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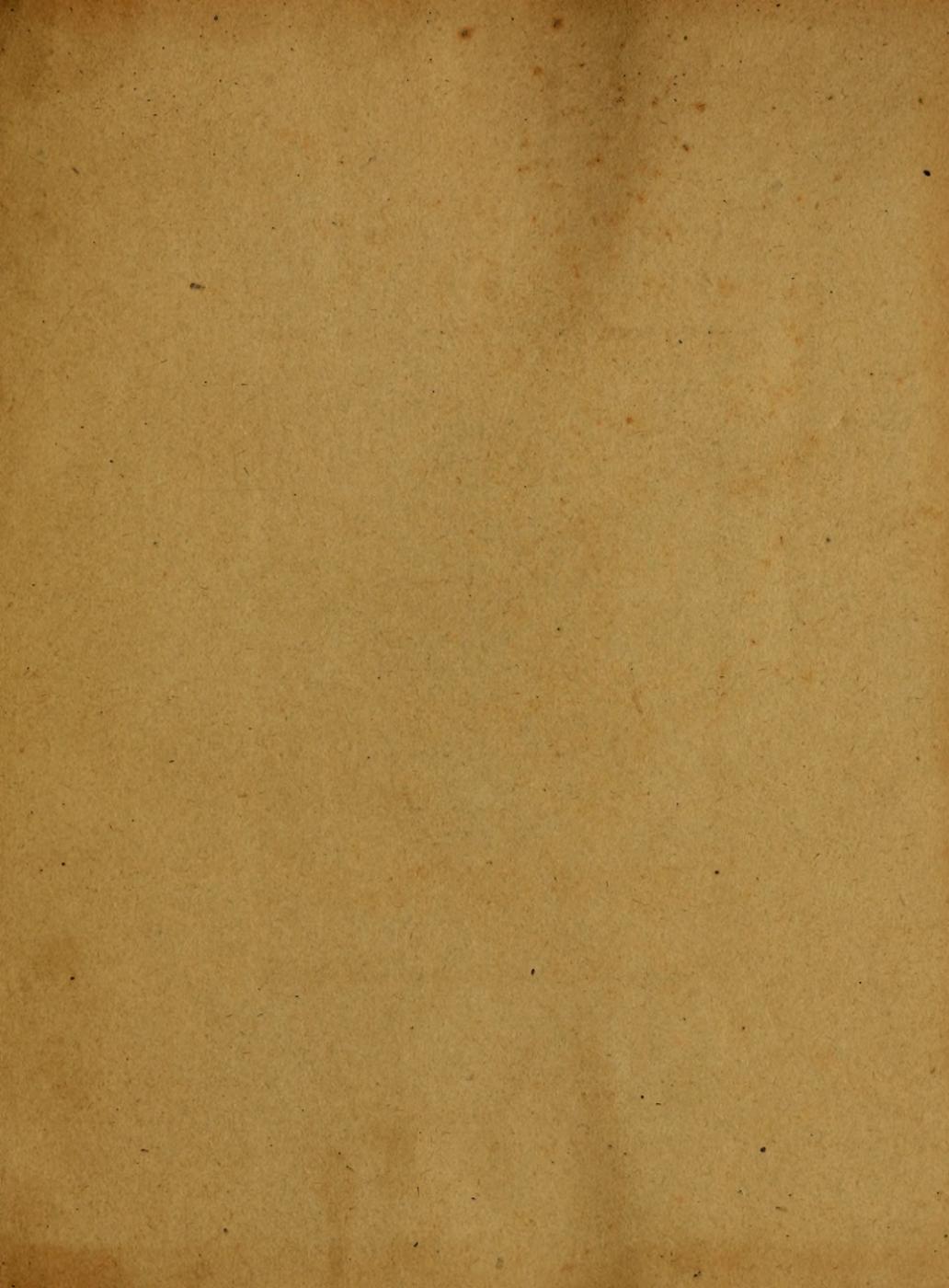
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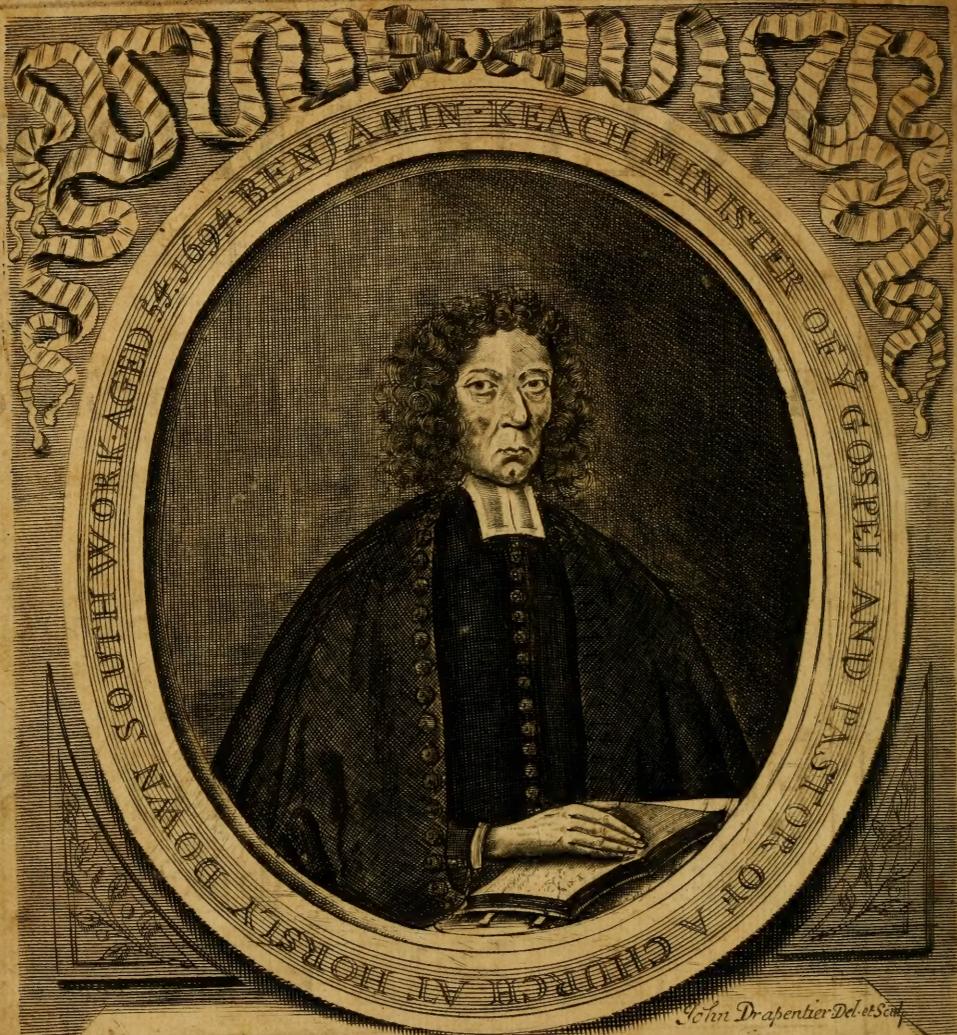
Number

Rev. Guy Bryan.









The Shadow of his Face you see
Who nothing hath to Glory in,
But his best Lord, unless it be,
His trials which not Small have been,
His Persecution once most sore,
But by false friends afflicted more.

A
GOLDEN MINE

O P E N E D:

O R,

The Glory of God's Rich Grace

Displayed in the Mediator to Believers:

A N D H I S

Direful Wrath against Impenitent Sinners.

Containing the Substance of near

FORTY SERMONS

Upon several Subjects.

By BENJAMIN KEACH.

Ephes. 3. 8. Unto me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable Riches of Christ.

London, Printed, and sold by the Author at his House in Horse-lie-down,
and William Marshall at the Bible in Newgate-street. 1694.

Reader, There are two Mistakes in the first Column of the first Page of the Contents of the Sermons: *Viz.* Line 7, for *Fear*, read *Fan*. Line 25, for *Eternal*, read *External*.

To the Christian Readers;

Chiefly to such who were the Subscribers for, and principal Promoters of the Publication of this Work.

Beloved in our Blessed Redeemer.

IT was the least of my Thoughts, when I had preached the greatest part of the ensuing Sermons, once to suppose they should ever be published to the World: But through some of your important Requests and Desires, I was prevailed with, many of you so readily and unexpectedly *subscribing* to take off so great a Number of them; which had you not done, they had never seen the Sun, I not judging them deserving such a Publication. I am sensible of my great Insufficiency; and might, from the Defects of my Ability for the great Work called to, have seen cause enough to have denied a Compliance with you herein: But having so often formerly passed through the Censure of the World, made me perhaps the more unconcerned; and knowing that the most of them will come into your Hands, (who I hope will cast a Mantle on my Humane Frailties) it was a farther Inducement to consent. However, if the Holy God be pleased to succeed the great Pains I have taken, with his Blessing, I shall see no cause to be troubled at what I have done. It's like some may object, I do not well to meddle with Controversies at this time. I answer, that I have, it is true, touched upon several controvertable Points; but not as they are Matters of Controversy, but to clear up the Truths of Christ for the Establishment and Comfort of the People committed to my Care. Besides, I being misrepresented as touching my Judgment in some great Points, (as I have been informed) I thought it was my Duty to rectify such Mistakes. The grand Controversy here insisted upon, is that about *Election*, and the *Saints Final Perseverance*, which I hope the Reader will find to his satisfaction confirmed.

Reader, I have since these Sermons were printed off, met with a Book wrote by a *Person*, whom I both esteem and honour, (excepting his Opinion) entitled, *A Treatise touching Falling Away*; wherein he endeavours to answer some of our Arguments: Had I met with it sooner, I had given a particular Reply; but in the general he may find he hath here an Answer to what he hath said. He endeavours to prove the Elect may be deceived; which we deny not, though not finally deceived; for that our Saviour intimates to be impossible: And to say, none are the Elect but they whose Warfare is finished, seems strange to me; and to suppose the New Covenant

spoken of *Jer. 31.* refers to the Jews only when called at the latter Days, is not true, but is contradicted by the Apostle, *Heb. 8. Heb. 10.* Our Argument, That Sin cannot separate from God's Love, is here also fully cleared: As also what he says, That Christ's Sheep may cease following him, and so fall out of his Hand, I have answered likewise: It is the Property of such, they do and shall follow him; God has put his Fear into our Hearts, and we shall not depart from him. Moreover, the Absurdities that he pretends, do attend the Doctrine of Final Perseverance, I find I have taken off, though I saw not his Book.

Object. But still the Cry is, *Your Doctrine renders God so severe to his Creatures, it can't be a Truth.* In answer; Consider, all acknowledg that God foreknew all his Creatures from Eternity, and who would not be saved, (which were far the greatest number); and yet nevertheless he created them whom he knew would refuse his Grace, and perish Eternally; is he unmerciful and too severe therefore? But enough is said to remove such Cavils in the ensuing Treatise.

Reader, There is one thing I thought good to hint unto thee, *viz.* I have quoted several Authors and worthy Writers in transcribing these Sermons for the Press, that were not mentioned when I preach'd the Sermons; which may be I had then done, had I thought they should have been published to the World. Also I have left out many of the Enlargements, for otherwise the Book had swelled almost as big again; so that you have but the Substance of what was delivered on these Texts, except it be that upon the *Fan in Christ's Hand*, which you have larger, God having been pleased to bless those Sermons to the great Profit of many Persons. But I am persuaded the Reader will like this Treatise not the worse for my brevity on each particular Head; for great Enlargements I find are not profitable nor approved of by Christians of this present Age. I shall not therefore retain thee longer at the Door, but shall desire thy Prayers, (as I have made them mine, and shall, God assisting me) that this Work may be attended with Divine Blessings to thee from the Press, as it has been to many from the Pulpit. And let me, Reader, have a share in thy fervent Breathings (as I hope I shall not forget thee) when at the Throne of Grace; that I with you, and you with me, may be kept from falling, and preserved in Christ's Hand to Eternal Life, who am willing to serve thee according to that small Ability received, whilst,

From my Horse at Horse-lie-down, in
Freeman's-Lane, Southwark,
Septemb. 13. 1694.

Benjamin Keach.

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A
TRUMPET
Blown in
ZION,
OR AN
ALARM
IN
God's Holy Mountain :

CONTAINING
An Exposition of that *Metaphorical* Scripture
MATTH. III. 12.

Lately delivered in Two Sermons, and now
Published to awaken the *Drowsie* and *For-
mal Professors* of this Age.

Wherein the Nature of *God's Wrath* both *Internal*
and *Eternal* is discovered, as seizing upon the *Chaff*,
and Burning of it up with *Unquenchable Fire*.

Together with an Account how Professors may know whe-
ther they are *Wheat* or *Chaff*.

By BENJAMIN KEACH,
Pastor of a Congregation at *Horshy-down, Southwark*.

LONDON, Printed in the Year 1694.

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A
Trumpet blown in Zion,
 OR
An Allarum in God's Holy Mountain :

Containing an
 EXPOSITION of that *Metaphorical Scripture*
MATTH. III. 12.

Lately delivered in Two Sermons, and now Pub-
 lished as an *Allarum* to the *Drousie* and *Chaffie*
Professors of this Age.

MATTH. III. 12.

*Whose Fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge
 his floor, and gather the Wheat into his Garner, but
 the Chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.*

Our *Text* is *Metaphorical*, and as touching the main *Scope*
 and *Coherence* of it, it is one and the same with
 the *10th. verse* of this *Chapter*, which I have already
 spoken unto, and lately published the *Sermons* unto the *World*.

John the Baptist endeavoureth to take off the *Jews* from
 their pretended *Priviledges*, of having *Abraham* to their *Fa-
 ther*, or their being his natural *Seed*, or *Offspring*; and as so

*Sermon 1.
 Preacht
 Feb. 5. 1693.*

considered in Covenant with God, and thought their State and Condition good: Which he strove to convince them was a mistake, and this he doth by that Tropical Expression in *ver.* 10. *Now also is the Ax laid to the root of the Trees.* And in this 12th. *verse, Whose Fan is in his hand, &c.* As if he should say, You shall e're long see your selves deceived, for all your great confidence in the flesh, touching your external, federal, relative holiness, and legal priviledges: For Christ with his *Ax* will now quickly cut you down: And with his *Fan*, fan you away as *Chaff*, if you have no better right to Church-membership on Earth, and to the glory in Heaven, than that which is derived to you from the account whereof you boast, *viz.* Having *Abraham* to your Father. So much only shall now serve as to the Scope and Coherence of the Words.

1. I shall proceed to give you the parts of the Text.
2. Open the Terms thereof.
3. Note two or three points of Doctrine therefrom.
4. Apply the whole.

1. As to the parts, you have,

Parts opened.

First, *The person speaking*, and that is *John the Baptist.*

Secondly, *The person spoken of*, and that is *Jesus Christ.*

Thirdly, *The Predicate, or what is spoken of Christ*, i. e. *Whose Fan is in his hand, &c.*

Luk. 7. 28.

John the Baptist was a great Prophet, yea the greatest Prophet that was born of Women, having greater Light and Knowledge of the *Messiah*. than any of them that went before him, in that he could tell them *this is he*: He was sent to prepare the way of the Lord; as his great Messenger or Harbinger. He therefore was well instructed into the Nature and Excellency of his Masters Kingdom; which was suddenly to be set up, upon the removal of the old Jewish Church, and Church-Membership; this *John* was he that the Prophet *Malachi* spoke of, that God would send as his Messenger, to prepare the way of the Lord, as also how he would do this, even by a *Spirit of Burning*: that should consume that People, and leave them neither Root nor Branch, i. e. burn up all their hopes in respect of their Root, *viz.* That external Covenant God made with *Abraham*; on which they stood, and of which they boasted; as also all that confidence they had in their own good works,

Mal. 3. 1, 2.

and

and inherent Righteousness: And this *John's Ministry* clearly held forth, and thereby discovered the grand Effect and glorious Design or Christs Doctrine, and Nature of his spiritual Kingdom, which was near at hand.

Secondly, As touching Jesus Christ, who is the person *John* speaks of. I shall not now treat of his *Office, Power, Dignity, and Glory*, which are more fully hinted at in the Context: *Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the holy Ghost and with Fire. v. 11.*

But I shall pass by that, and shall explain the *Terms*.

1. Shew you what is intended by Christs Floor.
2. What is intended by the Fan in his hand, by which he doth purge his Floor.
3. What is meant by the Chaff, and why so called.
4. What is intended by the Wheat, and why so called.
5. What we are to understand by Christs Garner, and gathering the Wheat into it.
6. And lastly, what is intended by the Fire, and by Burning up the Chaff.

First, I said before our Text is *Metaphorical*, therefore no doubt by *floor* the holy Ghost alludes to that which in *common* acception is well understood by Husbandmen, *i. e.* A floor is a heap of Corn, that is threshed out of the *Straw*, and laid in a *Barn*, *Wheat* and *Chaff* together; this usually is called a *floor*. *Terms opened.*

Quest. But what is intended or meant by it here? what is Christs floor, which he is said to purge?

Ansiv. I answer, By *floor* is doubtless intended hereby more directly and immediately the *Jewish Church*, but in a more remote and comprehensive sense, any spiritual community of Christians, Church, or body of People, professing religion. *What meant by Floor.*

1. The *Jews* were then Gods *floor* (or Gods People) as God himself is called an *Husbandman*, and they were a great Heap, *John 15. 1.* a mighty *floor*: But almost all *Chaff*; very *Lees, i. e.* loose, vain, empty, carnal, and unbelieving Men and Women. A more prophane and ungodly generation was hardly ever in the world; and but a very few godly ones among them, but a very little *wheat, viz.* few sincere ones, or believing persons in all that *floor*, who waited for Christs Coming, and did when he came, in truth receive him.

But now the Lord Jesus was come, with his *Fan in his hand*, to separate the *Wheat* from the *Chaff*, and not let them remain any longer together on that *floor*, in that *old Barn*, i. e. in the *Legal Jewish Church state*, according to the external *Covenant of peculiarity* God made with *Abraham*, and his natural *Seed* as such: Which had stood near its full period of time perfix'd by the Almighty, but now must be pulled down, *Jesus Christ* being come, and just a going to build a new *spiritual Garner*, or *Gospel Church*, to put all his choice *Grain* or *Wheat* into, *viz.* all believing and true penitent persons; this primarily I am satisfied is intended by *floor*: For the *Jewish Church* was not to abide or continue any longer than till the *Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, it being a *Typical Church*, when the *Antitype* was come that must needs vanish away.

2. Yet in a remote sence, *floor* may refer to any *Spiritual Community, Church, or people*, in the times of the *Gospel*, professing themselves to be *Christians*: Among which may be *Chaff* as well as *Wheat*: *Evil and ungodly Persons*, as well as *Believers, gracious and true Religious ones*; and the truth is, there is more than one *floor* of this sort in our days. For,

National floor
opened.

First, If we cast our eyes abroad, we shall soon espy a very great, old and decayed *Barn*, that hath a mighty *floor* or heap of *People* in it; called *Christians*, and *Reformed ones* too; But it is to be feared, when *Jesus Christ* comes with his *Fan*, to *fan*, and purge this *floor*, he will find it almost all *Chaff*: 'Tho' I doubt not, but in this great *heap* there will be found some *Wheat*, or godly *Christians*, but like as when a man comes into a *Barn*, and views a *floor of Corn* newly thrashed, he at first sight can hardly see or discern any thing save a *heap of chaff*: so it is here: Do but view the *National floor*, and you cannot but say, Sure 'tis a heap of filth, a heap of *Chaff*; for what an evil, polluted, and abominable *Company*; of *People* are in this *floor*! are there worse, or more notorious, more loose, light, prophane, unbelieving and ungodly *Wretches* living on the face of the *Earth*? yet call themselves *Christians*, and members of *Christ*, and despise, nay reproach others, as if they deserved not that *Name*. I question whether there were worse in *Sodom* than some are who belong to this *floor*: *Turks* and *Pagans* abominate some of those actions and deeds of *Darkness* that are among them, behold their hellish *Debauchery*.

1. See what a *heap of prophane Swearers* and *curfed Blasphemers* are here, who daily belch out most abominable *Oaths*, calling upon the holy and patient God to *Damn them* every day: you may hear them as you walk along the streets; nay their very Children by the Example of their wicked Parents, learn to swear and curse, as soon as, nay before, they can speak plain.

2. Then, O what a great and a filthy heap of beastly and brutish *Drunkards* are in this floor also, *who shew their Sins as Sodom, and hide it not!* many of them go reeling along the Streets, and some spuing as they go, foaming out their own shame, and little think what Poyson they drink to their own precious and Immortal Souls, whilst they Tipple down their glasses of Wine and strong Drink; and this they do without all fear of humane, or divine Laws, having no dread of present nor future Punishment; tho' God positively threatens them, and all other ungodly Persons, with the loss of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell-fire (for, *no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God; 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.*) yet they dread it not.

3. Behold also in this floor a *third Sort*, even as bad or worse than the other two, *viz. Unclean Persons*, or vile, filthy and impudent *Whores* and *Whoremongers*, who are the shame of this City and Nation! What a multitude of common Harlots are here among us, besides Secret ones, who are beheld by him whose eyes are like a flaming fire. Alas! they cannot hide their filthiness from his eyes, yet without fear how do they sin, 'till some bring Rottenness on their Carcasses, a Curse upon their Estates, Poverty on their Families, and Hell upon their own Souls: for *he that commits Adultery with a Woman destroys his own Soul.* Pro. 6. 32.

4. There is also another part of this floor, that are *Chaff*, which the fire of Gods wrath will Consume and burn up, *viz. all the proud and haughty ones.* This Sin reigns at this time to such a degree that we may fear some sad and fearful Judgment is near; *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty Spirit before a fall.* Behold the *strange Dresses*, and *high Heads!* which clearly represents the Vanity and Haughtiness of the Heart: The *shew of their Countenance testifies against them:* Women go to the Assemblies of religious Worship as if they went to *Play-houses*; and tho' God hath shewed in several poor *Animals*, his great Wrath and displeasure against this filthy Fashion, or high and shameful Head-dresses, yet they will not reform, nor leave them off: Nor is this sin only found among those of this floor, this heap.

heap, but also amongst others, who would be thought more pure, and of a *finer sort*: but let them know, the *Fanner* will suddenly come with his *Fan* in his hand; *the day comes shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all that do evil, shall be stubble, &c.*

Mat. 4. 1.

1 Cor. I. 18.

5. What a cursed *heap* is there also of *Atheists*, and *Graceless Wretches*, who contemn God and all *Supernatural Revelation* of the *Divine Being*, and *Religion*! these despise and ridicule the holy *Gospel*, or at best will acknowledge no other *Worship* nor *Religion*, than what the *old Heathens* owned, and were taught by the *Light of Nature*: *The preaching of the Cross*, or of a *Crucified Christ*, is to these *foolishness*; others that can't believe, nor will receive that *Doctrine* that comports not with their own carnal reason: What believe they can be justified by the *Righteousness* and *Obedience* of another! and their own *Inherent Righteousness* no part of their *Justification* before God! This is a strange *Doctrine*. For there are of this sort in this *heap*, such as are grievously corrupted, and erroneous, carried away with *Arminianism*, *Socinianism* and *Antitrinitarism*, and disallow of the chief *Corner-stone* God hath laid in *Sion*: For if *Christ* be not the most high God, God by Nature, Coequal and Coeternal with the *Father*, and one in *Essence*, 'tis *Idolary* to yield *divine Worship* and *homage* to him; for that *glory God will not give unto another*. *The gods that have not made the Heaven and the Earth, even they shall perish*.

Isa. 42. 8.

Jer. 10. 11.

6. What abundance of carnal *Worldlings*, covetous and *Earthly-minded Wretches* are there also, whose *gain is their Godliness*, who value no *Religion*, but what suits with their filthy *Lusts*! some of these set up for *Preachers*, meerly for their *Earthly gain*, and make a *Trade* of it, living *prophane* and *ungodly Lives*, being *Guilty* almost of all manner of *gross* and *abominable Sins*, preferring *humane Rites* and *Ceremonies* above *Christ's Institutions*, and a *Form of Godliness* above the *Power* of it.

7. Besides, what a *heap* have we among us, of *Traiterous*, *blind* and *deceitful Persons*, who seek to betray the *Protestant Interest*, and all our *Civil* and *Religious Liberties*, into the hands of the common *Enemy*; who neither *Fear God*, nor *Honour the King*! As also what a multitude of *Thieves*, *High-way-men*, *House-breakers*, and bloody *Villains*, skulk and hide themselves in this *heap*! The very mentioning of these things is enough to grieve and wound our very *Souls*, considering how good and gracious God hath been to us in this *Land*;
and

and what a Nation this hath been, and what Wonders the Almighty hath formerly and of late times wrought for us, I mean for the Land in general. May we not fear that the *Fanner* will come with his *Fan*, and sever the *Chaff* in his direful Indignation from the *Wheat*, and let the *Fire of his Anger* seize upon it and burn it up? what can we expect but some amazing and fearful Judgments from the Lord, unless a National Repentance and Reformation, like that of *Nineveh*, doth speedily prevent it?

Secondly, There is another *Heap*, that may be called *Christ's floor*, tho' not so big as the former, and tho' they seem to be more refined — yet if we consider them all together (for they are too much divided amongst themselves) what abundance of *Chaff* is there here also! Are there not many amongst these as bad as others, *viz.* People of ill and corrupt principles, bitter and censorious Spirits, and of scandalous lives: What *Malice*, *Envy* and *Hatred*, do they discover one against another, because of their differing Sentiments in and about some principles of Religion, rendering their Brethren odious to the World, *Back-biting*, *Reproaching* and *Scandalizing* each other, to the great dishonour of God, and shame of their sacred profession? one while charging and condemning the Innocent, and yet acknowledge not their Evil; and at another time striving to vindicate and clear such as are greatly guilty before God? both which are abominable and hateful in his sight, who will judge righteously, and render to every man at last according to his Works.

Certainly there is farcely a worie Sin than the Sin of Back-biting; *he that hates his Brother* (Robbing him of his good Name out of Malice and Envy) *is a Murtherer, and no Murtherer hath eternal Life abiding in him*, 1 John 3. 17. such who are destitute of Christian Love and Charity, or hate their Brethren, clearly shew they act contrary to the divine Principle of Grace, nay of Morality, and so are void of that sacred Life, Nature, and Image of God. For as love to the Bretheren is an Evidence of our being the Children of God, so he that is possessed with Wrath, Envy, Malice, and Hatred, shews he is one of the Children of the wicked one, who is called *the Accuser of the Brethren*. Clear it is that this is a *Diabolical Sin*, and renders such in whom it is found, like to the Devil. *In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil*

Devil; Whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God, neither
 1 Joh. 3. 10. he that loveth not his Brother.

Rom. 1. 28.
 29.

Nay this great evil and wickedness is a sad sign that such are given up and left of God, as not retaining God in their knowledge, as the Apostle speaks of the *Geniles*, who when they arrived to some degree of knowledge of God, yet did not glorifie him as God; but violated his Law written in their Hearts: Therefore 'tis said, that *God gave them up to vile Affections, and they were filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, full of Envy, Murther, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whisperers, Backbiters, Despightful, Proud, Boasters, &c.* No doubt but that the Sin of Backbiting, *Wrath, Malice, and Envy* is as bad, if not worse, than Fornication, Swearing or Drunkenness; and lamentable it is to see this Sin, found among some who account themselves no small persons for Knowledge, Zeal and Piety in these days. But alas! alas! how sad and deplorable is their Condition, and vain that profession they make of Religion! let them repent of this their great wickedness, and get a changed heart. Moreover, are there not in this *floor* others who are proud, earthly, carnal and covetous Persons? they are called *Non-conformists*, but 'tis not so far as they ought from the Sins and Pollutions of this World, they conform to them in their detestable fashions and covetous practices: Do not many of them appear to love Sons and Daughters more than Christ or his sinking Interest? they can lay out plentifully to feed and cloath their own Children, whilst their bowels are shut up against the poor Members of Christ or Children of God; they'll spare more to gratifie the Pride and base Lusts of their Children, than they will spare to supply the necessities of the poor Saints, or to support the Interest of Christ and his Gospel: Many pounds shall go for the first use, when a Shilling is thought a great deal with some of them for the second; they think nothing too much to enrich and uphold their own Families, whilst the Family of God suffers want, and the Cause of Christ languishes in their hands. O how little does the power of Grace and true Godliness shine amongst this sort! what formality and lukewarmness is there in these days, amongst such who are called Saints and holy Brethren! This, it is true, may be called Christs Floor especially, but abundance of *Chaff*, no doubt will be found in it, when the *Fanner* comes to fan it. Look to it you Sinners in *Sion*: *Fearfulness* will e're long surprize the *Hipocrite*.
 Who

Who among us shall dwell with devouring Fire? who amongst us shall dwell with Everlasting Burning? Isa. 33.

But so much as to what is meant by *Christ's Floor*.

Quest. 2. What is intended by the Fan?

Ans. A Fan is a certain Instrument which the Husbandman uses to cleanse, or purge his Corn from the Chaff, evil Seeds, and all filth whatsoever: And this Instrument he holds in his hands, and uses upon his Knees, by which he tosses up the Wheat and Chaff together: And then shakes it to and fro, moving all at once, by which a wind is made, and the Chaff is blown away, and the Wheat separated and purged from it: Now John Baptist alludes to such an Instrument as this.

Quest. But what is meant by *Christ's Fan* in a spiritual sense? what is signified hereby?

First, I answer, By *Christ's Fan* is meant his Word, his holy Gospel, especially the Doctrine thereof; 'tis by this he cleanses, and purges his floor. Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. (Now the unclean person, the Traytor Judas is gone out from you:) Thro' my Word, i. e. through my Doctrine, you believing in me, and receiving me by Faith for Righteousness and eternal Life. 'Tis said Christ gave himself for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, Eph. 5. 26. Cleansing here imports the means by which it is wrought, or the Instrument, namely the Word of the Gospel, especially the Promise of free Justification and Sanctification by Christ, received thro' Faith, which Baptism was a Sign or Symbol of; see 1 Pet. 1. 22. Seeing ye have purified your selves in obeying the truth thro' the Spirit, &c. This was done in subjecting themselves to the Faith of the Gospel, to which the purifying of the heart is ascribed principally in Justification, whereby the guilt of Sin is purged away, as appertaining to the conscience; he alludes also to the sanctifying power and virtue of the holy Spirit. Compare this with Psal. 119. 9. Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? that is, the way of his Heart, and also the way of his Life: The answer is, By taking heed thereto according to thy Word; that is, let him take heed according to that holy doctrine taught and held forth in God's Word; so that he attain unto a right knowledge of God, and of the Messiah, promised and typified by the Sacrifices of Aaron, by whose Blood, and thro' whose Righteousness only, Justification is to be had: for without Christ's Blood there is no cleansing from Sin and filthiness,

What is meant by *Christ's Fan*?

John 15. 3.

Act. 15. 9.

Annatators.

ness, neither of Heart, nor Life, for young nor old. It is not only to direct young Men to reform their Lives and Ways according to the Precepts of God's Word, nor to think by any degree of moral Righteousness or inherent Holiness they could be cleansed; no, no, but to take heed according to the *mysterious and sublime Doctrine of God's free grace in Christ*: Which was the only way of Salvation, as well under the Law as under the dispensation of the Gospel. Sirs, this was, and still is, Christ's *Fan*, namely the glorious Doctrine of God's Grace thro' the Redemption that is in Christ's blood; and it was by this *fan* Christ cleansed that *Jewish floor*, to which my Text primarily refers. For the *Jews* were his *floor*, in which was abundance of *Chaff*; and now Jesus Christ was come with his *fan* in his hand, to purge this floor; and evident it is, his *holy Doctrine* severed, or separated the *Wheat* from the *Chaff*; and by this means was the *Wheat gathered into Christ's Gospel Garner*, and the *Chaff* blown away: for as *Chaff* cannot endure the wind of the *fan*, so could not those unbelieving *Jews*, and hypocritical *Pharisees*, endure Christ's holy and heavenly Doctrine. See Joh. 6. 52. to v. 60. *How can this Man give us his flesh to eat?* They thought he spake of a Natural eating of his flesh, as we eat the flesh of Beasts or Fish: His Doctrine was not understood by them. *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, ver. 53.*

Now the eating of Christ's flesh, and drinking of his blood, is no other thing than the receiving Jesus Christ by Faith for Righteousness and eternal Life: *Believing in Christ, coming to Christ, looking to Christ, leaning, trusting, or staying on Christ, receiving of Christ, and eating of Christ*, imply one and the same thing: It is our going out of our selves to him, or feeding by faith on him, or resting, or relying on his Merits, on his Obedience in his Life, and in his Death, for Justification and eternal Life, without any Works done by us, or any Righteousness wrought in us, as the Apostle speaks. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

But this mysterious and sublime Doctrine the *Jews* could not bear, but it was such a *Fan* as fanned them all away that believed not: *For they being ignorant of God's Righteousness, going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God.* They thought their own personal

Rom. 4. 5.

Rom. 10. 3.

personal and inherent Righteousness was that by which they must be justified, accepted, and eternally saved : they had meat of their own to eat ; and therefore saw no need to go to their Neighbours door for it ; *they were full, and increased in Goods, and thought they had need of nothing* : And hence the Doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ alone was rejected by them, it was not understood by them ; that *Christ's flesh should be Meat indeed, and his blood Drink indeed,* was a strange Doctrine in their apprehensions ; they could not conceive how such things could be, (as *Nicodemus* spake of Regeneration.) Nor can any Man whatsoever who will receive no point of Faith, but what his natural reason can comprehend ; and thus this Doctrine of our Lord Jesus was a *Fan* in his hand, and it fanned away all the *Chaff* of that mighty *Jewish floor*, even all that received not that Doctrine, of who believed not in Christ, received not Christ by Faith for righteousness and eternal life : Nay it was such a *Fan* that it fanned away some of Christs Disciples, (not such who were his Disciples indeed,) but many that followed him, and who are said to believe on him ; they believed he was the true *Messiah*, had some kind of faith, tho' not the Faith of Gods-Elect. Joh. 3 9.

Many of his Disciples when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying, who can bear it ? It seemed hard to them, because they could not comprehend it by their own carnal reason : *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* Joh. 6. 60.

Such a *Fan* was this Doctrine then, and such a *Fan* it is now, that it may be said to make a discrimination between the pure *Wheat* and the *Chaff* : for no doubt all that receive not this holy Doctrine (whatever fair shew they make in the flesh) are but *Chaff* in the sight of God, and will be found such at the last day. Nor ought they to be suffered to abide in Christ's *Garner* on Earth, (as they shall not be gathered into his *Garner* in Heaven) but be esteemed as *Chaff*, or drossy professors, whatsoever their conversations may be : (I mean such who *eat not Christs flesh, and drink not his blood,* i. e. wholly feed not upon Christ, rely not alone upon the Merits of a crucified Christ, or seek not Justification by his Righteousness only, but go about to bring in their own Works and inherent Holiness with Christ's Merits in point of Justification in God's sight.) But to proceed : But like as a Husbandman hath more *Fans* than one, even so also in the

Second place, Jesus Christ hath another *Fan* also, and that is

(I doubt not) likewise intended here : *viz.* The dispensation of God's Providence ; for this was as a Fan in Christ's hand, by which he fann'd away those unbelieving Jews, and so purged his floor : I mean, the time was now come, that their national, legal and external Church-State must be pulled down and dissolved ; the Dispensation was changed, the Priesthood changed, and right of Church-membership changed ; they having Abraham to their Father, or being the Seed of professing Parents, would do them no good, nor avail them any thing. Because the Covenant of Peculiarity God made with him and his natural seed as such, as to the Date of the Duration thereof, was now run out and expired, *the Ax being now laid to the root of the Tree, ver. 10th.* So that unless they receive Christ, believe in Christ, and are found gracious persons, fit Wheat for Christs spiritual Garner, or Gospel-Church (which is built up of lively stones) as Chaff the Gospel-dispensation like a Fan purges them out ; as indeed it did, and blew them all away : And we are not alone in respect of this great Truth, for many of our worthy Brethren (who in some things differ from us) assert the same : particularly, Reverend Mr. Cotton, who speaking of this Text, *Mat. 3. 10.* saith, " The first is the root of Abraham's Covenant, which this " people much trusted upon, and of that it is which John Baptist " speaketh, *Now is the Ax laid to the root of the Tree, think not to " say within your selves, we have Abraham to our Father ; so " that all their confidence that they had in Abraham's Covenant, " Temple and Tabernacle, and such things, are burnt up, and so " they have no Root left them to stand upon, and this is one " thing intended by the Root.*

" Secondly, There is (saith he) something more in it ; the " Lord by the power of his Spirit doth cut us off from any power of our natural Gifts and Parts, and spiritual Gifts also, or " from any Confidence of our own sufficiency ; the Lord hath cut " us off from hope in the Righteousness of our Parents, and from " boasting of Ordinances. And again he saith, This we read of, " *Mat. 4. 1.* It is spoken of the Ministry of John the Baptist, " which did burn as an Oven, against all the Scribes and Pharisees, and left them neither the Root of Abraham's Covenant, " nor the Branch of their own good Works : He cutteth them " off from the Covenant of Abraham, &c. And by cutting " them off from the Root, he leaveth them no ground to trust " on. Thus Mr. Cotton on *The Covenant*, p. 177, and p. 21, 22. Now evident it is, that nothing but the dispensation of God's Providence,

Providence, or the Expiration of that period of Time determined by the Almighty for the standing of the Church of *Israel*, could cut the *Jews* off as a Nation, from being a Church and peculiar People unto God; I mean in respect of that Legal Covenant. I deny not but that the Covenant of Grace God made with *Abraham*, and with his true spiritual Seed, stands firm for ever and ever, and none in that Covenant can be cut off, nor fanned away: for the *Jewish* Priesthood, Church-state and Church-membership, and all their Church-priviledges, were to remain until Christ came, or until the time of Reformation; that is, till the Gospel-days and Gospel-dispensation took place, and no longer: But now that time being come, and they not seeing an end put to the old Covenant-Church, as it was made with the natural Offspring of *Abraham*; and that their right to legal Ordinances, and Church-membership, could not give them any right to Gospel Ordinances, nor Gospel-Church-membership, and they not believing in Christ, not accepting of the Terms of the Gospel, were all of necessity purged out or *fanned away*, by the *Fan* of the New Testament-dispensation, and so were no longer a people in any sense in Covenant with God.

Thirdly, Christ hath also another *Fan* in his hand, *viz.* The *Fan* of Church-Discipline. And many persons falling into sin are purged like *Chaff* out of his *floor*. Hereby,

1. Sometimes some evil and corrupt Persons, who get among God's people (or into his Church) and pass a while for *Wheat*, *i. e.* for gracious Persons, yet in time God suffers them to fall into one Temptation or another, by which means they are *fann'd away*, the Holy Jesus by his wise Providence making a discovery of them, and their evil Tempers and Dispositions.

2. May be some glorious Truths, or Truth of Jesus Christ, is revealed, or cleared up to his Church in General, to which several Persons of the same Congregation may not only want Light in, but may be filled with Prejudice against, and not only against the Truth, but against the Church or Minister for seeking to bring it in; and this may rise to such a height, through their Pride and Stubbornness, that they will not abide any longer Members thereof, but violently rend themselves by Schism, and so are purged out. Tho' (as 'tis observed by an Husband-man) some *light Corn*, may be good *Wheat*, may be *fanned out* with the *Chaff*, which he knows how

to recover by fanning the Chaff also afterwards. And thus it was with some of those who were called Christ's Disciples, they could not, would not endure that blessed Truth Christ preached to them, of *Eating of his Flesh*, &c. but cried out, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* and so went away and walked no more with him. O see what the Effects of preaching some Truths may be! how many are there who cannot bear in this day sound Doctrine, but desert his People, and some Truths of Christ, and seem to shut their eyes against them, calling them Error and false Doctrine, and what not? And this way God takes (in his wise Providence) to purge out some rotten Members, which possibly were a reproach to his People: And altho' may be some *Wheat*, may by this means through Satans Temptations, and Corruptions of their own hearts, and their great Ignorance, be *fanned out with the Chaff*, they being carried away by the Craftiness and Subtily of such whom Christ hath a mind to sever from the Body; yet he knows how to gather up the *Wheat again*, as the Husbandman doth.

3. Others, whom Christ would have purged out of his Church, may be suffered to suck in some evil, corrupt and dangerous Principles, or Errors in Fundamentals, like that of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, whose Errours being discovered, were purged out.

1 Tim. I. 20.

4. Also others fall into notorious and scandalous Sins, and so are purged out.

5. Some who are *Chaff*, or unsound Christians, may be suffered to take up undue offences against the Church, or Churches to whom they belong, and by giving way to Temptation, they may become unreconcilable, magnifying their own Wisdom and Self-conceitedness, and so by a secret hand of God be discovered and purged out: But it must be considered that the use and exercise of the Keys, or Rules of Church-Discipline, is appointed by Christ, as the proper *Fan* by which those sorts of Persons last mentioned, and some others, are to be purged out of the Church or Congregations of the Saints. Now the *Fan of Discipline* is two-fold.

1 Cor. 5. 45. *First*, The Act of Excommunication: *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, with my Spirit, to deliver such a one unto Satan, for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* The Persons, Christ by this *Fan of Discipline* purges out, are of three sorts.

1. All grois and scandalous Persons, who are Guilty of any Act or Acts of Immorality, as *Theft, Swearing, Drunkenness, Uncleannefs, Couetousness, Lying, &c.* These being publick and reproachful Crimes, the Offender ought forthwith (upon clear proof) to be purged out, that the Name of the Lord may not be exposed to contempt, and his People villified by the ungodly World; and time given to him for the proof and Trial of the sincerity or Truth of his Repentance; which in part will be manifested by his Carriage and Behaviour under his Punishment; I mean the Righteous Censure of the Church.

The *Second sort* that this *Fan* of Discipline takes hold of, are such that suck in *Heresies* or *Capital Errors*; these after the first and second Admonition, ought to be rejected and delivered up to Satan, that they may not learn to Blaspheme.

Tit. 3. 10.

1 Tim. 1. 20.

The *Third sort* are such who refuse to hear the Church after their case (in which they have offended) is regularly brought in against them according to the Rule contained in *Matthew*; the offence at first may be against one brother, and the offended party is first to tell him his fault between himself and his Brother or Sister that hath offended him alone: Whom if he can bring to see and acknowledge his evil, it is to proceed no further; but if he cannot, then he is oblig'd by the holy Law of Christ to take one or two more, and go to him, and strive to convince him, and bring him to a sight and sense of his iniquity; but if he cannot do it, then it ought to be brought unto the Church, and if he will not hear the Church, then the Fan of Excommunication is to be used in the Name of Jesus Christ, and they purged out.

Math. 18. 17.

As to such who rend themselves from a Church, or violate their sacred Covenant by irregularly withdrawing themselves, they ought to be marked, and solemnly in the publick Congregation declared to have withdrawn, rent, and cut off themselves from the Communion of the Church, and no longer to be owned nor lookt upon as Members, and none to Communicate with them until they have given satisfaction by Repentance.

Rom. 6. 17, 18.

2 Theff. 3. 6,

14, 15.

Math. 18.

The *Second part* of the *Fan* of Discipline is that rule laid down by the Apostle, of withdrawing from every Brother and Sister that walketh disorderly; as such that are *Busibodies, Tattlers, or Idle*; or such that neglect their Duties in attending on the Church in times of solemn Worship, or that make Parties, or cause

2 Theff. 3. 6,

Match. 18. 17.

cause Division in the Church, and refuse to live in Obedience to Christ, under the due and just Government thereof, or to obey them that are set over them in the Lord, or who strive to have the prehemience, like *Diotrophes*, being Vain-glorious, prating against, or despising of Dignities, or the just Authority of Christs *Ministers*, or *Angels* of his Churches, as the beloved Apostle speaks, *3 Joh. 9, 10. Wherefore if I come, I will Remember his deeds which he doth, prating against us with malicious Words, and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the Brethren, and forbideth them that would, and casteth them out of the Church.* These are to be marked and withdrawn from, *2 Thess. 3. 6. Not to be counted as Enemies, but exhorted as Brethren*: Unless they provoke the Church to further and a more severe Censure. Some of this sort oft-times strive to draw away disciples after them, and seek to disquiet the Peace of the Church, and in a fawning and flattering manner to deceive the hearts of the Simple; therefore these, if they will not hear the Church, are to be quite *fanned out* also by Excommunication, and to be looked upon as an *Heathen-man or Publican*, as in the Case of Notorious and Scandalous Sinners, or such who are guilty of *Heresie. Mat. 18.*

Fifthly, Jesus Christ hath also another *Fan* in his hand to purge his floor, or cleanse his Wheat from the Chaff, filth and defilement of Sin, namely, the Holy Spirit; and by this means he cleanses and Purifies in a gracious manner the Souls of his own People: *Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are Sanctified, but ye are Justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* What filthy Creatures were those *Corinthians*, before the Lord Jesus by his Spirit had purged and Sanctified them.

Faith, of the the Operation of God, is a most excellent Grace; it is by Faith in the Blood of Christ that we come to be purged from the Guilt of Sin; Faith applying his Merits and Righteousness unto the Soul in Justification; and such is the Nature thereof, that it makes holy the Hearts and Lives of all such Persons in whom it is by the Spirit wrought or infused in Sanctification: *And hath put no difference between them and us, Purifying their hearts by Faith.* Yea, it cleanseth them from all filthyness of *Flesh and Spirit*, that they may perfect Holyness in the fear of God.

But let me tell you that the Spirit and Grace of Christ in this respect is as a *Fan*, rather to Cleanse the Saints, by purging

1 Cor. 6. 11.

Acts 15. 9.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

purging out the Chaff of Corruption, which naturally is in their Hearts and Lives, than to purge Hypocrites and gross Professors out of the Church, and to that I Principally refer here.

6. Moreover Christ hath the *Fan of Persecution*, or the Sufferings of the Cross, and all other afflictions which he brings upon his People, which he uses to purge and purify their Souls, and his Churches too.

And from hence Afflictions are compared to a Refiners fire: *He shall set as a Refiners fire, and Purifier of Silver*: He, that is the *Messiah*, i. e. our Lord Jesus Christ; this is his Work, viz. to purge his People, who in this Place are compared to *Silver and Gold* that is refined: As in my Text they are likened unto *Wheat*, in this he is compared to a *Refiner*, and hath his *Furnace*; in the other to an *Husbandman*, and so hath his *Fan*. Both these Texts allude to the same thing, and doing the same work, namely, to sever and separate the *clean* from the *unclean*, the *Gold* from the *Dross*, the *Chaff* from the *Wheat*. And evident it is, that *Persecution, Trials and Afflictions*, commonly make a great discovery who are *Wheat* or pure *Gold*, viz. Sincere Believers; and who drossy and chaffy Professors. If *Wheat*, Persecution purges and purifies them: But if they are *Chaff*, it usually fans them away. *But he that received the seed in stony places, the same is he which heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it: Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; for when Tribulation or Persecution ariseth, because of the Word, by and by he is offended.* Thus the fan of Persecution purges these *Chaffy Professors* out of Christs Spiritual floor, or rather his *garner*: Namely, his Church, into which in a day of Liberty they got, and had a place; but they cannot bear the Wind and blast of Affliction and Tribulation: And as it purges out much *Chaff*, so also the *Wheat* is thereby refined and made more clean and fit for the Lords use. Of so great benefit is Persecution to Gods Church, that they cannot some times be without it; it is *if need be that we are in heaviness*; if we need it not, or if Christ sees there is no need of it, we shall never feel the Rod: *He doth it not for his pleasure, but for our profit, that we might partake of his Holiness.* And this *Jehovah* by the Prophet further makes known to us: *This is the fruit of all, the taking away your Sin.* And thus the Lord purgeth away the filth of the *Daughter of Sion*, and the *Blood of Jerusalem* from the midst thereof, by the

Mat. 3. 3.

Mat. 13. 20. 21.

Heb. 12. 10.

Isa. 27. 9.

Ha. 4. 4.

Spirit of Judgment and by the Spirit of burning. The Rod of Affliction, or Furnace of Persecution, cannot purge out the filth of Sin that is in the Lords People, without the operations of the Holy Spirit: The Spirit is called a Spirit of burning, because like fire it burns up and consumes the Filth, Chaff and Dross that is in us: Before Trials and Persecution comes, Christ seems to have a very great *floor*, a great heap, or much Corn; but when he comes to try them with this *fan* in his hand, one great part thereof is found meer Chaff, and the wind drives it away. So much shall suffice as to the Fan in Christs hand by which he purgeth his Floor.

Quest. Thirdly what is meant by the Chaff?

Ans. I answer the Chaff may be understood to be twofold.

1. Men and Women who get into Gods Church, or among his People, but are not Wheat, but vile Hypocrites, pretending to be that which in truth they are not; thus *all that are of Israel are not Israel.* Tho' they bore his Name, were called *Jews*, called Saints, yet were unsound at heart, and graceless Souls, or meer Chaff in Gods sight.

Rom. 9. 6.

2. By Chaff may also be intended Sin, or that Filth and Corruption which cleaveth oft-times to the best of Gods People, which Christ must and will purge out.

Quest. Why are Hypocrites or ungodly Persons in the Church compared to Chaff? and how may they be known?

Ans. I answer, Hypocrites and ungodly men in the Church are compared to Chaff;

1. *Because Chaff before it is separated from the wheat, cleaveth close to it, and it is hard to sever it from the wheat, and it also seems like unto it:* Even so some carnal and hypocritical Professors cleave to the Church, and seem to love and embrace the Godly in their Arms, and to lay them in their hearts; they walk in Company, nay in outward Fellowship and Church-communion with them; they Pray, and Break-bread with them, as if they were really gracious, and are not known to their Brethren to be otherwise: And as it is hard to discern them from the Godly, so 'tis as hard to separate such from them. *Chaff* is so much like to the *Wheat*, that some have taken it at first view to be *Wheat*; so are these taken to be Saints, and there may be no severing them from the Congregation of the Lord, till Christ comes with his *Fan* to purge his *floor*.

2. They may be compared to *Chaff*, in regard of the great pains that is, and must be used to separate it from the *Wheat*:

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The *wheat* must be *threshed* and *fanned*, nay *fanned* again and again, before all the *Chaff* can be severed from it. So unsound Professors or some Hypocrites in the Church, seem to cleave so close to the Godly, and are in such seeming union and oneness with them, that the Lord sees there is no other way to sever them from each other, but by *threshing* his *wheat* with the *flail* of Persecution, and then the *chaff* flies away by the wind of this *fan*. O what a multitude seemed to cleave to our blessed Saviour, and to be his Disciples, in a day of peace and prosperity, when he was riding in Triumph to *Jerusalem*, *Crying out*, *Hosanna*, *blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord!* but when our Saviour came to the Cross, how did they leave him, and disown him, nay, may be cryed out *Crucifixe, Crucifixe him*: So and in like manner in our former days of Liberty, what great numbers flocked to our Assemblies, and made a profession of Religion; but when that hot persecution arose, how did they fall off, and disown that People which once they seemed to cleave unto: The *fan* of persecution *fanned* them away as *chaff*, and not only a multitude of Professors, but also how many great Preachers did basely betray the truth which they professed, and in their Pulpits seemed a little before zealously to maintain, particularly that of Separation from the National Church. This way Christ took to discover the filth and rotten hearts of some, and slavish fear and weakness of Faith in others, who were left to a sinful Compliance and Conformity, building again that which they had destroyed, and destroying that which they had been a building; and thus it appears as *Chaff*, cannot bear fanning, but is blown away; so chaffy Professors cannot bear spiritual *fanning*, i. e. they cannot stand in an hour of Temptation, but fall away. Alas! tho' we have now again multitudes that seem to cleave to our Churches and to our Assemblies, yet should Christ come with his *Fan* upon us, you will soon see (it is to be feared) the former Effects again.

Mat. 21. 29.

Joh. 12. 13.

Jer. 23. 28.

3. *Chaff* is of very little worth or value unto *Wheat*: *What is the Chaff unto the Wheat, saith the Lord?* One peck of good *Wheat* is worth many Bushels of *Chaff*. So ungodly men and women are but of little worth in Gods sight; a wicked man to him is loathsome, as *Solomon* shews, and that which is loathsome and hateful in our sight we value not, but cast away: The Prayers of the wicked are abominable to the Lord, because their persons are not accepted in Christ; Whatsoever

Jer. 23. 28.

Pro. 13. 5.

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the ungodly do, or whatsoever show they make of Religion, let them Pray, Hear, Read, Preach, or give to the Poor, it is not regarded nor accepted of the Lord; one godly Person is more to him than a multitude of un sanctified and hypocritical persons. *The tongue of the just is as choice as silver, the heart of the wicked is but of little worth.* The best part of a Child of God is his Heart, tho' he thinks that is the worst of all; and the worst part of an unholy man is his Heart, tho' he thinks that is best of all. Saints are *wheat*, Hypocrites *chaff*, the one is Gold, the other Dross in Gods esteem. Hence the Lord saith, *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee, therefore will I give men for thee, and People for thy life: I will give Egypt for thy Ransom, Ethiopia and Sheba for thee.* God so little values graceless persons, that he will sacrifice thousands of them in love and mercy to his faithful ones.

Isa. 43. 3: 4.

4. *Chaff is light and airy, it is no ponderous thing, therefore the wind carries it this way and that way at every turn:* Nay, every small breath of wind moves it to and fro, whereas *wheat* stirs not, moves not, but abides in its place, it being a weighty and ponderous thing. Even so all hypocritical and unsound Professors, whatsoever they seem to be at some times, (by making a show of Religion and pretending to Piety) yet they are in Gods sight as light as vanity; they are like *chaff*, not serious, weighty and ponderous, they are but a flash, a shadow, and no substance, having meer dry, barren and empty Souls: And their lightness appears and shews it self in many respects.

