order; the one is first, the other second. Revenge is a sweet evil; nothing more pleasing to nature, and more contrary to grace. Nothing more pleasing to nature Patience, in the eye of nature, is a kind of weakness and servility. Men will plead for this; but Solomon saith, Prov. 24:29, 'Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me.' Aristotle saith, it is as reprovable to love an enemy as to hate a friend; and he saith, it argueth a servile, slow wit, and a disingenious spirit. In direct opposition to which Solomon saith, Prov. 19:11, 'The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.' It is a man's honour; it is not a servile, but a Christian and free spirit. And it is the most contrary to grace,; for giving is many times made the condition of the promises, and the measure of our expectations from God: 'Forgive as we forgive.' It is much, even a meritorious act in our thoughts, if we do but pass by an offence.

2. We learn to do good, and seek the good of others, to feed' and supply a hungry, thirsty enemy: Prov. 25:21, 'If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.' David saith, Ps. 35:12, 'They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul.' But in ver. 13, he saith, 'When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth, I humbled my soul with fasting.' It is much that the scripture requireth obedience in the least and lowest offices, where one would think our care were excused: Exod. 23:4,5, 'If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.' To reduce the straying ox or ass, and to ease the oppressed, these are offices of humanity that men express to their friends; but God requireth it to enemies: 'Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you,' Mat. 5:44. Nay, do not excuse yourselves by a colour and

show of religion. Religion, that should be the judge, is a party, and the restraint is made the fuel to passion. The very persecutors are named. We are apt to allow ourselves in the exorbitancy of our passions, under the colourable pretences of religion and duty; nay, not only when it is your enemy, but God's when a man is a persecutor, you are to do him good.

3. To do the best good for them, not only to wish them all the good in the world, but seek the good of their souls. Christ prayed, 'Father, forgive them;' that God would convince them of their sin, and reform and pardon them. Thus John converted a man that came to rob him. Our duty is expressed, not only by doing good, but by blessing and praying for them, Mat. 5:44. You should mind their good, pity poor blind souls, which we too often neglect for our friends, and those to whom we are engaged. Oh, when have you done this to those that have wronged and injured you? Alas! they have no light, they have no better principles; go and mourn over their souls to God. What sweet comfort shall a man have in his spirit, when he doth so really mind their good. This is a hard lesson, how shall we make it easy?

[l.] Consider you have God the Father's pattern for it, and the special precept of Christ for it: 'Do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' And you have the pattern of Christ for it, who prayed for the persecutors and transgressors. And the pattern of God the Father: Mat. 5:45,' He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.' They come not, by chance and the ordinary course of nature. None can be so much an enemy to you as sinners are to God, yet they have his rain and his sun. It is at God's disposal to exclude their right; there are none of these things but God could keep from them, and that justly too, yet it is godlike to bestow them, and it is man's perfection. It is the glory of man to imitate the superior beings, God and angels. Children, you know, when they first come to have the use of their reason, their pride is to imitate the actions of grown men. Why should not we then imitate those of God? Nay, further, you have the pattern of the saints, as well as the pattern of the Most High, that you may not think it an inimitable pattern. Stephen cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,' Acts 7:60. Note his vehemency, 'He cried with a loud

voice;' his tender love and compassion, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' The sense of your privileges and prerogative should make you do more than others. It was an accusation, 1 Cor. 3:3, 'Ye walk as men.' Should not Christians do more than publicans and heathens? Mat. 5:46, 'If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?' Christians must have something preeminent and rare. Where is your differing excellency? Oh, go and shame yourselves with these considerations.

[2.] Consider the inducements; such as these:—

(1.)The calmness of your spirit. If ever any were wise, they are wise that get and keep this frame of spirit. Men would find more pleasure in holy meekness and Christian endeavours for patience, than possibly they can in the pleasure of revenge. Vexations disturb the quiet of the heart; not only your affections, but your consciences. For can I do mine enemy a greater pleasure than to let him take away my contentment from me? It is a madness, when I am wronged by others, to wrong myself. David's heart smote him for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, that was his enemy; but what a comfort is it when, like an oak, we can endure the angry blasts in an unmoveable posture.