1. It appears sometimes by their *light, frothy and airy talk and discourse:* They may sometimes seem serious, but if watch'd, they will be discover'd, their Tongues will betray them, by their foolish and vain words, and communication: They setting *no watch before the door of their lips, and bridle not their Tongues, therefore their Religion is vain;* as the Apostle James shews: They are full of vain words and foolish talk; *The words of the wise are gracious, but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself:* They are offensive to others, and pernicious to themselves: *A fool also is full of Words;* either a *Talkative*, or else full of vain Boasts, magnifying and admiring himself, and lessning the worth and worthiness of others: His *vain and light Tongue* discovers a vain, carnal, proud and empty heart, some unprofitable matter in discourse or another you shall observe these people will be full of: May be talk and prate of this Man, or that Woman, to pick up one thing or

James 1. 26.

Ecl. 10. 14.

or another to their reproach, (who are gracious persons) and instead of discoursing of a *Sermon* they have heard, or telling their Experiences, may be they will tell you what *Garbs, Cloaths and Dresses*, such and such People had on, or else they talk of their earthly and worldly Affairs, or some *Idle Jest, Stories, or foolish Talk*; but little of God besure is in their mouths, when they are out of the sight and hearing of sober and pious Christians: Indeed as our Saviour intimates, *how can they being evil, speak of good things?* there is much vanity in their unsanctified Hearts, and their Tongues discover it; *For out of the abundance of the Heart the mouth speaketh; a good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.* Mat. 12. 34.

But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment. v. 35.

For by thy word thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. v. 36.

God will not only condemn men for evil actions, but their evil words also shall rise up against them at the great day: And as the gracious words which proceed from a sanctified and renewed Christian tends to his Justification, especially when the main design and purport of his Speech tends to exalt and magnifie God and his Free-Grace in Jesus Christ; so the evil words of the unsanctified Christian tends to his Condemnation, and declares him to be but meer *chaff*, or a hypocritical person; but if idle jesting and foolish Talking is the Character of a vain man, what is a detracting and back-biting Tongue, a Tongue that is set on *fire by hell*, who vilifise and render odious such who truly fear God, that are not guilty of those foul things laid to their charge; *such persons are not like to ascend Gods holy hill, nor abide in his Tabernacle, viz. That taketh up false and wicked slanders and reports against his Neighbour, to lessen his reputation among Men: And 'tis with the greater aggravation, when it is done out of Envy, Prejudice or Malice; and 'tis further aggravated when 'tis done to a Minister of the Gospel, on purpose to obstruct or hinder unthinking Christians to adhere unto his Doctrine, or receive that truth which they see not; but set themselves to oppose and gainsay, who do not only in an undue manner spread such Reproaches, but also raise them: It is a great evil to divulge or propagate a fault committed by a Brother, by making it publick when it was private, (they breaking thereby the express*

prefs Precept of Jesus Christ, *Mat. 18.*) But it is far worthe to publish false and groundless Slanders and Accusations of him or others: And tis an abominable evil in such who are ready to entertain, and easily to believe, and greedily receive such Reports of him who deserveth it not. Such men are by the Lord called *vile persons, Psa. 5. 4.* and are contemned by such that fear the Lord, howsoever great and honourable they seem to be. Moreover, if it be so great an evil for men thus to use their *Tongues or Pens*, to speak evil of, and to blaspheme innocent men, what is the Nature of their Crimes who *curse and swear*, and *blaspheme the sacred Name of God* and the *holy Jesus* & like as the Pharisees did, who said, *this fellow doth not cast out Devils but by Belzebul the Prince of Devils*; ascribing that to the Devil that was proper to God alone, and wrought by his almighty Power.

Mat. 12. 24.

Christians, if you would not be found *chaff* at the great day, take heed of a reviling Tongue, least you deceive your selves, and all your Religion and Profession be vain: "He either deceiveth his own heart (saith our *Annotators*) in thinking himself religious, when indulging himself in things contrary to Religion, "or else deceiveth his own heart, being blinded with self-love, "and lifted up with self-conceit, which is the cause of his "Railing, Censuring, and speaking evil of others: Their Religion is vain, *empty*, and to no purpose, having no reality in it self, and bringeth no Benefit to them.

Jam. 1. 26.

O what a Reproach doth the talkative and prating person bring on the Name of God: This Man, this Woman, say they, is a Member of such or such a Church, and see what vain talk, frothy words, and frivolous Discourse proceeds from their Lips: But much more evil is in such who back-bite, revile, and defame others (as was hinted before.) This I say may discover such to be but *chaff*.

2. They appear to be *Chaff*, not only by their *light, vain, idle and back-biting Tongues*, but also by their light Behaviour; for the lightness of the heart is as much discovered by a loose and airy Deportment, as by loose and vain words; their wanton Looks, and rowling Eyes, or other unseemly and uncomely carriage, shews in part what they are; they being not of a grave, sober, and serious spirit, but behave themselves as if they had no sense of the Omniscency of God upon their hearts, nor of his holiness, not setting *the Lord always before them*, gives cause to all to fear they are but *chaff*.

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3. Their *light, empty and airy Attire, Dresses, and antick Fashions*, which they wear and take delight in, doubtless too much discovers the *Lighness, Vanity and Emptiness of their Spirits*: I am perswaded these *high and shameless Head-dresses* which some Women appear in, that come into Christian Assemblies, are but as Tell-tales of the *Vanity, Pride, Emptiness, and Haughtiness* of their hearts; *who but they that sell Wine will put forth a Bush?* I cannot see how a sober, serious Christian Woman should be satisfied to wear such *Antick Dresses*: Their Souls sure must needs blush at the *Thoughts* of them; when they consider whose *Eyes* behold them, *First*, Many gracious Men and Women, with no little trouble: And in the *second place*, their faithful Ministers, to the wounding and grieving their Souls. *Thirdly*, And a multitude of loose and ungodly People, who reproach and laugh at them, and cast contempt upon Religion on that account. *Fourthly*, And which is more, the holy Angels, they come into our Assemblies, and observe all, both Males and Females, how they do adorn their Profession and behave themselves. Women should cover their heads, because of the Angels; they ought to be in subjection; and therefore before all things their head ought not to be exalted, but to lye low, and be modestly attired; no doubt tis a palpable Breach of the holy Precept, for 'tis not a modest dress, becoming Women professing Godliness; tho' I dare not say but some sincere Christians may be overtaken with this Evil as well as others, yet I hope God will soon convince them of the odiousness of it: Yet no doubt it doth clearly discover that some of this sort are loose and vain persons, and but meer *chaff* in Gods sight, which the day that is coming will burn up: And such especially have cause to suspect themselves, who pride in their own hearts, and take delight in those hateful and abominable fashions, and cannot bear to be told of it, tho' in never so wise and discreet manner, nor will they be brought by any perswasions to reform, and leave them off, tho' it wounds the very Souls of many of them they have Communion with. *Fifthly*, O that they that fear God would consider that he beholds them, and looks upon them, *whose eyes are like unto a flame of Fire*. These Dresses, O ye Daughters of *Zion*, know assuredly none but foolish and vain persons do like and approve of, even none but the Devil and his Followers; is it not sad, in such a day of distress, sorrow and humiliation, when Gods Hand is lifted up upon the Nation, and thousands of poor Families want

Antick Head-Dresses discovers the vanity of the Heart.

I Cor. 11. 16.

Bread, that Christians should thus walk, and consume their Substance on their Pride and costly Lust.

4. They appear to be but *chaff*, who seem to make it a small matter to grieve the Hearts of sincere Christians; what care they who they wound and afflict, they'll have their Fancies, their Humours, tho' the thing in it self may be doubtful, whether a breach of Gods Law or not; and so like eating of Meats, that was a thing indifferent in it self, and might or might not be done. Nay, that make light of grieving the Holy Spirit, in themselves, and in others also; let the Lord be grieved, his Spirit grieved, his poor Ministers grieved, and his faithful Children grieved, they regard it not, but set light by it. These may also be suspected, *i. e.* that are indifferent in and about Closet and Family-Prayer, (and other weighty Duties of Religion) or are loose and formal in it: This shews they bear no weight, they are not ponderous, but light as Chaff. Moreover, such may be suspected, who set light by Hearing the Word of God; alas, to go to hear a Sermon is a light thing with some, if there be any worldly Loss attending it, tho' it be not to the Value of a *Groat*, they can't go, or if the Weather be not very good, they plead Excuse; as not being able to go so far, tho' may be the next day in worse Weather they can go about their earthly Business twice as far.

Likewise such who for every small matter refrain from coming to *the Lords Table*; may be any trivial offence shall hinder them; they are offended with this Person, and that Person, and so cast a slight upon Christ, and on his Sacred Ordinance, and thus persist from time to time: They can go to Church, or stay at home: Can pray, and hear, and can forbear: Religion is a light and indifferent thing with them. This shews such are under fearful Temptations, or else loose and light Professors in the sight of God.

5. Such are *Chaff* that only have the *husk* or *shell* of Christianity: *Chaff* is the *husks* of *Wheat*; many Professors please themselves with the external part of Religion, having a *form of Godliness*, but are Strangers to the *Life and Power* thereof: Like the *foolish Virgins* they have *Lamps*, but no *Oyl*; a Name, but want the Nature of true Believers; can talk and discourse of Religion, of the Covenant of Grace, and excellency of Christ; they may have, I grant, clear Notions in their heads of the Mysteries of the Gospel, and defend it too against opposers, yet their Hearts are un sanctified, and never felt nor experienced

enced the work of Faith with Power; they have the outside of a true Christian, the *Shell* of the *Wheat*, but if tried and searched there's nothing but *Chaff*, no *Kernil* in them, they want the *root of the Water*: All true Believers have past through the Pangs of the New Birth; they found they were once Dead, but are now alive, once blind, but now they see, once lost in their own Eyes, but now found, once Carnal, but now Spiritual, once had their affection set on things below, but now on things above; Sin was once Sweet and Pleasant to them, but now 'tis bitter and Loathsome in their Eyes, because they see it is so in the sight of God: Their Judgments are informed, their Understandings savingly enlightned; Christ and heavenly things are valued and esteemed above all things here below, yea, above ten thousand Worlds, by them; and their understandings are not only brought to assent to the truth of Christ, to the Glory and Beauty of Christ; but their *wills* also are subjected to him, they are brought to consent, and yield themselves to the Lord; they believe, and love, believe and obey, believe and suffer reproach, taking up the Cross, putting on the yoke of Christ; their affections are so changed, and under divine Influences, that what they loved once, they hate, and what they once hated, or liked not, they dearly love and approve of now: But thus it is not with *Chaffy Professors*: They may be changed from open Prophaness to an outward Reformation of life, but their Hearts are not changed, Sin is not Crucified in them, *self* is not subdued; that enmity that was naturally in their hearts, or dislike of the Life and Power of strict Godliness is not removed; they act only from *common Illuminations of the Spirit*, and so they put a force upon themselves, when found in religious Duties; and find not a natural Inclination and sweet Propensity in their hearts to heavenly things, and this shews they are no more than *Chaff*.

6. And lastly, Chaff I told you was Light, and every breath of wind will move it, this way, and that way, and if it rises high it will may be blow it quite away, there being no Kernel in it, whereas the Wheat abides.

So *Chaffy* and vain Professors are startled at every small blast of Persecution, and presently begin to move out of their place, and shun assembling themselves with Gods People: Nay, every wind of corrupt Doctrine is ready to blow some of this sort a way; they are unsettled Persons, they want weight, or

Heb. 13. 9.

are not rooted in the Truth, wanting a good Understanding, and a Principle of saving Grace in their Hearts; *Be not carried away with divers and strange Doctrines, for it is good to have the heart established with Grace, and not with Meats.*

This sort are soon corrupted from the Simplicity of the Gospel, by the Canning Craftiness of Men, being ready to receive any strange Notion, or close in with a *New Scheem of Religion*, some turning to *Judgism*, and add *Moses to Christ*, or joyn to the Gospel their own Works; they are commonly corrupt, either in Principles or Practices, or in both, making a stir about the *Mint, Annis and Commin*, i. e. about the smaller matters of Religion, as concerning *Meats and Observation of Days*, as if in such things lay the great stress of Christianity; how many are there who like those *false Teachers*, and deluded People in the Primitive Times, plead for Justification some other way than by Faith only, and bring in their own inherent Holiness and sincere Obedience, and add that to the Merits of Christ, in point of Justification before God; or exalt the Power and Will of the Creature, to the Eclipsing the Doctrine of Free-Grace. Sirs, tho' I will not deny but many sincere Christians may be shaken by the wind of false and corrupt Doctrine, or drawn away through the subtilty of men, yet no doubt chiefly they are the Light, Formal and Chaffy Professors which are carried away, and Tossed too and fro with every wind of Doctrine, and this because of the want of Grace, a sound Judgment and a good Understanding in the Mysteries of the Gospel. *A good understanding (saith David) have all they that do his Commandments.* Moreover, such who seem unsetled in their places in Gods House, or particular Churches where they are Members, being uneasie, and every little difference that may arise in a Congregation is ready to turn them away; or seem to be moved and disturbed at the Charges the Interest of Christ, or which the House of God calls for; these I say, give cause to fear they are but Chaff, or under great Temptation, if Sincere.

Sin is likened
to Chaff.

Secondly, By *Chaff* may also be meant, Sin, Filth and Corruption, which cleaveth to the Hearts and Lives of true believers, which Christ by the *Fan* of his Word, Spirit, and Afflictions, as you have heard, purges out: *He shall purify the Sons of Levi, and purge them as Gold and Silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.* This is spoken of Jesus Christ, whose *Fan* is in his hand: It shews his Work and Office, namely,

Mat. 3. 3.

namely, to refine and *fan* his People, not only Members, but Ministers also, signified by the Sons of *Levi*, that they all may offer acceptable Service unto God: Besides, our Lord Jesus sometimes makes use of wicked Men as a *Fan* in his hand to purge his People, and thus he did of old fan *Israel* by the *Babylonians*, and by the *Affyrians*; *I will send unto Babylon Fanners, as I have sometime fanned and scattered my people by them; so will I fan them by the Medes and Persians, who shall empty the Land of them*; After Christ hath fanned or purged away the *Chaff* and Filth of the Daughter of *Zion*, he will *fan* their Enemies, and they being all *Chaff*, the wind of his Indignation will drive them away. Let this be noted, that Christ hath many ways to *fan* and purge his People, yet still it is for their good, and they shall lose nothing but their *chaff*, their Sin and Corruptions thereby.

Ger. 51. 2.
Chap. 4. 11. 12.
Jer. 35.
So Jer. 15. 7.

Quest. Fourthly, *Why are the Saints compared to Wheat?*

Ans. I answer, for many Reasons.

1. *Wheat* is a choice Grain, the best Grain, so true Believers are a choice People in Christ's sight: *The righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour*; they are called *the excellent in all the Earth*. God calls his People his Jewels, or choice Treasure; they are men of a high and heavenly Birth, of a high sublime and excellent Spirit, they are espoused by an excellent person, act and are influenced by excellent principles, and have glorious Ends and Aims in all they do; and from hence may be compared to *Wheat*.

Why the Saints
are compared
to *Wheat*.

Prov. 12. 26,
Psa. 6. 3.
Mat. 3. ult.

2. *Wheat* hath much pains used with it, the ground must be made good, it must be well plow'd and manured before the *Wheat* is sown; so the hearts of poor sinners must be first made good, and by spiritual Convictions be plowed up, before the seed of Grace is sown; for like as Believers are compared to *Wheat*, so is also the Grace of God.

Wheat must be weeded as well as gathered into the *Barn*, and also *Threshed, fanned, and well Purged*.

Believers may be compared to *Wheat* upon this respect, Christ takes much pains (to speak after the manner of men) with his own *Elect*, not only by *Plowing, Manuring, but by sowing, watering, weeding, fanning and Purging them like Wheat*.

3. *Wheat* will endure cold *Frosts* and *Snow*, and all manner of bitter and sharp Weather, better than any other Grain. Sow *Barly* before *Winter*, and you will find but little of it will live, but *Wheat* will live in the sharpest *Winter* that can come;

what

what a good *Harvest* had we here in *England* after the last great Frost; alas, the *Wheat* was not destroyed thereby, but was made better, the Weeds and Worms being killed, which is found to hurt and annoy it oft-times.

Even so sincere Christians, who are Christ's *Spiritual Wheat*, abide faithful under the greatest Trials, Persecutions and Afflictions they can meet withal; they endure the Frosts and bitter *North-Winds* of Tribulation, and *furious Storms* of the Wrath of wicked men, which kills the false-hearted Professor, they die and wither away, they can't live, and maintain their seeming *hope* and *Confidence*, when true Believers can; a Hypocrite is but *Summer Corn*, or rather *Weeds* or *Tares* that spring up with the *Wheat*, tho' they look like it, yet are only the product of *Natural Conscience*, or the *common Influences of the Sun*, or Gospel of Jesus Christ.

4. An *Ear of Wheat* when it is near ripe doth hang down its *head*, the Corn being full and weighty, when light and empty Ears hold up theirs; commonly a *light and chaffy Ear* stands strait upright, in a lofty manner.

Eph. 3: 8.

So a true gracious Christian is of an humble Spirit, he hangs down his head (as it were) and is ashamed of his best Duties and Services, seeing so great weaknesses and Infirmities to attend him; he abhors himself, yea, loaths himself; he knows he hath nothing to glory in, but in the Cross of Jesus Christ; he sees himself nothing; *Unto me who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given*, (saith Paul:) what an humble Person was he, what a full and weighty *Ear of choice Wheat* was this Apostle: If you see a Man or Woman proud, or of an haughty and conceited Spirit, being lifted up, you may conclude they are but *empty Ears*, no true Grace being in their hearts.

5. *Wheat* hath its *Chaff* cleaving oft-times close to it, yea, it will stick and cleave so to it, that it is not easily separated.

Rom. 7. 21.

So it is with Christ's *Spiritual Wheat*, the filth or *Chaff* of internal Corruption is very subject to cleave to them, and hard it is for them to get rid of it. *When I would do good, Sin is present with me, for the good I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not do, that do I.*

2. 19. & 24.

Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death! I am (as if he should say) even wearied with continual Combating, I cannot get rid of this dead Body, this inward Filth and Corruption, the remainders of Sin in my flesh; this *Chaff* cleaves to all Christ's *Wheat*.

6. *Wheat*

6. *Wheat* is of prime and chiefest use, of it excellent things are made, as Meat for Princes. So the Lords faithful People are of chief use in Gods hand of all others; *the Lips of the Righteous feed many.*

7. That Nation that abounds with the finest *Wheat* is esteem'd a choice Land, a happy Nation: So likewise that Kingdom and Nation in which are abundance of godly Christians, it is a happy Kingdom, a blessed Nation, because such are the common Interest of the Land or Place where they dwell; they are called *the Pillers of the Earth.*

8. *Wheat* is Threshed with the flail, to sever it from the straw and chaff, by the Husbandman; so God to sever the *Wheat*, i. e. the godly from the chaffy Professor, and free them of the Filth and Corruption of their own hearts, brings his flail of Affliction and Persecution upon them.

9. *Wheat* is also fanned, to cleanse it; and it is to be noted, that *the fan* in the Hand of the Husbandman tosses up the *Wheat* and *Chaff* together, and then he shakes it to and fro, this way and that way, on his knees.

So the Lord Jesus with his spiritual Fan tosses the Godly and Hypocritical Professor, by the same Afflictions, Trials, Persecutions and Temptations. And O what hurryings, tossings and Tumbings to and fro in their Spirits have some Christians met with in the late times, and still daily meet withal? they have their ups and downs, this Affliction, and the other Temptation, this Loss, and the other Cross: But yet, nevertheless, they are not tost out, or blown away by the fan, but evident it is: the Chaff is hereby purged out; while *Christ's Wheat* is refined, they abide *fanning*, (as I hinted before) but so doth not the Carnal and light Professor: They are offended, through this means, as our Saviour shews, and are ready to say with that wicked man of old, *this Evil is of the Lord, why should I wait upon him any longer? Believers know, God doth it not for his Pleasure, but for their Profit, that they might be partakers of his Holiness.* Hence it is said, that they endure Chastening, and faint not when they are rebuked of the Lord.

Quest. 5. What is intended by *Christ's Garner*?

I answer, Christ hath a twofold garner.

First. His Church is his garner.

1. A Garner is prepared on purpose to retain, and safely to secure the *Wheat* in a heap together, where it is carefully to be look'd after. So is the Church of God appointed and prepared.

Mar. 13.

2 King 6. 33.

Heb. 12. 10.

The Church is
Christ's Spiritual
Garner.

prepared to receive and secure his faithful People together; his not built for *Chaff* nor *Tares*, and great care and pains is required of Christs servants in looking to, and taking care of his Spiritual Wheat in his Church.

2. Yet through the Negligence or want of Wisdom in the Servants, oft-times some Chaff is brought into the Garner with the *Wheat*, which when the Husbandman sees it, by viewing his Grain, he is Troubled at his servant; see (saith he) what abundance of Chaff you have brought in with the *Wheat*, which spoils the beauty of it to such a degree, that it does not seem to be near so good as indeed it is.

So it is here for want of Care, or through weakness or want of Knowledge in Christs Ministers and Servants, in discerning who are sincere Christians and who are not: Many unsound and Chaffy Professors are let into the Church or Churches of Jesus Christ, which is displeasing unto him, because they spoil the Beauty and Glory thereof, and cause many to reproach his faithful ones; as it also renders them in the sight of the Carnal World not to be the People which indeed they are.

3. The Husbandman therefore causes the *Wheat* in his Garner to be fanned again, to clear it of the Chaff that is got in amongst it; so Christ with the Fan of Persecution often times fans his, People to purge out the loose and prophane from among them.

Heaven is Christs Garner. Rev. 21. 27. *Secondly, By the Garner is meant Heaven it self, into which all the Elect shall be put at the last day, and into this Garner shall none come but pure Wheat: And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or that maketh a Lye, but they which are written in the Lambs book of Life.*

6ly. And lastly, What is meant by burning up the Chaff with unquenchable fire?

What meant by burning up the Chaff. *Answer, I answer, by burning up the Chaff with unquenchable fire, is meant the direful Wrath of God, which sometimes seizeth on ungodly persons in this world, and shall eternally take hold of all the Chaff in the world to come. The Wrath of God is often compared to fire in the Scripture. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and a fire out of his mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it. So in another place it is said, A fire goeth before him, &c. Shall thy wrath burn like fire, Psa. 89. 46. His fury is powered out like fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him.*

1. Fire is a terrible and most amazing Element, especially when it breaks forth like a masterless Enemy, and none can stop it: So is the Wrath of God very terrible, when he poureth it forth in his greatest fury. O what a frightful Cry doth a dreadful Fire that breaks out in a Town or City cause! what wringing of hands! Men tremble, Women miscarry oft-times, Children screech out, it frightens the very Fowls of the Air, and Beasts of the Earth, and turns all Faces into Paleness! how amazing was the flames of Sodom, and how terrible is the burning of Mount *Atna*! the Wrath of God when it furiously breaketh forth upon a People and Nation, or particular Person, causeth dreadful horror, it maketh the stoutest heart to quake, and the strongest hands feeble: *At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation: His fury is poured out like fire, and the Mountains are thrown down before him: Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong, in the day when I contend with thee? Who can stand before his indignation? O how will the wicked fly into holes, quiver like a leaf, and cry to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*

Jer. 10. 10.

Nah. 1: 6.

Rev. 6. 16.

2. Fire breaks out sometimes very suddenly, when none think of it, but all are as they judge, safe and secure, yet in a moment how are they surprized, when nothing but the horror and cry of fire, fire, fire, is heard in their ears. So Gods Wrath, like a dreadful and an unexpected fire, breaks out sometimes suddenly upon the ungodly. How surprizing were the flames of Sodom, and the amazing hand-writing on *Belshazars* wall, when he was drinking Wine in Bowls! immediately the Kings countenance was changed, and he was troubled in his thoughts, so that the joynts of his Loins were loosed, and his Knees smote one against the other: *When they cry peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.*

Dan. 5. 5. 6.

1 Thess. 3. 3

3. A fire sometimes breaks forth in the Night, when men are asleep: So God comes upon men many times in the night of ignorance and unbelief, while they lye on their Beds of Ease and carnal Security, by amazing Judgments, or by sudden Death. How secure was the old World, and the rich man in the Gospel, to whom God said, *this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

4. A consuming Fire destroys, wafts and devours exceedingly, as Sodom found, and London also by woful experience. So God when he breaks forth in his Wrath and Fury, he makes

Psa. 21. 9. 10.

Heb. 12. ult.

most lamentable desolation, *The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.* The Wrath of God is compared to a consuming fire: *For our God is a consuming Fire.*

Isa. 2. 12, 13,

14, 15, 16,

Zeph. 1. 18.

5. A Consuming and raging fire spares none, the Palace of the Prince no more than the Cottage of the Peasant, the mighty Oaks as well as the lowest Shrubs are devoured by it; so the wrath of God seizeth, and will seize on all wicked men, on the mighty and honourable of the Earth, as well as the poor and contemptible ones; the King on his Throne, as well as the Beggar on the Dunghill: *His wrath shall be on every one that is lofty, and upon every one that is proud and lifted up, and he shall be brought down; upon all the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the Oaks of Bashan. — He will come upon Princes as upon mortar, the whole earth shall be devoured by the fire of his Jealousy, neither their Gold nor Silver shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath.*

Rom. 9. 22.

6. Wood, Hay and Stubble, are fit fuel for the fire to seize upon, and such things that are combustible make it to burn the more vehemently. And if high strong Towers cannot stand before a consuming fire, how is it possible for Briars and Thorns? Some Sinners are like stubble fully dry: They are fit Fuel for the Wrath of God like fire to take hold of. O what horrid Guilt lies upon some mens Consciences, just like a great heap or pile of wood, well dried, or Cart loads of straw, or dry stubble: *What if God will to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.*

Nah. 1. 10.

A long Course in sin, Custom in sin, resisting the Grace of God, slighting Convictions, hardening the Heart against Reproof, stifling the Accusations of Conscience, and abusing the Patience and long Suffering of God, fits men for the fire of his Wrath; *Whilst they are folden together as Thorns, and whilst they are drunken as Drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.* Such that are drunk with Pride, drunk with Pleasures, or whose Souls are surfeited with the Riches and Cares of the World, the fire of Gods Wrath, as fit matter or combustible stuff, will seize upon.

7. A dreadful fire when it breaks out, turns all joy into sorrow, and makes a day of mirth a day of Mourning: So the consuming wrath of God, whether it seizes on the consciences of Men only whilst alive in the body, or on Body and Soul

Soul both here, or on the Soul at Death, it turns all joy into sorrow. O what extremity of misery do such feel! ask *Judas* or *Spira*, they could tell you.

8. *Fire is a most cruel and dreadful tormentor*; if a man be cast into a fire, what intollerable pain and anguish doth it put him to! but alas, alas, that's nothing to the Wrath of God, when God kindles it in the Consciences of men, nor to Hell fire. You will say, O 'tis a fearful thing to fall into a *furious* fire, into a burning Furnace, but O Sirs, how much more dreadful is it to fall under the Wrath of God! *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God: For our God is a consuming fire.* Heb. 2. 12. If it be terrible to have a finger, a foot, or a hand to be burned off, or to have the whole body cast into a Furnace of boyling Oil, (as some of the holy Martyrs were) how then can sinners, who are as *chaff*, bear the Thoughts of Gods wrath and vindictive Vengeance, which is far more intollerable than any fire into which any Mortal was ever cast? For

1. Other fire burns only the external part, or temporal, or corporal matter, but the fire of Gods wrath burns and torments the Spirit, the Soul, the invisible part.

2. Elementary fire is seen, but internal Wrath is only felt inwardly, it cannot be seen.

3. The fiercest fire that ever was kindled hath been overcome, and by Engines or Instruments put out, but the fire of Gods Wrath when kindled, and the Soul thrown into Hell, cannot be put out, nor be extinguished, 'tis unquenchable fire. Tho' the burning of Mount *Atna*, and other burning Mountains, are impossible for man to extinguish, yet doublets they shall not burn always, they will be put out, but wrath shall burn for ever. So much as to the Explanation of our Text. From hence we may observe divers Propositions or Points of Doctrine.

1. Doct. *The old floor is gone, 'tis removed, viz. The old Jewish Church, or national Church of Israel, the wheat that was in it being taken into Christs Gospel-Garner, and the chaff or all graceless persons or unbelievers, are fann'd away.* Now Christ hath removed the partition-wall that was between Jew and Gentile, and hath reconciled both unto God in one body. Now there is no knowing men after the flesh, fleshly Priviledges, *i. e.* being the Seed of Abraham, or being the Seed of Believers, as such, gives no right to Spiritual saving and eternal Blessings. Both those two People, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that believe of twain are

Eph. 2. 16.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

made one, *i. e.* one new man, or one Christian or Gospel-Church. And this is done by Jesus Christ, who by his *Fan* or Dispensation of the New Testament hath abolished the old Covenant-right of Church-Membership; not the fleshly Seed, but the spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, are to be received into Christ's Gospel Garner; *Ye as lively stones are built up a spiritual House, &c.* But this I shall not prosecute.

2 Doct. *Jesus Christ would have none but pure Wheat be gathered into his Garner; not the fleshly and spiritual Seed, not the Believer and the Unbeliever, not godly ones and ungodly ones, not the Chaff and the Wheat, as it was under the Law, in the National Church of the Jews. Not whole Parishes, or whole Nations, no, no, none but true Christians, or holy persons, sanctified and sincere, and truly gracious Souls.*

3 Doct. *Christ's great Work and Office is to purge his People, to cleanse them, and make them holy, and to sever the Wheat from the Chaff, the pure from the impure; or to separate Hypocrites from his Church, and purge his Saints from all their inward Filth and Corruption: He would have no Chaff there, none that are false-hearted and unsound, such he will first or last purge out; and he will make them that are good to be much better, more clean, more holy, more pure, he will purge out the chaff of Hypocrisy, Unbelief, Pride, Passion, Covetousness, Vain Glory, Carnality, and all manner of Corruption whatsoever that is in them; he sets as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver, and he will thoroughly purge away their Dross, and take away all their Tin. The time draws near in which the sinners in Zion shall be afraid, fearfulness shall surprise the Hypocrites: Who amongst us shall dwell with devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting Burnings?*

Ma. I. 25.

Ma. 33. 14.

4 Doct. *All true Believers, or all Christ's Wheat, shall be saved, shall be received into Heaven, or be gathered into his glorious Garner above, and into which place no wicked person, no false-hearted professor, no hypocrite, no carnal and self-deceived Gospeller, shall come. Though some of this sort get into the Church militant, they shall not get into the Church triumphant, tho' they may get a seeming place in his Garner below, yet they shall have no place in his glorious Barn or Garner above. Sirs, you that seem to take delight in the Company of the Saints, and seem to feed and lie down with Christ's sheep, yet know you*

you shall one day be separated as Goats from the Sheep, as foolish Virgins from the wise, as Chaff from the Wheat, and as Dross from the Gold; all you that are not sincere must go to your place; and those that shall be set at Christs right hand shall receive the Kingdom prepared for them, and all that shall be on his left hand must go into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

Math. 25 41.

Doct. 5. *A discriminating day will come, a day of severing the good from the bad, &c.*

Doct. 6. *That the Wrath of God is like fire, 'tis intollerable; or the misery and torments of the damned, or of all hypocrites and unbelievers, will be dismal and amazing; or there's no expressing how fearful their condition is and will be, who fall under the vindictive Wrath and Vengeance of an angry God.* I purpose to speak unto one or two of these Propositions, but at present I shall close with a word or two by way of Use.

The Wrath of God, whether internal or external, is intollerable.

The Application.

1. *Caution.* Take heed you are not Chaff, or prove not chaff, when the Fanner comes to fan you. O see you are not loose, carnal and empty Professors; if you have only a form of Godliness, the Name of Christ only, or Lamps, and no more, sad will it be with you; if you are not solid, weighty and ponderous Christians, if you experience not the divine power of Godliness, the Sin-killing, the Soul-quickning, the Heart-transforming, and God-exalting power of Christs Spirit, you are undone.

Take a few Motives to stir you up to take heed.

1. *The Fanner* is coming with his fan in his hand: A Providence may be near, yea, such a providence and dispensation which you little think or dream of. I might have shewed you that the whole Earth is but Christs common floor, and he is now about to fan this mighty floor; he hath many fans to do this. What are his fearful Judgments but as a fan in his hand, whether it be War, Pestilence, or Famine, or other strange Judgment, 'tis and will be but as a fan to purge the Earth, and consume the ungodly, or blow them away as Chaff.

What amazing Earthquakes have there been lately in divers places, have not we in England, in London, felt some of it, (as well as most Nations in Europe) tho' not like to that.

that in *Jamaica*, and some other places? are not these fearful Tokens and Signs of Gods Wrath and Indignation? are they not Harbingers and Presages of what is coming upon the World, and of the end thereof? Look to it, there is great Wrath at the door, I am afraid thousands will be suddenly surprized, and paleness of face take hold of them: God is certainly about to shake and Toss the Earth too and fro; the seven Viols of his Wrath will quickly now begin to be poured out: Expect all of you to be tois'd and fan'd, as wheat and chaff is tossed and shook together: *The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesie?* there is a worse Earthquake near, as the wicked shall find it; yea, such an Earthquake that will make all their hearts to tremble, which will shake down the foundations of *Mystery Babylon*, and all false States; it will be such a one that never was since the World began; these which have been of late, may be but Signs and fore-runners of that. In the Earthquake which is near, the tenth part of the great City shall fall, and seven thousand of the names of men, or names given to religious men, that were never given to them by Jesus Christ, meer Antichristian names, shall be no more, strange will be the effects of it no doubt. O what will you do in the day of Gods Wrath if ye are Chaff, or but counterfeit Christians? if not sincere? if not in Christ? *thou shalt be visited of the Lord with Earthquakes and a great noise, &c.* Great Changes, Commotions, Mutations and Revolutions, will suddenly come from the Lord of Hosts: *He will make the earth empty, and turn it upside down, and it shall be as with the people so with the priest: He will fan, shake and tumble the People together; you will find Distress of Nations, and Perplexity with a witness in a short time; nay, no doubt but the day of Judgment and End of the World, or Coming of Christ is very near; for he hath foretold as Signs thereof, that there shall be great Earthquakes in divers places.*

2. If you be Chaff among the Wheat, you spoil the Beauty and glory of the Wheat; you bring a reproach upon the Saints and upon the Church; the ways of God are evil spoken of thro' your means; your Pride, your Covetousness, your Back-biting and detracting Tongue, and Unjust Dealing, hinders the propagation of the Gospel; your formality, deadness, slighting and neglecting of the Worship of God, and want of Zeal, and Love to Christ and to his people, hath bitter effects on the unbelieving World, as well as it will have on your own Souls.

3. If you are Chaff, you shall e're long be separated or severed from the Wheat: There is a time near that that will discover all, and make a full discrimination *between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth the Lord, and him that serveth him not.* There shall not (e're long) be a *Cannanite* in the House of God any more.

Mal. 3. ult.

4. Nay, and (remember my Text) *The Chaff shall be burned with unquenchable fire*; into Hell at last all false-hearted, light and loose Professors, shall be thrown. O Take heed for your Souls sake, that you rest not upon a bare Profession, or on a name of Christians!

This may inform us also, that Christ hath a gracious end in bringing Persecutions and Trials on his People; it shews us why he uses the *Fan of severe Providences, Judgments and Afflictions*: It is, you have heard, to purge, to purifie them, and to separate the Chaff from them. O do not then *think it strange concerning fiery trials, as if some strange thing had befallen you.*

Exhort. Let me exhort you to see to it in time, that you are not deceived, and so prove Chaff, and Vain Persons, empty and foolish Virgins at last.

Motives. 1. O how far may men go, and yet be but almost Christians! Remember this.

2. Many when Christ comes shall have great Confidence, and go forth to meet him, and yet be found foolish ones: Some deceive their own Hearts, and others have Hearts that deceive them, by trusting in them, and never examine how matters are between God and their own Souls.

3. Men may Preach and Prophecie, yea, speak as if they had the Tongue of Men and Angels, and Cast out Devils in Christs Name, and yet be nothing; they may Preach, no doubt, to the Conversion of others, and yet may not be Converted themselves.

1 Cor. 13. 1, 2.

4. *Wheat is commonly weighed, to know the goodness of it; so God weighs Men, he weighs the Actions of Men: Thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found wanting: Weighed in a Ballance alluding to the weighing of Gold or Goods exactly in Scales.* God tries Men and Women, that all may know he will proceed Justly and Righteously with them; he weighs them *in the ballance of the sanctuary*, or trys them by the Touch-stone of his Word, and if found *full weight, or pure Gold*, then he declares that they are his, and he owns them

as his People, as his *Wheat*; but if too light, or not hold weight, but are greatly wanting, there being no worth in them, but are Dross, Chaff, light and empty Persons, unsound and un sanctified ones, then he rejects them as none of his, but are as reprobate Silver, false Coin, People of no value with him.

As he weighs Men, so he weighs their Works, their Graces, their Gifts, their Duties, to see whether they hold weight, whether true and righteous or not; whether the Grace be true Grace, special Grace, not common Grace, and their Gifts not Counterfeit Gifts, or meer Natural Gifts, or only humane and acquired Gifts: Some boast of false Gifts, which as Solomon tells us, is like Clouds and Wind without rain: What a stir doth a vain Person make of a strong Memory, crying it up as if it was a Spiritual Gift, and as if none were true Ministers but such who have a great Memory, and can deliver all they have got by their Study, by the strength of their Memory; alas, all men of any sense know, that is but a Natural Gift, which some wicked men have as well as some good men; but let him know, God knows what mens Hearts are, what their Ends and Designs are, what their Gifts are, and what their Duties are, as well as what the matter of their Worship is, which they perform to God; that is, whether it hath his Image stamp upon it; or is of his Authority, his own Appointment, his own Institution, or but Humane Inventions; he also weighs the manner how they perform all Divine Worship towards him, from what Principle, Life, Power, End and Design; whether 'tis from a changed Heart, from unfeigned Faith and Love to Christ, in sincerity, with Zeal, and to glorify God; if not, he will discover them, weigh them, and they will be found wanting, and be found no better than Chaff at last: Though they may seek ways to hide and cover their Wickedness, and false Spirits, and base designs, yet let them know, he that weighs the hill in scales, and the mountains in balances, doth and will weigh them, and find out all their Cursed Deeds, their Pride, their Malice, and put a rebuke upon their back-sliding and detraiting Tongues: Talk (saith Hannah) no more so exceeding proudly, let not arrogancy come out of thy mouth for God is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: Thou Peninnah (as our Annotators note) speak no more so insolently and reproachfully of me as thou hast done; he knoweth thy Heart, and all that Pride, Envy and Contempt of me, which thy

1 Sam. 2. 3.

“thy own Conscience knows, and thy perverse Carriage towards me : God pondereth, and tryeth all mens Thoughts and Actions; as a Just Judge; to give to every one according to their works.

Oh what a Motive should this be to us all ; God weighs our Persons, our Graces, our Gifts, our Dutys, and all our Services, in Scales : Take heed you are not found too light, found wanting, as be sure you will if you be found Chaff, when put into the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

Direction. 1. If you would not be found Chaff, try and weigh your Spirits, your Persons, your Faith, your Love; see if it holds weight by the Kings standard, see on what Foundation you are built; have you *dugg deep, and laid your foundation on a Rock?* what Love have you to Christ? is he precious to your Souls, the chiefest of ten thousand? what Love have you to the Children of God? how do you carry it at home and abroad? do you feed the Hungry, Visit the Sick, and Cloath the naked? is Christs Family, Christs Servants, Christs Poor, more in your esteem, love and affections, than Sons and Daughters, than Brethren and Sisters, that are not his Children? if you do not love Christ more than *Father and Mother, more than Son or Daughter*, you may justly fear whether you are *Wheat* or no: And if it be so, that you do so Love him, and his Saints, Ministers and People, it will appear whilst you live; and when you come to die, you will not forget Christ then, his People and Interest then : O think on this!

2. And to you Sinners, if you would be found *Wheat* in the day of Christ, then receive Christs true Doctrine, labour to distinguish between Truth and Error; beware of that strange and new Scheme that darkens the Free-Grace of God, and tends to destroy the Covenant of Grace: Remember to exalt Christ alone in your Salvation. How do some turn the Gospel of Gods Free-Grace into a Law, by the performance of which, as the Conditions of Life and Justification tell thee, thy Salvation doth depend. See what subtle Opposers (of the clearest Gospel) are risen up amongst us, and labour to avoid them, though their Tongues should seem to be tipp'd with *Silver*, yet their Doctrine is *Copper*.

3. Be sure Build on Christ alone, and see that that Faith thou hast in him, be *the Faith of Gods Elect*, which sanctifies both Heart and Life, and is attended with Good Fruits; you must work from Life, and not for Life.

Consolat. 1. Lastly, By way of Comfort and Consolation: Be not afraid, O Child of God, tho' thou art in Christ's Fan, and art tost up and down with Temptations, Trials and Afflictions: Know that his Design is wholly herein for thy good, it is but to purge out thy Chaff, that thou as pure white Wheat may'st shine the more bright and clear in Grace and Gospel-Holiness, for Sin and Corruption spoils thy Beauty to all that behold thee. No Doctrine tends to promote Gospel Holiness like the Doctrine of Gods Free-Grace: Shall we sin because grace hath abounded? God forbid.

2. O what a Mercy of Mercies it is that Gods Wrath is appeased towards you: Christs Blood has quenched this dreadful fire, as to you who believe, and indeed nothing else could do it; O bless God for Christ, and for that River of Water which proceeds from him, to the extinguishing this flaming Fire; he hath born it, and allay'd it, nay, quite put it out, so that you shall never feel the burning or tormenting Nature thereof.

3. Thou shalt at last, whosoever thou art, if sincere, if Wheat, be gathered into his Garner; viz. into Heaven it self, for Christ will not lose one grain of his spiritual Wheat, not one Sheep of his shall perish; *He that has begun that good work in thee, will perform it to the day of Christ.*

He will gather his wheat into his Garner, but the Chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

So much for this time.

Joh. 10. 28.
Phil. 1. 6.

MATTH.

MATTH. III. 12.

Whose Fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the Wheat into his Garner, but the Chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

Beloved, I have gone through the several Terms of the Text, by way of Explanation, and have taken Notice of several Propositions or Points of Doctrine that naturally arise therefrom. I purpose only to prosecute but one of them, namely, the 6th. and last, viz.

*Serm. II.
Preached
March 12.
1692.*

Doct. That the Wrath of God is like Fire, 'tis intollerable; or, the Misery and Torment of the Damned will be dismal and amazing; there's no expressing how fearful their condition is and will be, who fall under the vindictive Wrath and Vengeance of an angry God.

I shall only do three things

1. Further open the Nature of Gods Wrath.
2. Prove and demonstrate the Truth of the Proposition.
3. Improve it by way of Application.

And to proceed, it is necessary to note to you in the first place, (as I before hinted) that the Wrath of God may be considered under a twofold Consideration: As it is manifested,

1. Internally or Externally, taking hold of, and seizing upon some ungodly persons here, whilst in this World.
2. As it is Eternal, seizing on and taking hold of all undone and lost Sinners hereafter.

Gods Wrath opened.

Sin is the cause of Gods Wrath and Vengeance, both of that which is felt here and shall eternally be felt and undergone hereafter; the word (as the learned note) which is translated *Wrath*, comes from a Root \square that signifies *heat*, or to be *hot*, and hence 'tis compared to *fire*; an *angry Man* we say is a *fiery Man*, a Man that hath much *fire* or *fury* in him; the Wrath of man is *hot*, but the Wrath of God is much *hotter*: *Because there is Wrath, beware.* Sirs, there is Wrath in the Heart of God against Sinners, there his anger is kindled; there is

Job 36. 18.

Wrath also in his *Decree*, and in his *Threatnings*, his Wrath continues on all Unbelievers: *He that believeth not, the Wrath of God abideth upon him.* Tho' many of them do not feel it, they have not the sense of it, but shall have one day; yet there are some that God lets out his Wrath upon to such a degree here, that they do feel it, and cry out under the sense and horror thereof in a fearful manner.

External wrath
opened.

Secondly, The Wrath of God, as it is compared unto fire; is oftentimes let out to consume men in divers respects.

1. Sometimes by *Poverty*, as by a flame he consumes in a secret way their outward substance; *there is a Curse upon their estates*, which dries up their Riches in which they Trusted, and set their Hearts upon, forgetting God their Maker, their *Chief Good* and Last End.

2. Sometimes he *Consumes* their *Honour*, Reputation and Credit, they falling by their Iniquity into disgrace, after they have made a Profession of Religion, and have been in the Love and Esteem of good Men.

3. Sometimes also by *Sickness* as by a flame he consumes their Health; and thus he threatned the People of *Israel*, *The Lord shall smite thee with a Consumption, and with a Fever, and with an Inflammation, and with extream Burning.*

4. Also his Wrath oftentimes breaks out like fire on some Men by suddain Death, in a strange and unusual manner, as in the case of *Lots Wife*, and of *Nadab* and *Abihu*; and *there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.* This was so amazing, that *Moses* said unto *Aron* and unto *Eleazor*, and unto *Sihamar*, *Uncover not your heads, neither rend your cloaths, lest ye die, and lest Wrath come upon all the People; but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled: Open not your Mouths, (as if he should say) shew no such sorrow as at other times, for God is Just, (and he hath let out his deserved Wrath against these young Men) lest you should seem to Justifie them, and shew a dislike of God's token of Divine displeasure.*

5. Moreover God many times lets out his Wrath by *War*, and the *Sword consumes and devours much people*: As also by *Famine* and by the *Pestilence*. The Wrath of God, as it is let out in this World is as a *drying, scorching and devouring fire*: The flame of Gods Displeasure puts all into a flame; as at this day, all the Earth seems to be on a fire, God is now a burning up, and consuming the Nations; *Therefore he hath poured upon*

him

Joh. 3. 36.

Deut. 28. 22.

Levit. 10. 1, 2.

vers 6

him (speaking of Jacob) the fury of his anger, and the strength of Baſtel, and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart : War consumes the Riches, the Wealth, the Strength, the Food and Bread of the Nation, as well as the People, but it is not laid to heart. He teareth me (ſaith Job) in his Wrath : The Hebrew Word טרף (as Mr. Caryl Notes) is near in found to our English Tear, and it ſignifieth to Tear as a Lyon his prey. Wrath is of a Tearing and devouring Nature. God ſometimes in his Wrath Tears in pieces the Bodies of Men, he tears their Power, their Riches, and consumes their Beauty, and turns all (as it were to Aſhes) and thus he will pour out his Wrath on Babylon, and ſhe ſhall be burned with fire.

Iſa. 42. 25.

Job. 16. 9.

6. The Wrath of God alſo Seizeth on the Souls of ſome men, whileſt they are in this World ; as when they are left, or given up unto hardneſs of Heart, Unbelief, and blindneſs of Mind ; indeed this is moſt dreadful of all : What can be a greater Token of Gods Divine Wrath ? it is the beginning of that Future Vengeance that ſhall be poured forth upon them to Eternity.

Internal Wrath explained.

Thus the Almighty dealt by the Jews for their Sin in rejecting of Jeſus Chriſt, and putting him to death by wicked hands, for this he gave them up to an hard, unbelieving, and an impenitent heart, and then let in the Romans upon them, who utterly deſtroyed their City and Temple, and ſo ſcattered them on all the face of the Earth ; and hence the Apoſtle ſaith, that Wrath was come upon them to the uttermoſt.

1 Theſ. 1. 16.

7. The Wrath of God like Fire ſometimes alſo ſeizeth on the Conſciences of men, by which means they are fearfully tormented ; for their horrid Blaſphemy, Prophanes, Atheiſm, Apoſtacy, &c. We have had two Examples of this ſort, viz. Mr. Francis Spira in the laſt Century, and Mr. John Child in this.

Internal wrath on the Conſciences of Men opened.

It is enough to make all who read thoſe Narratives to Tremble, at the very thoughts of the incenſed Wrath and Anger of an offended God. Who can ſtand before his indignation, when his wrath is poured out like fire, on the Souls and Conſciences of Men ? O how doth he ſeem to Tear them into peices, even to ſuch a degree as they ſeem to be in the very torments of Hell, while in the Body : And not knowing but that a faithful reciting of ſome Paſſages concerning the inward Horror of the ſaid Spira and Child, may be of ſome uſe to Caution all to take heed of ſuch like ſins which they fell under, I ſhall

(tho

(tho' more briefly than I intended) compare their States, Circumstances, inward Anguish and Horror of their Spirits, together.

S O M E

P A S S A G E S

Of the Fearful Estate of

Francis Spira,

Spira having received the Light of the Gospel, became a Teacher of the Blessed Truths thereof amongst his Friends and familiar Acquaintance; and (says the Narrative) in comparison seemed to neglect all other Affairs, much pressing this main point of Doctrine, viz. *That we must wholly and only depend on the free and unchangeable Love of God in the Death of Christ, as the only way to Salvation.*

As to his natural and corrupt Inclination; 'I was, saith he, excessively Covetous of Money; and accordingly applied my self to get it by Injustice, corrupting Justice by doing it, &c.

As touching Spira's Sin and his grand fall, it was thus, viz. The Popes Legate, Resident at Venice, was stirred by the malice of the Papists to accuse Spira to him, and by the Craft and Policy of

the Legate, and through slavish Fear, Spira first fled, and afterwards renounced his Testimony to the Truth; before which it appears he reasoned thus within himself, thro' the Suggestion of the Devil, viz. 'Be well advised, fond Man, 'consider Reasons on both 'sides, and then judge, how 'canst thou thus overwean 'thine own sufficiency, as thou 'neither regardest the Examples of thy Progenitors, nor 'the Judgment of the whole 'Church? dost thou not consider what misery this thy Rashness will bring thee into? 'thou shalt lose thy Substance 'gotten with so great Care 'and Travel; thou shalt undergo the most exquisite Torments that Malice can devise; 'thou shalt be counted an Heretick of all; and to close up 'all, thou shalt die shamefully:

ly: What thinkest thou of the loath-
 som stinking Dungeon, the Bloody
 Ax, the Burning Faggot? are they
 delightful? be wife at length, and
 keep thy Life and Honour. — Go
 to the Legate, Weak Man, and free-
 ly Confess thy Fault, &c. And
 upon these thoughts he goes to the
 Legate, and salutes him with this
 News, viz.

Having for these divers years enter-
 tained an Opinion concerning some Arti-
 cles of Faith, contrary to the Orthodox
 and received Judgment of the Church,
 and uttered many things against the
 Authority of the Church of Rome, and
 the universal Bishop, I humbly acknow-
 ledge my Fault and Error, and my Folly
 in my misleading others; I therefore
 yeild my self in all Obedience to the su-
 pream Bishop of Rome, into the Bosom
 of the Church of Rome, never to depart
 again from the Traditions and Decrees
 of the Holy See; I am heartily sorry for
 what is past, and I humbly beg Pardon
 for so great an Offence.

The Legate at this commanded
 him to return to his own Town, and
 there to confess and acknowledge the
 whole Doctrine of the Church of
 Rome to be holy and true, and to ab-
 jure the Opinions of Luther, &c.

After this he signed an Instrument
 of Abjuration, and then fell under hor-
 rid Despairation.

And he thought he heard a direful
 Voice, saying, *Thou wicked Wretch,*
thou hast renounced the Covenant of thy
Obedience; thou hast broke thy Vow; hence
Apostate bear with thee the Sentence of thy
Eternal Damnation. He trembling in
 Body and Mind fell into a Swound.

Now began some of his Friends to
 repeat too late of their Rash Coun-
 cil, not looking so high as to the
 Judgment of God, laid all the blame
 on his *Melancholly Constitution*, that
 over-shaddowing his Judgment,
 wrought in him a kind of Madness,
 and directed him to the use of Phy-
 sicians, &c.

To which Spira replied, *Alas poor*
men! how far wide are you? do you
think that this Disease is to be Cur'd by
Potions? believe me, there must be a
another manner of Medicine; it is nei-
ther Plaister nor Drugs that can help
a fainting Soul, cast down with the
sence of sin, and the Wrath of God;
'tis only Christ that must be the Physici-
an, and the Gospel the Souls Antidote.
 Amongst others that come to visit
 him was Paulus Vergerius, and Mat-
 theus Gribaudus, principal Labou-
 rers for his Comfort; they found him
 about 50 Years of Age.

Neither affected with Doteage,
 nor with the unconstant head-strong
 Passion of Youth, but in the strength
 of his Experience and Judgment;
 in a burning heat, calling for drink;
 yet his Understanding active, quick of
 Apprehension, Witty in Discourse,
 above his ordinary manner —
 they forcibly infused some liquid
 Sustenance into his Mouth, most of
 which he spit out again, and in a
 fretting mood said, *As it is true,*
that all things work for the better to those
that Love God, so to the wicked all to
the contrary; for whereas a plentiful
Off-spring is the Blessing of God and his
Reward, being a stay to the weak Estate
of their Aged Parents, to me they are

a cause of bitterness and vexation; they do strive to make me tire out this misery, I would fain be at an end; I deserve not this dealing at their hands. Oh that I were gone from hence, that some body would let out this weary Soul! My sin, said Spira, is greater than the Mercy of God; nay, answered his Visitors, the Mercy of God is above all sin, God would have all men to be saved; it is true, (said he) God would have all the Elect to be saved; he would not have damn'd Reprobates to be saved: I am one of that Number; I know it, for I willingly denied Christ, and I feel that he hardens me, and will not suffer me to hope. Being asked whether he did believe that Doctrine to be true for which he was accused before the Legate, he answered, I did believe it when I denied it, but now I neither can believe that nor the Doctrine of the Roman Church; I believe nothing, I have no Faith, no Trust, no Hope, I am a Reprobate, like Cain or Jadas, who casting away all hope of mercy, fell under despair; and my Friends do me wrong, that they suffer me not to go to the place of Unbelievers, as I justly deserve.