(2.) The likelihood of gaining upon them. Saul wept when he saw David's tenderness towards him: 1 Sam. 24:19, 'If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?' This is not usual. It is expressed by 'heaping coals of fire upon his head,' Prov. 25:22.. You may make him pliable to your purposes. They are men of distorted depraved natures, that will not be won by kindness.

(3.) Your acceptance with God: Prov. 25:22, 'And the Lord shall reward thee.' You will say, it will be labour lost. The sincere endeavours of duty are not lost with God; the Lord shall reward thee. Christ did much for the unthankful Jews, but he comforts himself with this, 'My reward is with thee.' A pattern for ministers to deal with opposers in meekness; you get nothing but scorn and contempt with men, but your judgment is with the Lord. There is much comfort in the sincerity and faithfulness of your endeavours.

Secondly, Look upon this intercession of Christ as a part of his mediation. Oh, what a glorious instance is this of Christ's love I what a pledge and token of those bounteous dispositions that are in his heart to poor sinners! Do but consider the circumstances that may commend it to you: —

1. Who prayeth: Christ, one that could destroy them with his glory easy enough. We say we forgive men when we cannot harm them; power swells the mind; many would be cruel enough if it were in their power. Christ could command twelve legions of angels if he would have prayed in another strain: Mat. 26:53, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?' But he doth not say, 'Father, send me twelve legions of angels;' but,' Father, forgive them.' Alas! one angel was enough, 2 Kings 19:35, to destroy a hundred fourscore and five thousand in Sennacherib's camp. But he prayeth for plenty of compassions, though in man's eye the other would have been a rare vindication of his glory.

2. Consider when he prayed. In the very act of his sufferings he seeks mercy for the instruments of his sufferings; he is full of love when the world is full of spite: 1 Cor. 11:23, 'The same night in which he was betrayed, he took bread.' When they were devising mischief, he was devising comfort. He taketh Paul, Acts 9, breathing out threatenings; and scorners have been brought upon their faces by an ordinance. We pardon when got rid of the misery, and perceive it is advantageous to us; but Christ pardons in the height of his sorrows. A man would have thought that the sharp sense of his sufferings should have embittered his spirit. Oh, the invincible love of Christ to poor sinners! It is much that he intercedeth in heaven;, but that he should upon the cross say, 'Father, forgive them,' we cannot but admire and adore till there be no spirit left within us.

3. For whom he prayed. For the transgressors, vile sinners, that offered him all the indignities in the world; them that had mocked, buffeted, spit upon him, and by their clamorous importunity got him to the cross, and gave him vinegar to drink, and placed him between two malefactors, and desired a murderer to be released before him. They cursed themselves, 'His blood be upon us;' they prayed backward, as we say, for themselves.

He was placed between two thieves. Now, he made intercession for these trangressors. Go home now, and see if you can find any just exception, among all your sins, against the love of Christ. Come and urge it; he prayed for the transgressors, for scorners of love, men that did not pray for themselves, injurious, blasphemers; name anything of higher aggravations; for those that scorned him in the very service and labour of love. Holy David vowed he would cut off all in the house of Nabal, that scorned and slighted his love. He vowed, but Christ prayed for such.

4. How he prayed. He pleadeth for them: 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do.' You see he pitcheth upon the most favourable construction that could be made of their fact; it is a bad fact, but they are poor ignorant people. Arguments in prayer imply earnestness; and Christ useth such an argument as might most lessen the offence, and be accepted with God. The usual plea is bare ignorance; and therefore Peter useth that: Acts 3:17, 'I wot ye did it in ignorance.' So Acts 17:30, 'The times of ignorance God winked at.'. So 1 Tim. 1:13, 'I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief.' If any excuse will serve, that doth. Oh, consider how willing Christ is to save poor lost sinners! Here is a great deal of comfort for poor, humble souls, whoever they be.