The mercy of God (said he) is exceeding large, and extends to all the Elect, but not to me, or any like me, who are sealed to Wrath: I tell you I deserve it, my own Conscience condemns me, what needeth any other Judge; if Peter grieved, and repented, it was because Christ beheld him with a merciful Eye, and in that he was pardoned; it was not because he wept, but because God was gracious to him; but God respects not me, and therefore I am a Reprobate; I feel no Comfort can enter into my Heart, there's

place only for Torments and Vexings of Spirit: I tell you, my Case is properly mine own, no Man was ever in the like plight, and therefore my Estate is fearful.

And then roaring out in bitterness of Spirit, he said, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Some said with a whispering Voice that he was possessed; he over-hearing it, said, Do ye doubt it? I have a whole Legion of Devils that take up their dwelling in me, and possess me as their own; and justly too; for I have denied Christ, Christ will not be denied, no not in a word, and therefore it is enough; in Heart I never denied him.

He said, when asked, that he knew there were worse, far worse pains than those that he then suffered; for the wicked shall rise to their Judgment, but they shall not stand in Judgment; this I tremble to think of, yet I desire nothing more than that I might come to that place, where I may be sure to feel the worst, and to be freed from fear of worse to come.

Being bid to believe the Truths he had denied, he replied, I cannot, God will not suffer me to believe them, nor to trust in his mercy; what would you have me to do? I would, but I cannot, tho' I presently be burnt for it.

I find I can neither believe the Gospel, nor trust in Gods Mercy; I have sinned against the Holy Ghost, and God by his immutable Decree hath bound me over to perpetual Punishment: God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth; God hath taken away from me all power of Repentance, and brings all my sins to remembrance; and guilty of one, guilty of all, therefore

fore it is no matter whether my sins be great or small, few or many; they are such, that Christs Blood, nor the Mercy of God belongs not to me; he hath hardened me, I find that he daily more and more doth harden me, and therefore I am without hope; I feel it, therefore cannot but despair: I tell you, there was never such a Monster as I am, never was any man alive a spectacle of such exceeding Misery. I know that Justification is to be expected by Christ, and I have denied and abjured it, to the end I might keep my frail Life from Adversity, and my Children from Poverty, and now behold how bitter my Life is to me, and God only knows what will become of this my Family; but sure no good is likely to beside it, but worse and worse, and such at length as one stone shall not be left upon another.

Said he, The Spirit of God often admonished me, when at Cittadella I did as it were set my Seal, the Spirit of God often suggested to me, Do not write Spira, do not Seal, yet I resisted the Holy Ghost, and did both, and at that very time I did evidently feel a wound inflicted my very will, &c.

David was Elected and dearly Beloved, and tho' he fell, yet God took not utterly away his holy Spirit, and therefore was heard when he prayed, 'Lord take not thy holy Spirit from me. But I am in another Case, being for ever accursed from the presence of God; neither can I pray as he did, because the Holy Spirit is quite gone, and cannot be recalled,

'O that I might feel but the least sense of the Love of God to me, tho' but for one small moment, as

'I now feel his heavy Wrath that burns like Torments of Hell within me, and afflicts my Conscience with pangs unutterable: Very Desperation is Hell it self; you persuade me to believe, how faint would I do it, but I cannot: Then violently grasping his Hands together, and raising himself, 'Behold, said he, I am strong, yet by little and little I decay and consume, and my Servants would fain preserve this weary Life, but at length the Will of God must be done, and I shall perish miserably.

'I see, said he, my Damnation, and I know my remedy is only in Christ, yet I cannot set my self to take hold of him! Such are the Punishments of the Damned, they repent of their loss of Heaven, they cannot amend their ways.

'Now also Belzebub comes to his Banquet; you shall see my End, and in me an Example to many, of the Justice and Judgment of God.

'What Hell can be worse than Desperation, or what greater Punishment than the gnawing worm, and unquenchable Fire? Horror, Confusion, and which is worse than all, Desperation it self, continually tortures me; and now I count my present Estate worse than if my Soul were separated from my Body, and were with Judas and the rest of the damned; therefore I desire to be there, rather than alive in the Body.

'God hath taken Faith from me, and left me other common Gifts for my deeper Condemnation, by how much the more I remember what

' I had, and hear others discourse
 ' of what they have, by so much the
 ' more is my Torment, in that I
 ' know what I want, and there is no
 ' way to be relieved : Thus spake
 ' he, the Tears trickling down ; pro-
 ' fessing that his Pangs were such, as
 ' that the Damned in Hell endure
 ' not the like Misery. That his Estate

' was worse than that of Cain or Ju-
 ' das, and therefore he
 ' desired to dye ; yet,
 ' Behold, said he, the
 ' Scriptures are accom-
 ' plished in me, *They*
 ' *shall desire to dye, and*
 ' *Death shall fly from*
 ' *them.*

See the Rela-
 tion of him at
 large, Sold by
 A. and F. Chur-
 chil, at the black
 Swan in Pater-
 Noster-Row.

SOME

P A S S A G E S

Of the Fearful Estate of

John Child,

MR. *John Child* was a Preacher, and when he was young a very zealous Asserter of the Doctrine of Gods Free-Grace ; Namely, of Personal Election, and of the Saints final Perseverance ; and was a man of considerable Natural Parts and Ability, being much followed wherever he preached, both in the City and Countrey, yet seemed to be of a haughty Spirit, loving Applause and Popularity, which it may be feared was the Cause of his Fall, and may be a Warning to all how they have mens Persons in Admiration. But he had not many years asserted the Doctrine before mentioned, before he changed his Judgment, and turned to be a grand *Arminian* ; which Notions he maintained with great Confidence, and was so conceited of his

Abilities, that he feared not to Dispute with any Man, charging the Doctrine of Personal Election at a strong manner, as if the Asserters of it rendered God cruel, and worse than the worst of Mortals : In his Judgment he was a Baptist, *being against Infants Baptism*, and for the *Baptism of Believers* ; for many years he lived in *Buckinghamshire*, near me, I being intimately acquainted with him for near 30 years ; but a little before the last Persecution of Dissenters he removed his Dwelling, and came to *London*, and lived near to my Habitation, in *Pauls Shadwel* ; now the first time I came to fear him, was through some Words he uttered to me, which was to this effect ; *I have*, said he, *seriously considered whether there be any thing in Religion worth suffering for :*

Which

Which Words I wondred at, from such a one as he; but soon after he Conformed, (Troubles rising high,) and then wrote a Cursed Book, rendering the Dissenters, especially the Baptists, very odious; casting Reproach upon their faithful Ministers, because some of them were not learned men, I mean with the Knowledge of the Tongues; and quickly after this he fell under fearful Despairation: I was one of the first Men that he sent for, and I found him in a dismal State and Condition, being filled with Horror, saying, he was damned, and crying out against himself for Writing that Book; saying, he had touched the Apple of Gods Eye; I said all I was well capable to speak, to Comfort him, but all in vain; at another time he said, *Mine iniquities are great and many, old sins as well as of a late date come to mind; Wrath is come upon me to the utmost, God hath forsaken me, good Men are my Enemies; I hate my self, I am afraid and ashamed to go abroad, and am confused and distracted at home; the Scriptures look dreadfully upon me, I have raised Reproach, invented Reproach, and by it wronged multitudes, — I am afraid to live, and afraid to dye; Judgment I fear will be terrible in this World, and more in the World to come; I cannot give an Account of my Actions to Men, how much less to God! my Heart condemns me, and he is greater, and knows more: I think I have not only outdone Cain, Balaam, and Judas, but some of the Devils themselves.*

O I cannot Repent, I cannot Repent! I shall go to Hell! I am broken in Judg-

ment; When I think to Pray, either I have a flushing in my Face as if I were in a flame, or I am dumb, I cannot speak; all the signs of one whom God hath left, forsaken and hardened — If I was in Heaven, it could not relieve me, for I should behold the Face of God and holy Saints, as now I behold the Face of good Men upon Earth, with shame and confusion of Face — and then again said, Wrath is come upon me to the uttermost — I am one of the greatest Hypocrites that ever lived upon the Earth, and shall be so accounted: God hath and will do his will upon me — Oh he thunders upon me! should God let out the fence of my sins on me, (as he will) I should howl like a Dog, roar like a Lyon, bellow like an Ox; mine inward parts would melt within me, as brass melts in a flaming fire; I shall lye lower than Judas, I have sinned worse then Judas — he quoting those words in Heb. 10. 2, 6. If we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truths, remains no more sacrifice for sin, &c. he said, when I am faint and low, I take some refreshments, but in Hell, there is no refreshment, not a drop of Water to cool my Tongue.

To some that came to Visit him, and to Comfort him, he said, *All is gone, I am undone — I have been so great a sinner against God, and the people of God, that God will have no Mercy on me, but will glorifie himself by me, and make me an Example for the strengthening and establishing of his People, but it shall end in my destruction — God hath sworn in his Wrath that I shall never enter into his rest — I have been a loose and carnal Professor,*

and if I were in the place of God, I should meet the same measure that God doth to me: My Calamity is even at the door, and all men in a little time will justifie Gods dealing with me: The Wrath of God is kindled, and burns in me; it is impossible for you to imagin my torment, and this is but an Earnest-penny of my Eternal Damnation. Said a godly man, this is a humbling dispensation that you are exercised under — A humbling dispensation, said he, do you call it? I tell you, it is an hardening dispensation, and I feel it to be so: Said his Friend, I hope there is mercy yet reserved for you; to whom he replied, I know I shall have such Mercy as the Damned have; I do highly justifie God in his dealings with me — at another time, I once thought, said he, that there was a power in man, but now I find it otherwise, for I cannot Pray — I have no desire after any thing that is good; I cannot Repent. His Visitors asked him if they should Pray for him? he said, No, No.

One said to him, the Learned Dr. Twiss in his *Vindiciae Gratiae* confesseth there were Depths in the Controversie between the Calvinists and Arminians, yet he believed the Truth against the Arminians.

Mr. Child replied, I thought I could have dived to the bottom of it by my parts, but I see I cannot; and then, and many other times said, I am broken in Judgment — One of his Visitors said, you are obliged to stoop to the Sovereignty of God; he replied, Oh I cannot! I would be above him! O that there should be an Eternal

blessed Being, and I sure never to enjoy him; there shall be an Eternal Wrath and Punishment, and I sure to fall under it. I shall be an eternal Monument of the Wrath of God — Pride and Covetousness hath ruined me, it hath undone me; I have been too much influenced thereby: I have been a Hypocrite, I am so now: I seem to repent, I do not; I cannot repent: And walking to the end of the room, turned back with a very stern Countenance, and striking his Hand on his Breast, said, No Sir, I cannot pamper this Body, for God will have it made a remarkable Example to this Generation. He cried out against himself for charging those that hold the Doctrine of Personal-Election with Consequences beyond the Sense of their Minds or Principles; I have, said he, made this World my God, I have been guilty of Idolatry, I have been guilty of Pride, endeavouring to run every Man down in Dispute; I have endeavoured to shake the Cross off my Shoulders; how deplorable a thing is this, that I that have preached so much of the glory of another World, should now be deprived of it all: You will as surely see me damned, as you now see me stand here.

To others he said, I have trifled in Religion, trifled; trifled — I am lost, there is no Hope, no Hope: At another time he said, The black Tokens of Reprobation are upon me: He said to Mr. Plant, smiting on his Breast, Sir, I am Damn'd, I am Damn'd; it is so most certainly: My day is over; O that it was with me as in days past! but it is too late, the Decree is gone forth, it is Sealed in Heaven, and it is irreversible. Jesus Christ cannot save me, he will not, he

he cannot Mediate for me, I have so much offended him, in maliciously abusing of his People: O what a Wretch was I! what a Spirit was I led by! I have guilt enough, said he, to sink seventeen Kingdoms, and I know the Earth would open its mouth and swallow me alive, like Corah, Dathan and Abiram, were it not that God hath reserved me to be a more publick Spectacle of his Anger and Displeasure both to Angels and Men. I can neither Pray, nor desire others to pray for me; my Heart is perfectly hardened; how should I, when I cannot desire Jesus Christ to pray for me; floods of Tears flowing from him, Dear bought Experience, saith he, hath taught me, that it is no small thing to trifle with him in the great things of Religion and Eternity, &c. In one of his Letters sent to Mr. James Foxes are these Expressions, viz. Being possessed with Doubts, Fears and Tremblings, night and day, the sad savour of Gall and Wormwood, an horrible Relish of Gravel-stones, the sad Apprehensions of Curses, Blastings and Mildew — the dismal sound of the mad Prophets words, I shall see him, but not now, I shall behold him, but not nigh — had I been a Backslider of an ordinary size — I have a Voice behind me, or dire Texts — to love and make a Lye is a qualification for the Lake.

His poor Wife, as I remember, intimated to me, that the

very Ends of the Hair of his Head in the Night-season did stand in Drops thro' the Anguish of his Soul.

Thus he continued for several Months under most dreadful horror and fearful desparation, until the 13th. of Octob: 1684. when to

put an end to his miserable Life, he hanged himself in his own hired house, in Brick-lane near Spittle-fields, London,

leaving a sorrowful Widow and several Children: But she poor Woman lived not long after. 'Tis to be noted; that there was a strange blast upon his Estate, for tho' I understood by a Friend that was intimate with him, he was little before his fall worth near a thousand pounds; yet I can hear but of a little left to his Children, his Eldest Son being but in a low and mean Condition. I take not upon me to pass Judgment upon this miserable Man, not knowing how God might deal with him; whose Mercy is Infinite, for I do not believe Self-murther is an unpardonable sin; for if so, there is more Sins unto Death than one; certainly it is a Sin against the Father and the Son; and not against the Holy Ghost; and therefore may be forgiven un-

The Narrative concerning Mr. Child is Sold by Tho. Fabian at the Bible in Cheapside, and worthy it is, Reader, of thy perusal.

to men, who may before their Life is quite gone have Repentance given to them. But I am of the Opinion, (with a worthy Minister that visited him) that if any *Atheist* in the World who had formerly known this man, and had conversed with him in his bitter Agonies, he would have seen sufficient Demonstrations to have convinced him that there is a dreadful God, or a Power besides and above Nature, who can touch, shake, and disorder, and turn into Confusion the strongest constitution of body, by mi-

nistring and fasting terrible things upon the Soul; and as he saith, let this *Pillar of Salt* tend to warn and season the People of this present and future Ages, of the danger of sinning against the light of their understanding.

Moreover, it doth I am sure serve with a witness to prove, and fully to demonstrate the truth of that Proposition I am upon, *viz. That God doth sometimes let out his Wrath on the Consciences of some men, for their horrid evil in this World, which seems intollerable and hard to be born or undergone by any Mortal.* But,

The fire of Gods eternal wrath opened.

Mark 9. 43,
44, 45, 46, 47,
48.

Secondly, To proceed, by *burying up the Chaff with unquenchable fire*, or by the Wrath of God in this place, our Blessed Saviour doth intend, *casting the wicked into Hell it self*: Remarkable it is, that no less than four or five times the Lord Christ positively affirms in *Mark 9.* that the fire of Hell into which Body and Soul of wicked men shall be cast, cannot be quenched; *where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched, &c.* Why repeated so often? is it not to assure all ungodly persons of the certainty of it? Men are not willing to believe this great truth, they are too ready to think that it is inconsistent with infinite goodness to inflict such Punishment on his Creatures, but alas, they forget that there is an infinite perfection in every one of the Divine Attributes, and that as Gods mercy is infinite, unsearchable, and unconceivable, so is his wrath and fury; none are able to conceive, much less to declare, what pain and anguish the damned undergo. What torments like fire? and what fire is so hot and so tormenting as Hell-fire? sad it is to burn half an hour in an *Elementary fire*, yet the Martyrs have endured that for Christs sake; God made it easie to some of them: But alas, who can bear the burnings of Hell-fire, when wrath shall be let out upon the Soul to the uttermost?

O Sirs, what a fearful thing will it be to be found *chaff*, and false hypocritical Persons! such cannot escape the damnation of Hell;
No,

No, nor can any sinner whatsoever, *except they believe, repent, or are born again*; there is no avoiding being cast into unquenchable fire.

Thirdly, I shall now endeavour to prove the point, viz. That the Wrath of God *in Hell is intollerable, and far greater than any Wrath let out here, either on the Bodies or Souls of men*; which will appear, if we consider these particulars following:

First, The extremity of their Torment will appear, upon the Consideration that it is inconceivable, beyond all mens understanding; *who knoweth the power of thy Anger? who can apprehend it, or is rightly and duely affected therewith? we can conceive of all bodily pain, or external Torment, but cannot comprehend the Nature of infinite Wrath, no more than we can conceive or apprehend the Nature of infinite Love and Goodness.*

Psa. 90. 11.

Torments of Hell inconceivable.

Secondly, It is and will be intollerable, because it is according to that fear, nay beyond the fear that an awakened Conscience hath of it; *even according to thy fear so is thy Wrath.* O what frightful thoughts and astonishing fears had *Spira* and *Child of Gods Wrath*: Now Sirs, it cannot be said of the Wrath of God as some other things, or of Death it self, *i. e.* that the fear is worse than the thing; No, no, *according to the fear, so is the Wrath and Vengeance of an angry God.* The fears of a dreadful Deity are not vain Bugbares, and the effects of ignorance, or of a crasse head, of Folly, Melancholly, or Superstition, as some *Arheistical Wretches* are ready to say; No, no, but it is grounded and built upon solid Foundations, as it is in part made manifest sometimes by the terrible effects upon mankind, (as I have hinted.) Wrath bears proportion unto the greatest fear of it, nay, doth far exceed the fear thereof, and what prepared Plagues, infinite pains, intollerable anguish, have some self-accused, and self-condemned mortals feared and looked for? what is the nature of that *certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation*? why now according to the fear of it, so will the thing it self be. Some have felt much Sorrow, but have feared much more: Mans thoughts and fears exceed all that can be expressed, &c.

Hells Torments according to the fear of them.

Heb. 10. 26.

Thirdly, The Wrath of God will be intollerable in Hell, and the extremity of the damned amazing, if we compare that misery and anguish with all, or any, nay the worst of Plagues and Punishments that can be undergone in this World; I mean of all temporal Miseries, as *Pestilence, Famine, War, or any tormenting Disease, as the Stone, Gout, &c.*

No pains like the pains of Hell.

These

1. These may be but the Fatherly Rebukes and Chastenings of the Almighty ; not from a Sin-revenging hand, but a Sin-correcting hand of God ; not in Wrath, but in Love ; but if his Anger be so terrible when he chastizes as a compassionate Father, what is his fury when he punishes as a severe Judge ? if he deals thus sharply with those he loves, what will their portion be whom he hates ? if his Wisdom leadeth him forth thus to correct in mercy, what will be the strokes of his Justice and incensed Wrath and Fury ?

2. The Miseries of this present Life are abated, or mitigated with the mixture of some Sweet : None are so universally afflicted, so deplorable, but some thing remains to ease their sufferings and tormenting pains : Judgments are tempered with Mercys. No man (as one observes) is tortured with all Diseases, nor forsaken of all Friends ; besides, if the Malady be incurable and remediless, yet their grief is a little allayed by the Sympathy of Friends and Neighbours : But in Hell the damned are tortured and surrounded with pain and horror, and compass'd with flames, without any mixture, nothing to refresh their distressed Souls and Bodies, no, not one drop of water to cool their Tongue. The *rich Man* desired but so much water that *Lazarus* could bring upon the tip of his finger, and it was denyed him.

Fourthly, The State of the Damned is void of the least degree of Comfort, Ease and Refreshment : *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of his holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb* : They shall have Judgment without Mercy, Sorrow without Joy, Pain without Ease, Darkness without Light, all felicity is totally withdrawn. Pity is the cheap and smallest relief any here can meet withal in misery, not denyed to the most guilty notorious Criminal, but yet this is not afforded to the damned ; all their bitter Crys cannot move the Compassion of God nor the Blessed Angels or Saints in Heaven toward them, for they are not Objects of Compassion, their Miseries being the just punishments of an offended God, whom they wilfully and of their own choice contemned, thro' love to Sin and this present World ; besides, in Hell all humane affections are extinguished for ever. Ah, this is the quintessence and perfection of Misery, the excess of Anguish and Sorrow, to be deprived of all good things pleasing to our desires, and to suffer all evils from which we have the deepest aversion and ab-

Luk. 16. 24.

No Ease, no
Comfort in
Hell.
His Wrath
without mixture.

Rev. 14. 10.

abhorrence; for as in Heaven all Good, all Felicity, all Joy, is inconceivable, so in Hell all evil is felt and endared to the highest degree, and nothing but what is evil.

Some of the greatest miseries that Mortals have met with here in this World, have been inflicted upon them by the hand of Man, (whose power is but little, and oft-times restrained and mitigated by the Lord) as in the case of the poor *Martyrs*: But in Hell the pain and punishment the of damned will be from the immediate hand of Almighty God, whose power is Infinite; nay, and it shall be according to *his glorious Power*, or the greatness of his Power; *Who knows the power of thine anger?* When infinite power is exerted in punishing the offending Sinner, who can conceive of that? what are the Lashes of a small Whip, to that with *Scorpions?* or the stroaks of a Child, to the blows of a Giant? but alas, this will not reach it, because the Stroaks of Gods Wrath are incomprehensible; in Hell he lets out the perfection of his Wrath, as in Heaven the perfection of his Love, &c. The Sorrows and Miseries we endure here from the hand of God, may by Repentance, by Cries and Tears, through Christs Blood be taken off; God hath promised to ease such who fly unto him (and look up to his Son) of their burthen, as he did those that were stung with *fiery Serpents in the Wilderness*, who looked up to the *brazen Serpent*; but no Tears, no Cries, no Repentance, will do in Hell, there's no Gospel preached, no means of Grace afforded, no Christ held forth.

2 Theff. 1. 9.
Psa. 80. 11.

Fourthly, The Torments of the damned will be dismal, intolerable and amazing, because they shall be *cast into a lake of fire*, or be tormented with fire. O how amazing is it, to be thrown into a fierce fire! look into a *Glass-house*, (behold their burning Furnaces) or into a hot *Oven*; can you bear the thoughts of being thrown into one of them? whether the fire of Hell be material or metaphorical Fire, however the reality and extensiveness of the Torment is signified by it, held forth by it, and as in other tropes in the Scripture, the things signified or held forth by those Metaphors far exceed what they are borrowed from, so no doubt it is here, our ordinary fire is not an adequate Representation of the fire of Gods Wrath, tho' it may seem to set it forth to our Capacities in some measure; what is the fire that man kindles, to the fire that God kindles? nay, to that Divine Wrath doth kindle? *The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it.* It is mingled with the most tormenting Ingredients, and not

The damned
cast into a lake
of fire.

Isa. 30. 33.

a little of it, but a River; this serves so illustriously to set it forth; that as one hints, as some of the Ancient Fathers expressed it, *if one of the damned might pass out of Hell flames into the fiercest fires here, it were to exchange a torment for a refreshment.*

Hell Torments
can never satisfie
Divine Justice.

Mat. 5. 26.

Fifthly, It will be intolerable, because the punishment of Hell is to satisfie Divine Justice, to pay the just Debt owing to God for the breach of his holy Law; true, because sin is an infinite wrong, and the Creature is but finite, they can never pay the Debt, nor make a satisfaction for the injury done to God, therefore they must suffer eternally; they are always a paying, but can never fully pay what they owe, Justice requiring the utmost farthing: Nothing can surely set forth the dismalness of their torment more than this. Oh take a view of Divine Wrath in the sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, when he stood in our stead, and was to satisfie for the Sins of all the Elect, how did it bring him down prostrate to the ground, and made him sweat great drops of blood, and to Cry out, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death!* Tho' he was God as well as Man, and had the Strength of the infinite Deity to support him: Ah Sirs, this wrath laid upon finite Creatures, will sink them down to the lowest Hell, and grind them to Powder.

The Torments
of Hell seize on
the Souls of the
damned.

Sixthly, It will be Wrath-amazing, and very terrible Wrath, because it will seize on the Soul of the Sinner, it will put the Soul into the fire: The Soul hath been the chief sinner here, and therefore shall be the chief sufferer in those Regions of Sorrow; and how unsupportable is that Wrath which is let out on the Soul or Spirit of man, you have had a taste in *Spirita* and *Child*. If, Sirs, a spark of Divine Displeasure, when it falls upon the guilty Conscience, tears it to pieces, what will be those floods of Divine Wrath poured forth in Hell on the Souls of Men and Women? who can stand here whilst in this World before an Angry God, or encounter with Offended Omnipotency? such is the sharpness of his Sword, the heaviness of his Rod, when laid on by the hand of his Wrath, that every stroke is deadly, and no doubt Satan greatens the wounds on the Conscience, he charges the guilt upon their Spirits with all the Soul-killing aggravations, and strives to hide Divine Mercy, and Rob the Soul of the precious Blood of Christ, the only lenitive and choice balm to heal a wounded Spirit. O what visions of horror, what sence of fear, and perplexity, were presented to the distressed minds of these two miserable Creatures before mentioned! the guilty Conscience turns all Joy into Sorrow, all Light into Darkness, the sweet Promises

of the Gospel, that assure of favour and pardon to believing Sinners, afford no relief, but are turned into arguments of Despair, by reflecting on their former Iniquities and abuse of Mercies, so that Christ himself they see is become their Accuser.

Whatever the wounded Sinner sees and hears (saith a worthy Minister) afflicts him, whatever he thinks of, torments him; all the diversions in the World, Business, Pleasures, Merry Conversations, Comedies, are as ineffectual to give him freedom from those stings and furies in his breasts, as the sprinkling of holy Water is to expel the Devil from a possessed Person; those who in their Pride and Jollity have despised serious Religion, either as a fond Transport and Extasie, or a dull Melancholly and Dejection about the Soul, &c. yet when God has set their sins, with all their killing circumstances, before their Eyes, how changed, how confounded are they at that apparition! how restless in the dreadful expectation of the doom that attends them! But alas, alas, what is internal Wrath let out on the Soul in Hell, as he notes? for the Aprehensions of the Soul will be enlarged, and their spirits work with the quickest activity: Here tho' they have no hope at present, yet they know not what God may do in a moment to turn their Sorrow into Joy, and their Night into Noon-day; here are many things to divert their thoughts, and they meet with some intermission of their horror and perplexity, as Mr. Child intimated, but in Hell there's none of this.

Seventhly, It will be intolerable misery, because it shall be Torments on the Body and Soul too, not on the Soul only, but on both. O it will be a dismal Meeting, when they two old Companions meet together at the last day, I mean the miserable Soul and Body of a wicked man, at the Resurrection, and hear the dolesom Sentence, *Go ye cursed.* *Spira* and *Child* had direful Sorrow and Anguish in their Souls, but their Bodies were not much tormented, they both being in a state of Health as to the outward man; but the fire of Gods Wrath will extend to and seize upon the Body as well as on the Soul in that day; every Faculty of the Soul and Member of the Body which have been Instruments of Sin, shall then be in Pain, and under fearful Torture and Misery: Now the Spirit of a man may support or sustain his bodily Infirmities and Afflictions, but in Hell the Spirit cannot afford any Relief to the Body, because it cannot sustain its own misery, both must and shall suffer.

Body and Soul
both shall be
tormented in
Hell.

Eighthly, All the Perplexing Passions and Faculties will then be let out upon the wicked, beyond whatever they have been here whilst in this World.

Conscience
will torment
the damned.

1. *The Conscience in a fearful manner shall torment the damned* May we not conclude Conscience will terrifie them after this manner? O thou Wretch, what a God hast thou lost, who is a most infinite, suitable, seasonable, and a Soul-satisfying Good! what a Christ art thou deprived of, who died for poor Sinners! how often did he knock at thy Door, calling upon thee, intreating thee to let him in, who stood with his Arms spread open to embrace all that came to him! and what a Heaven and endless Joy hast thou contemned, and this for one base Lust, for brutish Pleasure for a moment, for a little Earthly Profit, and sinful Honour! How didst thou hearken to thy vile Companions, and close in with them, rather than adhere to me, who accused thee for thy cursed Evils! thou wouldst not mind those Checks and Lashes thou hadst from me in thy Bosom; did not I tell thee what thy Pride, thy Lying, thy Swearing, thy Whoreing, thy Theft, thy Cheating, thy Covetousness, and Cruelty to the Poor, or Unmercifulness, thy Neglect of the means of Grace, and of Gospel or Christian Duties, thy Hardness of Heart, thy Unbelief, thy Hypocrisie and Formality, would bring thee to in the End? This is the *gnawing Worm* that dyeth not: O how fearfully will Conscience terrifie and torment the Soul of the Damned then! now it is Blinded, Missed, Deceived, may be *seared with a hot Iron*; but then it will be throughly awakened, and all Vails taken off; it will lay unmerciful Blows upon the Soul, and make it cry, yea, roar, and none to speak a word to allay or appease its Acclamations and its fearful Outcries: You may judge of the Nature of a Tormenting Conscience in Hell, by what those have found and experienced to be the Effects of it, who have been under Desparation in this World.

Dan: 12. 2.
Shame will torment
the damned.

2. *Shame also will torment them, some shall rise to Shame and everlasting Contempt.* O what Shame and Confusion of Face shall the Damned be cloathed with! should a King lose his Crown and Kingdom to get a few Cockle-shells, would it not bring Shame upon him? O how will the Damned Soul cry, I have for meer Toys and Trifles lost that God that made me, that Christ that is worth ten thousand Worlds, even he that is the *Pearl of great Price*: I have been that *Judas* that did not value him above thirty pence, no, not above the sinful Profits of this World,

World, not above the Pleasure of Sin, and the filthy Lusts of the Flesh; thus will the unclean Person be ashamed, Shame will torment him; I must, saith he, now lye in Hell for ever, and pay dear for my Folly.

2. *The Drunkard will be also tormented with Shame*: I was such a Fool, (he then may say) that for the sake of my Cups, and Love to my cursed Companions, and merry Bouts, have lost God, the Perfection of Happiness; I rather chose to go to the Ale-house, or Tavern, to Drink and carouse with these Damned Wretches, than to go to hear Gods Word; I derided them that feared to sin against God, and accounted them Fools, but I must lye in Hell for ever, and pay dear for my wickedness.

3. *Shame also will torment the Proud and Ambitious Person*: Ah what a Fool was I, he will say, to love the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God! I sought vain Honour, and pleased my self with a Name, all my Design was to be great, and had in Esteem among Men; I was proud of my *Estate*, and despised the *Poor*; I was of a Haughty Spirit, and gloried in my Titles of Honour; I sought the *Favour of my Prince*, but regarded not the Favour of God; I was proud of my Parts, I gloryed in my Gifts, in my Beauty, in my Strength; I delighted my self in *Antick Dreffes*, and in Decking of my Vile Body that now is here burning in Hell; I was so Graceless, that I would not leave off Idle and Foolish Fashions, though Godly Ministers were grieved at me, and told me my Doom, and tho' God bore Witness against my High Head and Haughty Heart, by strange Prodigies in Nature, seen in divers *poor Animals*, yet I still vaunted my self in Pride, and Wantonness, and laught at Christs Ministers when they reprov'd me. O what shame torments me now, here must I lye in Hell under Gods Wrath for ever, and pay dear for my Folly!

4. *The prophane Swearer and Blasphemer will be also tormented with Shame*: O, saith he, I looked upon my self to be no small Person, but one of the Hero's of my Day, and fit to keep Company with great Men, because I could swear and curse with any of them; how often did I call upon God to *Damn me!* I have but that which I desired, he hath now damn'd me indeed: I acted like a fearless Brute Beast: O what Shame do I find my Soul covered with, that I should cast away my self for that filthy Vice that was no Profit to me any manner of way!

5. *Shame also will terrifie, and bring Confusion upon the carnal Worldling,*

Worldling, or Covetous Person, who made this World his God I had, he will say, store of Gold and Silver in my Bags and Chests, where it lay to rust, but I refused to feed the Poor, and to cloath the Naked, I regarded no distressed Members of Christ; I set my Heart upon my Earthly Treasure, valuing it above God and Jesus Christ: O what a Fool was I, in that I could not foresee how soon I must leave all that which I had gathered. I to get the World, slighted, nay, despised my own Soul; now if I had ten thousand Worlds, I would give them for the Favour of God, nay for one drop of Water to cool my Tongue.

6. *The Liar moreover will be tormented with Shame.* Ah! saith he, how often did I read, that those that did love and make Lies should burn in this Lake, but I would not believe it; I damn'd my own Soul by telling Lies to please my graceless Companions, even to cause them to laugh and be merry, or to excuse my self, and free me from shame when on Earth, or for a little worldly Profit, Gain, or for popular Applause, I made no Conscience of telling Lyes: O what Shame doth these things now bring upon my Spirit!

7. *The Seducer and Heretical person likewise will be filled and tormented with shame,* who preached false Doctrine, or sucked in detestable Errors, laying aside the chief Corner-stone, and magnifying Morality, or the Light of natural Conscience, above Christ: I seemed, saith he, to be a strict and zealous Person, and deceived multitudes of People, but for trusting in my own Righteousness, for hugging a few base filthy Raggs I am damned: I was ignorant of Gods Righteousness, and of the Mysteries of the Gospel; yet gave out that none were true Christians but such as my self; I denied that Christ that bought me, and did not believe the Resurrection of my Body, but now I find how the Devil blinded my Eyes, and now here tormented with Shame I must lie in these flames, Body and Soul for ever! O! and what a multitude of poor deluded Creatures have I been an Instrument to bring into this place! Wo is me that ever I was born!

8. *The Hypocritical Professor will be tormented with Shame also:* I rested (he will say) upon a bare Name of being Religious, pleased my self with the Shell, with an empty Cabinet, without the Jewel, a Lamp of Profession, with a Form of Godliness, my Business was to keep up my Credit amongst Gods People, that they might take me to be one of them; yet my own Conscience often told me I was not sincere, I loved not the Life

and Power of Godliness, I did all to be seen of men, had base ends, I appeared abroad to be what I was not at home: O what Shame now torments my Soul! I had a darling Lust which I would not forego, my heart was never really changed — Thus I might go on to the rest, &c. O what Shame will seize upon the Sinner, when all his vain Excuses are laid open, and all his Extenuations of his Guilt are discovered, when his secret Deeds of Darkness are published (as it were) on the House-top, when his Breast shall be transparent to all Eyes, when his inward Thoughts, cursed Lusts, cruel Malice, Murders and Deceits, are made manifest, and all his beastly Sensualities shall be laid open before God, Angels and Saints, when the Vails and Covers of Shame shall be taken off, how will he be confounded for ever!

9. The Devil also no doubt will reproach them for their Folly, though he be in Misery with them: Ah thou Wretch, may not he say, wast thou not a Fool to believe me, (whom thou wast often told was a Liar from the Beginning) and wouldst not believe thy God? See how I have betrayed thee, and blinded thine Eyes, and made thee taken with silly Rattles, Toys and Trifles; I presented thee with false Money, with *brass Counters*, and thou didst take them, and refuse precious Gold and Pearl; I knew I was damned, and should be tormented, and I out of Malice to thy Soul resolved to try to make thee as miserable as my self, and I have done it: Alas I had no power to force thee, but I saw thou hadst no Strength to resist my Enticements, nor didst thou see thy own Disability, I hid it from thee, that thou mightest not look up to Christ for Help: I made thee believe thou wast a Christian, it was I that told thee thy Heart and State was good, (when I knew thou wast an undone Man) and thou didst believe me; I had more Honour shewed me by thee, than the Great God; thou didst believe me, and wouldst not believe Him, his Word, his Ministers. Ah how just is it, thou Fool, that thou should'st lie here with me to Eternity in these Flames,

The Devil will upbraid the damned.

3. Moreover, Sorrow will violently penetrate and seize on the Soul of the Damned, partly upon the Account of what they have lost, together with the sense of the Evil they feel. O how great is the loss of an earthly Kingdom! doubtless no little Grief and Sorrow to a King who meets with that Affliction, but what is that to the loss of the presence of God, the Vision of God, and the glorious Enjoyment of Christ, and the Eternal

The sorrow and despair of the damned will be great.

Crown and Kingdom above. Oh! what Grief and Perplexity will this be unto them, especially when they reflect on the small value of those Things for the sake of which they deprived themselves of Eternal Felicity! How have some mourned for the Loss of an Husband, a Wife, or Children! What will then the Sorrow be for the Loss of Jesus Christ? Christ is lost, Heaven is lost, and now here must I lye! O gulph of misery, doleful darkness and endless Torment!

4. *Despair* will torment them also, this will make their pain and anguish more intolerable. O how dismal was the Despair of *Spira* and *Child*, but in Hell it will exceed, it will be utter Despair, without all Hope and Intermiſſion!

5. *Fury* and *Rage* will afflict them also: O how will they *tear*, *roar* and *howl* in a hideous manner, hating themselves and cursing those that inticed them to sin and folly, and to slight the eternal Joys of Heaven?

The wicked in Hell shall have the frightful company of Devils.

Tenthly, The Misery which the Damned undergo in Hell will be great, upon the Account of their hateful and amazing Companions, *viz.* the Devils, they must dwell with Devils for ever: how have some who have but thought they have seen the Devil, trembled, and been terrified! Alas, alas! in Hell sinners shall be continually with him, nay with millions of Devils; who can express the Horror that will seize on the damned in this respect? We do not love to see such who have ruined us of our Estates, robbed us out of Malice of our good Names; *a King in Chains, in a Dungeon*, cannot like to behold the vile Traitor that *dethroned him*, that *wounded him*, and *stript him of all his Royal Robes*; thus hath the Devil dealt with those miserable Creatures of lost Mankind that are damned; yet he shall be with them, and be their Companion, and may, as you heard, reproach them, which with the constant sight of his ugly face, will add to their Misery and Sorrow.

Hell is a dark place.

Exod. 10. 21.

Eleventhly, The Place of Torment is called a Lake of Fire, yet it is called *utter Darkness*, they shall never see the least Glimpse of Light any more for ever. O how grievous is it to dwell in darkness! the Darkness of *Egypt* no doubt was one of their worst Plagues, *Darkness that might be felt*, but alas what was that darkness to the darkness which the damned shall be in; and feel to Eternity? If therefore the *fire of Hell* be material fire, yet it will not be like our common fire, the Property of which is to give Light; but it will be dark fire: God can change that quality of Fire, if he please, tho' it may have all other Properties;

erties, yet not that. The Holy Ghost saith, speaking of the ungodly, who are as *Clouds without Water, Trees whose Fruit is withered*, twice dead, plucked up by the Root, that to them is reserved the *Blackness of Darkness for ever*. The blackness of Darkness shews the Horror of their Punishment, and it being reserved for them, shews the certainty of it: As their Deeds have been deeds of Darkness, Works of Darkness, and some of them have wrought Wickedness in secret, or in darkness, so their Punishment shall be Darkness, never to have the least Glimpse of external, nor internal, nor eternal Light, any more for ever.

Jude 13.

Eleventhly, The Torment of the Damned is and will be intolerable, because it will be for ever and ever, the Eternity of their Misery is that which above all things renders it amazing, 'tis called in my Text *unquenchable Fire*. O how astonishing is this! all the Tears of those miserable Wretches can never quench one spark of the fire; no, no, if they could weep a Sea of Brinish Tears, or a Sea of Blood, it could not alay or extinguish the least spark of divine Wrath. God will never reverse the dismal sentence: How often doth our Saviour say, *there the Worm dyeth not, and the Fire is not quenched*: Sure he repeats it so oft, as I hinted before, because the Heart of Man is ready to question the Truth thereof. Wicked men are not willing to believe it, but they shall find it to be true, to their endless Sorrow at last: *As Sins*, the Thoughts of this drives them into the greatest Horror imaginable; if Pain and Anguish be never so extream, yet if there is Grounds to hope and believe it will be but short, that affords some Ease, some Relief; but when there is no hope, but they must bear it as long as they live, (tho' they may live ten, twenty or thirty years) the Thoughts of this is intolerable. What then shall we say of the Torments of the Damned, which as they are far beyond all pain and misery that ever mortal felt on Earth, so they will abide to the days of Eternity; should one of you be cast into a Fire, a fierce Fire, and it was possible that your Body might lye therein, burning, and broiling, and you not be able to dye, for an hundred years, would not the Thoughts of such Punishment be exceeding frightful and tormenting; but alas, alas! what is an hundred years to Eternity, if after ten hundred thousand million of years are run out in Hell, the damned might hope their Torments would be over, it would relieve them, but when so long a time (comparatively) is gone, they shall not be one moment nearer the end of their Sorrow and

Torments of the wicked Eternal.

Mark 9.

Misery: If one sand of the Sea shore was removed, and but one in a year, yet should that be done or continued every year, until all the sands on the Sea-shoar were removed, (tho' it would be a long time first) yet they would be all removed at last: And had the Damned but so much hope, that after so long a time as that would amount to, their Torments would have an end, it would revive their Spirits. O this word *Eternity*, *Eternity*, is most amazing to wicked men! besides, as in Pleasures, Joy and Delights, time seems to slide away in a silent and insensible manner, so in horrid Pain and Misery the days seem long and tedious, every minute is accounted; so that the Consideration of this must needs make their Eternity, if it were possible, a double Eternity, nay, many Eternities; for one hour under the greatest Extremities of Misery seems ten times, nay, an hundred times longer than an hours time in the Enjoyment of the sweetest Delight and Pleasure. An Eternity of Joy is long in respect of Duration, but seems short (saith a worthy Divine) in respect of Apprehension. So on the other hand, say I, an Eternity of Pain, Torment and Misery, is long in respect of Duration, but seems much longer in respect of Apprehension.

Quest. But shall there not be an end of the Torments of the Damned? will infinite Goodness be so severe with his offending Creatures? can this stand consistent with the Sweetness of his Nature and infinite mercy?

Ans. I Answer, there is a Perfection in every one of Gods divine Attributes; as his Love is infinite to such who are his Elect ones, who do believe in him, honour and obey him, so is his Hatred infinite to all those who despise, hate and dishonour him.

2. God will be sure glorifie his *Veracity*, or the Truth of his Threatning: He that hath said, the *righteous shall be saved with an everlasting Salvation*, or shall have eternal Life, hath said, that the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power: They are tormented day and night for ever and ever. Now since God hath Decreed and denounced eternal punishment to obstinate sinners, it is sufficient to satisfie all Doubts about the Justice of it. Let God be true, and every man a Liar; for divine Justice and Wrath is the Correspondence of his Will, Actions, and Holiness of his Nature to the damned: As divine Love and

' Good-

‘ Goodness is to such who are saved ; we may therefore, ‘ faith one, as easily conceive there is no God, as that God ‘ is unjust, because absolute Rectitude is an inseparable per- ‘ fection of his Nature ; *is God, unrighteous who taketh Vengeance ?* Rom. 3. 5. 6. *God forbid.*

3. Sin deserveth no less than an infinite and an eternal pu- nishment, therefore unless the Damned could give an infinite Satisfaction by suffering, they must suffer eternally, for they must lye in Prison *until they have paid the uttermost farthing* : But alas, how should they make full payment to Gods Justice who run continually into Debt, more and more ! for the Damned in Hell do not cease sinning, they will sin to Eternity, and therefore must suffer to Eternity.

4. Nay, they will sin with the greatest Fury and Madnes against God, when they come to be under the greatest sence of Despair imaginable ; they will sin then like as the Devils do now, and will for ever, when they see they are deprived of all good, and only possess what is evil : O how will they hate God, blaspheme his holy Name for evermore ! the blessed God is the Object of their Curses and eternal Aversation ; in Hell *is weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* ‘ Extream Sorrow and extream ‘ Fury, Despair and Rage (faith one) are proper Passions of ‘ lost Souls ; their Enmity against God is direct and explicir, ‘ *the Fever is heightened into a Frenzy.* If their Rage could ‘ extend to him, and their Power equal to their desire, ‘ they would dethrone the most High ; Hatred takes pleasure ‘ in Revenge. ‘ Tis said of the Worshippers of the Beast, *that they gnawed their Tongues for pain, and Blasphemed the God of Hea- ven because of their pain* : These Torments and Blasphemies of the Damned are clearly represented by these cursed impeni- tent Idolaters.

Rev. 16. 10. 11.

‘ If a Criminal were justly condemned to a severe Punishment, ‘ and should contumeliously, with the greatest Fury reproach the ‘ Prince by whose Authority he was condemned, could it be ex- ‘ pected there should be a mitigation of the severity of the Sen- ‘ tence ? How then should the righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth reverse or mitigate the Sentence against the Damned, who blaspheme his holy Majesty, and if they were able to effect as they are malicious to desire, would destroy his very being, and execute that on him which he in Justice inflicts on them ?

5. To hast to the Application : The infinite Guilt that cleaves to sin, and the Consideration that they continually add more

Guilt upon their own Heads, requires a proportion in punishment, as the Evil of sin exceeds our Thoughts: The Majesty of God being infinite, consequently the punishment of it will be infinite, and beyond our Conceptions; it will be a letting out of his infinite Wrath and utter extent of his power, therefore unto the Wicked *is reserved the blackness of Darknes for ever.*

APPLICATION.

Sin the greatest evil.

From hence we may infer, how great Evil there is in sin; O sin is the Plague of all Plagues! who can conceive how detestable a thing is sin in the sight of God, since He who is so gracious, merciful and compassionate a God, should throw millions of Men and Women in his Wrath *into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.*

2. This also shews the woful Depravation of Mankind, what Darknes, Ignorance and Folly is in their Minds and Hearts, that choose Sin, when told not only how hateful it is to God, but what intolerable and durable Torments it doth expose them unto: One would think that a person that hears these things should never indulge his vicious Appetite any more, nor lay his Reins loose on the neck of his Lust, but it is more marvelous to see or hear that he who believes the Scripture, and doubteth not of the Truth of Hell Torments, should yet notwithstanding lead an ungodly Life; what believe there is such Torments prepared for all impenitent Persons, and yet not turn to God by Jesus Christ!

3. From hence also we may infer, how necessary it is that Ministers open the Torments of Hell, seeing Jesus Christ so often in the Gospel threatens all *Hypocrites* and *Unbelievers* therewith: They that say it is legal Preaching, to preach such a Doctrine as this, know not what they say; will they magnifie their Wisdom above the Wisdom of Jesus Christ, and the first and great Preachers of the Gospel of Peace, who said, *we knowing therefore the Terror of God, persuade Men;* that is, to believe in Christ; and to live godly Lives, that so they may never feel Gods eternal Wrath; the Hearts of Men can more easily conceive of the Torments of Hell than of the Joys of Heaven.

2 Cor. 5, 11.

And as it may be of use by way of Information, so also by way of Terror, and that to many sorts of Persons.

1. Tremble ye worldly Professors, who have earthly Spirits, that

that set your Hearts on things below, and neither cloath the Naked, nor feed the Hungry, *Weep and howl for the misery that shall come upon you, — ye have heaped Treasure together against the last day;* how will your Folly gail your Consciences when you lye in Hell-Torments! whilst you heap up Gold and Silver in your Bags and Chests, you heap up Wrath against the last day: Remember what Christ says unto you, *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.* What will your Profession signifie, if you love the World above God, which be sure you do, if you see a Brother or Sister in want, and do not give them such things that they need: Remember Mr. Child, *I have made this World* (saith he) *my God.*

Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3.

Mat. 25. 46.

2. Tremble you proud and vain-glorious Persons: Pride, cries poor Mr. Child, hath undone me; *The Proud and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that comes shall burn them up.* Will you glory in your Riches, Honours, Gifts, Knowledge, or any thing you have? will you not be reclaimed to throw off your God-provoking Fashions, whatsoever comes of it, but plead to uphold your Lusts and Vanity, tho' the Name of God be dishonoured, and Religion brought into Contempt, and the Godly grieved.

Mal. 4. 1, 2.

3. Tremble you vain young Men and Women, who forget your Creator in the days of your Youth, that secretly resolve your own Hearts shall choose your ways; who will feed your carnal Appetites and wanton Desires, and will run on in wicked Courses, let Ministers say what they will, Godly Parents say what they will, yet you will swear, lye, be drunk, commit Uncleaness. O know, as you feed your Lusts here, and that burns in you, so shall Hell feed on you, and that fire like Chaff, burn you up hereafter: Will a few merry Hours with your filthy Companions make a compensation for the loss of your precious and immortal Souls? Are you willing to suffer the Wrath of God for ever, rather than to forgo your vain and wicked Courses?

4. Tremble ye that harbour *Archeistical* Thoughts in your Hearts, and are ready to think or hope there is no God: O how soon may you feel him within you, by his terrible Wrath! as Mr. Child in bitterness of Soul cryed out.

5. Tremble ye Lyars, that love to make a lye, for you shall have your portion *in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

Rev. 21. 8.

6. Tremble ye who are light and frothy persons also, you that are *Back-biters, Busie-bodys, that vilifie and reproach the Ser-*

vants.

vants of God out of Malice and Prejudice, you will be as Chaff that shall burn in Hell for ever.

7. Tremble all ye that slight Christ and his Gospel, and neglect those convictions you have either of Sin or Duty, and that slight all serious thoughts of Eternity, or how things will go with you in another World, and who stifle your Consciences, or turn a deaf ear to it's rebukes, God may awaken you er'e long in his Wrath, and tear you to pieces when there is none to deliver you.

8. Tremble all ye Hypocrites, whose Hearts condemn you for harbouring some Sin or another in your bosoms, who are not what you seem to be, but strive to cover your vileness under a cloak of a visible Profession: *Fearfulness* will soon surprize you: *Who amongst us shall dwell with devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burning?* Hell is that place that is prepared for *Hypocrites and Unbelievers*: It seems by the word of our Blessed Saviour, that they above all are in a dangerous Estate, and shall not escape eternal burning.

Isa. 33. 14.

Mat. 24. 51.

Luk. 12. 45.

9. Tremble ye *Apostates*, ye who have backsliden from God. O fear, lest God let out his Wrath upon you here, and it burn within you, whilst you are alive in the body; and if it prove a final Apostacy, Wo be to you as ever you were born! then there remains no more sacrifice for sin, *but a certain fearful looking*

Heb. 10. 27.

for of Judgment, and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries.
Exhort. O Repent, Repent, haste to Christ, believe on him.

1. *Motive.* The God of mercy exercises much Patience towards poor Sinners, O how doth he wait, O how willing is he they should be saved, and not come into the place of Torment.

2. He tells you what your End will be, if you believe not, if you accept not his Son, fly not for Refuge to take hold of Jesus Christ; *if ye believe not in Christ, ye shall dye in your sins*; that is, you shall be damned for ever: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.* He sets out the Torments of the damned by the most amazing figures, to move upon mens Spirits, and work upon their Minds, so that they being deterred from evil Practices may *see from the Wrath to come*, by laying hold on the hope set before them; he gives warning before he strikes, tells you of your danger; *Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*; *he that believeth on the son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him*; *the wicked shall be turned into Hell, with all the Nations that forget God*: You may know how it will

Joh. 3. 24.

Mark 16. 16.

Heb. 6. 18.

Joh. 3. 36.

Psa. 9. 17.

go with you at the last day, if you hear but Gods warning-pieces in his Word: *Know ye not the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor effeminate Persons, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor Thieves, nor Drunkards, nor Extortioners; &c.* Compared with *Rev. 21. 8.*

3. God calls, nay cries to you sinners, *O ye simple ones, why will ye love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge! Turn ye at my reproof, and behold I will pour out my spirit upon you, &c.* *Prev. 1. 26, 27.*

4. He gives sinners time and space to repent, or a day of Grace. *O how unexcusable will he leave every ungodly man at the last day! their destruction shall appear to be of themselves; be sure God will be clear when he judges, none shall have any thing to charge him with, all mouths shall be stopped. The man That wanted the Wedding-Garment was speechless.*

5. God hath sent his Son to die for Sinners: *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* *Joh. 3. 16.*

6. He sends his Ministers to call you, to invite you, who tell you *all things are now ready*: Sinners, will your sinful Honours, Riches or Pleasures, make a reparation for the loss of a Christ, the loss of Heaven, and loss of your own souls? Take two or three Directions. *Mat. 22. 7.*

1. Seek the Kingdom of Heaven first, before all things.

2. Take notice, this is the day of your Visitation, know now the things that belong to your peace, before they are hid from your Eyes: *Behold now is the accepted time, &c.*

3. Close with Christ whilst the Spirit strives with thee, and before Conscience is seared, or let out against thee, to tear thee into pieces.

4. Attend carefully upon the means of Grace, and know assuredly that the Wages of Sin is eternal Death, even everlasting burnings, therefore renounce it with the greatest abhorrence; know all the Pleasures and Honours of this Life are but the Elements of carnal felicity, and according to the Judgment of Reason and sense would any one chuse the enjoyment of the greatest Pleasures for a day, and afterwards be satisfied to suffer the most exquisite Torments for a year? much more folly and madness it is for momentary brutish delights to incur the fiery Indignation of God for ever.

1. One word to you that are Believers, and I have done. *Comfort to Believers.*
O bless God for Jesus Christ, who has born the wrath of God for you,

you, and in your stead, that you might never feel the bitterness of it, even *Jesus who delivered us from wrath to come.*

1. *Thess. I. 10.* 2. Admire the distinguishing Grace and special Love of God: *We love him, because he first loved us:* It was his Love that overcame you. The meer fear of Hell is not sufficient to Convert the Souls of men, tho' it may stop them in their way, and prevent great Abominations in the gross acts thereof, yet does not, cannot renew their Nature, regenerate and make holy their hearts and lives; that Religion that is the meer effect of fear will be according to the nature of its principle, even legal, wavering and inconstant; yet the fear of Hell may awaken the sinner, and in some sence prepare for Grace: When the Soul is storm-ed by the terror of Wrath, and the fear of Hell has made a breach, Divine Grace enters, but it is the Love of God and hopes of Heaven that works spiritual affections, (as the Obedience that flows therefrom is Evangelical, free and voluntary, from the entire consent of the Soul) and are abiding.

3. Be content with your Condition, tho' poor in this World, remember *Lazarus*, how much better was his state than the Rich Glutton's? O do not envy the wicked that are Rich, they will pay dear for their Wealth when they come to Hell, which they with greedy covetous minds heap up. I remember a Passage which is related in History: A General with an Army passing through another Princes Countrey, gave strict Order that no Person should offer to touch the least thing which belong'd to the Inhabitants; but nevertheless one Souldier as they were upon their March, stole a Bunch of Grapes, which the General being informed of, gave Order that he should immediately be put to Death; as he was going to Execution, he fell a eating his Grapes, and some Persons looking greedily on him, he observing them, said, *Do not envy me my Grapes, for they cost me dear, they cost me my Life.*

4. Let it appear to all that you do love Jesus Christ, and prefer the honour of God and his interest above all things in this World; let the main end and design of your Souls in desiring Grace, Gifts, Knowledge, &c. and in all you act and do in his Service, be, that you may advance his Glory.

Sirs, the time is near when it will be known who are Christs *Wheat*, true Christians, and who are not; but let all that are but *Chaff* tremble, for Hell is prepared for them: *He will gather the Wheat into his garner, but the Chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.*

T H E
BLESSEDNESS

O F

Christ's Sheep :

O R,

No final Falling from a *State of true Grace.*

DEMONSTRATED,

In Several SERMONS, lately Preached, and
now for general Good Published.

Wherein all the grand Objections usually
brought against the Saints final Perseve-
rance, are fully answered.

By BENJAMIN KEACH.

Heb. 10. 39. *But we are not of them who draw back unto Perdition: but of them that believe, to the saving of the Soul.*

London, Printed in the Year, 1694.

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T H E
B L E S S E D N E S S

O F

Christ's Sheep, &c.

J O H N X. 27, 28.

My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BELOVED, these Words are the Words of our Blessed Saviour: and they contain no small Comfort to all true Believers, who are the Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ. My main Purpose or Intention, is to speak to the 28th Verse, and to defend the sweet and comfortable Doctrine of the Saints final Perseverance; but shall begin with the 27th Verse, viz. *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them; and they follow me.*

Serm. 1.
Preach'd
Feb. 5.
1697.

In our Text are two Parts.

1. Something Implied, viz. Christ is a Shepherd, and that he hath a People that are *his Sheep*.

Parts of
the Text.

2. Something that is Expressed, viz. That all such who are his Sheep, *hear his Voice, and do follow him.*

You have in the Words, 1. The Property of Christ's Sheep.

2. Their Security, and happy State and Condition.

1. Their Character or Property, viz. They *hear his Voice, and do follow him.*

2. Their Security, and happy State and Condition.

1. He knows them, that is, he approves of them.

2. He gives to them Eternal Life.
3. They are in his Hand, and shall never perish.

Our Saviour in this Chapter calls himself the Shepherd of the Sheep, yea, the Good Shepherd, *Ver. 11. I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth his Life for the Sheep.*

Now if it be demanded who are the Sheep of Christ? I answer, All that the Father hath given to him, and that believe in him.

Christ's Sheep may be considered as his two manner of ways:

1. *Decretively.* See *Ver. 16. And other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my Voice.* The Lord Jesus meaneth the *Gentiles*, these he calls his Sheep by virtue of God's Eternal Election, *Them also I must bring*; They are given unto me; and *all that the Father hath given me, shall come*

John 6.37. unto me. I lay down my Life for them, or in their stead, that they might not perish. *I therefore* (as if he should so say) *must bring them, call them, renew or regenerate them*: The Covenant I have made with my Father is such, that it cannot be broken; the *Purpose, Counsel, and Promises of God* shall stand. This agrees with that Word of the Holy God to *St. Paul, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no Man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much People in this City.* They are called the Lord's People, though then in a state of Darknes and Unbelief; decretively, or according to his Eternal Purpose, they were his.

Acts 18.
9, 10.

2. *Actually*, or such who are already brought in, or who do believe, and are visibly of his Fold.

The Doctrine I shall prosecute, shall be drawn as comports with this latter Exposition.

Doct. 1. All true Believers are the Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ, and he is their Shepherd; they hear his Voice, and follow him.

Two things I shall (God assisting) do.

Before I raise any other Point of Doctrine, in prosecuting this, I shall, 1. Open or explain this Proposition. 2. Apply it. In speaking to the first, I shall observe this Method.

First, I shall explain the Proposition.

1. I shall shew you in what respect they may be said to be his Sheep.
2. Shew what is meant by Christ's Voice.

3. What

3. What by hearing of his Voice.
4. What by his knowing of them.
5. Give you some of the Characters of Christ's Sheep; and shew how they follow him.
6. Shew what a kind of Shepherd Christ is.

First, *They are his Sheep by Choice, or by virtue of Election.* Those that are Christ's, are not only his Sheep, but his Spouse also, according to another Scripture-Metaphor; and therefore 'tis reasonable they should be his own free Choice, and such as he can and doth dearly love; not only such as the Father loved, but he himself also loved: all that were Elected from Everlasting, were beloved by the Father, and the Son, from Everlasting, with a Purpose of Grace and Favour, or Love of Benevolence. The Sign and Fruit of Christ's Love to his Sheep, is the Choice he hath made of them; *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained that you should go and bring forth Fruit, and that your Fruit should remain,* John 15. 16. This Christ mentions here, as an Argument of his greatest Love; and therefore he doth not refer to that Choice of them as Apostles, for so was Judas chosen, who was not comprehended in God's Eternal Election; *I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen,* John 15. 18. Judas was chosen to the Apostleship, but was not chosen to Eternal Life; *he was a Devil,* and therefore not to be one of Christ's Sheep: *Have I not chosen you Twelve, and one of you is a Devil?*

Believers
Christ's
Sheep by
Choice.

Christ hath no Sheep, but such that he was pleased to chuse, or make choice of for his own; and he knows them, before they know him, as the Apostle speaks, *The Lord knows them that are his;* 2 Tim. 2. that is, all such that he hath chosen according to the Decree of Eternal Election.

Secondly, *Christ's Sheep are his, by virtue of the Father's free Donation.* They are all given unto him; *I pray not for the World, but for them thou hast given me. I have manifested thy Name to the Men which thou gavest me out of the World: thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* They were given to Christ to be his Sheep, to be his Spouse, and Members of his Mystical Body. *Behold, I and the Children thou hast given me, are for Signs and Wonders in Israel.*

By Dona-
tion.

Joh. 17. 9.
Joh. 17. 6.

Isa. 8. 18.

Thirdly, *They are Christ's Sheep by Purchase:* He bought them all, and that too at a dear Price. He paid heartily for them, every Sheep

By Pur-
chase.

Sheep

Sheep cost one and the same Price, even the meanest, poorest, and weakest of them, cost more than ten thousand Millions; nay, that which was in value more than ten thousand Worlds: *Ye are not your own, but you are bought with a Price.* We had sold our selves to other Masters, and they had possession of us. *I am carnal, saith Paul, sold under Sin.* He was formerly sold, and was hardly yet got out of the Tyrant's Hand. *Behold, for your Iniquities have you sold your selves; but ye shall be redeemed without Money.* We were all sold to Sin, sold to Satan, and there was no ways to redeem us from the Wrath of God, without a great Ransom; Justice will have a satisfactory Price: And since corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, will not do it, no nor a thousand Rams, nor ten thousand Rivers of Oil, nor the Fruit of the Body, which could not make Atonement for the Sin of the Soul, Christ must come to the Price proposed to him, and demanded of him, if he will purchase these Sheep, and that was his own precious Blood. *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, that ye feed the Church of God; which he hath purchased with his own Blood. I lay down my Life for my Sheep.* This was the Price, so dearly did Christ buy his Sheep. And this Day, Beloved, the Tokens of this Price, or Sacred Signs or Symbols of this Purchase is to be set before your Eyes: pray remember that Believers are Christ's Sheep by Purchase.

By Renovation.

Fourthly, *Believers are Christ's Sheep by Renovation, or Transformation.* In this lies a great Mystery, they had not once a Sheep-like Nature, but by Grace their *swinish* and evil Qualities are changed: he hath infused new and holy Dispositions into them. So that in this respect Jesus Christ excels all other Shepherds, for they cannot turn *Swine, Bears, or Tigers,* into Sheep; but the Lord Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, makes *such* to become his Sheep, or to have Sheep-like Natures and Dispositions, that were before as *vile, filthy,* and abominable as the worst of Sinners: the Holy Ghost compares them before Grace and Regeneration, to *Dogs, Swine, &c.* they having like evil Qualities with those unclean and filthy Creatures: *Such were some of you.* What a kind of such were they? Why, *Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, Effeminate, &c.* But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, (that is, by the Power of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God: Christ hath not one Sheep, but what he hath made so to be: He, as God, made them at first, and

and they having lost their first Excellent and Holy Nature, he new makes them, forms them again, or transforms them into his own holy, humble, meek, and gentle Nature. *This People have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my Praise.*

We are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works; and thus they Eph. 2. 10. may be said to be his Sheep.

Fifthly, *Believers are Christ's Sheep, by a Holy Covenant or Contract* By Holy Covenant and Contract. made with the Father; and by virtue of this Covenant they were given to him. By virtue of this Covenant he died for them; by virtue of this Covenant they became his, and he calls them, renews them, and changes them; *He shall see his Seed.* It was by the Blood of this Covenant the Great Shepherd of the Sheep was raised from the Dead; that they might be raised, quickned, and justified. Heb. 13. By virtue of this Covenant he gathers them, and carries 21. them in his Arms, and lays the young and tender Ones in his Bosom; and gently leads such that are with Young, Isa. 40. 11. By virtue of this Covenant he puts his Fear into their Hearts, that they may not Jer. 31. depart from him. 33.

Christ as Mediator in this Covenant, is God's Servant, and undertakes the Office of Shepherd, to take care of, feed, heal, and preserve all those who were given to him by the Father.

Sixthly, *Believers are Christ's Sheep by Conquest.* They were fallen into the Enemy's Hand; in the Hands and under the Power of most cruel Tyrants, who designed to tear them in pieces and devour them: They were in Satan's Hand, and under the Power of Sin; and were meer Bond-slaves, and in fearful slavery to these Enemies, having their Eyes put out, their Fleece torn off, or strip'd of their Robes, being dangerously wounded. And although Jesus Christ, to redeem them from Wrath and Misery, laid down a great Price (as you heard before) to satisfy God's Justice; yet, alas, Satan takes no notice of that, they were in his Hand; who like a strong Man armed, keeps the Soul, and had Power over them: therefore Jesus Christ puts forth his Almighty Hand to vanquish and subdue this cruel Foe, and thereby redeems and rescues all his Sheep out of Slavery and Bondage; by which means they come to be his by a blessed Conquest of their Enemies, and by overcoming them; for he subdues their Hearts, bends and subjects their rebellious Wills by the Power of Divine Grace, before he can have one of them: All the Sheep of Christ yield themselves up to him,

him, as being conquered by him; overcome by his Love, and the Power of his Spirit. This brings me to the next thing.

By a holy Resignation. Seventhly, and lastly, *Believers are Christ's Sheep by virtue of a holy Resignation of themselves to him.* They have chosen him to be their Shepherd: other Sheep can't make choice of their Shepherd, but Christ's Sheep can do this, their Eyes being enlightned to see the Excellency of Christ, the Greatness of his Love, and what he hath suffered and undergone for them; they commit their Souls to his care and keeping, that he may watch over them, feed and lead them: *They gave themselves first unto the Lord, and unto us by the Will of God.*

2 Cor. 8.
5.

First, They gave themselves unto the Lord, (by the Power of his Spirit) to be his, and no more their own, but to be his People, his Spouse, his Sheep; and then gave themselves to his Church, to be of his Flock. Christ hath no Member, no Sheep of his visible Church or Fold on Earth, but such who know him; *I am known of mine.* They are not ignorant Persons, or such who are unable to give themselves up to him. Others are not required to give them: No, no; they must be able to give or resign themselves to him, (as being overcome by his Love) and thus they become his Sheep also.

Secondly, I shall shew you what is meant by Christ's Voice.

There is a Four-fold Voice of Jesus Christ which his Sheep hear.

1. The Voice of his Word.
2. The Voice of his Spirit.
3. The Voice of his Holy Doctrine.
4. The Voice of his Rod.

First. Christ's Sheep hear the Voice of his Word. The Holy Scripture is Christ's Word, and therefore the Voice of Christ, and this Voice his Sheep hear: They give full credit to the Truth of the Sacred Scriptures, they believe they are of Divine Authority: *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness.* They are none of Christ's Sheep that do not, will not hear this Voice of Christ; that is, do not believe the Truth of the Sacred Scriptures, do not hear nor regard what they speak, but magnify unwritten Traditions above the Word of God, or the Light of Natural Conscience. The Sheep of Christ hear Christ's Voice in the Ministry of his Word, they attend upon the preaching of the Gospel, and

2 Tim. 3.
16.

look

look upon the Word delivered in Christ's Name, by his faithful Ministers, to be the Voice of Christ unto them : But how, or after what manner Christ's Sheep do hear his Voice, *viz.* the Voice of his Word, I shall open under the third Head.

Secondly, There is the Voice of Christ's Spirit ; and this Voice of his his Sheep hear also, and indeed none but they. Sirs, this is that Voice of Christ which doth the Work, and that which discovers who are his Sheep. The Voice of Christ's Word, without the Spirit, is not sufficient ; the Word will not make Sinners hear, though it be spoken a thousand times over, except the Spirit's Voice do accompany it : I shall therefore open to you the Nature of this Voice of Christ, I mean, the Voice of his Spirit.

1. 'Tis an *awakening Voice* : Sinners are asleep, yea, in a dead Sleep, and sleep they will till they hear this Voice. The powerful Voice of Christ awakened dead *Dazarus* after he had lain in the Grave four days : And it must be the like Voice that doth awaken the sleepy and dead Sinner ; *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou Eph. 5. that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Life.* ^{14.} 'Tis sad to see what a multitude of poor People sit, day by day, under the hearing of the Word, and yet remain in their Sins : they are asleep, the Word doth not awaken them ; but when the Spirit's Voice is heard, when that works with the Word, they are quickly roused up out of that dead Sleep in which they lay.

2. The Voice of Christ's Spirit, is a convincing Voice. *Come, John 4. see a Man that told me all things that ever I did :* The Spirit of Christ ^{29.} reached her Heart, convinced her what a vile Sinner she was : We do not read of many things Christ told her she had done, but *that he she had then was not her Husband*, ver. 18. so that she lived in Adultery with him. But now as soon as the Spirit convinced her of this one Sin, she is convinced of all her other abominable Evils ; and therefore cries out, *Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did ; Is not this the Christ ?* Intimating, none but Christ can make the Evil of Mens Hearts and Lives appear unto them : So 'tis none but the Holy Spirit can pierce the Soul, or convince the Sinner throughly of his Sin and Misery, and discover the Vileness of their Hearts and States unto them ; *They were pricked in their Hearts, Acts 2. and said, Men and Brethren, what shall we do ?* Is there any hope ^{37.} that such Sinners as we may be forgiven, and be saved ? *Verily, we were guilty concerning our Brother,* (said *Joseph's Brethren*;) God's Spirit now convinced their Consciences, and brought their Sin to remembrance. So there are none that hear the Voice of the

Spirit, but their Sin appears presently before their Eyes; their Sin is aggravated on their Consciences, and is most hateful and odious to them.

John 5. 25. 3. Christ's Voice is a Soul-quickening Voice. *Verily, verily I say unto you, The Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* The Voice of Christ doth not only cause the Ear to hear, but the Heart to hear also. All Mankind naturally are dead in a spiritual Sense, they have no divine nor spiritual Life in them. Man is not by Original Sin, or by Nature, only wounded or maimed, but dead: The Holy Ghost doth not make use of an improper Metaphor. We by Nature were as truly and really in a spiritual Sense dead; that is, had no more Life, spiritual Life, Motion, Heat, Feeling, or Strength in us, than a dead Man hath natural Life, Motion, Heat, Feeling, or Strength in him: but when the Soul hears the spiritual and powerful Voice of Christ, 'tis immediately quickened, a Principle of divine Life is infused; *You hath he quickened, that were dead in Sins and Trespasses.* Thus the Greatness of Christ's Power towards Sinners appears, that were dead, or destitute of a Principle of spiritual Life. Those that assert the Power of the Creature, or that every Man is put into a Capacity to be saved if he will, certainly do not consider this; lay this to heart, ponder on this, viz. That all Mankind, before Grace is infused into the Soul, are dead: What sort of Almighty Power can raise the Dead to Life? Power is not in the Dead to quicken himself; nor can dead *Lazarus* resist that Principle of Life infused into him: 'tis not what the Sinner, but what Christ the Saviour will; and he quickens not all, but whom he will; *For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.* 'Tis not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy.

John 5. 21. 4. Christ's Voice by his Spirit, is a Soul-humbling and a Self-abasing Voice: They that hear his Voice, are straitway brought to his Feet, loathing and abhorring themselves. The Voice of Christ hath the same Effect on the Soul, as the sight of God in Christ: *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear; but now mine Eye seeth thee: Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes.* After Paul had heard the Voice of Christ, saying, *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* how humble was he; though called to be an Apostle, yet esteemed himself less than the least of all Saints: Now to be less than the least, is to be nothing. Man before Grace, or

or before he comes to hear the Voice of Christ, is a proud Creature; but Grace humbles him to such a degree, that he is little, nay nothing in his own Eyes.

5. *Christ's Voice is a Soul-regenerating Voice.* His Voice is powerful, and thakes the old Foundation down, all former Hopes and fleshly Confidence is gone: It was the Voice of the Spirit that first made us, and made this World; *By the Word of God were all things made and created:* And 'tis his Voice that creates us again, or that renews us, or forms his Sacred Image in us. He that commanded by his Voice *Light to shine out of Darknefs,* doth but speak the word, and so *shines into our Hearts;* and thereby transforms us, and gives us the *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus* ^{2 Cor. 4. 6.} Christ.

6. *'Tis a Sin-killing Voice:* It lays the old Man a bleeding, (as it were) the Spirit destroys the Body and Power of Sin, it breaks down all the strong Holds of Sin. Christ slays this Enemy *by the Sword that goes out of his Mouth,* that is, by his Word, through the Operations of the Spirit: *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die;* Rom. 8. *but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* 'Tis not enough to forbear the acting of Sin, but we must kill and crucify it; and this we cannot do without the powerful assistance and help of the Spirit.

7. *'Tis a Soul-strengthening Voice.* As Sin dies, Grace lives, and the Soul receives strength: Faith is the Life and Strength of the Soul; and this Life and Strength we receive by the Holy Spirit.

8. *'Tis a comforting Voice.* 'Tis by the Spirit God speaks Peace to the Soul: *He will speak Peace unto his People, and unto his Saints.* ^{Psal. 85. 8.} *I will speak comfortably to her,* I will speak to her Heart: None can speak to the Heart but God, by his Spirit; it is the Holy Ghost that is the Comforter: And after the Sinner hath been deeply wounded in the true sense of Sin, and is dejected, grieved, and sorely troubled, then the Spirit comes with its sweet, still, and comforting Voice, and revives the drooping Soul. To comfort the Conscience, *Luther saith, is as great a Work as to make the World.* ^{Hos. 2. 14.}

1. Now the Spirit speaks Comfort to the distressed Conscience through the Blood of Christ; that is, by shewing the Soul that Christ died in its stead, and bore the Wrath that was due to us, having fully satisfied God's Justice, and answered all the Demands and Requirements of the Law, being *made a Curse for us, that the Blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Christ*

Gal. 3. 14. *Jesus, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith.*
 Heb. 12. 24. *The Blood of Christ speaks, it hath a Voice in it, it speaks good things, yea, better things than the Blood of Abel. But it never speaks Comfort to the Soul, till the Spirit applies it and sprinkleth it upon the Heart: O what Peace and Comfort then doth the Spirit speak to a wounded Spirit!*

2. The Spirit speaks Comfort to the Soul, by applying the Promises of Pardon and Peace unto us, causing our Souls to take hold of them, and to cleave to God in them: This Promise is mine, God hath fastened and fixed it on my Heart, saith a Believer.

3. By opening the Greatness and Preciousness of Christ's Love to us: because he *hath loved us with an everlasting Love; therefore with loving Kindness hath he drawn us*, and helped us to believe and to receive him.

4. The Spirit speaks Comfort to Believers, by opening unto them, the Nature and Excellency of the *Covenant of Grace which is ordered in all things, and sure*, being confirmed by the Oath of God, &c.

5. By shewing them the Power, Mercy, and Faithfulness of God, &c. O, Sirs, no Voice like the Voice of the Spirit: happy is that Soul which hears this Voice; and 'tis this Voice of Christ that all his Sheep hear.

Thirdly, There is also the Voice of Christ's Doctrine: I mean, the true Evangelical Doctrine of the Gospel. The true Faith of the Gospel, or the sacred Doctrine thereof, is the Voice of Christ, which his Sheep will hear: And they will not hear the Voice of Strangers, they will not hear the Voice of false Teachers, or their pernicious Doctrine; they know not the Voice of Strangers, they can distinguish between Christ's Voice, Christ's Doctrine, and the Doctrine of false Prophets, and false Teachers: they know not the Voice of Strangers, that is, they approve not of their Doctrine; but they know, they approve of Christ's Doctrine; though never so hard, never so difficult, and never so unpleasant to others, yet 'tis approved of by them; 'tis easy and pleasant to them that are Christ's Sheep.

They hear what Christ hath said, they hear Christ's Voice, *i. e.* the Doctrine he taught; *This is my beloved Son (saith the Father) in whom I am well pleased, hear him.*

1. Not *Moses*; *Moses* is not our *Shepherd*, our Guide, our Law-giver: We are not his Disciples, his Sheep; No, no, but we are Christ's Sheep, Christ's Disciples: The Jews said, *they were Moses's Disciples.*

2. They

2. They hear Christ's Voice, not the *Pope's*, not the Voice of *Antichrist*.

3. They hear Christ's Voice ; not the Voice of the *Light of Nature* only, or the teaching of *Natural Conscience* : though, 'tis true, they hear and follow that Light, yet they know the Light that is in all Men, which is in *Pagans, Turky and Heathens*, is not the Voice of Christ as he is *Mediator*, and the great Shepherd of the Sheep.

4. They hear Christ's Voice, follow his Voice, not the Voice of *General Councils* and *National Synods* ; they will no further hear any, than they hear and adhere to the Voice and Doctrine of Jesus Christ.

2dly, They will not receive or embrace any Capital Errors ; they will not hear the Voice of Strangers, but keep to all the Essentials of Christ's Doctrine of the Principles of true Religion.

Particularly,

1. They believe the Holy Scripture is of Divine Authority, and that it is the only Rule of Faith and Practice.

2. They stedfastly believe the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, that *there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Son,* ^{1 John 5.} *and the Holy Spirit ; and that these three are one ; One in Essence, yet* ^{7.} *three Persons or Subsistences.*

3. They stedfastly believe the Doctrine of Christ's Divinity, or have a right Faith about the Person of Christ, not doubting but that he is God by Nature, the most High God, *coeternal* and *coequal* with the Father and the *Holy Ghost* ; abominating the Doctrine of *Arius*, who asserted he was not of the same Substance of the Father, but rather a created Spirit, the first and chief Spirit or Angel God created.

And the Doctrine of Socinians, who affirmed, He is a meer Man, and had no Pre-existence before he was Conceived and Born of the Virgin.

They abominate that Voice or Doctrine of *Eutychians*, who maintain, that the Matter of Christ's Flesh was from Heaven, or that it was a Conversion of the Deity of the second Person of the Trinity into Flesh, and that he partook not of the Nature of the Virgin.

They abominate their Doctrine, who declare, that Christ doth consist of one Nature only ; and those who affirm that the Light that is in all Men (which is but an *inward Quality* created of God, with

with which the Soul of Mankind is naturally indued) is the only Christ of God; they know these are Strangers, and the Voice of Strangers they will not hear.

4. They hear and stedfastly believe, and receive the Doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Church.

5. The Doctrine of Satisfaction by Christ, in his Expiation of Sin, and of Justification by his Righteousness imputed, as it is received by Faith alone, without inherent Righteousness wrought in us, or good Works done by us.

6. The Doctrine of Regeneration, the Resurrection of the Body, and of the Eternal Judgment, and World to come.

In all these Respects they hear Christ's Voice, *i. e.* his Doctrine, and in all other respects so far as they receive Light and Knowledge touching any one, or all the blessed Truths and Ordinances of the Gospel.

Mich. 6.9. *Fourthly,* There is the Voice of Christ's Rod also, which his Sheep hear; *The Lord's Voice crieth to the City, and the Man of Wisdom shall see thy Name: hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it.* When Christ's Sheep will not hear as they ought the soft and sweet Voice of God's Word, he speaks to them by the Voice of his Rod, by Afflictions and sharp Rebukes, which by his Providence he brings upon them: And though others cannot hear so as to understand this Voice of Christ, yet his Sheep do, they *see his Name,* and *hear the Rod,* and know whose Voice it is, and to what End 'tis appointed; but this I shall not insist further upon here.

I should now come to shew you how Christ's Sheep hear his Voice, but that must be for the next time.

APPLICATION.

Psal. 89.
15. 1. Bless God you have Christ's Voice, Christ's Word sounding in your Ears; *Blessed are they that know the joyful Sound, for they shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance, O Lord.* It is not all they that hear the joyful Sound, but only such that know it, with an experimental Knowledge, who have felt the Divine Power of it on their Souls.

2. Rest not therefore upon a bare hearing of the Word of Christ; take heed that the Gospel comes not to you *in Word only,* but in *Power also.*

3. Labour to hear the Voice of Christ's Spirit in and with the Word, or you are undone for ever.

JOHN X. 27.

My Sheep hear my Voice, and they follow me.

D O C T. *All true Believers are the Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ, they hear his Voice, and they follow him.*

Serm. 2.
Preach'd
Feb. 12.
1693.

Beloved, we have shewed you in what respects Believers are said to be Christ's Sheep, and what is meant by his Voice, which his Sheep, or such who belong unto him, do and will hear.

Thirdly, I shall now proceed to the next general Head of Discourse propounded to you.

I am to shew you how Christ's Sheep hear his Voice, his Word, his Holy Doctrine.

They hear Christ's Voice, his Word and Doctrine, understandingly; *He that heareth the Word, and understandeth it, &c.* Some, tho they hear it, yet they are ignorant, and know not the Nature, Power, and divine Excellency of it. The sacred Scripture is as a sealed Book to some that are learned with Humane Arts and Sciences; they see but the outside of the Book (as it were); and others they are ignorant Persons, neither have Humane nor Divine Teachings: *then he opened their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.* See how Christ does honour the holy Scriptures: He did not open their Understanding without the Scriptures, he sends them to that because they testify of him; but he knew the Scripture would not sufficiently give them the knowledge of himself, without the Influence and Illumination of his Spirit. Sirs, they hear Christ's Voice aight, who are taught of God, and by his Spirit, to understand his Word. Some Men are so far cheated by the Devil, that they cry up the Light of natural Conscience, and magnify that above the Holy Scripture. He persuades them to cast away the Scriptures *as a dead Letter*, in expectation of the Spirit's Teachings; whereas the Spirit teacheth by, not without, nor contrary to the Sacred Scripture. The Word of Christ is full of Mystery; its holy and sublime Doctrine is not easily understood, nor can it be without the Spirit helps the Understanding. In a right and saving manner it is given to Christ's

How
Christ's
Sheep do
hear his
Voice.
Mat. 13.
23.

Luke 24.
45.

Christ's Sheep to understand the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to others it is not given.

2. *Christ's Sheep hear his Voice with Affection*: They like, love, and approve of his Word and Doctrine, it is sweet to them; Thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it. They know that there is no Falshood in it, it is pure from all Mixture, there is exact Purity and Holiness in it; which makes un sanctified Persons to like it not, but either disbelieve it, or else despise and hate it: But a godly Man loves it upon the account of its Purity, in that it promotes nothing but Holiness both in Heart and Life. *The Word of the Lord is right; and all his Works are done in Truth. Therefore I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right; and hate every false Way.* I do not reject such things that my carnal Reason cannot comprehend, or such as are opposite to the Lusts and Corruptions of my Heart, or worldly Interest; but I approve of all things that come out of thy Mouth. Some Men do not receive the Truth in the love of it, and therefore are given up to believe a Lie, or to strong Delusions.

3. *They hear Christ's Voice with Attention*; they hear it diligently. He says, *Hearken diligently unto me*; and they with the greatest care do so. Thus *Mary* heard Christ's Voice; she gave such attention to his Word and Doctrine, that she left all her secular Concerns to attend upon him, though her Sister was offended with her. And thus *Lydia* heard the Word of Christ, *Whose Heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* None can hear with attention, but such whose Hearts the Lord doth open; and none can open the Heart, and cause the Soul to hear that is dead, but Christ only.

4. *They hear Christ's Voice believingly*. Others hear it, but do not believe it: *Who hath believed our Report? and to whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed?* Christ saith, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* But O how few stedfastly give credit to this Doctrine: certainly, if Sinners did believe this but with the same Humane Faith with which they believe many other Things and Reports, it would make them tremble; but Christ's Sheep, or all gracious Persons, give full credit to whatsoever he hath said, and that not only with an Humane Faith, but with a Divine Faith also, or Faith of the Operation of God. *The Man believed the Word that Jesus had spoken unto him.*

The great Doctrine of the Gospel, is a Doctrine of Faith; 'tis to believe: *He that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the*

the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness. Mankind are generally for doing to be justified; they will not be persuaded that all is done already for them, and that they are only to believe and be justified: but thus Christ's Sheep hear his Voice.

5. Christ's Sheep hear his Voice tremblingly, with great Fear, holy Awe, and Reverence. Thus good King Josias heard the Word of God; his Heart was tender, and he trembled: and saith the Lord, *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and that trembleth at my Word.* They know it is God's Word, Christ's Word, who hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, Who is the only Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Where the Word of a King is, there is Power. Power goeth along with Christ's Voice, to awe all their Hearts that are gracious: *My Heart standeth in awe of thy Word,* saith David. Psal. 119.
161.

6. Christ's Sheep hear Christ's Word univerfally, even all that he saith unto them; *Him shall ye hear in whatsoever he shall say unto you.* And those who do not thus hear this great Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the People. Some will hear Christ's Word which they like of; but if any part of his Doctrine futes not their carnal Hearts or Interest, that they will not hear, nor comply with: but Believers are for hearing the hardest things that are contained in Christ's Word; they approve of every thing, as you heard before. A cts 3. 23.

7. They hear Christ's Voice with Retention; they hear and keep his Word; they lay it up in their Hearts, as it is said of the Blessed Virgin: They will not lose it, and therefore, with David, *hide Christ's Word in their Hearts.* Psal. 119.
11.

8. They hear his Voice always constantly unto the End; they will attend unto his Word and Doctrine as long as they live: let what will come, they are not offended, as the *stony-ground Hearers* are said to be. Mat. 13.

9. And lastly, They hear Christ's Voice only, his Voice and none else: *They will not hear the Voice of a Stranger*; that is, they will not receive damnable Errors, they know the Voice of Deceivers; nor will they receive a Mixture in Doctrine, nor in God's Worship: they will not join Christ and Moses together, Works and Faith together, Christ's Righteousness and their own together, Christ's Institutions and the Inventions and Traditions of Men together.

Quest. *May not Believers, who are Christ's Sheep, be beguiled, so as to receive some capital Errors, or an Error in some fundamental Point?*

N

Ans. w.

Answ. 1. No doubt but they may be seduced; I mean, a particular Sheep, or Saint, may be grievously corrupted in his Judgment.

2. But if a Believer be drawn away, or seduced, he shall, if sincere, if an Elect Person, be restored again; for it is impossible any of them should finally be deceived: *If it were possible they should deceive the very Elect*; but that cannot be.

Mat. 24.
24.

Quest. Why are false Teachers called Strangers?

Answ. 1. Because a Stranger is one that we know not; so a false Teacher is one that knows not Christ, nor his true and saving Doctrine, they are not acquainted with him, are not brought into Union with Christ, nor have Communion with him.

2. They are Strangers to the Life and Power of true Religion and Godliness.

3. The Saints also know them not, they approve not of them, nor of the Doctrine they preach; they can discern between Truth and Error, by the Anointing they have received.

4. A Stranger is one that is not a constant dweller in one Place: so false Prophets, and false Teachers, are not fixed long in one Opinion. *Her Ways, saith Solomon, are moveable*, speaking of the false Church, or adulterous Woman: many of these are one day for one thing, for one Error, and another day for another; this shews they are false Teachers, or Strangers to the Truth, they know it not.

Heb. 13.3.

5. They are called Strangers, because they publish strange Doctrine: *Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines.* The Doctrine of Christ is one and the same, being immutable, can suffer no Change or Alteration; but these bring in a new Doctrine, not known in the Primitive Days, not taught by Christ or his Apostles, nor received in the purest Times of the Gospel before Corruptions crept into the Church.

They will not hear the Voice of Strangers, or the Doctrine of false Teachers.

1. Not but that they may occasionally hear such preach; yet if they know they are Deceivers, they will not so much as hear them; neither ought they, but to shun them as such who have Plague-Sores upon them; yet they may hear and read their Books, to know the better their cursed Principles and Errors.

2. Therefore they do not so hear them, as to like and approve of their Doctrine, as I said before.

3. They

3. They will then be sure not so to hear them, as to receive and embrace their pernicious Principles, unless lamentably deluded; which as you heard they may be, through the subtilty of Satan, and the craftiness of his Emissaries, for some time, if they do not watch and take the better care.

APPLICATION.

Caution. To you that are Believers, beware lest you are led away by the Error of the Wicked; be sure that you are not corrupted in any main or fundamental Truth.

First. O labour to maintain and abide firm in the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity: God hath revealed or made known himself as *three in one*, and therefore as such to be worshipped. Look what way God hath manifested his Being and Properties unto us in his Holy Word: Our Worship consisteth in a due application of our Soul unto him, according to that Revelation of himself. And that there are *three distinct Persons*, subsisting in the same infinitely holy One undivided Essence, as manifested in his Word, is most evident; and those Persons are so distinct in their peculiar Subsistence, that distinct Actings and Operations are ascribed unto them.

The Father knoweth the Son, and loveth him; and the Son seeth, knoweth, and loveth the Father. In these mutual Actings, saith Reverend Dr. Owen, one Person is the Object of the Knowledge and Love of the other. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his Hand. No Man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son.* No Man knoweth the Divine Essence, or Eternal Generation of the Son, but the Father: Nor no Man knoweth the Essence or Counsels of the Father, or Dispensations of the Gospel, save the Son: Or, as Calvin saith, The Son is said to know the Father, as he is the lively and express Image of his Person.

John 5.
35.
Mat. 11.
27.

This mutual Knowledge and Love of the Father and Son, is expressed at large in *Prov. 8. 22.*

And they are Absolute, Infinite, Natural and Necessary unto the Being and Blessedness of God. So the Holy Spirit is the mutual Love of the Father, and the Son, knowing them as he is known, and *searching the deep Things of God.* "And, saith the Doctor, in these mutual and internal and external Actings of themselves, consists much of the infinite Blessedness of the

Dr. Owen.

“ Holy God. Again, 2. there are distinct Actings of the several
 “ Persons in the Godhead, which are voluntary, or Effects of
 “ Will and Choice, and not natural or necessary; and these are
 “ of two sorts, such as respect one another: for there are external
 “ Acts of one Person towards another; but then the Person
 “ that is the Object of these Actings, is not considered absolutely
 “ as a *Divine Person*, but with respect unto some peculiar Dispensation
 “ and Condescension. So the Father gives, sends, commands the Son,
 “ as he had condescended to take our Nature upon him, and to be the
 “ Mediator between God and Man. So the Father and the Son do send
 “ the Spirit, as he condescended in a special manner to the Office
 “ of being the *Sanctifier and Comforter* of the Church. Now these are
 “ free and voluntary Acts, depending upon the sovereign Will, Counsel,
 “ and Pleasure of God, and might not have been without the least
 “ diminution of his Eternal Blessedness.

Although this is such a Mystery, that it's beyond our Capacities
 fully to comprehend it, yet there are, as appears by what hath been
 said, clear Scripture-Demonstrations, that in the Deity there is a
 plurality of distinct Persons, which might further be evinced, as
 the Learned have shewed.

John 1. 1. A Being that stands under divers mutual Relations, eternally
 14, 18. and unalterably fixed, that one cannot be the other, must
 1 John 1. admit of such a Consideration of Existence. But thus it is here,
 22. God the Father eternally begets, and never can be begotten; the
 Heb. 1. 5. Son is eternally and unchangeably begotten, and can never beget
 6. the Father; also the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and
 Gal. 4. 6. the Son, and neither Father nor Son can proceed from the Holy
 Ghost.

2. Where one doth as it were command, and another obey; one
 Joh. 8. 20. sends, and another is sent, there must needs be a personal distinction
 & 10. 17, between each other: But, as it was before shewed, the Father
 18. doth as it were command and send the Son, not himself; the
 John 20. Son is held forth as obeying, not commanding or sending the Father.
 21. Luke 10. 22.

3. Where there is something done by one, that is not done by
 Afts 20. another; that argues the Persons are distinct one from the other.
 28. But thus it is in respect of the Deity, there is something done by
 John 5. 17. the Son, that is not done by the Father: The Son assumed Man's
 1 Pet. 1. Nature, the Father did not this; the Son in that Nature died,
 18. and

and satisfied for our Sins by the Sacrifice of himself; the Father did not this: The Holy Ghost is sent by the Father and the Son, Pfal. 2. 8.
 he doth not send the Father nor the Son. Heb. 10. 9.

4. Where there is a distinct mutual Converse, in which one speaks of himself to another, and of a third, there is the formality of three Persons; but in the Deity there is such a Converse. Heb. 1. 8.
9.
Ista. 61. 1.

5. Where there is an Image one of another, there is such a Distinction one from another, that one is not the other in that respect; but in the Deity there is an Image one of another. The Mystery is most manifest from express Scripture. It is a received Rule that cannot be contracted, That things alike are not the same, in that respect wherein they are alike. 2 Cor. 4. 4.
4.
Col. 1. 15.
Heb. 1. 3.
 Dr. Chauncy.

Secondly, Also labour to abide firm in the Faith concerning the Person of Jesus Christ, who is both God and Man, the Eternal God; not God by Office, but God by Nature, the most High God who made Heaven and Earth, and yet truly Man, taking our Nature into a mystical Union with his Holy Deity, being *made like unto us in all things, Sin only excepted*; and thus both God and Man in one Person.

1st. It is requisite that he should be God.

1. Because none can satisfy for Sin but he that is God; no Creature, though never so Holy, could do it, because Sin hath an infinite demerit in it; being against an infinite God, it therefore deserveth everlasting Punishment. From hence it appears, that the Satisfaction for our Sins must be infinitely meritorious, otherwise it could not satisfy the infinite Justice and Wrath of God. Now from the Dignity of Christ's Person, he being God as well as Man, his Obedience and Suffering hath an infinite Worth in it. Acts 20. 28.
Heb. 9. 14.

2. No meer Creature was able to abide and overcome infinite Wrath, or the Punishment due to us for our Sins; therefore he must be God, that so he might bear the Burden of Divine Anger in his Flesh, the Godhead upholding and sustaining his Humane Nature, under his bloody Agony and fearful Anguish and Suffering on the Tree, when God the Father was withdrawn from him, and the Pangs of Hell took hold of him.

3. That he might overcome and vanquish all the Enemies of our Souls, as *Sin, Satan, Death, and Hell*. Had he not been God, he could not have raised himself from the Dead; from whence rises the Spring of our Regeneration to a State of Grace here, and our Resurrection to a State of Glory at the last Day hereafter.

2^{dly}. He must be Man ; because he must die, which the God-head could not do ; yea, he must be Man in our Nature, that he might satisfy the Justice of God for us, because the Righteousness of God requires, that the same Nature which had sinned, should make a full Compensation to the Law of God and infinite Justice. O take heed no Man shakes your Faith in this great Article of the Christian Religion.

3^{dly}. Take heed also that you abide stedfast in the Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction, which dependeth on the former. Such who deny Christ's Deity, must disown that plenary Satisfaction he gave to the Law and Justice of God. Beware of *Socinianism*, *Quakerism*, &c. and all such like Errors.

4^{thly}. Take heed, there are some who tell you, Christ has fully satisfied for the Breach of the Law of the first Covenant, for the Sins of the whole World ; so that all Men are cured of that Sickness, and delivered from that Curse, and put into a Capacity to be saved, if they will but exercise the Power of their own Will and Abilities ; and that Men have power to believe and be regenerated, that sit under the preaching of the Gospel ; and if they answer and discharge their part in Salvation, Christ's Death will become effectual to them, it being but on this Condition that Christ Jesus died to save Men, provided they answer those Terms the Gospel offers : Whereas it's evident, that Christ is not the End of the Law, as touching Righteousness to any Man, but only to such as believe, (I speak of the Adult) ; and the Gospel is not our Sickness, but our Cure ; that condemns not, but as the healing Remedy is rejected, and the Curse of the Law abides upon all Unbelievers. And it is also as evident, that Man by Nature is *dead in Sin*, and must by an almighty and irresistible Power be quickned ; which is done by the infusion of a Principle of Divine Life. Faith is God's Gift, and not the Condition of the Covenant of Grace ; it is a Branch, or part of that Grace promised therein, upon the Condition of Christ's Satisfaction, not the Condition to be performed by the Creature, which procures the Blessings purchased ; therefore no Condition then in order and connection in the Promises, that God will enable all his Elect to perform, by bestowing that Blessing upon them freely by his own Grace. The whole of our Salvation is by Christ ; *It is by Faith, that it might be by Grace, to the end the Promise might be sure to all the Seed ; and all boasting might be excluded.* And 'tis not an uncertain Salvation, that depends upon the doubtful and depraved Will of Man ; but it is well ordered in all things,

things, and sure, by the infinite Grace, Wisdom, and Power of God. Nor did Christ die only for our Good who are saved, but in our stead also; so that Eternal Life comes to us in a way of Justice and Righteousness, as well as in a way of Mercy and Goodness. God was not rendered only reconcileable by the Death of his Son, which the Creature is to make effectual on his part, but he is absolutely reconciled: *For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life.* Rom. 5. 10.

5thly. There are others also that affirm, that Jesus Christ as Mediator, gave to God a valuable Consideration, or Recompence, that he might justly waive, and not execute the Law of perfect Obedience; and by his Merits purchased a new and milder Law of Grace: so that Christ's Righteousness hath only purchased the removing the Law of Works from being a Covenant of Life; and that our Right to Salvation, the Favour of God, and Peace of Conscience; does depend upon our Obedience to the Gospel, which Christ hath purchased, should be accepted for our Righteousness, by which we must be justified and judged: and that Faith in its whole latitude, is our believing and obeying the Gospel, or new Law, that by this we are made partakers of the Benefits of Christ, he having merited this Grant, or Law, That they who obey him sincerely should be saved; and that he is justified so far, and so long as he answers the Condition of this new Law of Grace.

Now we, and all sound Protestants, in opposition to this, affirm, That Jesus Christ as the Head, Surety, and Representative of all the Elect, did fulfil or satisfy for the Law of Works, bearing the Curse of the Law for us, and in our stead; and by his Holy Life, &c. purchased for us that Life which the Law promised to him; that continued to do all things that were written therein, and by the Supereminency of his Obedience, Additions of Blessedness unto Life; and that his Obedience and Righteousness, whereby he fulfilled the Law, is imputed to Believers for their Justification, by which God grants them pardon of Sin, and a Grant of Eternal Life, and that by Christ's Righteousness, thus imputed, Believers stand perfectly justified and delivered from the Curse of the Law, and are certainly intituled to Eternal Life; and that Faith is a relying on Christ, and trusting in him and his Righteousness and Merits only for Salvation.

6thly. Therefore be sure also you hear Christ's Voice, and adhere to his Doctrine about Justification, through his perfect and compleat

complete Righteousness alone, imputed unto all them that do believe in him, without Works done by us, or Holiness wrought in us; I mean, our Faith and sincere Obedience, is not the Matter of our Justification before God, nor any part of it, but the Righteousness of Jesus Christ only, in his perfect conformity to the Law of God in his Life, and by dying on the Cross as our Surety and blessed Representative: Yet know, we constantly affirm, That that Faith which unites us to Christ, in whom we are justified, doth purify both the Heart and Life; and though inherent Grace, Holiness, and good Works, do not justify our Persons before God, yet they do justify our Faith, and declare us to be in a justified State before Men, and to our own Consciences also, as the Apostle James shews; and that that Faith that is not attended with good Fruits, is dead, *as the Body without the Spirit is dead.*

Pray remember that you have been often taught, that Faith it self doth not justify us in God's sight, as an Habit, or Act, or in respect of the Product of it, but only objectively, *i. e.* in respect of the Object it doth apprehend, apply and take hold of.

O Sirs, take heed ye are not deceived; may be ye look upon the Lives and Conversations of Men, and you think they are good Men, holy Men; yet for all this examine the Doctrine they preach: for an evil and corrupt Doctrine may be as pernicious and damnable as an evil Conversation. *But there were false Prophets also among the People, even as there shall be false Teachers among you, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction.*

7thly, Be wary also, lest you are carried away with the Error of the Wicked, to doubt of, or deny the Resurrection of the Body: If once you come to deny the Resurrection, your State is dangerous, for that is a capital Error: *If the Dead rise not, then is not Christ risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your Faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false Witnesses of God, because we testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the Dead rise not.* It must be the same Body, not another; for if not the same, it will be no Resurrection, but a new Creation; and if not the same Body, but another, then it will not be that Body that suffered for Christ that shall be glorified, nor that Body that sinned against God and Christ that shall be punished, but an innocent Body, a Body that never sinned.

Be sure Labour to hold the Head, and be established in all the fundamental Truths of the Gospel, they are not many.

1. Your Souls are in danger of being corrupted; we have *slie* and *crafty Deceivers* among us in these Days.

2. Many thousands (we have cause to fear) are already poisoned with most pernicious Notions, and Soul-destructive Errors, who are in danger of perishing this way to Eternity, yet seem sober, holy, and devout Persons.

3. Let it be your care to sit under the Ministry of such Men who preach Christ, Christ only; or wholly seek to exalt Christ, and the Free Grace of God by Jesus Christ. *Take heed who you hear, and take heed what you hear, and how you hear: Therefore watch, and remember (saith Paul) that by the* Acts 20: *space of three Years, I ceased not to warn every one Night and* 31. *Day with Tears.* He was afraid of those grievous *Wolves* that would enter in among them, not sparing the Flock. You hear that Christ's Sheep hear his Voice; let it appear you are his Sheep, by having this Character, namely, in that you hear his Doctrine, and will not hear the Voice of Strangers.

But, O rest not in a bare hearing the Voice of Christ, nor in the knowledg of saving Truth; get it not only into your Heads, but into your Hearts. He that hath truly received Christ's Doctrine, or rightly hears his Voice, brings forth good Fruit; he feels the Power of his Word upon his own Heart: Knowledg without Grace will stand you in no stead. A good Doctrine, and much Head-Knowledg, and great Gifts, without Love, Humility, and a Godly Life, signifies nothing: *Knowledg puffs up, but Love edifies.*

I shall add no more at this Time.

JOHN X. 27.

My Sheep bear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Serm. 3.

DOCT. 1. *All true Believers are the Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ; they bear his Voice, and they follow him.*

I have shewed you what is meant by hearing of Christ's Voice.

Fourthly, I am now to speak to the next thing proposed, or Head of Discourse, which is the fourth General,

I know them, &c.

1st, In speaking to this, I shall shew you,

1. In what respect Christ knows his Sheep.
2. What a kind of Knowledge he hath of them.
3. Shew what Comfort doth and may arise unto them hereby.

John 13.
17, 18.

1. *Christ knows them as they are his Father's Choice.* All Christ's Sheep are chosen Sheep, such as the Father hath pick'd out of the common Lump of Mankind, or out of the great Flock of fallen Man; thus Jesus Christ knows them, and as they are his own Choice also, for the Father and the Son agreed both in the Choice of the Elect. *If you know these things, happy are ye if you do them. I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen.* Not only to Apostleship, but to Eternal Life; for Judas was chosen to be an Apostle, but he was not in the Election of Grace.

2 Tim. 2.
19.

2. *Christ knoweth them as they are the special Purchase of his own Blood.* He knows whom he died for, and in the room and stead of; he knows what Sheep he hath bought and paid so dear for: *The Foundation of God standeth sure; the Lord knoweth them that are his.* There is a certain Number who are built upon a Rock, upon a sure Foundation; these are sealed and confirmed by God's Eternal Decree of Election, and are the Price therefore of Christ's special Purchase, and as such he knows them from all others in the World.

3. He

3. He knows them as such, who have and do experience the Effects of his Death. He sees and knows they are his Sheep, as they have his Mark, his Image formed in them: for like as other Shepherds know their Sheep by the Mark they have upon them, so (to speak after the manner of Men) Jesus Christ may in this respect be said to know his Sheep, his Saints and People; *Surely they are my People, Children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.* I know these are my People, I cannot but own them, they will keep my Covenant: I have renewed them, and they abide faithful to me, and will not deal falsely with me. In another place he says, *Their Spot is not the Spot of my Children.* These I know are none of my Sheep, their Spot, their Sin, their Iniquity are not such as are in my People; not Sins of Infirmity or common Frailties, but they have a contagious Spot upon them; they have none of my Image, my Mark, &c.

4. Christ knows his Sheep with a Knowledge of Approbation; *I know them*, that is, I approve of them, I like them well, I esteem them, and accept of their Persons and their Services.

5. Christ may be said to know his Sheep also, with a Knowledge of Love and Affection. He knows them as to delight in them, they have his Heart: *I am the good Shepherd, and know my Sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my Life for the Sheep.* As this mutual Knowledge between the Father and the Son, was joined with perfect Love and Delight; so is Christ's Knowledge of his Sheep: And this he himself also here expresses, by saying, *I lay down my Life for the Sheep;* which shews not only the Sincerity, but also the Degree of his Love unto his Saints: So that if we can believe that God the Father loved Christ, his only begotten Son, we may also believe that both Father and Son love those who are really the Sheep of Jesus Christ; the Love that Christ hath unto his People, is as true, certain, and abiding, as the Father's Love to Christ, or Christ's Love unto the Father.

2dly, I shall shew you what a kind of Knowledge Christ hath of his Saints.

1. *Christ knoweth them by Name.* As 'tis said of Moses, so it may be said of every true Believer; *Yet thou hast said, I know thee by Name.* Even in like manner in this Chapter, the Lord Jesus shews us that the true Shepherd *calleth his Sheep by Name,* and leadeth them out; this denotes the knowledge he hath of them particularly.

2. *Christ knows their Hearts*, as he testifies to the seven Churches in Asia; *And all the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the Reins and Hearts, &c.* This shews he is the most High God; For who knoweth the Heart but God himself? This *Jehovah* glorieth in, as his own absolute Prerogative, it being out of the reach of any Creature; *I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins.* Moreover 'tis said of Jesus Christ, That he needed not that any should testify of Man, for he knew what was in Man. He needeth not any to bring him Information concerning the Principles, Ends, Aims, Purposes, and Tempers of Men; and therefore he knows his Sheep, his Saints, that they are sincere or upright-hearted Ones; he knows them from Hypocrites, from the Goats, from the foolish Virgins.

3. *Christ knows where they live*, in what Land, City, Town, or Family. *I know thy Works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's Seat is.* He knows the Place where they dwell, and how they behave themselves.

4. *He knows their Works.* How many times doth he express this, in the second and third Chapters of the Revelations, even in the beginning of every Epistle to the seven Churches, *I know thy Works*; whether they proceed from a renewed Nature, from a Principle of Divine Grace or Spiritual Life, or not; whether from Faith, or not; whether right Gospel-Works of Obedience, or not; he hath a Knowledge of Comprehension or Understanding of all. But,

5. *He knows his Sheep, his Saints, with a Knowledge of Approbation*, as I hinted before.

6. *Christ knows their Faith*, the Quality and Quantity of it, that it is true Faith, unfeigned Faith, the Faith of the Operation of God, or of his own Spirit. *But there are some of you that believe not; for Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* Though Faith be an inward secret Act of the Soul, yet Christ knows it, he knows who hath it wrought in them, and also though it be never so small, even as a Grain of Mustard-feed; whether it be weak or strong, great or little, growing or decaying, he knows it.

7. *Christ knows the Love of his People*, whether they love him in Sincerity; both the Truth of their Love, and the Degree of their Love: *Jesus saith unto Simon Peter, Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* And as he knows whether they love him above all or not, so he knows whether they love one another or no; whether

ther it be with a pure Heart, fervently, and in sincerity, Christ knows it: whether it be a Love in Words, or with the Tongue only, or in Deed and in Truth.

8. *He knows the Humility of his Saints*, whether they are clothed with it or not. *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the Lowly; but the Proud he knoweth afar off.* He is far off from them, though he knoweth such; but he is near unto humble Souls, he dwelleth with them.

9. *He knows the Patience of each of his People*, under all their Sufferings, Losses and Disappointments they meet with in this World: *I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience, &c.* He knows how they carry it under the Rod of Afflictions, which will work for the good of all that are patiently exercised thereby. In a word, Christ knows every Grace of the Spirit in the Souls of his People, and whether they are in Exercise or not.

Rev. 2. 2.