[1] Are they men that are sensible of their natural estate, oppressed with the sense of their sins, that think Christ will not regard them? He prayeth for the transgressors. Cannot you believe? See that place, John 16:10, 'He shall convince the world of righteousness, for I go to the Father.' Christ is gone to send the comforting Spirit, that shall give you clear gospel; he is gone to heaven to plead with the Father for you. You desire to believe, and Christ prayeth that you may. Do not think that Christ is only careful of the elect regenerate, he is also careful of the elect uncalled: John 10:16, 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.' He hath regard to those in that state you apprehend yourselves to be in. And he doth not only care for you, but pray for you: John 17:20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word.' As he wooeth you by his Spirit, so the Father for your sakes. Would you believe, then all were clear: Christ is praying you may believe. You are dealing with yourselves, with your own hearts, and Christ is dealing with the Father in heaven

about the same matter. There is comfort in this word *transgressors*.

[2.] Are they believers that groan under wants, or inward and outward distresses? Christ, that interceded for transgressors, certainly will intercede for you. Oh, if unbelievers have comfortable hopes—Christ prayed for them—what will he do for you? It is a mighty comfort that you have by Christ's intercession what you would have: Jer. 30:21, 'Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?' Christ hath engaged all his bowels and pities, that he will draw nigh to God, and plead with him for your sakes. Christ prayeth when you pray; the Spirit of Christ prays in you, and Christ himself prays for you. What is it that troubleth you? Do the cares of the world encroach upon your spirits and encumber them? Or else are you dejected by the fears and sorrows of it? In John 17:15, Christ prayed that you might be 'kept from the evil' of the world, either the one or the other way. Do you want the comforts of the Spirit, and do you sit in darkness, and see no light? John 14:16,17, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' Is it opposition against your private endeavours in duty, or public endeavours for reformation? Zech. 3:2, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee.' Is it for unity among God's people? John 17:21, 'That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' Or for success in duties? Rev. 8:3,4, 'Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne: and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.' Or is it for deliverance? Zech. 1:12, 'And the angel of the Lord answered and said, How long wilt thou not have mercy upon Jerusalem?' And he would not give over till God gave him some comfortable words, ver. 13.

And he made intercession for the transgressors.

The last observation from this last clause is this:—

That Jesus Christ is, and is alone, the Intercessor for poor sinners.

I shall be very brief on this point, because so many English authors have treated upon it, to whose judicious resolution I refer you.

Now, that Jesus Christ is so, appeareth by many places, which show this is his work now in heaven: Rom. 8:34, 'It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;' Heb. 7:25, 'Who liveth for ever, to make intercession for us.' It is the business of his endless life. And that he alone is the Intercessor is also fully manifest from the scripture: Isa. 59:16, 'And he saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor;' no man that would come between him and wrath, though the case of his people was sad and deplorable: Isa. 63:5, 'I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold.' The prophet speaketh there as if it were the inquiry of God's eternal thoughts to find out a meet person for intercessor, but none could be found. But why is Christ the alone Intercessor? The reasons of the point are:—

1. To answer the high priest under the law, who was not only to slay the sacrifice, but to intercede; both were the duties of the priesthood. First, the beast was slain without the camp, and then blood was carried into the holy of holies, and then prayers were made. This the apostle proveth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 13:11, 'For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.' So Christ, after he had offered himself a sacrifice for sin, 'is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,' Heb. 1:3, and in many other places. We were to have a perfect high priest in all points.

2. To carry salvation in a way of mercy as well as justice, and to have it by entreaty as well as satisfaction, Lev. 16:14, as the high priest was to bring the blood within the veil, and to sprinkle it on the mercy-seat, so our High Priest, having satisfied divine justice, by giving himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, he hath carried blood within the veil, so that now we may take hold of God with both hands, we may present the satisfaction of Christ, and yet beg mercy. The sending of Christ did not only glorify justice, but grace; and, therefore, Christ's address must be to both: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ' There was an act of free grace as well

as justice. These two are sweetly coupled together: 'Ask of me, and I will give thee,' Ps. 2:8. Though it were his purchased inheritance, yet he would ask.

But secondly, Why is it Christ alone?