10. *He knows the Works and Actions of his Saints*, and of every one of them particularly: *I know thy Works.* And again he says, *I know thy Works.*

(1.) He knows what our Lives are, whether we walk circumspectly, or not; whether we make Conscience in all we do, and walk uprightly, or not. He knew *Abraham*, that he would fear and serve him, and command his Children and Household to keep his Commandments also. He knew that *Noah* was only Righteous in that Generation. He knows our *up-rising and our down-lying*, whether we begin the Day with him, and end the Day with him or not.

(2.) He doth not only know all our Works and Actions, whether Natural, Moral or Spiritual; but also the Manner of our Actions, how we perform all our Duties towards God and towards Men.

(3.) He knoweth with what Hearts we act; whether with Zeal, Life and Power, or not; whether we stir up our selves in Duty to take hold of him, or perform Duties of Obedience but with a cold and lukewarm Heart. He knows with what Hearts we hear, read, pray, meditate, give to the Poor; in all these Respects he *knows his Sheep.*

(4.) He knows the Principle from whence we act, the Means we use, the Works we do, and the End we propound to our selves in all our Actions; whether we aim at his Glory, or seek our selves, self-Profit, self-Honour, self-Appause; all is known to him.

(5.) He

(5.) He knows what we have been, and what we now are; what we have done, and what we do, and will do hereafter: nothing is hid from him.

11. He knows our Carriage and Behaviour in our Families, in our own Houses, and what our Behaviour is in the House and Church of God; whether we know our Places and our Duty, in the Station where we are set. He knows and *will judg between Cattel and Cattel*, betwixt the fat and the lean Sheep; if any oppresses his Brother, or if the Strong and Rich neglect or wrong the poor and weak Ones of his Flock, he knows it. He knows whether we make his Word our Rule in all Cases, and do not offend nor grieve each other: And if any be offended with their Brother, he knows whether they proceed against him according to the Directions he hath left us to walk by.

12. Christ knows all our Sorrows, Troubles, and Afflictions. *Exod. 3. 7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the Affliction of my People which are in Egypt, and have heard their Cry, by reason of their Taskmaster, for I KNOW their Sorrow.*

13. He knows our Wants, Temptations, Tears, and Poverty: *Rev. 2. 9. I know thy Works, Tribulation and Poverty.* If we are Poor externally, and in Want, he knows it; or spiritually Poor, he knows it.

In a word, whether we are living or dying Christians, hot or cold, growing or decaying, he knows it.

APPLICATION.

Infer. 1. We may from hence infer, That Jesus Christ is God. This clearly demonstrates the Deity of the Lord Jesus, whose Eyes are said to be as a Flame of Fire, even of a piercing and penetrating Nature, to comfort and refresh the Sincere, and to burn up and consume all others that are not upright with God.

Exhort. 1. Be exhorted you that are Church-members, to look to it; Christ knows and takes notice of you all: He knows you (as you have heard) by Name, and where you dwell; your Hearts, Thoughts and Inclinations he knows, whether you are praying Men and Women or not; and also how you perform it, and when you neglect it.

2. Your Excuses, Pretences, about omission of Duties in your Families, Closets or Churches, are before his Eyes, and known to him.

3. Your

3. Your Ways in trading, buying, selling, building, planting, eating, drinking and sleeping, all is known to Christ; what you do for his poor Saints and People, what you do to encourage and further his Interest in the World; when you give, and what you give, and how, or with what End and Aim, all is known to him.

4. He knows and takes notice of your *Garbs* and *Dresses* which you wear; whether such as he in his Word directeth you to put on, or not; whether *modest* or *immodest*, like the wanton Ones of the World, and according to the former Lusts in your Ignorance, and not as becoming Men or Women professing Godliness.

5. He knows your Behaviour in all Relations you stand in one to another, as Husbands to Wives, or Wives to Husbands; Parents to Children, or Children to Parents; Masters to Servants, or Servants to Masters: Whether Husbands love their Wives, and Wives love and obey their Husbands: Whether Parents bring up their Children in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord, and train them up in the Way in which they should go, praying for them, not provoking them to Wrath, by being harsh and bitter towards them, but setting a good Example before them in all things: As also how Children carry it to their Parents in honouring them, and obeying them in all things in the Lord; all is took notice of by Jesus Christ.

6. He knows how Ministers carry it to his People in the discharge of their Work and Office; whether they preach the Word in Season, and out of Season, giving themselves to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine; and study, ^{1 Tim. 4. 13.} to shew themselves approved ^{2 Tim. 2. 15.} unto God, as *Workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

He knows whether they took the Care of the Flock, of a ready Mind, or for filthy Lucre sake; and whether they preach Christ or themselves, seeking to exalt Jesus Christ alone, or but in part, and rendering him to be but an imperfect Saviour; whether they ascribe all to him, or not some things of Salvation to the Creature, and so open a Door for Men to sacrifice to their own Nets and Drags.

7. Sirs, remember that Christ is not a *careless Spectator*, he knows you that are Members, and takes notice how you behave your selves to his Ministers; whether you shew due Respect to them, and honour them as *Ambassadors of Christ*, or as such who personate

personate their great Lord and Master; for if you dishonour, slight and despise them, Christ takes it as a Dishonour, a slighting and despising of him: He knows whether you obey them that are over you in the Lord, or not; but rather contemn, resist, or spurn at their Authority, and seek Occasion to quarrel with them, wounding, afflicting, and grieving their Spirits, and weakning their Hands and their Hearts: He knows whether you discharge your Duties to them, in administering and communicating all good things to them; providing a chearful and comfortable Maintenance for them, and not leaving them to encounter with the perplexing Cares, Wants and Necessities of this Life.

8. Christ knows his Sheep, so as to weigh their Actions, their Spirits, their Graces, and their Duties: He ponders every Step they take, and observes every Word of their Mouths, and Thought of their Hearts. *The Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed.*

1 Sam. 2.]
3.

9. Christ knows whether you are sincere or not, upright or not, regenerate or not; whether you are the same at Home as Abroad, in the Closet as in the Church, or not.

10. Moreover consider the Effects of Christ's Knowledge; he knows such whose Hearts are sound, so as to approve, love, protect, feed, comfort, and refresh them; and such that are unsound, so as to disown, reject, and condemn them.

11. He knows the Humble, so as to exalt them; and the Proud, so as to abase them: He knows and beholds all of us, at all times, either to accuse, or to clear us; to condemn, or to justify us.

Exam. Examine your selves; in vain it is to go about to hide or cover any thing, seeing Christ knows all we do; there is no way to hide your Sin from him. O search and try your selves, your Hearts, your States and Conditions, lest you are deceived, and conclude, *you are Rich, and increased with Goods, &c.* this was *Laodicea's* Misery.

Terror. Tremble at the Thoughts of doing one unbecoming Thing, or speaking one unbecoming Word. O Lord, said David, *thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising; and art acquainted with all my Thoughts: For there is not a Word in my Tongue, but so, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*

Psal. 139.
1, 2, 3, 4.

O what Terror is here for ungodly Men, that commit horrid Wickedness in secret, and say in their Hearts, *No Eye seeth us!* O let them know, that all their filthy and abominable Deeds of Darknes,

Darkness, are done in the plain and open view, and sight of the great God, and Jesus Christ; and that he keeps a Record of all their cursed Works, Oaths, and ungodly Words, and will lay them all before them at the last Day: *For he knoweth vain Men*: Job 11. *he seeth Wickedness also; will he not then consider it?* Men know but little of God, and therefore are very unfit Judges of all his Counsels, Decrees and Actions: yet God knows Man exactly, and all his Vanity, Falseness and Folly; let him never so carefully strive to cover and hide his Wickedness under Deceit, or a Cloak of Religion, *he seeth it*, it is a Knowledge by sight, therefore most easily and clearly known. God doth not know Mens Sins by hear-say; No, no, he sees it, beholds it with open Face; he is by when they commit it: They can commit no Sin out of his sight, nor do that which he knoweth not; though they are ready to say, *How doth God know?* Job. 22: *Thick Clouds are a Covering to him that he seeth it not.* Carnal Men 13. *frame Conceptions of God like themselves; Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine Eyes;* that is, thy Sins, and secret Works of Darkness. He considers it, *Will he not consider it?* 21.

Many Men know much of their own Wickedness, and of the Wickedness of others; but they lay it not to Heart, they do not consider it: But God knoweth and seeth Wickedness after another rate; He considers, observes it, and weighs the Nature of the Crime, and the Aggravations of it, the vile Purposes, End and Intention of the Person doing it; and how it is done wilfully against Light, and the clear Convictions of his own Conscience: He weigheth the Nature of their Wickedness as in Ballances; as it is said of *Belsazzar*, *Thou art weighed in the Ballance, and art found wanting;* thy horrid Pride, filthy Lusts, Counsels, Policies, and all the Contrivances of thy Heart and Government are weighed. *The Ways of Man are before the Lord; and he pondereth all his Paths;* He puts them into a Ballance, and doth not only see them, but consider them, ponder and weigh them. Dan. 5. 27.

Consol. Lastly, This may be also Matter of Comfort and Consolation to all the Sheep of Jesus Christ, or holy and sincere Children of God. Christ knows you; *I know my Sheep.* Job was glad that God knew him; *Thou knowest I am not wicked.* He doth not say, thou knowest I am not a Sinner, a Man of any Infirmities; No, but not an ungodly Sinner, an Hypocrite, one that lives in Sin, loves Sin, makes a Trade of Sin, as wicked Men do. Job 10. 7.

no matter how *Job* or *Paul* are censured, reproached or condemn'd by Men, whilst they had the Testimony of their Consciences touching their Sincerity : *My Integrity*, saith *Job*, *I hold fast, I will not let it go : mine own Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.* And saith holy *Paul*, *Our rejoicing is this, the Testimony of our Consciences, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World.* The consideration of this, that their own Hearts cleared and did acquit them of all those foul charges of Friends and false Brethren ; and also that God knows that they are what they profess themselves to be ; O this was matter of great Comfort to them, and may be so to all sincere and gracious Christians. Christ knows our Fears, our Straits, our Temptations, our Wants, and all the Wrongs and Injuries we have sustained : Is not this matter of Consolation ? O poor drooping Saint, lift up thy dejected Spirit ; All thy Wants are in Christ's sight, he sees the Place where every Sheep and Lamb of his dwells, and what their Wants are : And his Love, Bowels, Care and Compassion is infinite ; he that laid down his Life for his Sheep, for this and that poor afflicted, tempted, and dejected Soul, will not he, think you, seeing he knows your Condition, supply, support, strengthen, heal, feed, and comfort you, whosoever you are, if one of his Sheep ? *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all ; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?* He that hath given himself, shed his own precious Blood for us, will not deny us a little Bread to feed our Souls, nor Balm to heal them ; nor any Comfort he sees good, will he deny or withhold from us : He that gave the greater, will not stick to give the less.

2. Christ knows whatsoever you have done for his Glory ; and he is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister. You have forgot what you gave to such and such poor Saints, may be ten, twenty, or thirty Years ago ; yea but Christ hath not forgot it. True, there is no Work of ours that deserveth any thing from the Hands of Christ, in point of Merit ; yet what though, Rewards of Grace (as I have often told you) will exceed all Rewards of Merit : A Cup of cold Water shall have a Reward of Grace ; the Gift of a Penny given in love to Christ, when thou canst give no more, shall have a glorious Reward at the great Day. As I once told you of a King, who meeting with a Baker's Boy, as he was carrying Bread into the Town, (he being

being very hungry, and lost his Nobles, having been a hunting) desired the Boy to give him a Penny Loaf; which he readily did: And for this the King knighted the Boy, and gave a yearly Estate to him and his Heirs for ever. O Sirs, Christ's Rewards of Grace and Favour will exceed all that we conceive or can comprehend, though we deserve nothing.

3. Nay, Christ knowing our good Intention, and what we would do had we Power, or were we able to do it, he will reward that, accept of that, as if we actually had done it; as in *David's* Case, who had it in his Heart to build God's Temple, though God would not have him to do it, yet did accept it as if he had done it.

4. Christ also knowing what we have suffered for his Name's sake, though we have forgot it, yet he will remember it at the great Day.

J O H N X. 27.

My Sheep bear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

BELOVED, I have shewed you what a kind of Knowledge Jesus Christ hath of all his Sheep.

Serm. IV.

Fifthly, I shall now proceed to the fifth General Head, and give some of the Characters or Properties of the Sheep of Christ. But before I do this, I shall shew you why the Saints are compared to Sheep.

1. *First it is from their clean and mild Nature.* Wicked Men, from the consideration of their filthy and ravenous Nature, are contrariwise compared to *Lions, Wolves, Foxes, Dogs, Swine,* and the like. *Why Believers are compared to Sheep.*

But now God's People have (through the Operation of Divine Grace) their unclean and filthy Nature changed; that brutish, perverse and *swinish* Disposition which they brought into the World with them, is gone: *Such were some of you, but you are washed,*

1 Cor. 6. 11. washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Sheep are of a clean Nature, they like not to wallow in the Mire as Swine do: So the Saints have a clean and holy Nature wrought in their Souls, or Spiritual Habits infused through the renewing of the Holy Ghost, having obtained a true Righteousness, in which they stand justified, and appear without Spot before God, even in the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is counted to them for Righteousness to their Justification, and are sanctified through the Spirit of Holiness.

2. Sheep are a harmless and innocent sort of Creatures; not crafty like the Fox, nor devouring like the Lion. So the Saints are harmless and innocent, they seek the Hurt of no Man, but desire to live peaceably in the Land, and not like Romish Wolves, who delight in nothing more than in Blood and Rapine: They are like unto their Master, (or ought so to be) *i. e. holy, harmless, &c.* They are simple concerning Evil, Children in Malice, though Men in Understanding: They are not like the ungodly ones of the World, who are full of Wrath, Hatred and Revenge; they are so far from this, that if they arrive at their true Character, they will speak Evil of no Man, but pray for their Enemies, and for such that hate them.

1 Cor. 14. 20.

3. Sheep are patient under Suffering: In this they strive to imitate their Blessed Saviour also, who was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter; and as a Sheep is dumb before the Shearer, so he opened not his Mouth. How patiently did the poor Martyrs go to the Stake; they strove not with their Persecutors, nor made resistance: And when they suffer from the immediate Hand of God, they are patient as David was, and open not their Mouths, because the Lord hath done it: Like Aaron who held his peace, and patiently bore the heavy Hand of God, when his two Sons were devoured with Fire before his Eyes.

Isa. 53. 7.

Psal. 39. 9.

Levit. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4.

4. Believers may be compared to Sheep from their Profitableness to others. We all know that Sheep are very profitable Creatures many ways, enriching and making Land fat; as also for Clothing, and for Meat: How excellent is the Flesh of Sheep for Food? So God's People are useful and profitable. *The Lips of the Righteous feed many*, by their wise and pious Discourse, Counsels, and Divine Comfort, which they often communicate to many distressed and disconsolate Souls: *They are the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World*; and what a profitable thing is Salt to us, is Light to us?

Even

Even so in many respects the Godly, in a spiritual Sense, are alike useful, and have been in their respective Generations in this World.

What a blessing was *Lot* to *Sodom* whilst he was among them! the Fire could not seize upon that wicked City until he left it: *Haste thee, escape thither;* (said the Angel) *for I cannot do any thing* Gen. 19. *until thou be come thither.* What Profit did *Laban* receive by *Jacob*? 22. what a Blessing was he unto him! the like Blessing was *Joseph* to his Master. The Godly are like Sheep, the Interest of those Lands, Nations, Cities and Families where they dwell.

The Saints are profitable to others many ways.

- (1.) By that heavenly Doctrine they maintain and hold forth.
- (2.) By the fervent and profitable Prayers they make and send up to God on all Occasions.
- (3.) By that holy and good Example which they set for all those they converse with, and live among.
- (4.) And at their death, by Martyrdom, great Profit hath been received; from whence the Proverb rose, That *the Blood of the Martyrs was the Seed of the Church.* Believers bring Glory to God, and Profit unto Men.

5. *Sheep are tractable and obedient*, being ready to follow their Shepherd whithersoever he goeth. It is the Custom in some Countries for the Shepherd in leading the Sheep, to go out before them; to which practice our Saviour doth here allude: So Believers are obedient to Jesus Christ, they are tractable, and learn to follow him; *My Sheep hear my Voice, and they follow me. Thou shalt guide* Psal. 73. *me (saith David) by thy Counsel.* Christ's Precepts are the Saints 24. Directory, and his Practice their Pattern. Hence *Paul* exhorted the *Corinthians*, *to follow him as he followed Christ.* Ministers are to be followed and imitated, no further than they follow and imitate Jesus Christ.

6. *Sheep love to feed in green Pastures*; in clean and wholesome Fields or Medows. So do the Saints and People of God love sound and wholesome Truths, good Doctrine, Food that is fit and proper for their precious Souls; they must not, will not feed in the Soul-rotting Pastures of Mens Inventions, nor on the corrupt Glosses of cloudy Doctors that lived in the dark Times of the Church. The Spouse from hence enquires of Christ *where he* Cant. 1. 7. *feedeth, and where he maketh his Flock to rest at Noon?* that is, where his Blessed Gospel is truly preached, and his Holy Ordinances are duly and in a right manner administr'd. And he directeth her to

go forth by the Footsteps of the Flock, and to feed her Kids besides the Shepherds Tents; that is, to follow the Doctrine and Example of the Primitive Church, which only is our Rule and Pattern in all Gospel-Worship.

7. Sheep are incident to divers Diseases; many of them are weak and feeble, sick and distempered, and therefore must by their Shepherd be strengthened and healed, with much care, skill, and faithfulness: So are Christ's Sheep, his Saints, subject also to manifold spiritual Diseases, Weaknesses, Temptations and Afflictions, which of old moved the Almighty to great Compassion, and forely to rebuke the Shepherds of *Israel*, for their Cruelty and great Remissness towards his Flock: *The diseased have ye not strengthened; neither have ye healed that which was sick, &c.* And therefore the great Shepherd saith, he would take the Work into his own Hand: *I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.* Some of God's People are attended with one spiritual Disease, and others with another: Some with a spiritual consumption of their Graces, decline in their Faith, Zeal, Patience, brotherly Love, Charity, &c. Others are afflicted with the *Timpany of Pride*; some with the *Fever of Passion*, &c. Which were it not for the care and faithfulness of their Shepherd, would prove fatal to them.

8. Sheep are subject to go astray; So are the Saints to go astray from Christ, and to wander from his Precepts: *I have gone astray* (saith David) *like a lost Sheep; seek thy Servant.*

9. Sheep also are subject to take Soil and Filth, and therefore have need of washing: Even so likewise the Sheep of Jesus Christ are subject to contract fresh Guilt and Pollution on their own Souls and Consciences, Sin being of a polluting and defiling Nature; and therefore David cried out to his Blessed Shepherd to be washed: *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow.* O cleanse my filthy and leprous Soul in the Fountain of thy Son's Blood, signified by those Ceremonial Washings under the Law. *If I wash thee not, (saith Christ to Peter) thou hast no part with me.*

10. Sheep love to feed and lie down together; Nay, it is a difficult thing to scatter, sever, or divide them from each other; and if by Dogs or Wolves, &c. they should be scattered, they will quickly get together again; and such that straggle behind, the Shepherd fears are not well. So the Saints and Sheep of Christ dearly love to assemble together; and it is an Argument that such are diseased,

or sickly, who forsake the assembling themselves with the rest of the Flock; *Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another,* Mal. 3.16. &c. *They that fear thee, (saith David) will be glad when they see me, because I hoped in thy Word.* I can tell them that which will cause their Souls to rejoice; I have been afflicted, and tempted, and yet have been succoured and relieved by the Lord, because I hoped in his Word: So that none of them that meet with like Perplexities, need to fear or doubt of God's gracious Help and Support. Sirs, if wicked Men, like *Dogs, Wolves, or Lions,* do endeavour to scatter Christ's Sheep by Persecution, &c. they will soon get together again: *And being let go, they went to their own Company again.* Afts 4.23.

11. *Sheep need a shady Place when the Sun shines hot at Noon:* which is a great refreshment to them, where they chew their Cud; and being secured from the scorching heat, they with the greater alacrity return to their Pasture. In this also the Saints may be compared unto Sheep; for evident it is, Believers do need a shady Place, a Place of Refreshment to rest in and under, in the time of the great heat of Temptation, Affliction, and Persecution: And at such Seasons the Lord Jesus hath a Place of sweet Repose for them; *In me you shall have Peace: in the World you shall have Tribulation. Under the shadow of thy Wings will I make my Refuge, until these Calamities be overpast.* Hence also Jesus Christ is said to be *as the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land;* or in a dry and scorching Country, which, *metonymically,* is called a *weary Land,* because it makes the People weary that abide therein. Christ refreshes his Sheep under his own gracious Protection, in time of the hottest Persecution, &c. and affords them relief by his own Presence, and precious Promises: And when they return out of those Afflictions, with what joy do they feed in their Pastures, calling to mind and meditating upon those blessed Experiences they had of his Goodness in those hot and scorching Times. John 16. 33. Psal. 57.1. Isa. 32. 2.

12. *Sheep will live where greater Cattel cannot, even upon very hard and barren Commons,* where the Grass is exceeding short, and be very well contented with it, nay, thrive upon it. So will the Faithful in Jesus Christ live, where and when the carnal Professor cannot, even in a Time of Want and Scarcity, when the great and tall Cedars, whose Hearts are not upright with God, fall away, and their Spirits die in them. A poor Believer can live by Faith on the Promises of God, when he can't see by an Eye of Sense how he should subsist, yet doth then trust on God's Providence, who

Hab. 3. 17, 18. who careth for him; and he is contented and well satisfied with those hard Pastures the Lord is pleased to put him into: *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall Fruit be on the Vines; the Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no Meat; the Flocks shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stall: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation.*

13. *Among a Flock of Sheep are oftentimes some Goats, who feed with them, and lie down together. So in Christ's Flock are some evil and corrupt Members, such who are none of his Sheep, but Hypocrites, though they seem to feed and have Communion together; and these also are called Goats by the great Shepherd.*

Math. 25. 14. *Sheep are very fruitful, and do multiply in a little time exceedingly, though many of them may be killed by Butchers. The Saints may be compared to Sheep also in this respect, for they from a few have often increased to a very great Multitude. How few were the Number of Christ's Sheep at the time of his Ascension, yet in a little space we read, that their Number was five Thousand; And though the Heathen Butchers killed many Thousands, yet how wonderfully did they increase! which was marvellous in the Eyes of their Enemies. The like may be noted in these Days among us in England; what a few were they of the Baptized Churches, and other Dissenters, not many Years ago, and to what a Multitude are they risen now? Also the Saints grow in Grace, they are fruitful, bearing Twins, and none barren among them.*

15. *Sheep are sometimes separated from the Goats, for some special Occasion known to the Shepherd. Even so at the last Day shall all the Sincere and truly Godly be separated from unsound and un sanctified Ones, by our Lord Jesus the great Shepherd: Before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he will separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats: And he will set the Sheep at his right Hand, and the Goats on his left Hand.*

Mar. 25.
32, 33.

Secondly, To proceed: Tho I have already clearly opened the Properties or Characters of the Sheep of Christ, in speaking to several Parts of my Text, yet I shall in a summary way, here add some few Particulars further upon this Account, which may serve by way of Trial to all of us.

First, The first distinguishing Character of them is, They hear *Christ's Voice.*

What

What is meant by his Voice, and how they do hear it, we have shewed.

Secondly, Christ's Sheep have passed through a great Change, a glorious, internal and visible Change. They are converted Persons, renewed or regenerated by Divine Grace: They were once like other Men and Women, and had no Sheep-like Nature, (as you have heard) but rather the same filthy, unclean, and brutish Nature of *Swine*, &c. which is in all ungodly Ones.

1. It is a real Change from Nature to Grace; 'tis not a seeming, a nominal, or notional, but a true and real Change; they have a new Heart, a new Spirit, a new Nature created in them; they are become new Creatures: all real Operations of the Spirit suppose some real Form; a real Habit is infused, from whence they act, which works in them a ready Inclination, Disposition, and sweet Propensity to do that which is truly and spiritually Good.

2. And this is common to all the Sheep of Jesus Christ; in this respect they are all alike, having all obtained the same precious Faith, as to the Quality of it: As all *Wolves* have the Nature of *Wolves*, and all *Swine* the Nature of *Swine*, and all Sheep have the Nature of Sheep; so all the Saints and Children of God have the Nature of Saints; all Believers and Sheep of Jesus Christ have one holy Nature.

3. It is a Nature and Disposition quite contrary to that which was in them formerly: 'Tis a mighty Change, as when a *Wolf* is made a *Lamb*, the "*Wolfish* Nature (as one observes) is lost, and "*the Lamb-like* Nature is introduced. By Corruption Man was "*Carnal and Brutish*, but by the new Creation he is Spiritual and "*Divine*; by Corruption he hath the Image of the Devil, by this "*he is restored to the Image of God*; by that he had the Seeds of "*all Villanies*, by this the Seed of all Graces. He was an Enemy to God, nay, had Enmity in his Heart against God; but now he loves God, loves Christ, loves Holiness, loves the Ways of God, and People of God.

4. It is an universal Change, a Change of the whole Heart; as when a Child is formed in the Womb. it hath all the Parts, Nature doth not fashion one Part and leave another imperfect: So the Holy Spirit forms every Part of the new Creature in the Soul of the Regenerate. This Habit is but one, 'tis an intire Rectitude in all the Faculties, and an universal Principle of inclin-
ing and disposing to that which is good and well-pleasing to God: there is a Divine Light in the *Understanding*, by which the Soul

Charnock.

sees God to be its chief Good, and owns and looks upon him as such. There is a Change in the Will, that consents and chuses God as such; there is a Change in the Affections. There is no true Draught of the Image of God in us, unless there be a Rectitude of Affection and Disposition: There is therefore a conformity of Affections to God, they love God, and love as God loves, and hate as God hateth; they hate Evil, because of that inward Filthiness that is in it, and love Grace and Vertue, because of its pure and native Beauty and Excellency: therefore it is from hence the Soul comes to take delight in God.

5. It changes not the Heart only, but the whole Life also; *The Gal. 2.20. Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* Such live no longer to themselves, but to God; their Tongues speak for God, their Ears hear for God, their Hands work for God; their Actions are Holy, Just and Good. There is a Change of Company also, a Change of Labour, of Endeavour; and their whole End, Aim and Design, is to glorify God: Heavenly Things are preferred by them before earthly Things; they chiefly seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness. They do not pursue the World as they did, nor fashion themselves according to the former Lusts and the Course of this World; nor pray as they did, nor hear as they did, nor give Alms as they did: No, no, they do all things from another Principle, from another End, and with other Zeal, Endeavours, and Diligence.

Thirdly, Christ's Sheep will feed in Christ's Pasture, in their own Pasture, where they are put by him; not but that they may, for good Reasons, be removed into another Pasture, but they will not (unless under strong Temptation) break down the Hedg or Fold where they were put, and run away; No, no, but are contented with that Food, that Pasture God affords them, though there may be some more Fat and Rich than theirs. Some Sheep when they grow wanton, are unruly, and will break into other Mens Ground; so there are some Professors, some Church-members that rend themselves away from their own Flock and Fold, in a disorderly manner; "Which (as a Reverend Minister shews) is an
 " abominable Evil, and a shame to them: this destroys the Rela-
 " tion of Pastor and People, for what may be done by one Indi-
 " vidual, may be done by all; and (saith he) what Liberty be-
 " longs to the Sheep, belongs also to that particular Shepherd who
 " has the Charge of them much more; it is a breaking Covenant
 " with

“ with Christ and the Congregation, and therefore a great Im-
 “ morality : 'tis a Schism, if there be any such thing in the
 “ World ; it is a despising the Government of the Church ; and
 “ there is as much reason a Person should come in when he pleases,
 “ without asking Consent, as to depart when he pleases : It is al-
 “ so very evil and unkind in another Church to receive such a
 “ One, as not doing as they would be dealt with. Such a Pra-
 “ ctice can issue in nothing but in the Breach and Confusion of
 “ all particular Churches : It tends (saith he) to *Anarchy*, put-
 “ ting an Arbitrary Power in every Member, and breaks all Bonds
 “ of Love, and raiseth the greatest Animolities between Brethren
 “ and Churches. The truth is, how can another Shepherd justi-
 fy such an Act to the great Shepherd of the Sheep ; I mean, to
 take into his Fold his Neighbour's Sheep, without Christ's Order
 and Authority ?

Fourthly, Christ's Sheep will, and do follow him ; and this our *Christ's*
 Blessed Saviour lays down as an undoubted Character of all that *Sheep do*
 are his. *follow him.*

They follow his Example, his Steps. The good Shepherd
when he putteth forth his own Sheep, he goeth before them, and the Joh. 10.4.
Sheep follow him. Jesus Christ hath gone before his Sheep in his
 Obedience to the Father, *leaving us an Example that we should fol-* 2 Pet. 2.
low his Steps. 21.

1. They follow his Steps in Humility : He bids us to learn of
 him upon this Account ; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in* Mat. 11.
Heart. How did Christ deny himself ? in taking our Nature upon 29.
 him : In this ought his Sheep to follow him ; *Let the same Mind be* Phil. 2. 5.
in you which was also in Christ Jesus. O let the same humble Spirit,
 and self-denying Temper be in you, which was in him ; *Who being*
in the Form of God, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, and
made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the Form of a Ser-
vant, &c. Saints are, or ought to be, of a humble Frame, having
 mutual Love, and a condescending Spirit, even to them that are
 in the lowest and meanest Condition, bearing with the Weak,
 and not exalting themselves, nor offending one another in any
 thing that is indifferent in its own Nature : *I become all things to all,*
that I might gain some.

2. Christ's Sheep do follow him in Love, and bowels of Com-
 passion : *Be ye followers of God, as dear Children ; and walk in love,* Eph. 5. 1,
as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. By this 2.

all Men may know we are his Disciples, even when we have this Mark of his Sheep, namely, that we love one another. Husbands are exhorted to love their Wives, as Christ also loved his Church, and gave himself for it; even with a sincere, pure, ardent and constant Affection. And thus ought all Christians to love each other also, being united as Brethren together, and Members of the same Body of which Christ is the Head. *He that loveth not his Brother, is in Darkness*, he is none of Christ's Sheep. *He that saith he abideth in the Light, ought also to walk even as he walked, and love as he loved.*

3. They follow him in Holiness. *But as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation: Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* God the Father is holy, and Christ is holy: He was *holy, harmless, and undefiled, separated from Sinners.* Therefore in this we should follow him in the whole Course of our Lives, and in the several parts of our Conversations. All those who are his Sheep, they are such who are sanctified Persons, who laying aside all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, (they go on) *perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.*

4. They follow the Example of Christ, their holy Shepherd, in Obedience. *Though he was a Son, yet learned he Obedience by the things he suffered: And being made perfect, he became the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.* Christ's Meat and Drink was to do the Will of him that sent him; and thus we ought to follow him; it ought to be our Joy, our Delight, to do his Will, and attend on his Work: And this Mark have all Christ's Sheep, *i. e.* they keep Christ's Word; If a Man love me, he will keep my Word. And again, *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:* Not he that hath the knowledge of them; it is possible Men may have Christ's Commandments in their Heads, and in their Mouths, may know which they are, but they may not do them: It is he that doth his Word, that doth his Sayings; that keepeth his Commandments, that loves him; *Ye are my Friends, if you do whatsoever I command you.* This is a Mark of Christ's Sheep, of one of Christ's Friends, or of a sincere Christian and follower of him: He will be obedient to Christ, not in some things only, but in every thing that he requires or enjoins him to do in his Word.

5. They follow Christ in the hardest things, in such things that seem grievous to the Flesh. Like as *Abraham*, when he was commanded to offer up *his Son, his only Son, his only Son Isaac* whom

he loved, went presently about it, he made no pause, did not consult with Flesh and Blood : *And Abraham rose up early in the Morning, &c.* with an intention to do this hard Work. And now saith the Lord, *I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.* God knew it before, tho he speaks here after the manner of Men : but he would have *Abraham* to know it, and all Men to know that this is a Mark of one that feareth him, that loveth him, *viz.* he will do any thing God requires of him, even sacrifice up all that is near and dear to him, when called for. O see how obedient Christ was to the Father ; *The Lord God 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.* This was hard Work, yet Christ readily passed through it ; *He became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross,* the worst of Deaths, exceeding ten thousand Deaths, considering what he felt and did undergo for us.

6. They follow Christ whithersoever he goeth. Some will not do this ; they may go a great way after the Lord Jesus, but then make a halt, and give over following of him. Some are like *Orpah*, who kissed her Mother-in-Law, and departed from her, but *Ruth* clave unto her. Even so such who are sincere Christians, they keep following of Christ, when others leave him and cleave to the World, to their Lusts, to their cursed Idolatry ; but these say to Jesus Christ, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following of thee ; for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : Thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God.* Those that are wise Virgins, or the Sheep of Christ, the Holy Ghost gives us their Character ; *These are they which were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins ; these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, &c.* They will not follow God and *Baal*, Christ and Antichrist ; receive Christ's Institutions, and *Rome's* vile Idolatry and Superstitions ; or follow some Precepts of Christ, and reject others : No, no, they follow him in all his holy Laws, keeping close in all things to the Rules of his Worship, both in Doctrine, Discipline, and Conversation ; in all Duties of Religion, both Natural and Supernatural, whether towards God, or towards Men. They are like unto *Joshua* and *Caleb*, they follow Christ fully ; *But my Servant Caleb, because he had another Spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the good Land, and his Seed shall possess it.* He followed God when others forsook

Verse 12.

Isa. 50. 5,
6.Ruth 1. 14,
15, 16.

Rev. 14. 4.

Num. 14.
24.

forsook him, being not acted by that evil Spirit of Cowardice, slavish Fear and Unbelief which ruled in others, but was a Man of another Temper, *i. e.* Courageous, Faithful, Obedient; as it is said of the Righteous, he was *bold as a Lion*; and universally, thro' all Difficulties, Deaths and Dangers, followed God: And thus do all the true Sheep of Christ follow him.

7. They follow Christ in sincerity, not for Loaves, &c.

8. They follow Christ constantly to the End, and faint not. We read of some that followed our Blessed Saviour for some time, Joh. 6. 56. but then they were offended at his Doctrine; *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* This shewed they were not his Sheep or Disciples indeed, for these returned no more; they, it is evident, drew back to Perdition. A godly Man may, under a Temptation, seem to faint and draw back, as Peter did, but he returns by Repentance and follows Christ again. Heb. 10. 39. *We are not (saith Paul) of them who draw back unto Perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the Soul.* The Sheep of Christ hold on their way, they having clean Hands, grow stronger and stronger, they can never perish; therefore shall follow Christ always, or persevere in well-doing to the End of their Days. The good Ground brought forth Fruit unto Eternal Life: such who fall away were not sincere and honest-hearted Ones, but are either like Mat. 13. the stony or thorny-ground Hearers.

Christ's Sheep have his Mark on them. *Ezek. 9. 4.* *Fifibly,* Christ's Sheep have his Character by which they are known. Men mark their Sheep so; we read in the Revelations, that the Ser-vants of God were sealed; they were marked in their right Hands, and in their Foreheads, &c. God gave a Charge of old, to set a Mark upon the Men that sigh'd and mourn'd for all the Abomi-nations that were committed in the Land. Merchants, and others, commonly set a Mark upon their Goods, by which they lay claim to them, and know them: So Christ sets his Mark, his Seal, upon all his Saints. By their Father's Mark on their right Hand, some understand the Heart: A Mark in the Hand is a secret Mark.

1. No doubt the Mark of Christ's Sheep, is the Mark of Rege-neration, or that holy Image of God which is stamp'd upon them all, as I hinted at first: And if Christ sees not this Mark on the Soul, he will not own that Man or Woman actually to be his.

2. The Holy Spirit is expressly called the Seal with which every true Believer is sealed: *Also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise. Which is the Earnest of our Inheritance,* until

until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the praise of his Glory. And again he saith, Grieve not the holy Spirit, by which you are sealed unto the Day of Redemption. Whosoever hath the Spirit of Christ in them, or hath received the saving Graces thereof, are Christ's Sheep, they have his Mark; these he will own, and say, (where ever he find this Seal) this Man and this Woman is mine. And on the other hand; Now if any Man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; he is none of his Sheep, he hath no special Interest in him. Remember the Spirit of Christ, true Grace, Faith, Love, Humility, &c. is the Ear-mark of Christ's Sheep.

Eph. 4. 30.

Rom. 8. 9.

3. And why may not inward Sincerity be Christ's Mark also? for that I am sure does distinguish them from all others, from Hypocrites, and all unsound and false-hearted Professors whatsoever.

2dly, *The Mark in their Foreheads* is seen by all; that may denote their holy Carriage, Behaviour, and Deportment in this World, to all that behold them.

1. It may shew that they hate Idolatry, and all false Worship.

2. It may signify their holy Conversation; for Holiness is written, as it were, in legible Characters, on all their Foreheads: There is not one of Christ's Sheep without this Mark; for *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*. This shews who they are, and whither they are going, and to what Country they do belong.

Heb. 12. 14.

Sixthly, Christ's Sheep follow the Footsteps of the Flock, *i. e.* Christ's the Primitive Church, in Church-Constitution, Doctrine and Discipline. They contend for that Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, and keep the Ordinances as they were at first given forth; they are for no mixture in Doctrine nor Discipline; be sure before all things, they keep pure the Doctrine of Justification, and do not join Work and Grace together: Their great care is to exalt the free Grace of God, and abase the Creature, accounting all their own inherent Righteousness as Dung, or Dogs-meat, in comparison of Christ, and the Righteousness of Christ.

Christ's Sheep follow the Footsteps of the Flock. Jude 3. 1 Cor. 11. 2. Phil. 3. 8. 9.

Seventhly, They love to drink in pure Christal, soft and gentle Streams. Sheep do not love to drink of muddy, rough and raging Rivers: No more do Christ's Sheep; *He makes me to lie down in green Pastures; he leadeth me beside the still Waters*. They will not

Psal. 23. 2, 3.

for sake.

for sake the Waters of Shiloah that run softly, and drink of the proud, swelling, and troublesome Rivers of Babylon, Tygris, and Euphrates. They like the Teachings of God's Spirit in the meanest Instrument, tho' such who are despised, and contemned of Men, better than the highest Elegance, and loftiest Rhetorick of all the Cicero's and Plato's of the World. What are the artificial Flourishes of Demosthenes, or exact Method of Aristotle and Galen, or all humane Curiosities or itch of Words, to the Teachings of the Holy Ghost? Paul spoke not in the Wisdom of this World, or with the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in the Demonstration of the Spirit, and with Power. These Waters Believers chuse and love to drink of. I am afraid some Men are more nice in studying Words than Matter, to affect the Ear rather than to work upon the Heart of their Hearers. Though Humane Learning is not to be despised, yet no doubt Dr. Carlton was in the right, "That a Lay-man that has
" the Spirit of God, is better able to judg of spiritual Things,
" than a Man in Ecclesiastical Function, destitute of the Spirit of
" God. *Infelix est sapientia extra Verbum Dei sapere*, saith *Justin Martyr*.

1 Cor. 2.
4.

Our Annotators say well, viz. " 1. Ministers ought to speak
" Intelligibly, so as the People may understand.
" 2. That they speak gravely and decently; all other study of
" Words and Phrases in a Divine, (say they) is but Folly and
" Vanity.

Christ's Sheep trust in the Faithfulness of their Shepherd.
Eighthly, and Lastly, Christ's Sheep do relie upon the Care and Faithfulness of their Shepherd. They know on whom they have believed, and can and do venture their Souls on him, knowing he will keep that which they have committed to his Charge: They depend on Christ, rest on Christ, believe in Christ, relie on his Word and Promises for all things they need: They can say with *David*, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want*, neither any thing for this Life, which is really necessary, nor for the Life which is to come: They leave the Almighty to chuse for them, knowing they are not competent Judges, as touching what is best for themselves: *Though he slay me*, (saith *Job*) *yet will I trust in him*; Let God do what he will with me, yet I will rest upon him; my hope shall be in him, and I will not be offended if I have Poverty, Sickness, Persecution, Reproaches, or whatsoever else: I know, saith a true Christian, God sees it good for me, and I will not murmur nor complain.

Psal. 23.1,
2.

Job 13.
15.

APPLICATION.

1. We may infer from hence, that Christ hath but a few Sheep, but a few Followers: O what a small Number have these Characters upon them!

2. It may be for Lamentation. *Cyprian* brings in the Devil triumphing over Jesus Christ, after this sort: "As for my Followers, I never died for them as Christ did for his; I never promised them so great Rewards as Christ hath done to his, and yet I have more Followers than he, and they do more for me than his do for him.

O how blind and deceived are poor Sinners, that they chuse to follow Satan rather Jesus Christ! What a great Multitude hath the Devil! his Flock is a mighty Flock, Christ's Flock is a little Flock: *Fear not, little Flock, it is your Father's good* Luke 12. *Pleasure to give you a Kingdom.* Every Saint shall have a Kingdom, a Crown; this is Christ's Promise to all his Sheep, and yet how few are they that cleave to him, that believe in him, and follow him!

3. By what you have heard, you may try your selves: O see, have you these Characters, these Marks of Christ's Sheep? certainly if so, you have no cause to doubt but your State is happy; if not, labour for them.

4. The way to be one of Christ's Sheep, is to believe, and to pass under the New Birth.

JOHN X. 27.

My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Serm. V.

THE last Day I shewed you who are the Sheep of Jesus Christ, by giving you the several Characters and Marks of them.

Sixthly, I shall now proceed to the last General Head, *viz.*

1. Shew you, What a kind of Shepherd Christ is.
2. What those Pastures are where he feeds them.
3. What a Fold he hath for his Sheep.

Christ a chosen Shepherd.

Isa. 43. 10.

Isa. 42. 1.

First. Jesus Christ is a chosen Shepherd. No Man hath a right to be a Shepherd, but he that is first chosen by the Owner of the Sheep. Christ is called the Elect of God; *My Servant whom I have chosen.* Again, *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth.* He was fore-ordained, in the Decree, Design and Purpose of God, to be our Redeemer; and as a Shepherd, to take care of, feed, heal, nay, to die for the Sheep.

A called Shepherd.

Heb. 5. 4.

Secondly. And as he was chosen, so he was called also to this Work and Office. For as the Apostle speaks concerning Christ's Priesthood, or touching that Office, so I may say of this, *No Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* He did not intrude himself upon this Service, but he had a lawful Call unto it; the Father called him, and sent him into the World, to keep, feed, and save his Sheep. This shews the wonderful Love of the Father, he is the first and principal Author of our Salvation: *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ.* All the spiritual Blessings we have by Christ, spring from the Father; the Father is held forth as the first Cause, first Mover and Contriver of all spiritual Mercies for us: The Father also fitted and qualified him, or put him into a Capacity to accomplish this Work and Office; he prepared him a Body, that so he might die for his Sheep.

2. Cor. 5. 18.

➤ *Thirdly.* Jesus Christ is a kind, loving and compassionate Shepherd. What Shepherd ever loved his Sheep as Christ loved his? The greatness of his Love, bowels of Affection and Compassion, appears, *Christ a compassionate Shepherd.*

1. By his coming so far (as 'tis 'from Heaven to the Earth) to seek them; *For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.* Mar. 18. Luke reads it, *To seek and to save that which was lost.* My People have been lost Sheep, Jer. 50. 6. 11. Luk. 19. 10.

(1.) We were all lost in the first Adam, not one Sheep but was lost; and had not Christ came to seek and save us, we had been all lost for ever.

(2.) We were all lost, not only by Original, but also by our own actual Sin: *All we like Sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one of us to his own evil way.* We were all gone out of the way, gone far from God, and without all hope or possibility of returning, had not Christ came to seek us; *For we were all as Sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls.* I Pet. 2. Isa. 53. 6.

(3.) They also, by the Grace of God, at length came to see that they were lost; they are lost in themselves, and in their own sight. *Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, Go not in the way of the Gentiles, &c. but go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* The whole House of Israel was lost, but there were but a few of them that saw their lost State. Mar. 10. 5.

2. The Bowels and Compassion of Christ to his Sheep, chiefly appears by his dying for them. He laid down his Life for the Sheep; none could shew greater Love than this: *As the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my Life for the Sheep.* John 10. 15.

3. His great Love and Affection to his Sheep, is manifested by his care to gather them; *He shall gather the Lambs with his Arms, and carry them in his Bosom.* Gathering implies, bringing them Home unto himself by the Arm of his Power, or by the effectual Operation of his Word and Spirit. *To whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed?* Or, who hath felt and experienced the powerful Influences of his Spirit, and saving Grace thereof, on their Souls? This must be before any poor Sinners are gathered or brought home to God. Jesus Christ must rescue them out of the Mouth of the Lion, and Paw of the Bear, as David did his Sheep, who was a Type of him. We were all once in Satan's Hand; that hungry Lion had us in his Teeth, and was going to tear us I Sam. 17. 34. 35.

to pieces, but then comes our Blessed Shepherd and delivers us. None but he whose Power is Infinite could gather us, or bring us home to God, such a miserable State were we in.

4. Christ's Love is further expressed, by that affecting Metaphor, *Luke 15. 6.* He goes after the lost Sheep, leaveth the rest in the Wilderness, and never gives over until he hath found it; *And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his Shoulder, rejoicing.* O my Friends, how great is the Love of Christ to one poor, lost, and undone Sinner? He will not lose one that his Father hath given him: No, no, though it be but one individual Soul that is missing, yet he will go after that, seek that, leave all the rest to look after that one poor Sheep; and when he has found it, he sees it cannot go, it has no strength, therefore he lays it upon his Shoulders. Sinners, Christ must lay hold of you, and take you up, and lay you on his Shoulders, and carry you home if ever you are saved. It is upon Christ's Shoulders, Christ's Power, that every Elect Soul is brought home; 'tis not on the Power of their Will, their Strength, their Faith; no, but on Christ's Shoulders. Moreover, it is said, *He rejoiced,* and calls upon all his Friends (the blessed Verse 7. Angels and Saints) to rejoice with him, *for I have found my lost Sheep.* This shews his wonderful Love to poor, undone, and lost Sinners that are his Sheep, whatever it costs him, whatever Pains, Labour, or Charge, home he will bring them, saved they must and shall be. *I have other Sheep (saith he) that are not of this Fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my Voice.*

John 10.
16.

5. His Love to his Sheep, to his Saints, also appears in *his laying them in his Bosom,* in his Heart. O how near and dear is every believing Soul to Jesus Christ! It's a Metaphor taken from a Father or tender Mother, that hugs an only Child in his or her Arms, and lays it in their Bosom, knowing not how to express the Greatness of their Affections. Christ himself is said to *lie in the Bosom of the Father;* which denotes how he is beloved by him, how near and dear he is to him: Even so this discovers his great Affections to his People.

6. He also makes his Love manifest to them, by his gentle leading *Isa. 40. 11.* of them: *He shall gently lead them that are with young.* He will not lead them faster than they are able to go, or lay more upon them than they can bear; nay, he gives Strength to them, and supports their Souls under all their Troubles and Sorrows. *Jacob* was a compassionate Shepherd; *If I over-drive them, (saith he) all the Gen. 33. 13. Flock will die.* Christ had many things to tell his Disciples, but they

they were not able to bear them : He lets out or discovers his precious Truth to his People, according as he knows they are able to receive it and take it in : You shall not have harder Things, Trials, Temptations nor Afflictions, than your strength is. *There is faithfulness, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* 1 Cor. 10.

7. His infinite Love and Bowels are made known also to his Sheep by his feeding them, as well as it is by his leading them. He feeds them with choice Food, he gives them his own Flesh to eat, and his own precious Blood to drink, knowing that except he doth this, they must perish for ever : This was that strange Doctrine in the Eyes of the Jews, which they could not receive nor understand.

8. Also by his healing of his Sheep with his own Stripes. *But 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.* What Shepherd ever thus loved his Sheep, even to be wounded and bruised for them, to heal them of their Wounds with his own Stripes? But this Jesus Christ doth.

9. By this washing them also in the same precious Blood : Nothing could purge away the Filth and Guilt of our polluted Souls, but Christ's Blood; and if he wash us not, we have no part with him : *He hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood.* This Love is wonderful Love, amazing Love, exceeding all Love. Rev. 1. 3. O in what a Stream, in what a Fountain are the Sheep of Christ washed ! Think upon it, our Pollution was great, but Christ hath washed us. God sent his Son to take away our Sin, and it must be done this way ; *It is the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son that cleanses us from all Sin.* 1 John 1. 7.

Fourthly. Jesus Christ is the good Shepherd. *I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his Life for the Sheep.* Our Lord Jesus shews in this that he excels all Shepherds : Some Shepherds have ventured their Lives, hazarded their Lives for their Sheep; yet it was more than was required of them, for the Life of a Man is much more valuable than the Life of a Beast : But no doubt our Saviour refers to his great Work and Office as Mediator, and as the *Messiah* that was to come, who was to be cut off, not for himself, for his own Sins, but for the Sins of the Elect, or die for his Sheep : It was required of him, the Father gave him John 10. 11. Dan. 9. 26. com-

commandment to lay down his Life; and he did it actually, freely, willingly; nay, he came on purpose into this World to do it, and therefore he is the good Shepherd.

Jesus Christ a wise Shepherd. *Fifthly.* Jesus Christ is a Wise Shepherd, a knowing Shepherd; *I know my Sheep:* this I have already spoken to.

1. He knows and sees all his Sheep at once, with one look of his Eye, in all the Nations of the Earth, let them dwell where they will, though never so far asunder or remote.

2. He is so wise, that he knows in what Condition they are, and what Condition is best for them; whether Poverty or Riches, Sicknefs or Health, Liberty or Bonds, Peace or Trouble, Honour or Disgrace, Strength or Weakness, either a fat or a lean Pasture, Loss or Gain, Cold or Heat, whether a North or a South Wind.

3. He is wise to protect us, wise to conduct us, to feed us, wise to fold us, wise to heal us, and wise to save us.

Christ is a great Shepherd. *Sixthly.* Christ is the chief and great Shepherd of the Sheep. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory.* And again, the Holy Ghost calls him in another place,

I Pet. 5. 4. Heb. 13. 20. the great Shepherd: *Now the God of Peace, that brought from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, &c.*

Jesus Christ may be called the chief and great Shepherd.

1. Because he entered into Covenant with the Father, as the great Surety of all the Sheep; by which he came under a legal Obligation to pay the just Debts, and to answer for the Defaults of all his Elect: And then and thereby he undertook to bring in and gather all the Sheep to God by the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant; by which Transaction he made our Peace, and reconciled us unto the Father.

2. Because he actually bought all the Sheep, in pursuit of the said glorious Covenant-Transactions, by the Price of his own Blood, that so he might unite them all unto himself in one Body.

3. He may be called the chief and great Shepherd, because all the Sheep, or Elect of God, are given into his Hand, to keep, take care of, feed, heel, protect and preserve to Eternal Life. And this great Work and Office he hath undertaken, and doth and will perform with all Faithfulness, being every ways fitted, endeared and qualified, as Mediator and universal Shepherd and Head, to discharge it.

4. Because 'tis he that calls them, that justifies them, that sanctifies them, and presents them all faultless and without Spot before the Father.

5. Because he is exalted in Glory and Dignity, not only as the Head, Lord, and Sovereign of all the Sheep, but also as the Prince of all Pastors and subordinate Shepherds that ever were, are, or shall be; from whom they all receive their Power and Authority as his Deputies, to take care of and watch over each part and parcel of his Flock committed to their respective Charge. Jesus Christ is not only above all Shepherds, all Ministers, but they do all in his Name, and must at the last Day be accountable to him for their Administrations.

6. He is the great Shepherd of the Sheep, a mighty Shepherd, if we consider the greatness of the Flock, which he hath not only received the Care and Charge of, but they are all his own Sheep. If a Shepherd had under his Care 100000 Sheep, and all his own, would not every body call him a great Shepherd? Now though Christ's Flock is called a little Flock comparatively, yet the Number of all his Sheep, all his Elect, is very great: we read of *ten thousands of his Saints*, and a Number that no Man can number, they are all his; and therefore a great Shepherd.

7. He is great in Riches, having a multitude of rich and choice Pastors, enough to feed Millions of Sheep here on Earth: And though his Flock will encrease e're long, when the *Fulness of the Gentiles shall come in*, and his antient Flock, I mean, the *Seed of Abraham* now scattered, be gathered, and all brought into one Fold, yet he hath Pastures for them all. Moreover, he hath prepared a glorious and rich Fold for them Above, which is Heaven it self, that is the Fold into which all his Flock shall be put for ever and ever.

8. Lastly, He is great in Power: No Shepherd hath such Power to defend, protect, preserve and save his Flock like to him. None are able to pluck one Sheep out of his Hand, as I shall prove and demonstrate when I come to speak to the next part of my Text. Another Shepherd, for want of Power, may lose his Sheep, the *Wolf* or *Lion* may come and tear them in pieces, and rob him of them: But no Enemy, neither Sin nor Satan, nor the World, can rend his Sheep from him; he hath Power over all Adversaries, and can subdue them with much ease at his Pleasure; therefore he is the great Shepherd.

Christ a watchful Shepherd.
 Luke 2. 8. *Seventhly.* Jesus Christ is a watchful Shepherd. This is one Property of a good Shepherd: *And there were Shepherds in the Field watching over their Flock by night, &c.*

Christ knows his Sheep are subject to sleep, and so lie open to many Dangers, therefore he watches over them. He is always awake; he that keeps *Israel*, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; *Pfal. 121. He will not suffer thy Foot to be removed: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy Keeper, thy Shade upon thy right Hand.* The Sheep of Christ are in danger by Sin, by Satan, by Temptation, by Wolves, by a deceitful Heart, by inward Corruption, by false and self-seeking Teachers, whose Design is to make a Prey of his Flock; therefore he watches them like a Vineyard of red Wine: *Isa. 27. 3. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it Night and Day.* I will, as if he should say, protect my Church, my Vineyard, my Flock, from all Assaults of its Enemies; neither Men, nor Devils shall spoil, ruin, or hurt my People.