1. Because none else would undertake it; none of the creatures have such bounteous affections: John 15:13, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' The two emphatical words are *life* and *friends*. Some creatures have gone far, as Abraham in offering his son, Lot his two daughters, and the father of the Levite's concubine in Judges.

2. Because none could intercede and come between wrath and justice, as Christ did. Not man for man; one rebel cannot undertake for another: Ps. 49:7, 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.' One man cannot undertake for another. 'It became us to have a high priest, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners.' Nor any angel, for he would have perished in the attempt; they needed an intercessor themselves to confirm them.

But what is this intercession? I shall open the matter to you a little. The word signifieth coming between; one that undertaketh for us, that intercedeth for us; that was the duty of the high priest after slaying the sacrifice. This Christ did as a high priest, after offering himself upon the cross.

For distinctness sake I shall give you the parts. This intercession is despatched:—

1. Partly in heaven; and—

2. Partly in the hearts of believers.

1. Partly in heaven. There these acts are performed by Christ:—[1.] His presenting himself in our natures, and in our stead: Heb. 9:24, he is said to 'appear in the presence of God for us.' Christ is 'not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself.' The high priest had

the names of the twelve tribes written on his breast, and Christ the names of his redeemed ones on his heart. He cometh there not only in our nature, but as our common person, as one that was to represent, and to do our business with the Father.

[2.] He presents his own merits, that the Father may turn his eyes from us, and look upon that everlasting righteousness that he brought with him into heaven in our nature. He bringeth his blood within the veil. Though Christ were on earth, yet he could not despatch all his offices of priesthood on earth, as those that had to do with typical sacrifices: Heb. 8:4, 'For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there priests offer gifts according to the law.' And this blood of Christ is 'the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel,' Heb. 12:24. We by our sins causing the Lord Christ to die, had deserved that his blood should speak against us, as Abel's did against Cain; no, but it speaketh to God to pacify wrath, and pardon our sins, and give peace to our consciences. These merits plead hard for us, which is what we call the mediation of Christ.

3. He undertaketh for us, and promiseth obedience to God the Father in our behalf; therefore he is said to be our surety, Heb. 7:22. He promiseth that we shall subscribe to the conditions of God, and pass over into the power of the covenant.

4. He prayeth and intercedeth, and maketh his request for *us,* as being sensible of our infirmities, as the high priest was to bless the people, that is, to pray for them. Therefore it is said, 1 John 2:2, 'We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' There Christ is dealing with God for us. When he was here upon earth, he was a-praying whole nights, and there he is praying whole ages: Jer. 30:21, 'Their governor shall proceed from the midst of them, and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.' His heart is engaged, even all his bowels and pities, to draw near to God, and plead with him for your sakes. These are the acts of Christ's intercession in heaven.

2. In the hearts of his people; and there the acts of Christ coming between us and wrath are these two:—

[1.] He applieth his merit: the application is by virtue of his intercession. The scriptures everywhere put a great deal of weight upon this, Rom. 5:10. Therefore it is said, 'Much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life: He beginneth to save us here by his Spirit, sanctifying all inward and outward means for the bringing of us to the full participation of all the benefits he hath purchased for us; but the actual application is afterwards.

[2.] He prays in us. The Spirit's interceding in our hearts is but the answer and echo of Christ s intercession in heaven: Rom. 8:26, 'The Spirit also 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.' The workings of Christ's Spirit in prayer show how Christ's heart is affected towards you in heaven.

Use. Is comfort. Think of Christ as a Mediator and Intercessor, for whose sake we shall be accepted with God. To open this comfort, consider for whom he prayeth, not only for present believers, but for all them that shall believe hereafter. For what? All mercies, the public glorifying of God's name: John 12:30, 'This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.' Private acceptance in duties, efficacy of ordinances, doing away guilt in holy services. Exod. 28:38, the high priest was to bear the iniquity of their holy things. Here is comfort in Christ's success in prayer: the Father always heareth him, John 11:42. In the person praying, the Son of his love, a Son that hath made satisfaction; he can bring blood with him. It is a great privilege for us to pray to God, but it is a much greater to have God praying for us.

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