And that he may secure his Flock,

1. He discovers by his Word, the Subtilty, Craft and Devices of their Enemies, and their Danger thereby.
2. By his Spirit also, through its quickning Operations, he awakens them when their Enemies are upon them; and that shews he is a watchful and a wakeful Shepherd.
3. He also by his Providences shews he is awake, and strives to awaken his People also.

And this he doth several manner of ways.

1. By Wars, Perplexities, and Distress of Nations.
2. By Famine and Pestilence.
3. By strange Signs, Prodigies, and fearful Earthquakes in divers Places.
4. By the awakning Providence of sudden and unusual Deaths, snatching away one Man here, and another there, to keep the rest awake.
5. By letting out Symptoms of his Displeasure, by distressing the Consciences of some, by fearful Horror and Desperation; as in *Spira* and *Child's* Cases; to awaken others, and to deter them from like Evils.
6. He also employs his Ministers to rouse them up; they, as his Substitutes, are made Watchmen, to give his People, his Saints, his Flock, warning of approaching Dangers.

2dly. Christ knows that his Flock is not only subject to sleep, but also to go astray, and therefore he watcheth over them.

1. Because he sees our Enemies watch against us to ensnare, to catch, and to ruin us; *Deliver thy self as a Roe from the Hand of the Hunter, and as a Bird from the Hand of the Fowler.* Prov. 6.

Satan is a subtil Fowler, a crafty Enemy; and is also clothed with great Power. He is compared to a Serpent, to shew his Subtily; and to a Lion, which denotes his Strength and devouring Nature.

2. Jesus Christ watches his Sheep, that he may give them those Mercies they need in the proper season of them: He knows when and how to give us that Good he himself hath promised. Sometimes he watches over his People, to chasten, to afflict and punish them with the Rod, when he sees there is need of it: He lets out his Dog, (as I may so say, like as a Shepherd doth upon unruly Sheep) when his Calls will not do, will not reclaim them and reduce them to an orderly and diligent walk. But then at another time, he watches over them, to bestow his Favours and Blessing upon them: *And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to overthrow, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord.* Jer. 31.28. Though there is no Change in God, but he doth all things according to the Counsel of his own Will and Eternal Purpose, yet there is a Change of his providential Dispensations. God here speaks after the manner of Men; and as he is diligent to afflict for Disobedience, so he is likewise as diligent upon a Reformation, to distribute his Blessings, when he sees it will make for his Glory and his Peoples Good.

Seventhly, and lastly, Christ is a living Shepherd. Other Shepherds die and leave their Sheep, and know not what Evil may befall them after their departure: But Jesus Christ never dies; *I am he that was dead, and am alive; and behold, I live for evermore.* He ever lives to feed, to heal, guide, protect, and save his People; *He ever lives to make Intercession for us.* In this doth the Safety, Happiness and Comfort of Believers lie: Christ is always the same, he changes not; and is such a Shepherd, that his Sheep cannot lose; Death hath no more power over him, Death cannot deprive them of this Shepherd.

Christ is a living Shepherd.
Rev. 1.18.

1. O happy Saints, blessed Sheep: O love your Shepherd, trust in your Shepherd; say with David, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.* Psal. 23.1.

2. Be ruled, led and guided by your Shepherd; and be content with that Pasture into which he hath put you, and with such Commons he is pleased to afford you.

3. How doth this reprehend such who repine, murmur, and are carried away with slavish and distrustful Fear? O what a shame is it to be afraid, when you have such a Friend, such a Keeper, such a Shepherd to protect, feed, and keep you? But to proceed.

What Secondly, What Pastures doth Christ feed his Sheep in? What or which
Christ's Pa- are his Pastures?
stures are.

Christ's First. I answer; His Word, this is one of his Pastures, and a fat
Word one of one it is, yea, a most choice and rich Pasture; here is precious
the Pastures feeding: Some (like David) can relish God's Word, and find it
where his sweeter than Honey; *How sweet are thy Words unto my taste! yea,
Sheep feed. sweeter than Honey to my Mouth.* The Study, Meditation, and O-
Psalm. 119. bedience of God's Word, yields more Satisfaction, Joy and De-
103. light, than any worldly Men find in their earthly Profits or sensual
Pleasures. If you cannot find it thus, it is because you have lost
your spiritual Appetites, you do not hunger after heavenly Food,
nor see the Worth nor Want of it: *Thy Words (saith Jeremiah)
were found, and I did eat them; and thy Word was unto me the joy and
rejoicing of my Heart.*

Jer. 15.
16.

Beloved, there is a two-fold tasting of the Word.

(1.) Some taste it, but digest it not; they have an Apprehension, and bear Reception of it, and no more: The news of a Saviour, and deliverance from Wrath, seems desirable to them; they like the Promises of the Word, and flatter themselves with a false Hope of Pardon, by giving a bare Credit to the Truth of the Gospel in the declaration of it.

(2.) But there is a farther and better tasting than this; a tasting by a special Application, and a saving relishing of the Word of God; and not the promissory Part only, but the preceptory Part thereof also: These like and love the Word, because of the Purity of it. Others have a common, but not a special Faith; the Jews seemed to rejoice in *John's Doctrine*, but did not receive it into their Understanding, and sincerely subject to the Life and Power of it.

John 5.
35.

(1.) The Word of God feeds the Souls of Believers with saving Knowledge, the Doctrine of Free Grace, of Justification, Adoption, Pardon of Sin, and free access to the Father, which shows
it

it to be a fat and blessed Pasture; and thus it feeds their Understanding.

(2.) It feeds and raises their Affections also in Love to Christ, and desire after him, to hear what God is to them, and Christ is to them; what a Covenant is made with Christ for them, what Promises are made to them, what Love the Lord Jesus hath to them, and what Grace is purchased, laid, and treasured up in Christ for them; what Care he hath of them, and what Glory he hath prepared for them.

(3.) They receive the Word, they assent to the Truth of it, and feel also the Power thereof, inclining, bowing and subjecting their Wills to a holy, ready, and hearty Consent thereunto, in a way of universal Obedience to what is required of them.

(4.) It feeds their Faith also, and every Grace of the Spirit in their Souls; it increases their Faith in Christ, and their Love to Christ, whilst they meditate thereon, and believe with an unfeigned Faith the Veracity of God's Word, and apply the Promises and Blessings thereof, which are purchased by Jesus Christ now, is to eat and digest the Word.

Secondly. The Ordinances of Christ may be said to be another Pasture where his Sheep do feed. The Spouse no doubt enquired after this Pasture; *Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest,* &c. where thy Holy Ordinances are truly administered. *Christ's Ordinances a rich Pasture. Cant. 1. 7.*

1. *The Ordinance of Preaching, or Administration of the Gospel, is a rich Pasture,* especially when it is preached powerfully by the Influence and Demonstration of the Spirit; the opening and explaining the Word of the Gospel, is like the opening the Pasture-Gate, and so letting the Sheep into it. *Did not our Hearts burn within us, while he talked with us, and opened the Scriptures?* 'Tis like the opening of the Box of precious Ointment, causing a sweet Perfume in the Soul, like as *Mary's* did in the House. The Work of the Ministry is to open the Scripture; *Understandest thou what thou readest?* saith *Philip.* The Eunuch answered, *How can I, unless some Man should guide me?* He might have added, some skilful Man. Alas, some are unlearned, unexperienced and ignorant Preachers, they know not the Lord themselves, they never learned of the Father, but want the Teachings of the Holy Spirit: They understand not the Scripture, the Holy Bible is a sealed Book to them, notwithstanding all their Humane Literature and Knowledge of the Tongues, with their Arts and Sciences.

The preaching the Gospel, is the feeding of the Soul. But O what care should be taken, that nothing is delivered by the Preacher but sound Doctrine; not to feed the People with airy and empty Notions, corrupt and poisonous Doctrine; for that is to destroy the Sheep, especially such that are weak in Knowledge, and cannot quickly discern Truth from Error.

John 21. 15. They are not to feed the Flock with Humane Traditions, nor with their own Dreams. Simon, *Son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my Sheep*: Not with good Doctrine only, but good Discipline also, and with an holy and good Example: Good Government is precious Food to the Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2. 4. 2. *The Holy Ordinances of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, is another part of this blessed Pasture*: And such are ill Sheep that will not feed where the Shepherd willeth them, or like not a Pasture of his chusing. With what gladness did those Saints at *Jerusalem*, when they received the Word, yield themselves up to Holy Baptism? The *Eunuch* also found that Ordinance (he meeting with Christ in it) very sweet; and therefore when baptized, he went away rejoicing. The Mystery of the Gospel is preached or held forth in a lively Figure in Baptism to the very sight of the natural Eye; which being understood, conveys much Light and Knowledge to the Understanding.

It shews that Christ was dead, buried, and rose again for our Justification.

Tilenus his disput. p. 886, 887. 1st, "Baptism (saith the Learned *Tilenus*) is the first Sacrament of the New Testament, instituted by Christ; in which there is an exact Analogy between the Sign and the Thing signified. "The outward Rite in Baptism is threefold.

" 1. Immersion into the Water.

" 2. Abiding under the Water.

" 3. A Resurrection out of the Water.

Baptism precious Soul-Food.

"The Form of Baptism, (saith he) to wit, External and Essential, is no other than the Analogical Proportion which the Sign keeps with the Thing signified thereby. The plunging into the Water, (saith he) holds forth to us that horrible Gulph of Divine Justice, in which Christ for our sakes, for a while was in a manner swallowed up: abiding under the Water, (how little time soever) denotes his descent into * Hell, even the deepest of Lifelessness: and lying in the sealed or guarded Sepulchre, he was accounted as one dead. Rising out of the Water, holds forth to us in a lively Similitude, that Conquest

" which

“ which this dead Man got over Death. And (saith the same worthy Author) so dipping into the Water, in a most lively
 “ Similitude, sets forth the Mortification of the old Man; and
 “ rising out of the Water, the Vivification of the new Man; it
 “ being meet that we, being baptized into his Death, and buried
 “ with him, should rise also with him, and go on in a new Life.

The Apostle clearly confirms the same great Truths; *Know ye not, Rom. 6. 3.*
that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized 4.

*into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into
 Death, 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.* We have

Fellowship with Christ in his Death in Baptism, or the Efficacy of
 his Death evidenced to us, as the outward Symbol of it is held
 forth in the external Administration of it: For as Christ died for
 Sin, so we are hereby obliged to die to Sin; and as he rose again
 from the Dead, so we ought (as we covenant in this Ordinance)
 to walk in newness of Life. Dr. Cave saith, “ In Immerging there
 “ are in a manner three-fold Acts, *The putting the Person into the
 “ Water, his abiding under the Water, and his rising up again; there-
 “ by representing Christ's Death, Burial, and Resurrection; and our
 “ Conformity thereunto in our dying to Sin, and the destruction
 “ of its Power, and our resurrection to a new course of Life.*

O learn what your Baptism holds forth, and what you are taught
 thereby, and promised therein, and live accordingly. Brethren,
 you will find blessed Food in this Ordinance for your Souls; and if
 you experience the Things signified thereby, happy are you; if
 not, in vain were you baptized.

2dly, *What sweet Food, or how good a Pasture is the Ordinance of The Lord's
 the Lord's Supper, to a hungry Soul who longs after the Bread of Supper pre-
 Life, and Communion with Christ. A Crucified Christ is the cious Soul-
 Bread of Life; and by Faith in this Ordinance we feed on this Food.
 Bread; it feeds and strengthens our Faith, and also our Love to
 the Lord Jesus: Who can forbear to love that Christ, who poured
 forth his precious Blood for us? He was made a Curse for us, by
 hanging on the Tree, and bearing our Sins.*

When you take this Bread, and this Cup, you declare you take
 and accept of Christ as the only Food of your Souls; and that way
 of Salvation God hath been graciously pleased to find out: and
 when you eat the Bread, and drink of the Cup, you shew that
 you feed alone upon him, and that he is your Saviour. Indeed,
 Christ doth in effect say to you, Soul, *take all this*, in token that I
 have

have satisfied the Justice of God for thy Sins, I have made thy Peace; take this Bread, and this Cup as a Pledg of it, and of my Eternal Love to thee, and as a Token that all thy Sins are forgiven, and that thou art mine also. (1.) By this Ordinance we learn, and clearly see, the horrible Evil of Sin, the cursed Nature of Sin, in that nothing could atone for it, nor satisfy the Law and Justice of God, but the precious Blood of the Son of God himself. (2.) Here likewise we see that infinite Love of the Father, in giving of Christ to die for us; *He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* (3.) Here also we perceive the wonderful Love of Jesus Christ, who willingly laid down his Life for us. (4.) Moreover, here we see how we come to be saved, or the Way of Life; and that it is only by a Sacrifice, and that by the Sacrifice of Christ himself alone. (5.) Here we see our near Union with Christ, and blessed Union one with another, as the Bread and Wine is turned into Nourishment; the first is held forth: and as many Corns of Wheat do make one Loaf, so we being many Members, are but one Body; and therein the latter Union is held forth also, I mean, our Union one with another.

Prayer a
rich Soul-
Pasture.

Jam. 4. 3.

Thirdly. The Ordinance of Prayer, is also as a Pasture for Christ's Sheep to feed in. If we pray in Faith, we receive what we desire and stand in need of: That Soul that goes to God in Christ's Name believingly, never comes away empty handed. *We have not, because we ask not;* or else ask amiss, *that we may consume it on our Lusts,* to please the Flesh, and gratify our Carnal Appetites, and so an evil End spoils good Means: So long (said a good Woman in distress) as I have a praying Heart, God will have a helping Hand. It argues we have not hungry Souls, if we have not praying Souls. You may as well live without eating, as spiritually live without praying; and as it is a sign you are not well when you cannot eat, so it is a sign your Souls are not well when you cannot pray: And as it is a sign the Body is faint, when the Breath is short, or breaths not freely, so it is a sign of a faint and languishing Christian, when his Prayers are short, or prays not freely. He that believes savingly, will pray fervently. He that thrives not in this Pasture, will thrive in none. As he cannot live naturally that breaths not, no more can that Soul live spiritually that prays not. He that casts off Prayer, casts off God. No wonder God withholds Mercies from us, when we restrain Prayer from

from him. Pure Prayer is only pleasing to a pure God : our Prayers must be directed to the right Object ; *O thou that hearest Prayer, to thee shall all Men come.* Psal. 65-2. We must always direct our Prayers to God, but must not forget to come unto him by Jesus Christ ; and we must see to the Matter of it, as well as the Object : If we ask not that which is lawful, our Prayers must needs be unlawful ; as it is a Sin to do any thing God commands not, so it is a Sin to ask any thing God allows not.

We must also be right in the Manner, as well as in the Matter of our Prayer : When our Spirit prays not, our Hand receives not.

And we must, if we would thrive in this Pasture, also see that our End be right : Our great End should be, that our Prayer may be accepted, and God may be glorified.

The first thing we should ask in Prayer is, that the Name of God may be hallowed.

O Soul, haste into this Pasture : *Whatsoever ye ask, saith Christ, John 14-13. in my Name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified.*

To pray in Christ's Name,

1. Is to know we come to have this Privilege to draw near to God, only by Christ, *i. e.* through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh ; he hath purchased us this Liberty.

2. 'Tis to pray in his Strength, *i. e.* by the Spirit, which he hath procured for us, and given to us.

3. 'Tis to pray in the Virtue of Christ's Mediation : Whatsoever we ask on Earth, Christ obtains for us in Heaven.

4. To ask in Christ's Name, is to ask for his Sake, for his Worthiness : 'Tis not what our Deservings are, but what Christ's Merits are.

Fourthly. The Promises of God are another Pasture, where the Sheep of Christ do daily feed. The Promises of God are of a Soul-fastening, and Soul-strengthening Nature : But there is no feeding here, without believing. A Sheep may as well feed on Grass, without Teeth, as a Christian can feed on the Promises without Faith. The Reason why the Soul cannot get into this rich Common, or rather fat Meadow, is, because he cannot get over the Slough of Unbelief. *Man lives not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the Mouth of God.* He can feed his People, and support them by a Word of Promise, when their Bread faileth. Nor must we take unlawful Means to supply our Necessities, nor distrust the. The Promises are a rich Pasture for Christ's Sheep. Mat. 4-4-

the Care and Providence of God, tho we do not see which way we shall subsist : *Trust in the Lord, and do good, so thou shalt dwell in the Land, and verily thou shalt be fed.* We must depend upon the Providence and Promise of God, for Supplies both of Body and Soul : *The young Lions lack, and suffer Hunger ; yet they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.* We must let God judg and chuse for us ; 'tis better for us sometimes to want, than to abound : There are Promises (as I have sometimes shewed you) that answer every Condition we can be in.

The Providences of God, and the Saints Experiences, a Soul-fatning Pasture. *Fifthly. The Providences of God, and the Saints Experience, are another Pasture for Christ's Sheep.* How oft have they been fed this way ? *I have been young, and now am old ; yet have I not seen the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging Bread.* This was more especially *David's* Experience, and under that Dispensation, when the Promises of God were of temporal Blessings ; ours under the Gospel are better : Or else take it thus, *Not begging in vain.* If they are such Children that walk in the Steps of their godly Parents, or not so begging as to be forsaken, it cannot intend any kind of asking, or begging ; for *David* himself desired and received Relief from others. Nothing doth more clearly relieve and feed our Souls under Trouble and Distress, than those Experiences we have formerly had of God's special Providence and Goodness to us, or how he helped his People in their Extremities in the days of old. *O my God, my Soul is cast down within me ; therefore I will remember thee from the Land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the Hill Mizar.* He would call to mind how God had helped him formerly, when pursued by *Saul*, or distressed by *Abalom* ; and the way his drooping Spirits were revived. *He that delivered me (saith he) from the Paw of the Bear, and Paw of the Lion, will deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine.* All Power is given into Christ's Hand, he is the great disposer of all things ; therefore be sure he will order every thing for the Good of his Church. If not a Hair of our Heads shall fall without the Providence of God, we may conclude he will be concerned for us in greater Matters : And if he provide for *Sparrows*, he will provide and take care of his own Children.

The Covenant of Grace, the Love of Christ, and that Relation we stand in to him, must needs give us ground to believe he will, in his most wise Providence, order all things for our Good, besides the exprefs Promises he hath made upon that Account. Doth he

he hold us in his Hand, carry us in his Bosom, nay, engrave us on his Heart, and will he forsake us? O this cannot be.

Hath he took the Charge of his Sheep, and will he leave them to Lions, or Wolves, to be torn to pieces? Or shall Sin or the Devil pull Limb from Limb, and he look on? But I must not further enlarge here.

Quest. *What is the Nature of that Food which Jesus Christ feeds his Sheep with?*

1. I answer in the Negative; It is not surfeiting Food: some Pastures are naught, they will rot the Sheep; but Christ feeds not his People in such Pastures.

2. 'Tis not forbidden Food; he hath prohibited us to follow a Multitude to do Evil, to walk in the Way of the Heathen, or after the Course of this World, or according to the former Lusts in our Ignorance, and not to touch, taste, nor handle of the Traditions and Doctrines of Men; but he allows us his own Word and Ordinances.

1. 'Tis costly Food, Pastures that were purchased by our Shepherd at a dear Price.

2. 'Tis sweet and pleasant Food; *More to be desired than Gold; Psa. 19. yea, than much fine Gold: sweeter also than Honey, or the Honey-comb.*

3. 'Tis Soul-satisfying Food; he satisfies every hungry Soul: *I Psa. 132. will abundantly bless her Provision, and satisfy her Poor with Bread. 15.* Wicked Men eat that which satisfies not: what is all the Trash of this World, but meer Husks, Ashes, and Gravel-stones?

4. 'Tis strengthening Food; it strengthens the Soul, and strengthens the Graces of the Spirit in the Soul.

5. 'Tis chearing, comforting, and reviving Food, as I might shew you, but must not enlarge.

6. 'Tis living Food, 'tis Bread of Life; such who feed on it shall never die: it gives Life, and it continues and encreases Life, and will feed the Soul up unto everlasting Life.

7. It is Soul-fattning Food: *Eat you that which is good, and let your Soul delight it self in fatness. Isa. 55. 2.* O this Food, these Gospel-Pastures fatten the Soul, when they meet with God, enjoy God in his Ordinances; when they have Communion with him, and when they find their Sins and Corruptions wither and die, and Grace grow and flourish in their Souls; when they thrive in Holiness, in Faith, Love, Patience, and Humility, &c.

What
Christ's
Folds are.

Quest. *What is Christ's Fold?*

Ans. He hath a twofold Fold.

1. His Church is his Fold; Christ built it himself, and it is a Fold the Enemy cannot destroy, he hath set it upon a Rock.
2. Heaven is Christ's Fold.

Quest. *What is the Fence of Christ's Fold (or Church) here on Earth?*

Ans. I answer, It is threefold.

1. The Fence may be said to be, that Holy and Primitive Constitution, Order and Ordinances which Christ hath appointed.
2. That Sacred Covenant Believers enter into, when they are admitted Members.
3. The Holy Discipline, Order and Government Christ hath ordained and left in the Gospel.

APPLICATION.

We infer from hence, that Believers are in a most happy Condition, they having such a Shepherd and such Pastures to feed in. Which will further appear, if we consider these things following.

1. They are Pastures that will feed Multitudes; nay, they cannot be over-stock'd, Christ's Pastures cannot be eaten up.
2. Christ's Pastures are always Good, always Rich, as good in Winter as Summer; and so are not other Pastures.

3. So well fenced about, that the Walls cannot by Men nor Devils be broken down. God secures his People and Gospel by his own Almighty Power and Providence; he is a Wall of Fire round about: besides, his Angels encamp about them that fear him also.

4. Christ's Pastures have most precious Water in them; *There is Pſal. 23. 2. a River that makes glad the City of God, &c. He feeds me in green Pastures, and leads me besides the still Waters.* The Holy Spirit, and Graces of the Spirit, may be here intended.

1. Water hath a cooling Nature, it allays Thirst; so these Waters cool the Fire of Lust, and every evil Passion, and allay that inordinate Thirst after the things of this World.

2. Some Waters are of a purging Quality; these Waters also purge the Soul of all evil and nauseous Humours.

3. Water makes fruitful; it makes Pastures fruitful, and the Sheep also: So these Sacred Waters make the Word and Ordinances fruitful, and the Saints fruitful likewise.

4. Waters

4. Waters soften; so these Waters soften the Heart and make it tender.

5. Waters have a cleansing Virtue: So have these Divine Waters; the Spirit, and Graces of the Spirit, cleanse the Soul of all Filth and Pollution of Flesh and Spirit.

6. Water hath a healing Property: The Spiritual Waters heal, they are beyond all Waters, exceed all Waters. For,

1. These Waters never fail; other Waters may be dried up. *He that drinks of the Water I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the Waters that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of living Water, springing up unto Everlasting Life.* Joh. 4. 14.

2. These are Waters of Life; he that receives the Holy Spirit, shall live for ever.

3. These are still Waters, not rough boisterous Streams; they may be called still Waters in respect of their Effects.

1. They will keep such that drink of them, in God's Bounds, and cause them to rest in quiet where he hath placed them.

2. They make a still and quiet Soul, a still and quiet Family, a still and quiet Church, when all drink of these Waters; nay, a still and quiet Nation: they allay all Feuds and undue Heats among Christians that partake of them. These Waters quiet the Conscience under the Accusations of the Law; quiet the Conscience under Satan's Temptations. Thou art a Sinner, saith Satan, and thy Sins are committed with great Aggravations; thou deserveest Wrath, and Divine Vengeance: But no sooner doth the Soul drink of these Waters, but it is quieted; the Spirit by Faith shews the dejected Person that Christ hath born the Wrath of God, and reconciled him to the Father.

3. They quiet Believers under Affliction, in Times of Want and Poverty, and under National Fears and Disquietments. And,

4. In a Time of Sicknes, and at the Hour of Death.

1. By evidencing to the Soul, that the Covenant is well-ordered in all things, and sure.

2. That the Promises of God are firm, and cannot be broken.

3. That the Love of God is Everlasting, and nothing can separate them from it.

4. That the Faithfulness of God, and his Almighty Power, is engaged to preserve them, and keep them unto Salvation.

1. *Exhortation.* If Christ feeds us in such Pastures, and gives us such Waters, labour, O ye Saints, to be thankful. What Praise doth this call for ! even holy and thankful Lips and Lives.

2. Labour to glorify this God, this Saviour ; strive to bring forth Fruit to him : *Herein, saith Christ, is my Father glorified, Joh. 15. 8. that you bring forth much Fruit, so shall you be my Disciples.*

3. Take heed you do not straggle from the Fold of Christ, or refuse the Conduct and Guidance of your Blessed Shepherd.

4. *Terror.* Wo to them that do annoy, disturb or disquiet Christ's Flock, Christ's Sheep ; or any manner of way seek to scatter or divide them, so that they cannot comfortably feed and lie down together.

5. Sinners, will you not enquire where Christ feeds ? Remember his Direction ; *Go forth by the Footsteps of the Flock.*

6. What comfort is here for you that are the Sheep and Lambs of Christ ! How safe are you in the Hand of such a Shepherd !

So much at this Time, and for the first part of my Text, *viz.* the 27th Verse.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

I Closed with the 27th Verse the last Day ; and shall now come to the great Subject, which at first I told you I should (God assisting) endeavour to demonstrate and fully prove : Serm. VI.

Namely, *The final Perseverance of the Saints of God, or Sheep of Jesus Christ.*

But that we may the more orderly proceed, we shall first consider again the Parts of our Text.

1. You have an Account of a Gift given, which is expressed, *Parts of the Text.*
Life.
2. The Nature of that Life explained, *Eternal Life.*
3. The Donor, or whose Gift it is, *viz. Jesus Christ's.*
4. To whom the Gift is given, namely, *to his Sheep.*
5. The Certainty of their possession of it, *They shall never perish, neither shall any Man pluck them out of my Hand.*

Some read it, *neither shall any*; and from the Greek word $\tau\iota\varsigma$, *The Terms explained.* it may be better so rendred, *viz. [any]*; that is, any Enemy, neither Sin nor World, Men nor Devils, Things present nor Things to come ; let all Enemies do what they can, I have them in my Hand, in my Power, in my keeping ; as if our Blessed Lord should say, And I will hold them fast, and they shall be preserved through Faith by my Power, and the Power of my Father who gave them me, unto Everlasting Life, and perish they shall not.

1. *I give them Eternal Life* : I now give it to them in the Seed thereof. Those that Christ gives saving Grace unto, he gives Eternal Life unto. I give them the promise of it, and when they die, they shall have the actual possession thereof.

2. *They shall never perish*, that is, eternally perish ; they shall not die the *second Death*, or be cast into the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone. They shall not come into Condemnation, or be eternally

eternally damned, as all Unbelievers shall be.

3. *Neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand:* No doubt by the Hand of Christ, is meant his Power, his Protection; *the Lord's Hand is not shortned that it cannot save;* he is able to save, it is in his Power to save.

They were delivered into Christ's Hand by that Holy Covenant or Compact made with the Father before the World began. And when they believe, (or by that Grace which he infuses into them) he then takes actual and fast hold of them; and there he will keep them, and never let his hold go.

They come therefore into Christ's Hand, upon the same Considerations by which they came to be his Sheep; which (as I have already opened) was seven manner of ways, *viz.*

1. By *Election*.
2. By that *holy Covenant* or Compact made between the Father and the Son.
3. By the Father's *free Donation* they were given into his Hand, delivered to him by the Father.
4. By *Purchase* he bought them, and so they came into his Hand.
5. By *Regeneration* or *Transformation* he hath wrought his Image upon them, and so brought them into his Hand.
6. By *Conquest*, he fought for them, and conquered their Enemies, and subdued their own filthy and rebellious Hearts, and so they came into his Hand.
7. They by a *holy Resignation* of themselves, (as being overcome by his Divine Grace) yielded themselves up into his Hands; So that he hath a sevenfold hold of them.

Secondly, Their being in Christ's Hand, denotes

1. His personal possession of them, he being now entered upon the actual Administration of his *Pastoral Office*.

2. It denotes the present actual Charge he hath taken of them, he having gathered and brought them home to his own Fold, and put them into his own Pasture.

3. It denotes also their great Safety and blessed Security, he being, as Mediator, every way invested, qualified, and endowed with Power and Authority to keep them; having received all Grace, yea, the Fulness of Grace from the Father, as well as an express Command to supply all their Wants and Necessities; so subdue all

their

their Enemies, and to preserve them unto Eternal Life. So much shall serve us to the Explanation of the Terms of our Text.

I shall only observe three Propositions from hence.

Doct. 1. Everlasting Life is a free Gift, or Salvation is wholly by Grace; it is only of God, and the Gift of Jesus-Christ.

Doct. 2. The Saints of God are committed into the Hand of Christ, he hath the Care and Charge of them.

Doct. 3. All the Saints, all Believers, or Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ, have Everlasting Life given to them; and they shall, every Soul of them, be saved, and none of them so fall away as eternally to perish.

I shall speak to the first and last of these Propositions, in which the Second will be comprehended.

In opening the first, I shall,

1. Shew what is meant by Eternal Life.
2. Shew how it appears that Salvation is a free Gift, or wholly by Grace.
3. Shew why Salvation, or Everlasting Life, is a free Gift, or by Grace only.
4. Shew why Christ doth, and will give Eternal Life unto his Sheep.
5. And lastly, I shall briefly apply it.

1. *Quest.* What is meant by Eternal Life?

Answ. There is a three-fold Life of Man.

1. The Life of the Body, which is a natural Life, or the Life *A three-fold* of Nature: *In him we live, move, and have our Being. Neither Life of count I my Life dear to me, so that I might finish my Course with Joy. Man. He giveth to all Life, &c.* All have this Life; Sinners as well as *Acts 20. 24.* Saints have a natural Life. *Acts 17. 25.*

2. There is a *Spiritual Life*, which is the Life of the Soul, the Life of a Saint, or of the New Creature; this is the Life of Grace. *I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Gal. 2. 20. Christ liveth in me; and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, &c. The Dead shall hear the Voice John 5. of the Son of God; and they that hear, shall live; that is, their 25. Souls shall live, or be quickned and raised to a State of spiritual Life.*

3. *Eternal*

3. Eternal Life, that is properly the *Life of Glory*, or the Life of the other World, that Life which the glorified Saints possess above: *The Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Object. *But Christ says, I give them Eternal Life; He speaks in the Present Tense.*

Answer. 1. I answer; you heard before that true and saving Grace is the Seed of Eternal Life, or the Seed of Glory to come, as Glory is the Harvest of Grace.

2. Spiritual Life is the earnest of Eternal Life. Now every Believer hath received the Spirit, which is the Earnest of their Eternal Inheritance: And thus they have it, as a Man that purchases an Inheritance, he gives Earnest for it; and no sooner that is done, but he cries, such a House, or such Land, is mine; 'tis his by virtue of the Earnest given, though he hath not yet the actual possession of it: so it is here.

3. Christ gives his Saints Eternal Life. Now because he gives them a sure Title to it, he makes them a *Deed of Gift* of it; or seals unto them a *Right, and legal Conveyance* of it, as firm as the Law and Ordinance of Heaven. Now when a Person hath a true Right and Title, or *Deed of Gift*, made and sealed to him of such or such an Estate, he may say he has the Estate, 'tis his own. And thus Believers have Everlasting Life, or the Eternal Inheritance, *i. e.* they have a true Right and Title of it sealed to them here by the Holy Spirit: *After that ye believed, you were sealed with the Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of the Saints Inheritance, &c. Faith is the Evidence of things not seen.*

4. The Spirit of God, who is that Principle of Divine Life in the Soul of Believers, is Eternal. Christ is in us; every Believer hath Christ in possession, and Christ is Eternal Life; and therefore he that hath the Son, hath Everlasting Life: *These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know you have Eternal Life, &c.* Jesus Christ being in us here, is more to us than the Hope of Glory, for he is Eternal Life*; and the Soul of a Child of God, shall never lose nor be dispossessed of Christ, no not by Death it self, therefore may be said to have Eternal Life. They have Eternal Life abiding in them, because they have the Spirit abiding in them; *But the Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of living Water, springing up unto Everlasting Life.*

Query. Methinks I hear some doubting Soul say, *O that I could but experience this Spiritual Life to be in me! How may I know I am made alive, and have Eternal Life given to me?*

1. In answer to such it is necessary to consider, that all *Adam's* Posterity by Nature are spiritually dead in Sin, or under a Privation of the Life of God, until spiritually quickned and made alive by *Jefus Christ*.

2. Now as natural Death is made use of by the Spirit of God, to shew what spiritual Death is; so also natural Life is tropically made use of, to demonstrate and discover spiritual Life.

A Man naturally dead,

1. Is cold; all Heat is gone, if long dead. So all unregenerate Persons are spiritually Cold, or without any Divine Heat or Warmth in their Spirits; that Principle of internal Life Man had before he fell, being lost and gone, he is cold as a Stone Godward, or in a spiritual Sense.

2. A Man naturally dead cannot move, all power of Motion and Activity, or all vital Actings are gone also. So in Men spiritually dead, there is a Disability or Impotency unto all spiritual things to be performed in a spiritual manner; they can perform or act spiritually no Act of Life, or do any thing that is absolutely accepted of him: *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God; it is not Rom. 8. subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. — So then they that 7, 8. are in the Flesh cannot please God.*

3. A Man naturally dead cannot breath nor speak, no more can carnal Men: Men spiritually dead breath forth their Desires in Prayer to God, they have no Tongue to speak for God, or to pray to God acceptably; all they do is dead Service, all their Prayers and Works, are dead Prayers, dead Works, because performed from Persons spiritually dead, and not from a Principle of Divine Life.

4. A dead Man can't feel, see, nor hear: No more can such who are dead in Sin, they cannot feel spiritually, they have a heavy Burden, a mighty Weight of Sin, Guilt and Wrath lying upon them, but feel it not: They are grievously wounded, but feel no pain, do not cry out; think they are well, and all nothing: They cannot see spiritual Objects, nor spiritual Things. These Dead see not *Jefus Christ*, see not his Beauty, his Glory; neither the Want of him, nor the Worth of him; the Eye of their Understanding is darkned, they have no Faith, which is the Eye of the new Creature: Nor can they hear in a spiritual Sense, until,
like

like dead *Lazarus*, they hear Christ's Voice by his Spirit, and are made alive.

5. The Beauty of the Dead is gone, *Death is gasty*; so is the Spiritual Beauty of the Soul gone, of those who lie dead in Sin and Trespases.

6. The Bodies of those who are naturally dead, are fit for nothing, they soon stink, and therefore must be buried and put under the Ground, being loathsome, &c. So ungodly Persons who are spiritually dead, are loathsome in God's sight, as *filthy Carion*, or a *stinking Sepulchre* is in ours, and are fit for nothing but to cast into Hell, as abominable and hateful to the Holy *Jehovah*.

How to
know we
are spiritu-
ally alive.

1. By these things therefore you may know, whether you are spiritually alive, or not; for if so, you are quickned and made alive by the Operations of the Spirit, and there is a Principle of Divine Life infused into your Souls: So that from a holy and new Nature, you can and do breath forth your Desires freely and frequently to God, and see the excellency of spiritual Objects and Things; Christ is most precious and lovely in your sight: Your Eyes see, and your Ears hear, and you have spiritual feeling, and you can and do act and move; that is, believe, repent, and obey God, with great Activity, and a strong Propensity, or gracious Inclinations of Heart: There is also much of the Beauty of Holiness shining forth in your Lives.

Arminianism de-
sected.

2. This also by the way may serve to detect that Doctrine some, nay too many maintain, of the Power of the Creature: Alas, alas, what can the Dead do! For evident it is, that those who are thus dead, have no Principle or first Power of living unto God, or to perform any Duty to be accepted of him: It is with them, as to all Acts and Ends of spiritual Life, as with the Body, as to the Acts and Ends of natural Life, when the Soul is departed from it; or else God would never say they are dead, call them *dead*. Does God make use of an improper Metaphor? Dare they affirm that? It must be so, if Man naturally be not dead, but wounded, in a spiritual Sense only. True, a wicked Man is naturally alive, and his Soul is in his Body, and he is endowed with *Understanding*, *Will* and *Affection*, and may perform many Duties God requires of him: But what of this? for in spiritual Life the Holy Ghost is unto the Soul, what the Soul is unto the Body, in respect of natural Life, namely, the quickning Principle. And

Dr. Owen. (as a Learned Author well observes) to deny such a quickning Principle

Principle of spiritual Life, superadded unto us by the Grace of Christ, distinct and separate from the natural Faculties of the Soul, is upon the Matter to renounce the whole Gospel: It is all one as to deny that *Adam* was created in the *Image of God*, which he lost, and that we are renewed unto the *Image of God* by Jesus Christ.

2dly. They may also as well assert, Man hath a creating Power; for Regeneration is called the *New Creature*, which is created in us after the *Image of God*, according to his own glorious Power. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 1. 18, 19, 20.

3dly. Therefore whatsoever Sinners act in spiritual Things, by their Understanding, Will or Affections, that are not renewed, they do it naturally, and not spiritually, and are therefore called *dead Works*. We may also from hence infer, what a mighty Blessing and Favour it is to be made spiritually alive. How should such admire God, and his Free Grace in Jesus Christ; for as they have an internal holy Life, so they shall never die, but have eternal Life; nay, that this Eternal Life is begun in them here: *I give them Eternal Life.*

But to proceed.

Secondly. I am to shew how Salvation, or Everlasting Life is a free Gift, or by Grace only. Salvation a free Gift.

1. Life and Salvation is of Grace in opposition to Nature, we have it not as the Product of Nature: *Which were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* To be born, signifies to receive a Principle of Life; and those that are the Children of God, have not that spiritual Life that is in them, from the Motions or Powers of Nature; not from the Power of Man's Will, nor from their fleshy or natural Parts and Abilities, however improved. Joh. 1. 13.

2. Life and Salvation is wholly of Grace, or a free Gift, in opposition to Merit; we cannot purchase or procure it by our Acts of Obedience: *By Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of your selves; it is the Gift of God: not of Works, &c. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us.* Not the desert of our Works, let them be what they will, either before or after Grace, but from God's own sovereign Mercy and Goodness, whose Bowels yerned towards his Elect in Misery: *For the Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Death Natural, Death Spiritual, and Death Eternal, are the Wages and Desert of Sin: Ephes. 2. 8, 9. Tit. 3. 5. Rom. 6. 23.

And who will deny a Servant his Wages? Wicked Men are the Servants of Sin, and they shall have their Wages. But though Death is the Wages or Merit of Sin, yet Eternal Life is not the Wages of our good Works; no, but the Gift of God, through the Righteousness of Jesus Christ: It is not by our Works, or for our Worthiness. The Apostle, as our *Annotators* note, varies the Phrase, on purpose to shew that Salvation is wholly of God's Grace, and not of our own Merits: 'Tis of Grace, or the Gift of God through Jesus Christ, that is, through his Merits, *De gratia & libero arbitrio*, saith *Augustine*.

3. Life and Salvation is by Grace only, or the free Gift of God, in opposition to the Law: The Law could not give Life, that could
 Gal. 3. 21. not save us: *For had there been a Law given that could have given Life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law.* The Law requires perfect Obedience, and lays every one under the Curse,
 Gal. 2. 10. *that continues not in all things that is written therein to do them.* Therefore no Life by the Law; that being weak through the Flesh,
 Rom. 8. 3. Man could not perfectly fulfil it, and so could have no Life by it.

4. Life and Salvation is the free Gift of God, in opposition to any acceptable Service done for it, by us; as some times great Gifts are bestowed on Persons for the sake of some small Service performed for them: But it is not so here, though Salvation be a Reward of Grace, yet it is not given for the sake of any acceptable Service done by us; we know that a small Matter sometimes purchases that which is of great Value; but nothing we do, or can do, can purchase Life and Salvation for our Souls. True, Eternal Life is a Purchase, it is a Reward of Merit; but O mistake me not, it is not of our purchasing, it is no Reward for any Work done by us, but it is the Purchase of Jesus Christ, the Reward of his Work, by his fulfilling of the Righteousness of the Law for us in our Nature, in his holy and spotless Life, and by his satisfying the Justice of God for our breaking and violating of his Holy Law, which he did by the painful and cursed Death of his Cross:
 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, and for Sin condemned Sin in the Flesh; that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, that is, in our Head, Surety, and Representative; for though we in our Persons were utterly unable to do it, yet Christ having done it in our Behalf,

Behalf, and Nature, it is accepted, as if we had done it our selves, Christ's Righteousness and Obedience being imputed to us who do believe: so that what he did and suffered, is accounted unto us as if we had done and suffered it; yet it was Christ that purchased Life, not we; he purchased, and we possess; he is the Redeemer, Rom. 3. 24. we are the Redeemed; he merited all, and we have all freely of 25. Grace through his Merits, or through that Redemption that is in his Blood.

5. Life and Salvation is a free Gift, or of Grace only, doth appear yet further, because the Foundation thereof laid from before all Worlds, in God's eternal Election, was the Spring of it; and this was alone of God's own free Grace: *There is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace. And if it be of Grace, then it is no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more of Grace, otherwise Works are no more Works.* Rom. 11. 6.

This Opposition or Contrariety is not only between Grace and legal Works, but between Grace and all manner of Works whatsoever; because it lies betwixt the Nature of Grace and Works, they are repugnant or contrary the one to the other, they can no more be the Causes or Motive of any one Action, than one individual thing can be White and Black in the same part, as a worthy Writer notes. Men are not elected partly of Grace and partly of Works foreseen, but wholly of Grace; nothing but an Act of God's Sovereign Grace was the Cause and Motive of it.

6. Life and Salvation is a free Gift, or by Grace only, because the Glorious Covenant between the Father and the Son, made and entered into before the World began, was alone of God's Grace, of his infinite Grace and Favour: God was at liberty (who foreseeing Man's Fall and horrible Transgression, he having forfeited all those Blessings bestowed originally upon him) whether he would or would not afford him any Help or Relief, but might have justly and utterly rejected the whole Race of Mankind, as he rejected all the Angels that sinned, or kept not their first Estate.

Did Man, fallen Man, deserve this Love, this Favour, who was become an Enemy to God? Was there any thing in Man that could be a Motive to move the Almighty to enter into this Covenant, to save so vile a Creature, such a poor and despicable a Creature as Man became by his Sins, the Visage of his very Soul being now loathsom, deformed, and abominable in the sight of God, God's holy Image being utterly defaced, and all his Beauty gone, being besmeared and covered all over with noisom Filthiness.

and

and Pollution, filled with Enmity and Hatred against God; de-throning his blessed Creator, and setting up the Devil in his Place; subjecting himself to that implacable Enemy of his, and casting off his most holy and gracious Sovereign from whence he received his Breath and Being.

Nay, and in respect of God himself, it must needs appear to be wholly of Grace; could Redemption of Man add any thing to the essential Glory of God? Did he stand in need of Man to make him more happy or glorious in himself, who being an independent Being, had been eternally happy in the Enjoyment of himself, had Man never been made, or had he left him under Wrath and Misery? Or was he obliged to save us, and that he might do it, to send his own Son to die, and be made a Curse for us? Or could he not have created other Creatures to have shewed forth his glorious Perfections? Or why might he not have sent his Son to have taken hold of the Nature of Angels to have redeemed them. (who were his Creatures as well as fallen Man, and more glorious too than Man before they fell) and let Man have perished for ever, and not have entred into such a Covenant of Grace with his own Son on his Behalf?

7. Life and Salvation therefore is a free Gift; it is wholly of Grace, because we could not have obtained it, unless God sent his Son out of his own Bosom to effect it. The giving of Christ, and the Father's sending of him into the World, is nothing but an Act of his own free Grace: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son. &c.*

John 14.
3, 4, 5. 8. Because Everlasting Life is by Christ alone, nor could we have had it, except he died: *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no Man can come unto the Father but by me.* It is by Faith, that it might be by Grace. *But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour appeared: Not by Works of Righteousness that we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost: Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ; That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs, according to the Hope of Eternal Life.*

Thus if we consider the Rise, the Spring, the Motive, and the Author of Everlasting Life, all appears fully to be of God's Grace alone; but should we proceed a little further as to the Means and Application of the Remedy, in order to interest in this Salvation, that is all of Free Grace also.

1. We are called and quickened by God's special Grace, according to his Eternal Purpose in Jesus Christ: No Man could quicken himself. All rational Arguments, without Divine Influence, or an Almighty Power, will not bring our Souls into a State of Life. See how *Paul* ascribes his Conversion and special Vocation to God's Grace; *But when it pleased God who separated me from the Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me, &c.* Gal. 1. 15, 16. Special Vocation is of God's Free Grace, *who hath saved us, and called us with an Holy Calling; not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the World begun.* We are quickened, renewed, or regenerated by Grace, through the Operations of the Holy Ghost. 2 Tim. 1. 9.

2. Adoption is of Grace; *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace.* As the Purpose was free, so is the Execution free also: *That the Purpose of God, according to election might stand; not of Works, but of him that calleth. To them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, &c.* The Privilege of being Sons and Daughters of God, is freely given to us, through Jesus Christ: 'Tis through Christ, for that we might become Sons he became a Servant, and died the cursed Death of the Cross for us, *to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* Eph. 1. 5. Rom. 9. 11. Joh. 1. 12. Gal. 4. 5.

3. Justification is wholly of Grace: *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, without Works.* Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness: 'Tis not because we are righteous in our selves, therefore we are justified; no but being justified by the Righteousness of Christ, we are declared righteous in him; and this is wholly by God's free Grace. Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5.

4. Faith is a Grace; or a Gift freely given to all that believe: *To you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake. For by Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 2. 8.

5. Repentance is of Grace: *Him hath God exalted with his right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, &c.* God in the New Covenant promises to take away the Heart of Stone, and to give a Heart of Flesh; that is, a broken, tender, and a repenting Heart. *If God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging the Truth.* If God will give them a Power and an Heart to repent, it is his own free and gracious Gift to poor Sinners. Acts 5. 31. Ezek. 36. 26. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

6. Forgiveness of Sin is also freely given of God; it is of Grace, *through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*

Rom. 3. 25. So that it appears Eternal Life, from the first to the last, is wholly of Grace, both the Author of it, the Means of it, and the End thereof, all is of Grace: Heaven it self is the Gift of Grace;

Luke 12. 32. *Fear not, little Flock; it is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* The Crown of Glory is the Gift of Christ: *Be thou*

Rev. 2. 10. *faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life. Take the Water of Life freely; buy Wine and Milk, without Money, and without Price.* Salvation was contrived by Infinite Grace, and all things that do concur or accompany it are freely given: Bread of

Isa. 55. 1, 2. Life, and Water of Life, is freely given; *A new Heart will I give them, and a new Spirit will I put into them. To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, &c.*

Why Salvation is of Grace.

Thirdly, To proceed to the Grounds of the Point, I shall give you the Reasons why Eternal Life is the Gift of Christ, or of the free Grace of God.

1. It is because Sin and Death cannot be removed out of the Way to Life, but only by Jesus Christ, and so by Grace only. The Law of God is broke, and *Justice* calls for Wrath and Vengeance to be executed upon the Transgressor. *Justice* must be satisfied, but Man cannot make a Compensation for the Violation of God's Holy Law, nor will God acquit the Sinner unless that be done; the Law is but an Impression of God's Holy Nature, it resulted not from a bare Act of his Sovereignty, but from his Holiness and perfect Rectitude of his blessed Nature. If Man could have attained to Life by any Works of Obedience done by him, Christ died in vain; and if it had consisted with the Wisdom and Holiness of God to have accepted of imperfect Obedience, provided it had been sincere, he could at first have given Man such a Law, and so have saved the Life of his Son. For any therefore to affirm that God accepteth sinful Man for the sake of his imperfect (though sincere) Obedience, it is to assert, in effect, that he accepted of some sinful and polluted Acts as a Recompence and Satisfaction for other sinful Acts and Deeds of Darkness; for all our best Services are unclean in themselves. *Paul* accounted all his own Righteousness but Dung, &c. Besides, the Obedience under the Gospel which God requires, is to be performed in the highest perfection imaginable; *Be ye Perfect, as your Father in Heaven is Perfect.* The Law of the Gospel is the same in Nature with the Moral Law,

Law, therefore (if it may be called a Law) it is a perfect Law; we are still commanded to love *the Lord our God with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, and with all our Strength*; yea, and to live and sin not. *Little Children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.* Our Faith, 1 John 2. Love, and Patience, &c. ought to be perfect; the Law or Com- 1. mands of the Gospel know no Bounds nor Limits; *Until we all* Eph. 4.13. *come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the Fulness of Christ.* It would therefore be a Work becoming the *New-Lawyers* to shew where the Commands lie in the Gospel, that God's Law only requires sincere Obedience unto; the Law certainly loses no part of its Sanction by the Gospel, that is as *Holy, Just and Good* as ever; and a perpetual Rule of Life and Obedience: "Therefore (as a reverend Person Notes) either the Gospel- Mr. J. C. Law, or Law of Faith, must require Perfection of Obedience "in these Duties, or some other Divine Law, or else God would "become an indulger of Sin, by Law: if it be by another Law, "viz. the Moral, that requires perfect Obedience, and this sin- "cere only, then these Laws differ but in Degree, not in *Specie* or "Kind; because both require the same Duties or Works; and so "this Gospel-Law would be no distinct Law, but only the Mea- "sure of sincere Obedience would receive a new use; which we "own it has, to wit, to be an *Index* and Mark of our Justificati- "on, tho we cannot own that use of its giving Right, &c. But to "proceed, (saith he) "a distinct Law they must hold, or quit their "Cause, or this Foundation of it; for the Text sets the Law of "Faith down as an opposite Law to that of Works, and that they "hold. Then if it be a perfect Law, requiring perfect Obedi- "ence, there is no possibility of Justification in this Life. *Poppinus* "the *Arminian* grants the Conclusion, that our Obedience must be "consummate before our Assurance; and others distinguish be- "tween a compleat and partial Justification, the former is not, "they say, until the Day of Judgment. But this is not all the "Difficulty, for it's the adding a Load to a Burden: Is this Gospel, "to a Man that is unable to perform the least part of the Moral "Law, to tell him, that God, or the Mediator, requires perfect "Obedience to it for the future, and another too? Or is this Go- "spel, to say, you shall perish eternally, and have the Fire of "Hell seven times heated, if you obey not this Gospel? It's in- "deed a conditional Hell, but it is more dreadful than the Fire of "Hell; and the Condition is more impossible, because we have

" less power to shun this Difficulty of two perfect Laws.
 " Mr. *Bull* owns no other perfect Law but this Gospel, since
 " Man fell: but by shunning one Difficulty, he falls into two as
 " great; (1.) Then the Moral Law is abrogated, besides the falseness of the Doctrine it self; for it is impossible that should cease to be our Duty, to love God with all our Heart and Soul. What
 " Advantage brings Christ's Death, to abrogate one perfect
 " Law, and establish another? here is little Gospel. A second
 " Difficulty is, we must either say Christ has purchased to us Pardon for Sins against the Gospel-Law, or none at all, but that
 " one Sin of *Adam's*, if the Moral Law be abrogated; after the
 " Fall we never sinned against any Law but the Gospel, for we
 " were under no other Law according to him, &c.

The Sum of that I drive at is this, *viz.* There is a necessity we must be justified and saved by Grace only, because we cannot be saved by a Law of Obedience, but by Christ and Grace alone: If we fly not to Christ by trusting, believing, and depending on him, and the Grace of God in him, who hath satisfied the Justice and Law of God for us, and brought in Everlasting Righteousness, the Law of God will cut us down and throw us into Hell for ever.

2. It is by Grace alone that we are saved, because all-boasting is excluded, and cause of boasting. And this is the Design of God in the Gospel, *viz.* That Man might not have whereof to glory, but in the Lord alone: Nor could this be done any other way, but by his contriving our Salvation to be wholly by his own free Grace.

Rom. 4.3,
24.

Where is boasting then? it is excluded; by what Law? of Works; nay, but by the Law of Faith, not of Works, lest any Man should boast.

Eph. 2.8,
9.

3. It is only by Grace that we are saved, or Eternal Life is the free Gift of God, and Gift of Christ; because he will have all the Glory of it: God will not give the Glory of our Salvation unto others.

Eph. 1.5,
6.

Having predestinated us to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

4. It is by Grace only because God would magnify his Son, by whose Righteousness and Obedience imputed to us, we are justified and saved: and it is to this end I say, that God might exalt Jesus Christ; his Design was, to magnify Christ in our Salvation, and to abase Man:

Joh. 17.2.

Thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him.

5. And lastly, It is by Grace, because God would have Salvation sure to all Believers: *Therefore it is of Faith that it might be* Rom. 4. *by Grace, to the end the Promise might be sure to all the Seed, &c.* If 16. Salvation were by our Works and Obedience, it might be very uncertain; or if the whole of our Happiness and Eternal Life be not in Christ's Hand, but that it dependeth on the Will of Man, or on the condition of our Faith and Holiness, or in the improvement of our Abilities; and it is possible that we may, or may not answer the Condition thereof; it might so fall out, that not one Soul might be saved: Besides, should it be so, those that are saved, would then have something to glory in, or boast of in the Great Day: They in effect may thank themselves, and admire their own Wisdom, Care and Industry, that brought them to Heaven.

Fourthly, Why doth and will Christ give Eternal Life to all his Sheep, to all his Saints?

Answer. 1. Because Eternal Life was purchased for them by his Death: *But by his own Blood he entered once into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.* Heb. 9.12.

2. Because all that are given unto Christ, are ordained unto Acts 13. Everlasting Life. 48.

3. Because Christ was sent into the World to this End, to give Life unto them: *I am come that ye might have Life, and that ye might have it much more abundantly.* It was that he might give his People the Knowledge of Salvation, and save them from their Sins. Joh. 10.10 Luk. 1.77.

4. Because Life is given to Christ to this End, *viz.* to communicate it to all his Elect: he is made a quickning Spirit, that he might quicken all his; *As in Adam all die*, so all that are in Christ shall live, Spiritually here, and Eternally hereafter: *Because I live, ye shall live also.* John. 14. 19.

5. Because all his Elect were quickned together with him virtually, when he rose from the Dead: yea and also virtually they entered into Heaven with him; for he ascended as their Head and blessed Representative. Col. 2.13.

6. Because Eternal Life was promised to them in Christ before 2 Tim. 1. the World began; and they have many firm and sure Promises 9. made of it to them since also.

7. Because they are united to him, and Christ hath prayed, *That they may all be made perfect in one*; and he hath prayed that they may have Eternal Life. Now Union with Christ gives right John 17. to Glory; a whole Christ shall be glorified, and not a part only. 22, 23.

Quest. What doth Eternal Life import?

Ans. I answer, It doth import a Deliverance from all Evil, present and to come, and a full and perfect possession and enjoyment of all true spiritual and everlasting Good and Glory above.

Quest. But doth not this seem to diminish or lessen the Glory of God the Father, to assert, That it is Christ that gives Eternal Life? &c.

Ans. No, not in the least, for all things are of God and through Jesus Christ; *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ.* It is God that hath reconciled us unto himself; 'tis by Christ we are reconciled, his Blood being the Price of our Reconciliation; God the Father gave Christ for us, and also gives him to us: *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.* And thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him. It is the Father that gave Christ the Power (as Mediator) to give Eternal Life unto his Sheep.

APPLICATION.

*Free-Will
detected
and confu-
ted.*

First. This may serve to reprehend those that would not have Salvation to be wholly of Grace; it clearly condemns *Free-Will*; for if it be only by God's Grace, it is not at all of *Man's Will*. They, 'tis true, do acknowledg the Contrivance of our Salvation to be of God's Grace alone, or the Effects of his great Love, and his sending of Christ into the World to be an Act of Infinite Grace, but withal deny Regeneration and effectual Vocation, to be wholly the Effects of God's special and distinguishing Love; but do affirm, that Grace which those Men have who perish at last, would have been sufficient to have renewed them, had they improved it. They assert, that all Men have Power to believe, and that that Grace which God affords to Men to save them, 'tis in the preaching of the Word, or consisteth in no more than *Moral Swasions, Arguments, or Excitements, in a rational way.* But whether this Light, Power, or Moral Grace, (as they call it) be Natural or Supernatural, Mediate or Immediate, they do not seem well to accord about it. Some of them (as one observes) say, the Power of Natural Reason, or the Exercise of Human Credence, is sufficient to a Man, being convinced of the Truth of the Gospel, or of the Declaration of God's Love and Grace in Christ, so that he may

may believe as easily as to believe any other Matter upon infaillible Testimony. Others call it a Gift, or the Light of the Spirit, which all Men have yet if thorowly examined, it is no more than a Natural Gift, Light or Ability: That it is the special Grace of God, or Illumination of the Holy Spirit, is not granted, but denied by these Men, it being no other Grace or Power, than is afforded equally to those who perish, as to such who are saved. It is not such Grace or Operations of the Spirit that infuses holy Habits, which determines the *Will*, or inclines it to Good, but such Excitements that only awaken and rouse its Native Power; it is such Grace that the *Will* may receive, or refuse the whole Efficacy of it; (so far as I can gather) it lies not in its own Nature, nor from the essential Operations of God's Spirit, but from the *Will* of Man.

Now how contrary this is to the Truth of the Gospel, and all the Experiences of renewed and gracious Persons, I leave to their considerations: yet to detect and condemn these Notions, I shall add a word or two before I conclude.

1. Can a dead Man quicken himself, or be raised to Life, without a vital Principle be infused into him? Will Moral Swastions bring a dead Man to Life?

2. Hath Man a Power, naturally in him, exceeding the Power of Satan? Or is he stronger than that *strong Man armed*? Or are not all Men naturally under the Power of the Prince of Darkness, he *taking them Captive at his Will*? Let this be considered, for seeing 2 Tim. 2. God's Word doth positively declare this to be the State of all Men 26. by Nature, *i. e.* that they are under Satan's Power; what signifies that which they affirm? Will Satan be perswaded to release and let go his Captives, which he holds down in strong Bonds and Chains? Or doth not our Saviour expressly intimate, he will keep all his Goods in security until a stronger than he comes, and binds him, and devests him of his Power? Mat. 12. 29. Mark 3. 27. Luk. 11. 21.

3. Is not Faith said to be the Gift of God; and not only so, but that we believe according to the working of God's Almighty Power, and after the same manner that he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the Dead? Eph. 1. 18. 19, 20.

4. Is not the *Carnal Mind enmity against God*, having in it an utter Averseness and Moral Impotency to do that which is spiritually Good? for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom. 8. 7.

5. Doth not the Scripture say, that those who are born again, Joh. 1. 12. are not *born of the Will of Man*, but of God? And again, it is 13. said,

Jam. 1. 18. said, *of his own Will begat he us.* And if so, is not the Creature as passive in Regeneration, as the Child is in Generation? God doth not work on the Soul absolutely of his Will, according to these Men, but waits to see what Man's Will will do, all depends on *Man's-Will.* Grace with them neither worketh Physically nor Irresistibly; and that God cannot, or doth not, by any Divine Operations of *unwilling* make the Will of Man *willing*; for after all God doth, the Will hath power, and oftentimes does resist it and render all God doth of none effect.

Mr. C. " Now (as a reverend Person well observes) according to these
 " Mens Doctrine, as the Power for these great Concerns of Sal-
 " vation is not in God, or his special Grace, so neither is the Act
 " from him: that which gives or works the Act, *determines the*
 " *Will*, or causes it to determine it self; but the Lord, by his
 " Grace, brings it only to the *Will's choice*, and leaves it to do as
 " it list—. The Lord by his Power works not the *Will* to turn
 " to God, to love God, to imbrace Christ, to yield to the Spirit,
 " but leaves it indifferent to turn to God, or against him; to love
 " God, or to hate him; to imbrace Christ, or reject him; to
 " yield to the Spirit, or resist him. It must be left indifferent as
 " to either: Grace turns not the Scales, but leaves the *Will* an
 " equal poise, that the *Will of Man*, not the Grace of God may
 " have the casting weight; if Grace should weigh it down, the
 " Liberty of the *Will*, they say, would be violated and in nature
 " destroyed.

Is this the Doctrine of general Love which they will have to be in God to Mankind? *viz.* Hath the Lord left it indifferent in his Eternal Purpose, whether any should be saved, or no? For if the *Will* complies not, God will not bend it, or bring it, by irresistible Grace, in a Physical Way, to a Compliance: and though Christ, in redemption, according to them, died for all, yet he hath left it indifferent whether any should be actually redeemed, or no; for the depraved *Will* of Man determines the whole Event of all that which Christ hath done, and the Gospel, or the Spirit doth do: and if some Men were not better natured, and more considerate than others, Christ might have died in vain. And it follows also that such who are saved, have more cause to admire their *Wills compliance* in believing, than to exalt and admire the free Grace of God, if what they say be true. Alas, this general Love of God they talk of, (that is but an indifferent respect to all or any, for all are beloved alike, or else God is a respecter of Persons, they

they say) ends in Love or Hatred, as the Sinner's *Will* determines it : If the *Will* accepts, chuses and yields to Christ, then the Person is beloved and chosen by Him ; but if the *Will* refuses, (as the *Will* of every Mortal might, as well as one, according to their *No-tion*) then he is hated : Whatever particular Love they ascribe to God, it is no other than what rises or is occasioned from the Sinner's Love to him. God foresaw that such and such Persons would believe and love him, therefore purposed to save them : he foresaw that they would embrace, chuse, and love Christ, therefore he loved them, and chose them to Eternal Life ; provided they continue their Good-liking and Affections to God unto the End. How they will be able to deliver themselves from these and such like Consequents from attending their Notions, I see not. The Apostle says, *We love him, because he first loved us* ; and that ^{1 John 4.} we have not chosen him, but he hath chosen us : But certainly if ^{19.} these Men consider their Principles, when they speak of particular Persons, they must say, he did not love us first, but we loved him ; and that he did not chose us first, but we chose him. And thus the Doctrine of *God's Free Grace* is trampled upon ; but *let God be true, and every Man a Liar.*

Object. But doth not this Doctrine of special Grace, render God unmerciful, because he doth not give that Grace unto all Men that is effectual to their Salvation ?

Answer. I answer, We do not deny that God gives that Grace to all, which they say is sufficient or effectual to save all ; our Doctrine robs no Man of that Power they have, but we do deny that common Light, Grace, and Abilities are sufficient to save any one Soul : And if this be true, it follows that they render God more unmerciful than they are aware of, in that they will not have God to afford such Grace that is sufficient, *viz.* Special Grace to any at all. Certainly if God was not more merciful to them that assert this Doctrine, than their Notions import, or did not their Experiences contradict their Principles, it would be impossible one of them should be saved : For will *meer moral Swasive Grace*, (which leaves Salvation to the choice of Man's depraved and unrenewed Will, whether it will turn to God or no, believe in Christ or no) save one Soul ? which they say is all the Grace God vouchsafes to any. So that by their Doctrine, none can be saved, but all must unavoidably perish.

Besides, how unjust do they render God to be, seeing he, as they say, gave Christ to die for all Men, with an intention to save them,
and

and this without any desert of Man, which is the greater Gift; and yet he denies the Gospel to the greatest part of the World, nay and effectual Grace to many (nay to all, according to them) that attend upon the Administration thereof, seeing he could as easily bend or incline the Wills (if he please) of such who do not believe, as he doth theirs that do believe. Strange! did Christ spill his Blood for the greatest part of Mankind in vain? nay, die in their stead for them, that he foreknew would reject him, and believe not? Did he give Millions for them to redeem them, and deny one Pound to make that Redemption effectual to them, in order to give them a Right to it, and Interest in it? What! give them the greater, and deny them the lesser Gift? But how contrary is

Rom. 5.10. this to what Paul says, *If when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life*: And again saith, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall not he freely give us all things?*

Secondly. If Life Spiritual and Eternal be by Grace, or if it is given freely by Jesus Christ; Then all that have not this Gift given to them, Life given, Grace given, are spiritually dead: and if they die naturally before it is given to them, they must perish forever, or die eternally.

Thirdly. We may also infer, That all that would have Everlasting Life, must come to Jesus Christ, seeing it is his Gift: *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life. Thou hast the Words of Eternal Life.* Sinners, you must believe in, relie upon, or fly unto Christ if you would be saved: *If thou knowest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water.* O know where this Life is, how it is given, and do not neglect the time; Christ is now giving forth this Gift, this is the time: *Behold, now is the Day of Salvation. Hear, and your Souls shall live.* 'Tis but asking Life, and thou shalt have it; thou must believe, &c. O seek and cry to God for Life, haste to Christ. Were there an earthly Crown, or many Thousands of Pounds to be freely given, what running and striving would there be! every Body would make haste, and be early at the Door, they would not neglect the Time. But alas, what are all Riches, all Crowns, or all Kingdoms here below to Eternal Life. So much for this Time.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish.

DOCT. 3. *All the Saints of God, all Believers, or Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ, shall be saved, and none of them shall so fall away as eternally to perish.* Serm. VII.

Beloved, in speaking unto this Point of Doctrine, I shall only do two things.

- I. Endeavour to confirm and prove the Truth of the Proposition.
- II. Answer all the Objections that are usually brought against the Doctrine of the Saints final Perseverance.

First, But before I enter upon the Proof and Confirmation of this great Gospel-Truth, let me hint a word or two to explain who we mean by the Saints of God.

Secondly, I shall shew you, by way of Premise, that the Saints, or Sheep of Christ may fall, yea, fall from Grace; and also how far they may fall: and then proceed to demonstrate the Truth of the Proposition, and prove, *That they cannot fall finally, so as eternally to perish.*

1. Those that I call the Saints of God, or Sheep of Christ, are those who are elected or chosen in Jesus Christ unto Salvation.

2. And such who are elected, are they who are redeemed and purchased by the Blood of Christ, or those whom he died for, or in the stead of.

3. By the Saints, I mean, those who are effectually called, regenerated, justified, sanctified, and adopted; these are the Sheep of Christ that shall never perish, but have Everlasting Life. They are not all such that are of his Fold or Church on Earth, not all the Members of the visible Church, but all the Members of the invisible Church, or mystical Body of Christ.

Secondly, I shall shew you how far the Saints may fall.

Saints may
fall into
great and
grievous
Evils.

1st. They may, if they take not heed, fall into great Evils, nay into most of the worst and abominable Sins any Mortals do commit and are overcome by.

Gen. 9.
19, 20.

Noah was a Saint of God, yet he fell grievously by drinking too much Wine: Noah began to be an Husbandman, and he planted a Vineyard, and he drank of the Wine and was drunken. Though it might be partly through Ignorance of the Nature of the Fruit of the Grape, yet no doubt, by the pleasantness of the Liquor, and Corruption and Infirmity of the Flesh he was overcome.

Lot was a Saint of God, a righteous and just Man, yet he fell worse; not only by Drunkenness, but also by committing Incest with his two Daughters. What are the best of Men, when God leaves them to themselves.

Jacob also, no doubt, greatly sinned and fell, when he told his Father he was Esau, his First-born.

How lamentably did David sin and fall, who was a Man after God's own Heart, save in the Case of Bathsheba the Wife of Uriah.

Peter fell likewise, and that grievously too, not only in denying of his blessed Master, but also by Cursing and Swearing, that he did not know him.

Many more sad Instances I might add of this Nature, but that I love not to rake into the Sores of God's sincere Servants. No doubt the Falls and grievous Sins of the Holy Saints of God, are by the Spirit left on Record for blessed Ends and Purposes.

(1.) To shew what need the best of Men and Women have to pray, and stand upon their Watch at all times.

(2.) To discover the Strength of Indwelling Sin, or the natural Corruptions of the Hearts of such who are truly gracious; and the absolute Necessity there is for all to depend upon the Divine Help and Assistance of God under Temptations.

(3.) That no true Christian that is suffered to fall into Sin, should despair of the pardoning Grace of God.

Saints may
fall from
Degrees in
Grace.

2dly. The Saints of God, or true Believers, may fall from Grace, (as well as into great and immoral Evils, and Acts of Wickedness) I mean, they may fall from Degrees of Grace, or decay in Grace, lose the Strength and Power of Divine Grace, as to the Acts and Exercise thereof. They may decay in Faith, in

Rev. 2. 4. Love, in Humility, Patience, Hope, &c. Yet nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love. Love may cool

cool in the best of Saints, though it shall never be quite extinguished, for nothing can utterly quench it. How low was the Faith of Christ's Disciples, when they said, *We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel.* Luke 24. 21. Job also intimates, that his Hope was cut off: *He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone, and mine Hope hath he removed like a Tree.* Job 19. 10. There are Weaknesses in the Strongest, and Imperfections may come upon those who are perfect, as Mr. Caryl notes; Ebbings after the greatest Flowings, and Declinings after the greatest Heights of Graces, and gracious Actings: *My Days are spent without Hope.* David also said, *I shall one day fall by the Hand of Saul,* so low was his Faith. Job 7. 6.

3dly. God's Saints may also fall from the true Doctrine of the Gospel, which is called a falling from Grace: *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from Grace:* that is, such who seek or desire to be justified by a Law, any Law of Obedience, or by their own Righteousness, for the End of Christ's Death, and the Gospel, is to cast away Man's own Righteousness in point of Justification, and to supply us with the Suretyship-Righteousness of Jesus Christ: and such who seek to be justified any other way, are fallen from Grace, they renounce the Free Grace of God exhibited in the Gospel. The Apostle doth not here refer to a State of Grace, but to the Doctrine or Gospel of Grace, in which is manifest the free Love of God in offering Christ to Sinners for Righteousness and Life. Saints may fall from the Doctrine of Grace. Gal. 5. 4.

4thly. True Believers, or the Sheep of Jesus Christ, may fall from the publick Profession of the Faith, from a visible owning and maintaining their Testimony to Christ and his Gospel, through slavish Fear. Thus not only Peter, but all the other Disciples fell also, they all forsook their Blessed Master, when he was apprehended and led away as a Sheep to the Slaughter; *then all the Disciples forsook him.* All these Disciples had promised him, that they would not forsake him; but when the Trial comes, not one of them stands, they shrunk from professing themselves to be his Disciples and Followers: But they recovered this Fall, and after Christ's Resurrection made a glorious profession of him and his Gospel unto the Death. Saints may fall from the Profession of Faith. Mar. 26. 56.

5thly. The Saints of God may fall, so as to break all their Bones, and grievously to wound their own Consciences: *O Lord, heal me, for my Bones are vexed. My Soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long? My Pain and Anguish is bitter by the Burden of my Sin and Sense of thy Anger.* Again, he saith, *My* Saints may fall and break all their Bones. Psal. 6. 2, 3.

Pfal. 31. *Strength faileth, because of mine Iniquities; and my Bones are consumed. I am feeble and sore broken.* Elsewhere he speaks, as if
 Pfal. 38. 8. all his Bones were broken, all his Strength was gone: Bones, we know, are the Strength of the Body, from thence the Metaphor seems to be taken. Now that is a grievous Fall, which breaks all the Bones.

Saints may be without any Light. 6thly. The Saints, or Sheep of Christ, may so fall, or to such a degree lose the exercise of their Faith and Hope in God, as to be deprived of the Light of God's Countenance, and the Joy of his Salvation; *Restore to me the Joy of thy Salvation:* Pfal. 50. 12. Nay, may wholly be in Darkness for a time, or have no Light: *He hath kindled his Wrath against me; and he counteth me to him as one of his Enemies. I am gone,* ver. 10. I am a lost Man, as if he should say, *Thou hast laid me in the lowest Pit, in Darkness, in the Deeps. Free among the Dead, like the slain that lie in the Grave, whom thou remembrest no more; and they are cut off from thy Hand.—That walk in Darkness, and have no Light.* I do not say that Desertion is always the Fruit and Punishment of Sin, though sometimes it is; yet it is always occasioned through the decay or want of the Exercise of Grace, or through God's withdrawing his sweet Presence and Influences of his Spirit from the Soul.

It may not be amiss here, before I proceed, to answer a Question that some perhaps may have in their Thoughts to propound, viz. What are the Causes that sometimes the Saints fall so far as hath been hinted?

Ansiv. The Grounds or Causes of their falling may be divers.

The Causes of the grievous Falls of God's Elect Ones. 1. It is through the Remainers of Corruption, or Indwelling Sin, that abide in all Believers. The chiefest Saints of God are but renewed in part: Though they are renewed in every Part, there is a Law in the Members that wars against the Law of the Mind: *But I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.* O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of Sin and Death? These two Laws are in all true Believers, or in all regenerate Persons, and they are directly contrary the one to the other; and by reason of this, there is continual War and Combating between them: And evident it is, thro the Power or Policy of the fleshly Part, the Godly are sometimes overcome, not only by common Failings, but fall into great Transgressions also. Our chief Enemies are those of our own House; the Devil could do us little hurt from without, had he not such a strong

strong Party for him, and siding with him in our own Bowels, or within us. This inbred Enemy always lies in wait to betray us; and if we take not the more care, will prevail against us, and at one time or another trip up our Heels, especially that Sin which doth chiefly beset us; most Christians having their Constitution-Sin, though no godly Man hath a beloved Sin: yea, the Seed of all Sin still remains in our base Hearts, and hence it is our Danger is great, which appears may be not so clearly, till the Providence of God brings us unto such a State, Occasion or Company, whereby Satan hath an Opportunity to excite and stir up, or draw forth that Sin or evil Seed into act that lies hid within us.

2. The Cause of those Evils, or grievous Falls that some Christians have and do sustain, are from Satan; who is not only a malicious Enemy, but a strong and cruel Enemy also: Hence called, *A roaring Lion, going about and seeking whom he may devour.* 1 Pet. 5. 8. He is very diligent to observe the natural Inclinations of all Christians, and watcheth the fittest Opportunity to make his Onsets: As when *David* neglected the proper Work and Business God by his Providence called him unto, *The time when Kings go forth to battel,* 2 Sam. 11. *he sent Joab, and tarried at home himself; and then the Enemy* 1. set upon him; he being a walking on the Roof of his House, spied a Woman washing her self; which produced his fearful Fall. Let Christians take heed they are not out of such Employment that God calls them to, and not put an Opportunity into Satan's Hand, by excess of Eating, Drinking, or Idleness, or by gadding or gazing Abroad, like *Dinah, Jacob's Daughter*; and beware how they neglect any Spiritual Duty, in the way of which God hath promised to keep our Souls.

3. The Falls of the Saints may be occasioned by reason of the weakness of their Grace: Faith may be but small, or not in Exercise, and so the Hope and Trust of the Soul may fail. If the Anchor hath not good and firm hold, but should slip, the Ship is in danger; so it is here, Hope is the Anchor of the Soul, it should be therefore both sure and stedfast: *O ye of little Faith, wherefore did you doubt?* Mat. 6. 30. & 8. 25, 26. Christians are in no small danger if their Faith be not strong: Faith is the Shield by which we should quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked. The Apostle alludes to those violent Eph. 6. 16. Temptations, by which Satan strives to enflame Mens Lusts; but right skill to use the Shield of Faith, will soon quench all those Darts of Temptations. A Shield is to defend every part of the Body, and will, if rightly used. So by Faith a Christian is enabled,

abled, when in the true Exercise thereof, to preserve his whole Soul from Evil; but let this Shield go, and Satan quickly prevails: If Satan can perswade a Man there is no such Evil in Sin as God's Word declares, or that it is no great matter, 'tis no wonder he is overcome.

Mat. 26.
35.

4. They sometimes fall, by reason of their own fleshly Confidence, or trusting in their own Strength: *Though all deny thee, yet will not I.* Nay, Peter said unto him, *Though I should die with thee, yet I will not deny thee.* O how dangerous a thing is it to glory in our own Abilities, or trust in Self-confidence! What little knowledge have we of our own Hearts! It was but a few Hours after this, but Peter denied our Saviour, and swore he did not know him. When Men have not their whole dependance on the Grace and Power of God, he oft-times leaves them, that they may see without him they can do nothing: And whenever God withdraws his Divine Assistance from a Person, or leaves him to himself, he falls immediately as Peter did.

2 King. 20.
13.

5. The Falls of the Saints, may be through the Ensnarements and Vain-glory of this wicked World. Hezekiah fell this way; his Heart was lifted up with Pride in beholding all his Glory and Riches, which he shewed to the Princes of the King of Babylon, in a vain-glorious manner: *He shewed them all the House of his precious things, the Silver, and the Gold, and the Spices, and the precious Ointments, and all the House of his Armour, and all that was found in his Treasures; there was nothing in his House, nor in all his Dominions, that Hezekiah shewed them not.* This was his Sin and Fall; this

Ver. 16, 17,
18.

provoked God against him: *And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the Word of the Lord. Behold, the Days come, that all that is in thine House, and that which thy Fathers have laid up in Store to this Day, shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy Sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall be Eunuchs in the Palace of the King of Babylon.*

2 Pet. 3.
17.

6. Sometimes they fall by the Subtilty of Deceivers, who lie in wait to corrupt their Minds, and poison their Souls with their abominable Errors. Hence the Apostle Peter cautions the Saints, to *take heed, lest they being led away by the Error of the Wicked, fall from their own stedfastness.*

7. Many times they fall through slavish Fear, in the Time of Persecution. Many gracious Christians have wanted Courage in that Hour, and have been prevailed with too far to a sinful Compliance

pliance with the Lusts and Wills of their Adversaries, by reason of their *cruel Threats* and *bloody Edicts*; who have nevertheless afterwards been restored again by Repentance, as *Peter* was.

8. Some fall through their Remissness in Duty, or being off their Watch. There is no great fear of falling, if Christians always stand with their Swords in their Hands, and having all their Armour on; *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all Perseverance.* The *Witch* told the wicked Person (as the Story goes) that employed her to do Mischief to a godly Neighbour of his, That she could not touch him, because he was always either Reading, Praying, or Meditating, or to that effect. No Evil, no Sin nor Devil need that Man fear, that is always careful in the true and faithful discharge of his Duty to God. If we are asleep, or slothful, 'tis no marvel that Satan prevails, and wounds our Souls. How easy was it for the *Philistines* to cut off *Sampson's* Hair, and bind him, when he was asleep? or *Jael* to strike a Nail through *Sisera's* Head, he being asleep? Eph. 6. 18.
Judg. 4. 21.

9. And lastly, They may sometimes also fall, by having a greater dependance on that Grace they have already received, or on the Grace that is in them, than on that Grace which is in Christ Jesus; we stand not by virtue of that Grace that is in our Cisterns, but by the Grace that is in God's Fountain: When the Grace already received fails us, that Grace that is in Christ shall supply us, if we by Faith depend upon him; *Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.* How is that done? Why, 2 Tim. 2. 1. to have our whole dependance upon Christ, who as he is our Head and Mediator, hath received the Spirit without measure, to the end he might communicate thereof to all his Members: *'Tis of his Fulness that all we receive, and Grace for Grace.* John 1. 16. But it is not all let out at one time, we have not all our Riches put into our own Hands; No, no, God will not trust it in our own keeping, but it is put into the Hands, or committed to the keeping of our Blessed Trustee, who will give forth Grace unto us as we want it: *But my God shall supply all your Need, according to his Riches in Glory, by Christ Jesus.* Phil. 4. 19. Some poor Saints can't live longer than they see their own Wells are full of Water; they live more, alas, by Sense than by Faith: but if all their Hope and Comfort lies in the Grace they have already received, 'tis no wonder if they soon fall, as being worsted. Let us make some Improvement of this.

APPLICATION.

First. From hence we may infer, what the Reason is we have so many Cautions, or Take-heeds, in the Holy Scriptures, and anticipate a grand Objection that is brought against the Doctrine of the Saints final Perseverance: No marvel that we have so many Warnings given us, seeing our Danger is so great, or that the

Matth. 26. Saints may fall so foully. *Watch and pray always. What I say unto*
 Mark 13. *one, I say unto all, Watch. Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit*
 37. *your selves like Men, be strong. Be sober, and watch unto Prayer.*
 1 Cor. 16. *But let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober. Take*
 13. *heed unto your selves. * And again, Only take heed, and keep thy Soul*
 1 Thess. 5. *diligently, &c. † Take heed, and beware of Covetousness. Again, Take*
 6. *heed that no Man deceive you, &c. Take heed, behold, I have told you*
 * Deut. 4. *all things, &c. He that thinketh he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.*
 9, 15. *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbe-*
 † Luk. 15. *lief, in departing from the living God. And a multitude more of*
 Mark 13. *like Cautions.*

1 Cor. 10. *2dly.* There is another Reason also for these Take-heeds.

12. 1. Because the Evil of the Sins of God's People are so great,
 Heb. 3.12. God is grievously dishonoured by the Falls and gross Enormities of his Saints. How did *David's Sin* provoke God, and cause the Enemy to blaspheme him and despise his holy *Israel!* They are as Wounds he receives in the House of his Friend. Hence he cries
 Jer. 44. 4. *out, O do not this abominable thing which I hate.*

2. The Sins and Falls of God's People, hinder the spreading and blessed Promulgation of the Gospel. It makes the Souls of those who stand fast to mourn, and the Hearts of the Wicked to rejoice, and to insult over them who always watch for their halting.

3dly. Another Reason of these Cautions may be, because there are many false Professors in Churches who may fall finally: therefore from these and other Reasons it appears,

1. That there may be great need of, and good reason wherefore, God gives such Cautions in his Word, though his Elect Ones cannot fall finally.

2. We may also infer from hence, that the Reason why some fall quite away, is, because their Hearts were never upright with God.

3. From hence we may likewise be stirred up to consider and examine our Hearts about our Sincerity; for if not, we may fall away and rise no more.

7. Let

7. Let us bewail our selves upon the account of Indwelling Sin, for oft-times it wounds our Souls, it breaks our Bones, destroys our Peace, spoils our Communion with the Father and the Son, and brings Fears and Doubts upon us about our State, when we are overcome thereby, covering us with Clouds and Darknes.

8. This may be of use also by way of Exhortation, to arm our selves, and to stand upon our Guard, and to resist Satan stedfastly in the Faith, our Life being a Life of Warfare: Let us shew our selves good Souldiers of Jesus Christ, and make a resistance of Sin and Satan, whilst there is Life in our Bodies, or Blood in our Veins.

9. It may teach us also to be aware of Deceivers, since they some times trip up the Heels of many of God's poor Saints.

10. It must needs administer great Succour to such Saints who have fallen, I mean, to Backsliders, and keep them from utter Despair; for though they fall, they shall rise again, as the truly Godly (of whose Falls we read of in the Scripture) always did. Where do we meet with one Godly Person, that the Lord declares so to be, who fell and rose no more? Or that there is no ground left in the Word for us to believe they were saved?

11. Lastly, It may serve to discover the infinite Grace of God in Christ, who hath secured the standing of his own faithful Ones; they are in Christ's Hand, and cannot be pluck'd out, nor perish, let all Enemies do what they can; as I shall now in the next place come to demonstrate, and fully prove, according to my Promise, and the Proposition I have raised, viz.

That all the Saints of God, or Sheep of Jesus Christ, shall be saved, and none of them shall so fall away as eternally to perish. The grand Doctrine opened.

The Truth of this Point I shall prove by divers Arguments and Scriptures.

And my first Argument shall be taken from Eternal Election, which dependeth wholly upon the Absolute Sovereignty of God, who hath Power over all his Creatures, and may do with his own as it seemeth good in his Eternal Wisdom, and good Pleasure of his Will. The first Argument taken from Election.

I shall premise one or two things before I proceed to confirm this Argument.

1. That God set up Jesus Christ as Mediator from Everlasting, as the Head and Spring of our Election; therefore it is said, *We were chosen in him before the Foundation of the World.* It was the only Act of Love, and Free Grace of the Father, therefore not to be ascribed to the Merits of Jesus Christ: For though Christ hath merited our Salvation, yet he did not procure or merit our Election; for Christ himself was the Fruit of this Eternal Blessing and Privilege, it being then the sole Act of God's Sovereign Grace and Love. It follows,

2. That all the Ways which were ordered in the Wisdom of God, for the accomplishing the Ends of Election, are of the Father's appointment also; for whatsoever Christ hath done in working out of our Redemption, it was according to the Purpose and Determinate Counsel of his own Will and Sovereign Goodness. Jesus Christ was first chosen, or elected, by the Father, as Head and Mediator, and only Foundation to bear up the whole Building, which the Almighty designed to raise: The Father's Love, did precede Christ's glorious Mission; therefore he was only of the Father's Designation; *Who verily was fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World, but was made manifest in these last Days.* Christ was first chosen as the Well-head of Grace and Glory, and then others were chosen in him, by and through whom they should be redeemed and raised to a State of Grace and Holiness here, and to Eternal Happiness in Heaven hereafter: *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren.* To the Image of his Son, that is, to Christ's likeness as Mediator, and taking our Nature; not to Christ barely considered as God, for as Christ is God, he is no where said to be *the First-born among many Brethren.* Now this Conformity being absolutely designed in Election, Christ, in the Contrivance and Intention of the Father, was the first Exemplar and Copy of it, or the main Center, to which all must be brought that were given unto him; the Father setting him up, and electing him as Head of all that should be saved, or as the glorious Bridegroom, and therefore it was requisite he should be consulted about those who were to be the Members of his Body, and his own blessed Spouse for ever: And since Christ was also to suffer and undergo such Pain and Sorrow in the purchasing and redeeming of them, it was necessary he should not only freely assent and consent in the Choice of them, but also be certain of the obtaining and securing them all to and for himself for ever, and not

Eph. 1. 4.

1 Pet. 1.
19.

Rom. 8. 29.

not run the Hazard of injoying or not injoying of them ; which must follow he did, if the Doctrin of some Men of dark Minds were true.

To proceed, it may not be amiss to consider what is contained in the Bowels of my first Argument, *viz.* that there is a peculiar People, or some certain Persons (as personally considered) of the lost Children of the first *Adam*, who are Elected or Chosen of God, in Christ, from all Eternity, of his own Sovereign Grace and good Pleasure, ordained unto Everlasting Life ; and that this Decree of Election doth prevent their final falling, or make it impossible that any of them should ever so *apostatize* as eternally to perish.

The first Argument explained.

The Argument being thus fairly stated, it calls upon me to do two things.

First, To prove that there is such a particular and personal Election of a peculiar People of the lost Sons of Adam.

Secondly, To shew how this prevents their final falling, and makes it impossible that any of them should ever so *apostatize* as eternally to perish.

A little to open the first of these.

1. I say of *peculiar Persons*, which denotes it belonging to them only and to none else ; others are passed by, or not afforded by any such Divine Act of Grace the like Privilege : they are God's *Jewels*, or his *peculiar Treasure*, though until called and cleansed, or their inward Filth and Pollution purged away, they cannot be delighted in by him, or be beloved with a *Love of Complacency* ; though from Eternity God did love all his, with a *Love of good Will*, purpose of Grace and of *Benevolence*. Mah. 3. 17.

I say *personally Elected* ; that is, the Objects of this Grace, or of this Election were singled out and pitched upon by Name ; not with respect had to such or such Qualifications foreseen in them, they being repenting, believing, and holy Persons, but chosen in Christ, the Head of Election, that they should believe, should repent, and *should be Holy and without blame before him in Love*. They are chosen that they may be Holy ; not because they were Holy, or God foresaw they would be Holy. Eph. 1. 4.

I say, they were ordained to Everlasting Life. Now to predestinate, decree, or ordain, denotes the same thing, and signifies the

absolute Purpose of God to bring them into a State of Grace here, through Jesus Christ, and to Eternal Glory and Happiness hereafter : Hence it is said, *As many as were ordained to Eternal Life, believed,* or appointed ; and he that ordered or ordained the End, ordained the Means also, and so prepared them for Everlasting Life.

They were chosen in Christ ; in the Mediator, in their Blessed Head, that their standing might be secured through their Union with him, and his Righteousness being imputed to them, according to God's Eternal Purpose.

Particular Election proved. 2. And further, to make good the first Part of what I have laid down, *viz.* That there is such a particular Election ; what lies more clear in the Word of God, and the Election of *Jacob,*

Rom.9.11. I shall here first mention, as a full Proof of what I say ; *For the Children being not yet Born, neither having done Good or Evil, that the Purpose of God, according to Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth.* Here the Apostle designedly or on purpose confirms, not only the Doctrine of *Personal Election,* but also that of Preterition, of a passing by, or rejection of the other ; and all resulting from the Eternal Purpose and Good Pleasure of God's

Rom.9.13. Will ; *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* The main scope of *Paul* in this place is to shew, that God hath not cast off all *Israel,* that is, those who are the true *Israel,* or such who are the Children of the Promise, or that do belong to Christ according to the Election of Grace ; see 5, 6, 7, 8 Verses : therefore they that run the Love of God and Election here spoken of, to the Posterity of *Jacob,* and Reprobation to the Posterity of *Esau,* and will not have it to be understood of their particular Persons, do palpably abuse the sacred Text and Drift of the Holy Ghost. Now that all Men may know that Election doth run to, or take hold of particular Persons, and that not for any foreseen Faith or Holiness in them, *Paul* saith, *The Children being not yet born, neither having done Good or Evil.* And therefore adds, not of Works, that is, of foreseen Worthiness or Desert in *Jacob,* but that the Purpose of God, according to Election might stand, (that is, stand firm as an Act of God's Sovereign Love and Grace only) and abide a blessed Truth against all the Opposition and Cavils of cloudy Minds. I might have mention'd *Abraham, Isaac, Moses,*

Jer. 1. 5. *David,* and others ; also *Jeremiah,* of whom God says, *Before I formed thee in the Belly, I knew thee ;* that is, I knew thee to be one of them that I had chosen and given to my Son, or one of mine

Elect

Elect Ones; and I sanctified and ordained thee a Prophet.

Moreover, in the New Testament we find, that our Saviour calls his Disciples by Name, and tells them, That he knew whom he had chosen, excluding Judas; he must therefore intend their Eternal Election, for as I said before, Judas was chosen to the Apostleship: also Paul by Name, Jesus Christ declares (to Ananias) was a chosen Vessel, not only as an Apostle, but one also comprehended in the Election of Grace. Do but observe the Nature of his Conversion, and what he was before and when called by the special Grace of God. Moreover of this number and sort, were those that the Lord speaks of in Elias's Time which Paul mentions, I have reserved to my self seven thousand Men who have not bowed the Knee to Baal. Though it is a certain Number put for an uncertain as to us, yet all their particular Persons were chosen, and known to God; Even so at this present Time also there is a Remnant, according to the Election of Grace. God had some particular Persons then whom he had from everlasting elected, and so he hath now; According as he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without blame before him in Love: Us, as such and such particular Persons, not such of such and such Qualification, viz. as being Believers, obedient and holy Persons; No, no, but that they might believe, &c. Election will produce Faith: it is, because they are elected that they do believe; But ye believe not, because ye are not of my Sheep as I said unto you; that is, not such as were ordained to believe, and ordained to Eternal Life. And as many as were ordained unto Eternal Life, believed: As it was hinted before, Christ hath elect Persons, or Sheep, that yet believe not; I have much People (saith he to Paul) in this City.

Unto these Testimonies I shall add one or two more; as that of Paul, touching the Saints at Thessalonica; Knowing, Brethren beloved, your Election: For our Gospel came not to you in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, &c. By the evident Operations of God's Spirit, the Apostle knew they were elected: We cannot know our Election, but by special Vocation, or as it is manifest in the Fruits and Effects of it. There is a Knowledge of Things, (as our Annotators note on this place) *à priori*, when we argue from the Cause to the Effect: So *à posteriori*, when we argue from the Effect to the Cause. Now what is Election, but a choosing some out of others? Thus the Angels that stand were elected, and the rest were left to the Power they had, or passed by, or reprobated. Peter also confirms the Doctrine of personal Election,

John 13.

18.

Rom. 11. 4.

Verse 5.

John 10.

26.

Acts 13.

48.

Acts 18.

10.

1 Thess. 1.

4. 5.

1 Tim. 5.

21.

calling

1 Pet. 1. 2. calling the Persons to whom he wrote his Epistle, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, or his Eternal Purpose*; and therefore were separated unto God by special Grace, or effectual Calling; through sanctification of the Spirit to Obedience, &c. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are concerned in our Salvation; the *Father elects*, this is principally ascribed to the *first Person* in the Godhead; the *Son purchaseth*, he redeems; and the *Holy Spirit renews*, calls, and sanctifies. Now the Purchase of the Son extends no further than the Election of the Father; nor the Sanctification of the Spirit, further than the Purchase or Redemption of the Son: Sanctification here, takes in the whole Work of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration and actual Holiness, to the final fitting and making the Soul meet for the Eternal Inheritance.

So much shall serve to prove that there is an Election of particular Persons.

If I am Elected, I shall be saved; if not, I shall be damned. **Object.** But may be some will Object, If this be so, what need any Man concern himself about his Salvation, as to seek it or labour after it: for if he be elected, he shall be saved; but if not, let him do what he can, he cannot be saved, he cannot frustrate God's Decree, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his Mouth?

This grand objection answered. **Ans.** 1. I answer, All Mankind are under the strongest Obligation imaginable to God, as he is their Creator, and they his Creatures; as he is their only Lord and Supreme-Governour, they are bound to fear him, and obey his Laws, let him do what he will with them. Is not that a base and fordid Principle in a Servant or Subject, to do nothing but for meer Self-profit and Advantage?

2. *Paul* was certain of a Crown of Life, yet knew it was his Duty to press towards *the Mark for the Prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus*, and to keep down his Body. He strove as strenuously against Sin, as if Salvation could be merited by so doing; so that his Election took him not off from a diligent Care in use of Means, in order to his attaining to Eternal Happiness.

3. God hath as well ordained the Means, as the End, as I newly told you; both are appointed of God, and equally under his absolute Decree: Men are not elected to Salvation, but also to Sanctification and Holiness.

Mr. Mead. 4. "We are not to look upon the Decree of God (as a Reverend Minister well observes) for a Rule of Life, but the Word of the Gospel; *secret things belong to God*, &c. The Decree can neither be a Rule of Life, nor Ground of Hope, but the Precept and the Promise, &c. He that leads an ungodly Life, and pursues

pursues his filthy Lusts, may assure himself, so living and dying, he shall be damned for ever: He that believes not in Christ, but rejects him, and despiseth all the Offers of his Grace to the End of his Life, no Decree can save him; therefore if he will go on in Sin presumptuously, let him take what will follow. On the other hand, he that doth believe in Christ, and conforms to the Holy Gospel, need not doubt of Salvation, no Decree can hinder him of Salvation. Men ought to endeavour to believe and repent, and close with Christ upon a Peradventure; *If God peradventure will* 2 Tim. 2. 25. *give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth.*

5. Because God hath absolutely determined the Time of thy Life, or how long thou shalt live: And *there is a Time thou canst not pass*; Wilt thou therefore forbear eating, or use of Physick, to preserve thy Life, and say, If I eat not, I shall live my appointed Time? What signify Means or Medicines, I will take no Physick, no Potion? for if the Time is come God hath set in his Eternal Decree, I shall die, nothing can save my Life: Would not all think you were under a fearful Temptation and Delusion of the Devil?

6. Did not God absolutely tell *Paul*, that he had given him the Acts 28. Lives of all that were with him in the Ship, and that none of 22, 23. them should perish? Yet he said, *Unless these abide in the Ship, ye* Ver. 31. *cannot be saved.* Whosoever therefore that doth neglect the Means God hath appointed, in order to the obtaining the End, let it be what it will, doth but tempt God, and comply with the Devil, let his Pretence be what it will.

7. No Decree of God necessitates Men to sin: for though the Free Grace of God is the absolute Cause of Election, and no fore- Jude 4. seen Faith or Holiness; yet foreseen Wickedness, Unbelief and Disobedience, is the procuring Cause of the Reprobation and of the Damnation of them that perish: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy* Hof. 13.9. *self, but in me is thy help.*

8. Were any ever damned that did what they could in the use of all Means under the Light of the Gospel, to be saved? *Brethren,* God (may justly and) will condemn Men for their not improving their *one Talent.* Nor will it be a good Plea for such to say, *I* Mat. 25. *knew thou wert an hard Man, reaping where thou hast not sown, &c.* 27. Thus some Men seem to charge God, *I am not Elected.* There is an Election of Grace, of special and distinguishing Grace, and Man hath no Power in his own Will; and God doth not give me Power to believe, and will he damn me? Doth he expect to reap *where*

where he hath not sown, and gather where he hath not strowed? Such shall have no Excuse, as our Saviour shews, at the Great Day. *Annotators.* The Lord of that Servant shews, the Fault lay in his own Sloth and Wickedness; and his dread of his Lord's Severity, (as our Annotators note) was but a frivolous Pretence and unreasonable Excuse; for if he had feared any such thing, he should have done what he could; he should have put out his Money to the Exchange, and then he should have received his own with increase. Thus God may as justly another Day reply upon those who think to excuse their lewd and wicked Lives, their unbelief and contempt of his Word, from their not being Elected, and not having Power of themselves to believe and repent, not receiving his efficacious Grace; *O ye wicked and slothful Wretches.* May he not say, did ye suspect or fear you were not elected? Why did you not then give all diligence to attend upon the Means, and to make your Calling sure, as all they do that are elected? Do you plead the Power of your own Wills, to repent one while, and that you wanted Power at another time, and that I gave you not my special Grace? But had you not Power to keep from Taverns and Alehouses, to keep from Lying, Stealing, Swearing, and other prophane Deeds of Darknes? Had you not Power to read, to hear my Word, to pray? If you had done your uttermost in improving of the Talent I gave you, would I have been wanting to you? But since you did not that, why should I trust you with more? Brethren, are these Mens Eyes Evil, because God's Eye is Good? Is he unjust in giving effectual Grace to some, because he doth not bestow it upon all? Had he not took hold of a few, the whole Lump of Mankind would have destroyed themselves, and none would have been saved. Was God unjust in electing some of the Angels, because he passed by others of them?

9. In the Day of Judgment, God will be just, and all Mens Mouths shall be stopped: This you may assure your selves of, *He will be justified when he judges, and clear when he condemns:* He that had not on the Wedding-garment, was speechless. God will not then proceed with Men upon Election and Reprobation, but upon their believing, or not believing: *He will render to every Man according to their Works.* All Mens Mouths shall be stopped, and every Man's Conscience witness against him. Alas, Men do not act or exercise that humane Faith in respect of the Report of the Gospel, which they do in respect of other matters and things that are made known to them, or do not bring forth the Fruit of such an historical Faith. But so much to this Objection.

Now

Now I should come to the second thing, *viz.* to shew how Election doth tend to prove and fully demonstrate the happy State of all Christ's Sheep, or that it is impossible they should, any one of them, so fall away as eternally to perish. But that must be the Work of the next Day.

J O H N X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

MY Brethren, I am upon proving the Truth of the Proposition, or Point of Doctrine that I have raised from our Text, *viz.*

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Sermon  
VIII.  
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That all the Saints of God, Believers, or Sheep and Lambs of Jesus Christ, shall be saved; and that none of them shall so fall away as eternally to perish.

My first Argument to do this, was taken from Eternal Election. In speaking to which I told you I should,

First, Prove that there is an Election of particular Persons; and that I have done with, and now shall proceed to the next thing.

Secondly, I shall shew, that the Nature of Election is such, that it secures all that are in it from final Falling; or fully serves to demonstrate, they must and shall all eternally be saved.

And to make this good;

1st. It is because Election is Absolute, not a Conditional Election, depending on the Obedience or good Behaviour of the Creature. *First Arg. The Election of Grace proves that the Saints cannot finally fall.*
The Decree of God on his part is irrevocable; God will not go back from his Purpose to save his People, nor shall their Unworthiness or Miscarriages make it void: it is the high, unalterable, and supreme Law of Heaven; therefore it is said to be, according

to his Eternal Purpose and Counsel. His Counsel and Thoughts of his Heart shall stand for ever. 'Tis that that all subordinate Means must terminate in, and all inferiour Administrations must be accommodated thereunto, the Salvation of the Elect being the grand Design of God, whereby to exalt and magnify his highest Glory; that should his glorious Contrivance, and no less gracious Purpose and Designment herein miscarry, nothing in Heaven or Earth could countervail the Damage: therefore it could not stand consistent with his Wisdom, either to revoke it, or leave it at an Uncertainty, or obnoxious to Disappointment; which he must needs do, if it was possible any of the Elect should perish; or that it should be laid upon the Foundation of the wavering Principles, and uncertain Will and Obedience of the Creature. Now the best Constitutions, States and Kingdoms upon Earth, are liable to Mutation, and Mens Decrees and Purposes, however Absolute designed, may fail, their Minds may alter, or they may see cause to change their Counsels, not being able to foresee future Events, or what Inconveniences might arise; or some after them may arise, who may carry on a different Interest, or Enemies may invade them, conquer them, and spoil all their Designs and Purposes.

Mr. Cole.

But it is not so here, God foresaw all future Events, his Mind alters not; he is of one Mind, and who can turn him? And none can hinder him in the accomplishing of his own Eternal Purpose; For the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? &c. Declaring from the Beginning, and from Ancient Times.—My Counsel shall stand, and I will do all my Pleasure.—Yea, I have spoken it, I will bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. The Thoughts of his Heart shall stand to all Generations; therefore their standing is firm who are elected, and none of them shall perish. The Decree and Purpose of God of Election, is as absolute as that of Day and Night, Winter and Summer; or that of God's not destroying the World again by Water; or that of God's Decree and Purpose, of sending Christ into the World to die for our Sins.

Eph. 1. 4. 2dly. It is, because they are chosen or elected in Christ, in an immutable, an unchangeable, and an Eternal Head. What was the Reason Adam stood not, notwithstanding his Power and Abilities were such? Why he stood not in Christ, was not fixed on Christ; but all true Believers are in Christ, chosen in him, he is the Head of the Eternal Election, as Mediator. In Election he is

to be considered as the Head; and all the Father hath given him, as the Members of his Body, *chosen in him*, and *united to him*: Therefore their standing in Christ, by virtue of Election, is like that of the Election of their Head. Now can Christ cease being an Elect Head? Every one will say, No, that is impossible: No more can they cease from being Elect Members. This of Election in Christ, presupposeth an Union; and there was a decretive Union from Eternity, and that influenced their actual Union in Time: and as certainly as Christ died, rose again, and ascended, (in the fulness of Time) who was decretively *a Lamb slain before the Foundation of the World*, so will God's Decree of Election in Christ as certainly bring in all the Elect into actual Union with Christ, and carry them all to Heaven, (whither their Head, as *the Fore-runner for us, is already entered*) as sure as he is now there. But you will hear more of this when I come to speak of that Argument, simply taken from their Union with Christ.

3dly. That the Saints of God, or Sheep of Jesus Christ, by virtue of their Election, cannot fall away so as to perish for ever, doth appear evident from one or two express Scriptures; see *Rom. 8. 28. We know all things work together for Good to them that love God, who are the Called according to his Purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* See here, and I beseech you consider it, and weigh it well, for this Text is enough to convince (one would think) all the Opposers of this glorious Truth in the World, or silence them for ever: The Apostle begins the Happiness and eternal Salvation of all that shall be saved, and the certainty of it in Election, *Whom he did foreknow*; that is, whom he in his good Pleasure did *pitch upon*, or think good to give to his Son, to be his Spouse, or Members of his Mystical Body; *he also did predestinate* them, and all them, them, and none but them; he elected, chose, or appointed them, *to be conformed to the Image of his Son*, that is, in Holiness, &c. but more of that by and by: and whom he so *predestinated*, or elected, *he called*, and them he justified, and them and every one of them he glorified, or will so call, justify and glorify. This is that place of Scripture which is called by some, the *Golden Chain*, by others the *Chain of Salvation*; and it may very well be so called: nothing can be more clear than this, *viz.* That those who are elected, shall

be called; justified, and be all as certainly glorified. 'Tis not in the Power of all the Enemies of the Soul to break this Chain, one part is so linked to the other; it begins in Election, and ends in Glorification: So that our Election is a forcible Argument to prove there is no final falling for any one of the Sheep of Jesus Christ.

4^{thly}. It is because the Means is ordained by the unalterable Decree of God; as well as the End: True, we grant, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*: And it is he that indureth to the End that shall be saved; or such only that mortify the Deeds of the Body; or, *Who by continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality; Eternal Life*. But, pray Brethren, consider that God hath ordained all his Elect Ones, to be holy, and without blame before him in love; or as Paul, in that to the Romans before mentioned, *to be conformed to the Image of his Son*. Grace shall be given to them to renew them, and to carry on, and finally at last perfect Holiness in them: *For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*. No Man can do good Works, until created and formed by the Lord: *This People have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my Praise*. They shall bring forth Fruit to the praise of his Glory; see that emphatical Text, *John 15.16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should bring forth Fruit, and that your Fruit should remain*: Not only ordained to Eternal Life, as the End of their Election, but also ordained to bring forth Fruit, as the Way and Means of obtaining it: Nay more, that *they shall persevere in bringing forth Fruit; that your Fruit should remain*.

(1.) They shall not cease bearing Fruit, because united to such a Root, a Root that hath so much Sap in it, or grafted into such an Olive Tree: and they shall be made Partakers of the Fatness thereof; *Because I live, ye shall live also*. Because their Root lives, they shall live; or because their Head lives, they shall live. Christ is the Head of Election, the Head of his Mystical Body, and of every Member of it; a Head of Influence, *and he lives*: therefore they that are his true Branches, or his Members, according to Election, *shall live also*; they shall live a Life of Holiness, the Life of Grace here, and the Life of Glory hereafter.

(2.) They shall bring forth Fruit, because the Holy Spirit is given to them, and shall remain in them for ever: This Water will make them fruitful; They *spread forth their Root by a River, and shall not see when Heat cometh; but their Leaf shall be green, and shall*

Heb. 12.

14.

Mat. 24.

13.

Rom. 8.13.

Rom. 2.7.

Eph. 1.4.

Eph. 2.10.

Isa. 43.21.

Rom. 11.

17.

John 14.

19.

John 14.

16.

shall not be careful in the Year of Drought, neither shall cease from yielding Fruit. Now if this be so, if they are elected to use the Means, or ordained to be Holy; if it is the absolute Decree of God, that they *shall hold on their way*, and are united to such a Head, that their Fruit shall remain, and they shall not cease yielding Fruit, then they cannot finally fall away, Election secures them, they shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life: But all this is true, therefore they cannot perish. Jer. 17. 8.
Job 17. 9.

sibly. I argue from the Nature of the Election of the Blessed Angels: All the Angels that stand were elected, and it was this that secures them and preserves them from falling: Those that fell were not elected; and as evident it is, not one of the Elect Angels are fallen, nor can fall. I marvel any thinking Christians should doubt of Election, as it results from the absolute Sovereignty of God's Grace, or good Pleasure of his Will, since God by Election took hold of some of the Angels, as well as some of the lost Sons and Daughters of Adam. Was God unjust, because he did not secure, by his unchangeable Decree, the standing of all the Angels, but left some of them, and only fix'd upon so many as he in his own Wisdom thought good? They may as well charge this upon the Divine Majesty of God, as so to charge the Doctrine of particular Election of lost Sinners. *Brethren,* Though Christ is not a Redeemer of Angels, the Elect Angels needing none, yet he is the Head of Angels, and a Confirmer of them; He is the Head of Principalities and Powers: by him, and for him were all things created that are in Heaven, that are in Earth, visible and invisible; whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him. Col. 1. 16. Christ is God, and he is the preserver of the Elect Angels; they are committed to him, and under his Power, and he upholds them, though he never died for them; and shall we think he will not preserve his Elect Saints, or that their Election should not as absolutely secure them, for whom he as their blessed Lord and Head died, and to whom he is a Redeemer, as the Elect Angels to whom he is only a Confirmer? *And ye are compleat in him, who is the Head of Principalities and Powers:* Col. 2. 10. Ye are compleat, fully compleat; ye stand in him, in his Righteousness, compleat, who is your Head, and shall be preserved in him, in whom you are elected to everlasting Life.

sibly. Because they are chosen to Salvation, that is, to enjoy and possess Salvation; if they have it not, the Decree of God is frustrated: but his Eternal Decrees are as firm as Mountains of Brass.

Bras. If the Decree of God, in appointing his Elect to Salvation, be frustrated or made void, either it is done by himself, or by others. Now it cannot be made void by himself, because it is an absolute Decree, his Mind alters not, and none else are able to do it: And as to the Slips and Miscarriages of the Elect themselves, God foresaw all their Evils from Everlasting; and as that hindered not their Election, so before it shall never turn them out of it. *But we*
 2 Theff. 2. *are bound to give Thanks always to God for you, Brethren, because*
 13. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation, &c.* From the beginning, that is, from before the World began, or from Eternity; for the absolute Decrees of God, according to his Eternal Counsel, are from Everlasting. After the Apostle had shewed these Saints that there would come a falling away from the Faith, and that many would be deceived and damned for ever, to comfort and encourage them against the fear of *final Apostacy*, he brings this in the 13th Verse, *But we are bound to give Thanks for you, Brethren, beloved of the Lord, &c.* You need not fear, as if he should say, of being deceived, or of perishing by dangerous Errors, or otherwise.

1. Because you are beloved of the Lord.

2. And also are elected to Salvation; and because beloved, therefore elected: Whomsoever God doth absolutely appoint to this or that End, he will assist or enable to do whatsoever Means is necessary in order to that End. Now the Elect are chosen to Salvation, to inherit Eternal Life; if therefore any of them miss of it, his Decree and Purpose is frustrated, which cannot be. We have another Text of the like Nature with this; *For God hath not appointed*
 Isa. 46. 10. *us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.* From
 1 Theff. 5. *hence the Apostle argues, that they needed not to doubt of their Sal-*
 9. *vation: and by what preceeds, it appears, that Election is a great Motive to Holiness; as when a Man that is sure of the Victory will fight courageously, Let us who are of the Day, or Children of Light, not of Night, nor of Darkness, be sober, putting on the Breast-plate of Faith and Love; for God hath not appointed us to Wrath, &c.* Children of the Night shall perish, but none of the Children of the Light ever shall. The Apostle ascends to the original Cause of it, which is God's absolute Decree of Election; Salvation would wholly else depend upon the uncertainty of Man's Will, and not upon the immutable and unchangeable Will and Purpose of God. This is more than appointing the Means, it is an appointing the Persons, not appointed to Salvation upon the foresight of Man's Faith,

Faith, because Faith is the Gift of God, and proceeds from his Counsel, that's appointed too : else a Man may say, that I might be saved, I must thank God ; but that I am saved, I must thank my self, because it was left to the liberty of my own Will whether I would believe, and be saved, or no. Two things are necessary in our Salvation ; (1.) The Merits of Christ's Blood : (2.) Faith to apply it ; by which God's Image is restored to us, and preserved in us : and both these we have by his own free Grace, through Christ Jesus, as the Fruit of his electing Love.

7thly. It doth further plainly appear, that Election does eternally secure all Christ's Sheep, all true Believers, from final Falling, or everlasting Ruin, from the words of our Blessed Lord himself ; *For there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they should deceive the very Elect.* Mat. 24. Now is it not easy for any Man from hence to draw an Argument, that the Elect cannot fall finally away, so as to perish ? for if it is so, that they cannot be deceived, *i. e.* finally, or take in damnable Errors, so as to perish, of which our Saviour speaks ; for the Elect have otherwise in a great measure, and in many things (I mean some of them) been deceived ; but it is impossible they should be so deceived as to be damned. And if this be granted, then Election secures them, they cannot finally fall. If they might perish eternally, they might be deceived with damnable Heresies, and bring upon themselves swift and utter Destruction ; but they cannot be so deceived, because they are the Elect, therefore they cannot fall away so as to perish.

Arg. If the Election of Grace be absolute, as the Decree of Day and Night, or as that of Christ dying for our Sins : If we are elected in Christ as the Head, we being all Members, given to him to make up his Mystical Body ; if those that are elected, shall be called, justified, and glorified ; if the Means, as well as the End, be under God's absolute Decree and Purpose ; if our Election doth as absolutely secure us from final Apostacy, as the Election of the Holy Angels does secure them ; if we are elected to Salvation ; if it be impossible for any of the Elect to be finally deceived ; then none of them, none of the Elect, or no Sheep or Lambs of Jesus Christ, can so fall away as to perish eternally : but all this is true, therefore none of them can so perish.

So much shall suffice as to the first Argument, to prove the Saints final Perseverance.

Secondly,

2d. Arg. *Saints can not finally fall, taken from the nature of God's Love to them.* Secondly, My next Argument shall be taken from the Nature of God's Infinite Love to all his Saints: The Love of the Father, and Love of the Son, doth secure them from perishing; it is wonderful, it passeth all Understanding: It is because God's Love is set upon them; and it is such a Love, What a Love?

Jer. 31. 3.

1. I answer, It is an Everlasting Love: *The Lord appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an Everlasting Love, &c.* It is a Love from Everlasting, therefore it must be a first Love, an early Love; and because he loved them from Eternity, he elected them from Eternity.

John 17. 23.

2. It is a firm Love, a strong Love, an endeared Love, nay, an inconceivable Love: *I in them, and thou in me; and that the World may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me:* A Love of the same Nature, of the same Quality. O! what is the Nature of that Love the Father hath to Jesus Christ? Who can conceive of it, much less express it? It is impossible for us to comprehend how firm, strong and endearing it is; but thus he loves all his Elect Ones: Christ as Mediator is the Object of the Father's Love, so are all his Members: The same Love that is let out to the Head, as to the Nature of it, is let out to his Mystical Body, and to every particular Member thereof.

Zeph. 3. 17

3. The Father's Love is a Love of Delight: He is said to love others with a Love of Pity, but he loves his Saints with a Love of Complacency: *He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his Love; he will rejoice over thee with singing.* He takes delight and satisfaction in his Love; not in our Love to him, but in his Love to us. Again, it is said, *As the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*

Isa. 62. 5.

Rom. 8. 38, 39.

4. The Love of the Father is an inseparable Love, nothing can separate his Love from his Elect; like as nothing could separate his Love from his own Son, so nothing can separate his Love from his Saints: *For I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in, Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Annotat. on

2 Cor. 4.

13.

I am fully assured, as some read it, not by any special Revelation, but by the same Spirit of Faith which is common to all Believers, neither fear of Death, nor hope of Life; nor shall the Devils be able, or evil Angels, though they are Principalities or Powers, though of that Rank, or according to others, (who by Principa-
lities

lities understand the wicked Potentates of the Earth) nor shall cruel Persecutors be able, nor shall Things present, whatever Temptations, Miseries or Afflictions which you now lie under, or may hereafter meet with; neither height of Honour, or Spiritual or Civil Advancement, nor depth of worldly Disgrace, or Abasement, or the deepest of Spiritual Desertion that can befall them, nor any other Creature or Thing, *shall be able to separate us (who believe, or are united to Christ) from the Love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Arg. *That which no Power of Earth or Hell, no Potentate, no Enemy, no Friend, or no thing whatsoever is or shall be able to do or effect, cannot be done, or it is impossible it should be done. But no Power of Earth or Hell, no Potentate, no Enemy, no Friend, or nothing whatsoever, is able, or shall be able to separate true Believers from the Love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord: Therefore it is impossible any such should fall so away as eternally to perish.*

Object. But stay, say some, your Argument is not good; for Sin may separate them from the Love of God: We grant indeed from what the Apostle says, that nothing else can do it, but Sin may; *for your Iniquities have separated between you and your God.*

Isa. 59. 2.

Ans^w. I answer, It is a mistake, Sin cannot separate them who are his beloved Ones from his Love; the Scripture mentioned, proves not that such who are true Believers may be separated from God's Love, or that Sin can finally separate them from their God: therefore consider,

1. That I deny not but Sin may separate such from God, who are his People only by visible Profession, or only his in an externally legal Covenant, as the whole House of *Israel* at that Time was, when the Prophet uttered those Expressions: and it hath separated them, and the greatest part of them, I mean, for ever; for the Jews, for the Sin of Unbelief, and rejecting of Christ, were utterly cast off.

2. Sin may also separate God's Elect Ones from his sensible, sweet, and comfortable Presence; for a time God may hide his Face from his dearest Children, or bring them into great Afflictions.

3. *Israel*, when in the Babylonian Captivity, was said to be separated from God, because they were separated from his Temple and visible Worship, where he promised them his Presence. But it doth not follow from hence, Sin can ever finally separate

God, and his Love, which is eternal and abiding, from those he hath chosen in Jesus Christ.

To make it appear yet more fully, that Sin cannot separate them from the Love of God for ever, consider,

First, That though it is true, as I have before shewed, that God's Beloved Ones may grievously sin against him, yet they cannot sin away his Love and Affection. And to make this appear, hear what God himself saith; *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments;—If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments*: What then, will he take away his loving-Kindness from them, and cast them off for ever? O no, *Then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquities with Stripes; nevertheless my loving Kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail; my Covenant I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Mouth.*

Psal. 89.
30, 31, 32.

Object. This is spoken of Christ, My loving-Kindness I will not utterly take from him, &c.

Ans. 1. I grant that it is spoken of Christ, but not of Christ personally, but Christ mystically considered: Did Christ personally ever forsake God's Law? Besides, doth not God say, *his Children?*

2. Christ and Believers are considered as one, in regard of their mystical Union with him.

3. Doth the Covenant of Grace made with Christ, respect his Person only? Or doth it not refer to all that are in him, or given to him, or all his true spiritual Seed? But to put it out of doubt, read the next Words, and tremble, whoever you be that assert, that the Elect may perish for ever: *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie to David.* Well, what is that which God hath sworn by his Holiness, and will not lie to do for David, the true David, that is his own beloved Son? pray read the 36th verse, *His Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me.* His Seed, that is, all those that are given to him, or that are the Children of the Promise, such who are renewed by his Grace, or born of him by his Spirit, these are his Seed, and all these shall endure for ever: And to make it good, God hath sworn to Christ as Mediator, by his Holiness, they shall endure, that is, remain his Children for ever, or abide in his Covenant to Eternity, and therefore they can't be separated from his Love by Sin. Now dare any go about, through their great Ignorance, to charge God with Perjury? O let them dread the Consequents of their evil Opinion.

Object

Object. Those of the Seed of Christ, or Believers who sin, and afterwards do humble themselves, we grant, shall endure, or be restored; and they are such that the Spirit of God speaks of in that Psalm you mentioned.

Answer. In answer to this, Brethren, pray consider, that God hath promised Grace to all his Children that fall into Sin, to humble them: Repentance is in the Covenant of Grace; a broken and tender Heart he will give them, not only at first when they believe, but afterwards, when through Temptations and humane Frailties they are overtaken and sin against him; 'tis not a Repentance of their own getting, whereby to oblige God to return again to them. But pray see what he says to his beloved Ones, *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the Spirit shall fail before me, and the Souls that I have made. For the Iniquity of his Covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; and he went on frowardly in the Way of his Heart.* Well, and what will God do with him now, he hath sinned, and that grievously too, and God hath afflicted him as sorely, smote him in his Wrath; or, as a Father seems to do when his Child that hath grievously offended him, but he is not humbled, he repents not, but goes on frowardly under the Rod: shall he perish? stay a little, see what God says, verse 18. *I have seen his Ways, and will heal him:* although I might justly destroy him, (as if God should say) and leave him to perish, yet of my meer Mercy, and for my own Name sake, I will pity him, I will give him Repentance; I will heal him, he shall mourn for his Sins, and I will restore Comfort to him, and to his Mourners. Alas, till God turn us, we turn not; therefore a godly Man says, with poor Ephraim, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote on my Thigh.* After God hath graciously touched our Hearts, convinced us of our Sins, or changed our Minds, we repent, and alter our Practices; and God will give Grace thus to do. He remembers his Covenant and his Oath to our David, &c. *I create the Fruits of the Lips; Peace, Peace, to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; I will heal him.* I will in a wonderful manner, and by my own Grace and Almighty Power, do all, and have all the Praise to my self.

Object. But may be the Persons you speak of, were a praying People, they were found in their pious Duties, and so their Sins were forgiven, and they healed.

Ans. How fain would some Men eclipse the Free Grace of God, and find something in the Creature to oblige God to give the Mercy promised.

Rom. 8.
26. 1. I deny not but God will be sought unto for all the good Things promised to Believers; But who is it that puts it into our Hearts to seek him, or helps and influences our Spirits to pray unto him? *We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with Groanings that cannot be uttered.*

Iſa. 43. 2. Yet nevertheless, see what God saith of the People before mentioned; *But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel, ver. 22. Thou hast not brought me the small Cattel of thy Burnt-offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy Sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an Offering, nor wearied thee with Incense, ver. 23. 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 wearied me with thine Iniquities, ver. 24.* See now what a People these were, they had not so much as done the least things commanded, had not brought the small Cattel for a Sacrifice, nor did they pray, nor seek the Face of God: Yet that God may magnify his Grace, see what he speaks in the next Words, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy Transgression for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Sins.* Nothing you see, can take off God's Love from his Covenant-Children; nothing is done by our own Merits, or for the sake or worth of our Duty, but all wholly of his own Mercy and Goodness.

Secondly, To make it further manifest that the Sins of Believers cannot separate them from the Love of God, is evident; because Jesus Christ hath fully satisfied his Justice for all their Sins, he hath paid all their Debts; Wrath and Divine Vengeance cannot hurt the Elect of God, in whose stead Christ died: Should their Sins work their Ruin, and destroy their Souls, it would follow that Christ made no perfect Compensation for them; if he hath, it would be injustice in God, should he let out his vindictive Wrath against them for their Sins: *Surely he hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows, &c.* *All we like Sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all.*

Iſa. 53. 4.
5.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Because they have an Advocate with the Father. Christ pleads the Merits of his own Blood, the Satisfaction he hath made for their Sins. *My little Children, these things write I unto you that you sin not.* O take heed you sin not; do not grieve your Father, offend your God; you know how hateful Sin is to him, as if he should so say: *But if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.* Saints should neither presume to sin, nor despair if overtaken thereby. 1 Joh. 2. 1.
Ver. 2.

Fourthly, Because Christ prayed in the Days of his Flesh, that the Father would keep them that he had given him in the World from the Evil thereof, though not from every Evil. I dare not say that; because whatever Christ prayed for, it was granted; and yet we see the best of Saints do sin: But he prayed that they might not fall so, sin so, as to perish in their Sin, or sin unto Death; therefore their Sins shall never damn them. John 17.
15.

Fifthly, Their Sins cannot separate them so from the Love of God, as that he should cast them off for ever; because a broken Heart, and pardon of Sin, is contained in the Covenant of Grace: *I will be merciful unto their Unrighteousness; and their Sins and Iniquities I will remember no more.* Though they will be sick, none can live and sin not; yet they have a Physician that can and will heal them. The Covenant hath a healing Antidote in it for every spiritual Malady of the Soul of a poor dejected Believer: And because God hath promised to give Repentance to his Israel, Sin not being actually forgiven without Repentance, or before Repentance, therefore God will give Repentance to all his Children; he will look upon them as Christ look'd upon Peter, and then they shall, and do weep as he did, bitterly. Nay, Brethren, Jesus Christ is exalted on high to this very End: *Him hath God exalted with his right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of Sins:* That is, to cover, to conquer and subdue all their Corruptions, and to supply their Wants, and to protect and defend them from all Enemies, and eternally to save their Souls: For which End he had his Name given him; *And thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins;* from the Guilt of them, the Power of them, and the Punishment of them. Also therefore Sin cannot separate them from God's Love, and ruin their precious Souls. Heb. 10.
16, 17.
& 8. 12.
Act. 5. 31.
Mat. 1. 21.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, No Sin can destroy the Soul, nor separate it from God, but such Sins only that have dominion, that rule and reign in Men and Women, such that the Sinner loves and allows in himself : Nay, all unrenewed Persons are Servants of Sin ; but no Sin reigns in a true Believer, he loves no Sin, allows of no Sin, therefore cannot commit Sin : *Sin shall not, cannot reign in them ; for Sin shall not have Dominion over you ; for you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* Grace will prevent it, the Covenant of Grace, and the Influences of Grace, and the Promises of Grace. The Law commands, but gives no Power to obey ; but Power to subdue Sin goes along with the Gospel : the Law is the Strength of Sin, but the Gospel is the Death of it.

Object. But for all this, good Men may be overcome, and backslide from God, and God may leave them and love them no more.

Ans. 1. I answer, They may be overcome for a Time, or worsted in the Conflict, but they shall not finally be overcome ; though they fall, they shall rise again : And as it is said, *A Troop shall overcome Gad, but Gad shall overcome at last ;* so it may be said of every Believer. Hence the Apostle says, *We are more than Conquerors, through him that loveth us. Rejoice not over me, O mine Enemy ; when I fall, I shall rise.*

2. Though they backslide from God for a time, yet he will recover them again : *I will heal their Back-slidings, and will love them freely.* See here, that God's People by their Backslidings, do not lose his choice Love and Affections : No, no, he will love them still, and that freely too ; and will not rest till he heals them of that Sickness, which is the worst they can relapse into.

3. The Elect are another sort, they are not of them that backslide so, that God's Soul takes no pleasure in them : *But we are not of them who draw back unto Perdition, but of them that believe to the Salvation of the Soul.* There are some that so draw back, after they have made a high Profession of the Gospel ; but Christ's Sheep are not *Sons of Perdition*, but *Sons of Faith*, or true and sincere Believers, they cannot so sin, so apostatize : because the *Seed* remains in them, they cannot commit Sin ; they cannot sin as others do, not so as to lose God's Love, or not sin unto Death ; therefore cannot perish : *They went out from us, but they were not of us ; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, &c.* They were not such that had real Union with Christ, the

true Anointing was not in them, they were not of Christ's Sheep, not sincere Believers, not Elect Ones. From hence let me draw this Argument ;

Arg. 2. *All those that sin, cannot separate from the Love of God in Christ, nor eternally destroy, nothing can, but they shall be certainly saved: but Sin cannot separate true Believers, or the Sheep of Christ, from the Love of God in Christ, nor eternally destroy them: therefore nothing can, but they shall certainly be saved.*

Object. But doth not this give encouragement to Believers to sin, and so a Licentious Doctrine ?

Ans. 1. The Apostle answers this very Objection, to anticipate such a sort of Men that were in his Days, which we meet with in these of ours : *What shall we say then ? shall we continue in Sin that Grace may abound ? God forbid.* He having largely, in the foregoing Chapters, proved the Doctrine I am upon, viz. That Salvation is alone by Christ, by the Free Grace of God in him, that our Justification is by the Righteousness of Christ imputed, and no other way : And that Everlasting Life is sure and certain to all the Seed, to all in Christ, or to all who do believe in him ; and he shews, that *where Sin abounded, Grace hath much more abounded :* Particularly in the precedent Verse, he asserts, *That as Sin hath reigned unto Death, even so might Grace reign through Righteousness unto Eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* From hence he raises this Objection, to anticipate carnal and blind Mortals, who see no further, and answers it with, *God forbid ; how shall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein ?*

2. Let me tell you, that they who leave Sin, refrain from Sin, upon no higher, better, or more noble Principles, than the fear of Wrath, or eternal perishing, or only act from slavish Fear, have doubtless not one Dram of true Grace in them.

Brethren, to abstain from Sin, to strive against Sin, to resist Temptations, and to be found in all Duties of Obedience and Holiness, lies in high, sublime and evangelical Principles, and from such Motives that have greater Force and Power on the Soul, than the fear of Wrath or Hell can have. As,

1. Saith a Believer, Is Sin hateful to God ? doth God's Soul loath it, is it abominable to him, and shall it not be so to me, but shall I sin ? *God forbid.*

2. Hath Sin pierced my dear Redeemer ? Was it the Spear that let out his Heart's Blood, that wounded and tore him to pieces,

From what Principles Believers resist Sin,

dare not

sin.

pieces,

pieces, that made him sweat great Drops of Blood, that let out Divine Wrath upon him, and made him a Curse for me, and shall I sin, and wound him again? *God forbid.*

3. Did Christ die for me to redeem me? did he stand in my stead, and bear mine Iniquities, and shall I sin? *God forbid.*

4. Hath God bestowed such Grace upon me, as to love me from Everlasting, to *chuse* me, to *redeem* me, to *renew* me; and all to this End, that I should be to the Praise of his Glory, and bring forth the Fruits of Holiness, and not sin against him; and shall I sin? *God forbid.*

5. Hath God raised me from the lowest Hell, and set me on High; made me his own Child, and espoused me to his Blessed Son? Hath he set a Crown upon my Head, and put Chains better than those of Gold about my Neck? Has he clothed me with a *Robe* that shines like the Light, and sparkles beyond all precious Stones? Has he given the Flesh of his Son to me for Food, and his precious Blood to me to drink, and shall I sin against him? *God forbid.*

6. Hath God given me himself, given me a Taste how good he is? Hath he allowed me to have free access to the Throne of Grace, and to have Communion with himself, and with his Son, and shall I sin against him? *God forbid.*

7. Hath God given me his Holy Spirit to destroy the Body of Sin, and do I confess my self dead to Sin; and as being dead, have I been buried with Christ in Baptism, and shall I live in Sin? *God forbid.*

8. Have I seen, and do know the detestable Nature of Sin, how evil a thing Sin is, and am by the Graces of the Spirit completely armed to oppose, resist, and overcome Sin, and all the Enemies of my Soul; and shall I commit Sin, and cowardly yield to the Temptations of Satan, and acquit the Field to the Reproach and Disgrace of my Blessed Lord and Captain of my Salvation, and destroy mine own Soul that Christ hath done so much to save; and shall I sin? *God forbid.*

9. Am I an Heir of Heaven, an Heir of Glory, and have the blessed Angels to minister to me, and to wait upon, and to protect me, who also observe how I behave my self; and shall I sin? *God forbid.*

10. If I sin, live in Sin, make a trade of Sin, it will appear I hate God, resist his Will, contemn his Authority, cast Dung in his Face, grieve his good Spirit, and put the Devil into the

very

very Throne of God ; and shall I live in Sin ? *God forbid.*

Brethren, here is the principal and the grand Motive to keep you from Sin : it is from these and such-like Grounds that we should not sin against God.

But I cannot further now enlarge ; I should have spoken of the Nature of Christ's Love, and have shewn how that keeps the Saints from Sin, and falling, so as not to perish : but I'll proceed no further at this time.

J O H N X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, the last Day I was upon the *second Argument*, to prove, That all true Believers shall certainly be saved, and none of them shall ever so fall away as eternally to perish : Which was taken from the Nature of the infinite and unchangeable Love of God the Father.

~
Sermon
IX.
~

Thirdly, I shall now proceed to the third Argument, taken from the Nature of the Love of Jesus Christ the Son ; and shew you that his Love secures the standing of all his Sheep, or all the Elect Ones of God, unto Everlasting Life.

*3d. Arg.
Taken from
the Nature
of Christ's
Love.*

First, *The Love of Christ is an early Love* ; He loved us from everlasting : I was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.—Then I was with him, as one brought up with him ; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth, and my delights were with the Sons of Men. It appears it was not only an early Love, but a Love also of Complacency, a Love of

*The Love of
Christ is an
early Love.
Prov. 8. 23
v. 30, 31.
A Love of
Complacn-
cy.*

Secondly, *Christ's Love to his Elect, is a wonderful Love.*

- Christ loves his People with a wonderful Love.*
1. If we consider the *Person loving, viz.* the Son of God, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth.
2. If we consider the *Persons beloved*, in their natural and fallen State; for, when such, he set his Heart upon them: *When they lay in their Blood*, it was then he passed by and loved us: *Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy Time was the Time of Love, and I spread my Skirt over thee, and covered thy Nakedness, &c.*
- Ezek. 16. 8. We were his Enemies, traiterous Enemies, vile Rebels to him, having abominable *Enmity against him* in our Hearts.
- Rom. 8. 7. 3. Consider the wonderful Achievements his Love put upon him to undertake, and the wonderful Effects thereof.
- (1.) Even to become a wonderful Surety for us, and to pay a wonderful Debt.
- (2.) To leave wonderful Glory, even to come from Heaven, where he lay in the Bosom of the Father, and to come to the Earth, to *dung-hil Earth*.
- (3.) If we consider his wonderful Condescension and Abasement: he became Man, who *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*; yet made himself of no reputation, and took unto him the Form of a *Servant*. He became wonderful Poor, who was wonderful Rich, yea, amazingly Rich, Heaven and Earth, and all things in it, being his own; yet was born of a *poor Virgin*, who doubtless had little or no Money to accommodate her, or to defray the Charges of a Lying-In at the *Inn*; and therefore they turn'd her into the
- Luke 2. 7. Stable, where she was delivered of our Blessed Saviour, *and laid him in a Manger*. O what wonderful Abasement was this! Moreover, he also had no Money to pay the Tax that was laid upon him, therefore sends *Peter* to the Sea to take a piece of Money out of the Mouth of a *certain Fish*. He had no House of his own to dwell in, no not a poor Cottage: The *Foxes* of the Earth, said he, *have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath no where to lay his Head*.—Also when in his greatest
- Mat. 17. 27. of *Man* hath no where to lay his Head.—Also when in his greatest
- Mat. 8. 20. Pomp on Earth he rode but on an *Ass*, and that not his own neither, but he borrowed it. Moreover the good Women ministered Relief to him, he had not to supply his own Necessities; he was poor in his Life, poor in his Death, standing charged with the Debts of many thousands, the least not owing less than ten *thousand Talents*; which could he not have paid and satisfied for, he must have lain in Prison for ever. O what a Charge of Guilt was laid upon him! Does Sin render a Man miserable? doth one Sin charged on a Person, render him poor? How poor then was
- John 12. 14. he

he for a Time, that stood charged with all the Sins of his Elect? He was forsaken of all his Friends on Earth in his greatest Distress, and by his Father in Heaven; he was Poor and Miserable in the Sight of all that saw him; they pulled off his Hair, spit in his Face, crown'd him with Thorns, strip'd off his Garment: and all this for the sake of his Sheep, or for his Elect.

(4.) If we consider the wonderful and amazing Wrath he bore, what a Curse he was made for us; the wonderful Horror, Pain, and Anguish he felt; the wonderful Sweat he sustained, which were great Drops of Blood; the wonderful Passion and Sufferings on the Cross he endured: He loved us, and washed us from our Sins Rev. 1. 5. in his own Blood. He loved his Sheep, his People, his Spouse, as himself, above himself: Mary loved him so as to wash his Feet with her Tears; but he loved Mary so, and all his Elect Ones, as to wash their Souls in his own most precious Blood. Jacob loved Benjamin, David loved Absalom; but David said, Jonathan's Love to him was wonderful, passing the Love of Women. But what is a Bubble to the Ocean! a Spark of Fire to a Furnace! or a finite Love to an infinite Love! What is all Love to Christ's Love?

(5.) Christ's Love to his Sheep, to his Elect, is wonderful; because it passeth knowledg: That ye may know the Love of Christ, Eph. 3. 19. that passeth Knowledg.

1. It passeth the Knowledg of the Natural Man. What can he, with all his natural and acquired Parts find out, as to the greatness and wonderfulness of Christ's Love?

2. It passeth the Knowledg of the Moral Man. What can the Natural or the Moral Philosopher do, as to the comprehending, finding out, or demonstrating the Nature of Christ's Love? Can he found the Depth of the Sea? Can he measure the Breadth of the Heavens? Can he account the Length of Eternity? Besides, here is a Height that their Art discovers not; the *Mathematicks* teacheth not this Mystery: That ye may be able to comprehend Eph. 3. 18, 19. with all Saints, what is the Breadth and Length, the Depth and Height, and to know the Love of Christ that passeth Knowledg.

3. It passeth the Knowledg of the Spiritual Man; he cannot arrive to a full and perfect understanding of it.

4. Nay it passeth the Knowledg of the Holy Angels; their Wisdom and Understanding no doubt is wonderful; but here they are at a loss, they stand in amaze, looking into, and admiring with astonishment, this Love, to see him that is God become Man. to

save such a Vile and Sinful Creature; to love and delight in him that was so great an Enemy.

5. *It is wonderful, because a whole Eternity will be but little enough to let out to Believers the Love of Christ.* It will never be fully known, it cannot be comprehended; all above, and all below, are at a loss, they are all at a nonpluss, and astonished at it.

Christ's
Love to his
People, an
immense or
infinite
Love.

Thirdly, Christ's Love therefore to his Sheep, to his Saints, is an immense, incomprehensible, or an infinite Love; as the Wrath and Anger of God, and the Lamb, when kindled and let out, is inconceivable, so is his precious Love to his People: this Breadth, Length, Depth and Height, doubtless refers to the unsearchable Greatness and Immenity of God. *Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? Canst thou come to the uttermost of what God is? Canst thou find out the inmost Recesses or Secrets of God's Heart, of Christ's Heart? Hast thou seen what is laid up in the inner Chambers of his Spirit? then thou mayst know his Love; for it is like himself, God is Love, Love is his very Nature: It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know? longer than the Earth, broader than the Sea.* Many Wits, as one notes, run Riot in Geometrical Notions about Moral Dimensions; and whereas Naturalists give us but three Dimensions of a Body, Longitude, Latitude, and Profundity, the Love of Christ (Brethren) hath *Altitude* added, which is a Fourth. Doubtless all these Dimensions are mentioned, only to set forth the Immenity of Christ's Love.

1. Christ's Love is broad, enough to spread over and cover, like a Mantle, all the Sins of his Elect, and also to hide them from Satan's Rage and Fury. His Love is long enough to reach us with his Arm of Affections, where-ever we are, or whatever our Wants be. Christ's Love is deep enough to find us out, and relieve us under all depths of Afflictions, Despondency or Distress, of what sort soever. Christ's Love has a Height in it, enough to defend us, like a high Wall, against all the Assaults of those Enemies that are in high Places, and above us; we cannot see them: As Satan is a Spirit, he has the Advantage of us; such is his Nature, he is said to be *in high Places*; he is the Prince of the Power of the Air. But God is above him; Christ is in a higher Sphere, his Love hath a Height in it; so that neither Height nor Depth can separate us from his Love, as well as it cannot separate us from the Love of the Father.

2. Christ's

2. Christ's Love is an infinite or an immense Love, as appears, because it is without beginning, it is from Eternity, before ever the Earth was. That which was before the World was, is without beginning: but the Love of Christ to his Elect was before the World was, even from Everlasting. Yea, *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love.* Jer. 31.3.

3. Christ's Love to his Sheep, to his Saints, is an infinite or immense Love; doth appear, because his Love to them is as that Love the Father hath to him: *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.* Though [as] may not be a Note of Comparison in every Sense, yet it doth signify the Truth, Firmness, and Greatness of Christ's Love: The Father loveth Christ with an eternal, immense, immutable, constant, free, full, and perfect Love; so doth Jesus Christ love every one of his Elect Ones. Again, saith Christ to his Father, *that the World may know that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me:* He would have all know how he loves his People, or such that were given to him. John 15.9. John 17.23.

4. It appears to be an infinite Love, because it cannot be found out, defined or comprehended, it passing all Understanding; as also by the glorious and amazing Effects thereof, which are apparent to all.

5. *Because it is without ending:* all those that Jesus Christ doth love, or hath set his special Affections upon, he loveth to the End; his Love is not only from Everlasting, but also to Everlasting; he abides in his Love, notwithstanding all the Weakness, Frailties or Decays of Love in his People towards him: He heals, and with a *Nevertheless* will heal their Back-slidings, and love them freely. Joh. 13.1.

Fourthly, *The Love of Jesus Christ to his Saints is a Conjugal Love;* it is an Espousal Love. Though I purpose to speak to the Nature of that blessed and mystical Union which is betwixt Christ and every Believer under a distinct Argument, yet let it be considered here, that the consideration that Christ's Love is such, as that he doth espouse every Godly Soul, and marry it to himself; this must needs be one of the highest Arguments that can be produced to prove their final Perseverance; because Espousal Love is the Sweetest, the Firmest, and most abiding Love, especially the Love of Christ's Espousal: *I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in loving Kindness, and in Mercy. I will even betroth thee unto me in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* Hos. 2.19, 20.

What

What words can more fully express the Firmness of this Marriage-Contract, or Espousal Love of Christ to his true *Israel*? This Conjugal Love of Christ is that never-exhausted Fountain of all our Spiritual and eternal Comforts; all Mercies, like Streams which never fail, flow to all Believers, from hence. Can a Man shew greater Love to a Woman, than to espouse her to be his Wife? This is beyond the Love of Parents to Children: Christ bestows himself on us, and all he hath; nay, and that he might do this, he bought or purchased us: Christ bought his Spouse; none ever gave such a vast Sum for a Wife as Jesus Christ hath done; and shall any think he will lose her after all this, if he is able to help it? How can that enter into any Man's Thoughts? Will a faithful Husband, a tender Husband, suffer his most dear and beloved Wife, that he hath such Affection to, to be torn from him, and be abused and pulled into pieces, and he look on? If he hath Power in his Hand, will he not rescue her, nay, die upon the Spot before he will see this done? But alas, alas, what is the Love of any mortal Man, to his Spouse, to his Wife, when compared with the Love of Christ to his Saints, *who loved his Church, and gave himself for her*; and whose Love is as you have heard, so wonderful, infinite, and inconceivable? Moreover, I hope none doubt of his Power. Others may see their Wives ravished and torn in pieces before their Eyes, and cannot help it, they are not able to help and save them: but Christ wants no Power, as he wants no Wisdom, Care, or Affections. Now what are the Enemies, the most dangerous Enemies of the Spouse of Christ? Is not Sin the chief, Sin, the World, the Devil, &c. Will he then, think you, let Sin prevail, Satan prevail, so far as to despoil, murder and destroy that precious Soul he thus loves, and hath espoused to himself? Those who assert final falling from a State of true Grace, must say he doth thus, *viz.* He suffers Sin to destroy his Spouse, even to put out the Eyes, despoil, strip, wound, and murder the Soul he has espoused, whilst he stands by and looks on, and can, but will not help nor deliver her, because the Soul is blinded by some Lusts, or drawn away by an Enemy; therefore they say he will not. He that can believe such a Doctrine, let him. But,

*Christ's
Love an
attracting
Love.*

Fifthly, *Christ Love hath an attracting and a retaining Quality in it: It draws the Soul to Christ, and it keeps it close with Christ, when it hath received and imbraced him; it draws, nay, constrains the Soul to love Christ; We love him, because he first loved*

us. And no Man or Woman that loves Christ sincerely, but they hate Sin : it constrains the Soul to return Love for Love. Christ's Love is like *Elijah's* Garment that he cast upon *Elisha*, who immediately run after *Elijah*, and said, *Let me, I pray thee, kiss my Father and Mother, and then I will follow thee.* *And he said, Go back, what have I done unto thee?* Thus doth Christ's Love to the Soul in all that feel its Influences, they follow him, cleave to him, and also keep with him : for like as the Fear of God, so the Love of God is put into our Hearts, (if we are sincere Christians) and we shall not, cannot finally depart from him.

1 King. 19.
19, 20.

Sixtly, Christ's Love is a free Love ; as nothing did purchase it, so nothing can nor shall lose or forfeit it : *I will love them freely.*

A free Love.

From the whole I infer,—*If the Love of Jesus Christ is an earthly Love, a Love of Complacency ; if it be a wonderful and amazing Love ; if it be an immense, infinite, and incomprehensible Love ; if it is a conjugal Love, an attracting and retaining Love, a free and abiding Love, which he hath to every Believer ; then he will not ever let go that hold he hath of every one of them, so as to suffer them to fall from him, as eternally to perish: But such is the Nature of the Love of Jesus Christ ; therefore he will never so let go that hold he hath of every Believer, as to suffer them to fall so as eternally to perish.*

The General Argument.

Brethren, such is the Love of Christ to his Saints, as that he gives them special Tokens and Assurance of his Eternal Favour.

Christ's Special Love Tokens.

Some of them are these following.

1. He calls them with an effectual and special Calling.
2. He renews them, and stamps his own Image upon them.
3. He puts his Holy Spirit into them.
4. He justifies them freely by his own Grace, giving them his own Robe of Righteousness, which is beyond a Garment of Cloth of Gold.
5. He sanctifies them, and endows them with Power to mortify Sin ; and when they fall, he helps them up again by his right Hand.
6. He seals his Love to them with the Kisses of his Mouth, or by his most sure and precious Promises.
7. He commands his *Holy Angels* to attend them, and to administer to them, and keep them in all his Ways.
8. He leads, feeds and preserves them, under all Trouble, Temptation and Afflictions, and sympathizes with them.

Rom. 8. 29.
Ezek. 36. 26.
Isa. 59. 5.
Ch. 6. 10.
Rom. 6. 14.
Cant. 1. 1.
2.
Psal. 91.
11.

- Cant. 8. 6. 9. He sets them *as a Seal upon his Heart, as a Seal upon his Arm*; they are engraven on the Palms of his Hands; he hath sworn that his loving Kindness shall never be taken away from them. *As*
- Isa. 54. 10. *I have sworn that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee. — For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed; but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, &c.*
- Psal. 37. 31. 10. He puts his Law into their Hearts, that none of their Feet should slide.

APPLICATION.

1st. Exhort. First, To close with this; O see, you that are Believers, that you strive after the Knowledge of Christ's Love.

Motives.

1. It is the highest Ingratitude not to desire after the Knowledge of such Love: Shall a Beggar be beloved by a Prince, and she not be affected with it, nor inquire after it?
 2. Because you are the Objects of this Love, of this Affection; doth it not seem an amazing Consideration to you? May be you can't soon believe it, because you see no worth in your selves. Ah, saith the Soul, Christ loves me thus! What, such a poor sorry and filthy Wretch! Wonder O Heavens, be astonished O Earth! The more you know it, the more you will love your Blessed Saviour. He loved me not a righteous Person, but me a Sinner, a loathsome Sinner, when in my Blood and Filth.
 3. This will make you little in your own Eyes; the more we know of God, and of Christ, and of his Love, the more we shall loath and abhor our selves. O that ever I should grieve him as I have done! How did the sense of God's Love and Goodness to David humble him: *Who am I, O Lord, and what is mine House, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet is this a small thing in thine Eyes, O God, for thou hast spoken of thy Servant's House for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the Estate of a Man of high Degree, O Lord.* Thus may every Believer say. The Love of Christ will have the like Effect on our Souls, as the Knowledge of David's Love to Abigail, when he sent Messengers to her to make her his Wife, and raise her to his Throne: *Let*
- 1 Sam. 25. 41. *me (saith she) be a Servant, to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord.*

4. The Knowledg of Christ's Love, will beget greater and stronger Love in our Souls to him: *Love begetteth Love*, but not till it is known. O taste, Sinners, of this Love: had you but a Taste, how would your Hearts be enflamed in Love to Jesus Christ. And as to you Saints,

5. The more you know of Christ's Love, the more your Hearts will die (and your Love cool) to all earthly things.

6. The more you know of Christ's Love, the more firmly you will be fixed and settled in his Truth, and be delivered from Fears and Doubts about your standing. Alas, it is not Sin, nor Satan, nor Hell, nor Death, that can deprive your Souls of Christ's Love, if you are his. If Satan says, Thou art a vile Sinner, and lays before thee the Baseness of thy Heart; tell him, Christ's Love passeth Knowledg. Does he say, that thou wilt fall one time or another? Tell him, Christ loved thee not for thy Righteousness; and his Love that is so infinite, will never suffer thee to fall and rise no more.

7. The Knowledg of Christ's Love will make us to speak well of God, and Christ, and his Ways, at all times; still we shall say, the Love of God, and Jesus Christ, is the same, *all is in Love; whom I love, I rebuke and chasten*: Christ's Love known and experienced, Rev. 3.19. will be a Cordial to bear thee up to the end of thy Days.

8. This will set your Souls at liberty, and bring you out of the Spirit of Bondage, and make you *to run after him*: But it is Cant. 1. 4. not the knowing of Christ's Love in any degree, but to that degree that *passeth Knowledg*; a Love that can't fail which will do this:

9. The Knowledg of Christ's Love will make you cling and cleave to him: Christ is the Loadstone, and our Soul the Needle; and now our Soul having touched him, it makes to the Center; and though you may, like the *Needle, tremble* for a Time, yet you are hastening to him, and never will rest till you come to him whom your Souls love.

10. The more you know of him, and of his Love, the more will be your inward Joy and Peace: For this is the Way to be filled with all the Fulness of God, *and to know the Love of Christ* Eph.3.19. *which passeth Knowledg, that you may be filled with all the Fulness of God.*

Secondly, This may reprehend and sharply reprove, such Christians that doubt of the Love of Christ; especially those who affirm, that justified and sanctified Persons may for ever lose his Love and

perish; for this renders his Love mutable and changeable, according as the Love of Mortals change one towards another.

Thirdly, and lastly, What Comfort and Consolation doth this afford to all true Christians?

But I must proceed to the next Argument, to prove, That Saints shall not, cannot finally fall so as to perish.

The fourth
Argument
taken from
the Nature
of the Co-
venant of
Grace.

Fourthly, Christ's Sheep, his Saints, shall never so fall, as finally and eternally to perish, I shall in the next place prove, and that from the Nature of the Covenant of Grace.

First. Because it is a Covenant of Grace: We do not stand in this Covenant, as *Adam* stood in the first Covenant.

And now that it is a Covenant of Grace, will appear, if we consider with whom this Covenant was primarily made; and that was with Jesus Christ, it was made between God in the Person of the Father, and Man in the Person of Christ. Our Lord Jesus was constituted in this Covenant, the great Head, Representative, and blessed Surety, for and in behalf of all the Father gave unto him. *Adam* had no Surety that undertook for him in the first Covenant, as a Covenanting Hand, but was entrusted with all his Riches, all being put into his own Hand, which he soon by his Sin lost, and undid himself and all his Posterity, whom he was set up as the common Head and Representative of. God foreseeing this, he would not enter into a Covenant any more with Man, his Credit being for ever lost: And since he lost all when he had Power to stand, there was no likelihood or possibility of his standing, after he had deprived himself of his Power of doing good, being deprived in all the Faculties of his Soul. Therefore Christ was set up, set up from Everlasting, by the Holy God, (who foresaw all things before they came to pass) as the Head and Surety of the New Covenant, (called the New Covenant, in respect had to the time of the Revelation of it to Mankind, it being not known until Man had broke the first Covenant): now Christ undertook in the Covenant of Grace for all the Elect, he personating them, when the Father and he entered into that glorious Compact or Covenant-Transactions, we having not then an actual Being, he represented all that were given to him out of the lost Lump of fallen Man; and undertook, as Mediator, to make up that Breach that was between God and Man; and by his perfect Obedience to merit for them Everlasting Life, and to bring them all to Glory.

This

This being so, nothing can more fully demonstrate the Certainty of their Sa- vation, and the Impossibility of any of their perishing; for they for whom Jesus Christ did undertake this great and glorious Work, even all the Elect Seed, were put into his Hand by the Tenour of this Covenant, to work out Life and Salvation for them, and to die in the room and stead of them; thereby to bear that Wrath and Curse that they otherwise must have suffered, born and endured for ever. Now in this Covenant, Eternal Life comes to us primarily by God's Free Grace, in his finding out, parting with, and accepting of his own Son to be our Saviour and Surety. And secondly, by virtue of what Christ hath done, and did undertake to do and suffer for all that should be saved, they cannot perish: *I have found David my Servant; with my Holy Spi- rit have I anointed him. — My Mercy will I keep with him for ever- more, and my Covenant shall stand fast in him. His Seed also will I make to endure for ever.* His Seed, that is, all that are the Product of his Spirit, or are quickned and renewed by him. This is the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, Christ is their Root and Head, their Spirit of Life is in him, and it is derived from him in Rege- neration, in a spiritual way, as our natural Life was in, and de- rived to us from the first *Adam* by Generation, in a natural way. My Brethren, pray do not mistake about the Nature and Tenour of this great and glorious Covenant: The Father, we say, enters into a Covenant with his Son, and promises Eternal Life unto him, and to all his Elect Seed, upon the consideration of what he, I mean our Blessed Saviour, was to perform in respect of those fe- deral Conditions proposed to him, which he did then undertake on Man's behalf, or such of Mankind that God did intend to save. And the Father that accepted of him, and sent him into the World, and gave him his Sheep, doth look to him as to the final and compleat Accomplishment of all things, that were either to be done for them, or wrought and done in them, in order to the Everlasting Salvation of their Souls. And this Christ engaged to do, and took them into his Hands in this Covenant to effect; which is clearly signified in my Text, together with a full Assurance unto us, that he will do it in spite of Sin, Devil, World, and all Ene- mies; *Neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* Our Blessed Saviour further saith, *All that the Father hath given 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 this is the Father's Will that sent me, that of*

Psal. 89.

20.

Verse 28.

29.

John 6.37,

38, 39.

all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day. This was the Covenant between them both, this is his *Father's Will*, that none, no not one, no nothing of them that were given to him, neither their Souls nor Bodies, should be lost, but all must be saved, he having engaged and promised to fulfil and accomplish the *Father's Will* herein. O happy Believers! you are not left to your own Covenanting with God, to the Power of your own Wills; nor do you stand upon your own Legs, but you are in God's Covenant, in Christ's Covenant; you are committed into Christ's Hand to keep, you stand upon your Surety's Engagements, his Undertakings; God looks to him, and expects that he gives a good Account of all his Sheep at the last Day; and Christ is able and faithful: He says, *Them I must bring*; I have struck Hands with my Father, I have covenanted and promised to die for them, and to call, renew, and eternally to save them; and they shall never perish. This being all true, what is become of the Doctrine (or rather of the gross Error) of a final falling from a State of true Grace?

Secondly, To proceed a little further: Jesus Christ, by virtue of this Covenant, and in pursuance of that great Work he undertook, did not only die to satisfy for the Sins of his People, but also purchased or procured thereby a gracious conveyance of the Holy Spirit, and the saving Graces and Influences thereof, to change their Hearts, bend and subject their Wills, and graciously to renew and convert their Souls unto God, which God foresaw otherwise could never be done, and also to carry on that good Work in them until they come to Glory: And this indeed he was obliged to perform, according to the Tenour of this Covenant. And hence it is that Paul saith, *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you, will perform it until the Day of Christ*; or until the Day of your Death he will perform it; which denotes his Covenant-undertaking, he having obliged or bound himself as our Surety to do it. It is not said he will perfect, or finish it, but he will perform it. Had not the Apostle referred to that Obligation in the Covenant of Grace which he laid himself under, the other Expression had been as proper, *i. e.* to say, he will perform it. He is faithful, and cannot fail in doing and performing what he hath made a Bargain, or covenanted to do: As we say, when a faithful and responsible Person hath covenanted to do this or that, though the Work be great and difficult, and much Opposition lies in his way, yet he will do it, he will perform what he hath undertaken.

taken. Hence David saith, *I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me*: To God most high that is able to do it, let Sin, Men and Devils, do what they can to hinder him. This is further confirmed by the Prophet; *Lord, thou wilt ordain Peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our Works in us*: All is the Effects of thy Grace, according to thy glorious Covenant. Hence also the Apostle saith, *For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure*. No Man can chuse that which is savingly Good, much less perform it, until his Will is graciously renewed: *My People shall be willing in the Day of my Power*. This being so, how contrary is this Doctrine to that which some Men maintain concerning the Power of the Creature, or Power of Man's depraved Will, the purport of which leaves the Salvation of every Soul at the greatest Uncertainty imaginable? They tell you Christ died for all Men, that is, for their Good, and satisfied for their Sins, against the first Covenant, for all Men; and that all are put into a Capacity to be saved, if they will believe, repent, and continue in believing and in well-doing to the End: they clearly intimate, that whatsoever the Decree or Purpose of God is, and whatsoever the Nature of the Covenant of Grace is, yet all is at the determination of Man's own Will, whether any one will be saved or not, God affording him only strong moral Perswasions, Reasons, Motives, and Subjective Considerations thereunto, which may, or may not incline, excite or prevail with him to believe and obey the Gospel, and perform the procuring Conditions of Life and Salvation; or they may not incline, excite or prevail with any one Soul: they do not, will not say, that Christ is under an Obligation, by virtue of the Covenant made with the Father, to afford effectual Grace, special Aid, internal Strength to any, in order to bring them over unto God; but that it is left to the Creature, and that he needs no such supernatural or irresistible Grace to work upon him: Which doth,

(1.) Evidently tend to ascribe the whole Glory of our Regeneration and Perseverance in Grace unto Man, and not to the Grace of God: for that Act of our Wills on this Supposition whereby we convert unto God, is meerly an *Act of our own*, and not of the special Grace of God. This is clear; for if the Act it self were of effectual Grace, then would it not be in the Power of the Will to hinder it, as a late Reverend Minister notes.

Dr. Owen.

Also (2.) it would and must follow, that this would leave Regeneration and Salvation absolutely uncertain, (notwithstanding the

the Purpose of God, the Covenant of Grace, the Undertaking and Death of Christ) whether ever any one in all the World should be saved, or no, as I hinted before: for when God hath done all, Christ hath done all that he is concerned in, or is to do on his part, it is absolutely in the Power of the Will of Man, whether it shall be effectual, or not; which is directly contrary to the Covenant, Promise and Oath of God unto Jesus Christ.

(3.) It is also contrary, as you have heard, unto express Texts of Scripture, wherein effectual Conversion, and final Perseverance is wholly ascribed unto the special Grace of God, as the immediate Effect thereof; *God worketh in us to will and to do.* The Act therefore it self in our Conversion, is of God's Operation; and though we will our selves, yet it is he who *causeth us to will*, by *working in us to will and to do.* But if the Act of our Will in Believing and Obedience, in our Conversion and Perseverance, be not the effect of God's special Grace in us, then God doth not work in us, both *to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.*

2 Sam. 23.
5. *Thirdly.* The Covenant of Grace secures all Christ's Sheep, all his Saints, from falling away so as eternally to perish, because the Covenant of Grace is *an Everlasting Covenant, well ordered in all things and sure:* Not only well ordered in all things for the Glory of God, in all his blessed Attributes, but also for the Happiness, Safety and Security of all their Souls that the Father gave unto Jesus Christ.

1. It is well ordered for our Good, in that Christ hath pacified the Wrath of God thereby for us. Christ hath, by the Blood of his Covenant, made up that great Breach that was between God and us. So that now God says unto his People, Isa. 27. *Fury is not in me.* See what Paul says, *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the Death of his Son:* And by his Spirit he reconciles us, he slays and subdues the Enmity that naturally was in our Hearts against God. Christ in this Covenant (it is so well ordered) is that blessed *Days-man* that lays his Hand upon both, he brings God to Man, and Ephes. 2. Man to God: We were the *Children of Wrath*, and under the 2, 3. *Curse of the Law*; but by the Grace of this well-ordered Cove- Gal. 3. 4. nant, we were made the Children of God, and delivered from 25. the Curse of the Law: *Christ hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.*

We had lost the Image of God; but by this Covenant it is restored to us again, and so that we shall not lose it any more for ever.

ever. We were dead, blind, naked, in Bonds and in Prison, but by the Grace of God in this Covenant we are quickned, our Eyes are enlightned, and we have our naked Souls clothed; yea, and are brought out of Prison, and all our Wounds are healed. We were guilty and filthy Creatures; but by this Covenant are justified and sanctified, being actually acquitted, and through Faith pronounced Righteous, in the perfect Righteousness of Christ; and all our Sins pardoned; and are sanctified, purged and washed by Faith in his Blood, and shall not come into Condemnation: *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; they shall never perish: If there is no Condemnation to them, there is no possibility of their final falling.

Ephes. 2. 1, 2.
Eph. 1. 18.
Zech. 9. 11.

Rom. 8. 1.

Well, but what are the Characters of those happy Souls? why, they are such, saith the Apostle, *who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*. Moreover, see this more fully confirmed by Christ himself; *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my Words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life*: He is passed out of a state of Death to a state of Spiritual Life; he hath Eternal Life in the Seed of it in him; he hath a sure and certain Right and Title to Everlasting Life; he shall not be deprived of it by any Enemy whatsoever: so much do these words of our Blessed Saviour imply. Now what daring Men are they who say, they may come into Condemnation that do believe? Will they gainsay and contradict the Lord of Life and Glory?

3dly. It is a well-ordered and sure Covenant, because it is made in and with our blessed Surety, as before I shewed you: God treats with us, trades again with us, gives forth his Heavenly Treasure to us; but all is upon the Credit and Security of Jesus Christ, who is become the Surety of this Covenant. Now we may have what we need, come when we will in his Name, he is engaged to God the Father for us; *Christ was made a Surety of a better Covenant*. When God saw Man undone, run out of all, and no trusting him any more, Christ step'd in and undertook for us, and put his Hand to the Covenant, and brings himself under an Obligation for us.

Heb. 7. 22.

Quest. *Is Christ a Surety to God for us, or of us to God?*

An. I answer; God on his part had no need of a Surety to undertake for him; he never failed nor broke at first with Man, it was Man that broke and failed in his Covenant with God. "But we on all Accounts (saith Dr. Owen) stand in need of such a Surety."

Dr. Owen
on Heb. 2.
22. p. 223.

“ Surety for us, or on our behalf : Neither without the interpo-
 “ sition of such a Surety, (saith he) could any Covenant between
 “ God and us be firm and stable, or an Everlasting Covenant ordered
 “ in all things and sure.

4thly. Because this Covenant is made upon the unchangeable De-
 Pf. 89. 34. cree and Counsel of God : *My Covenant I will not break; nor alter
 the thing that is gone out of my Mouth. If you can break my Covenant of
 the Day and Night, then may also my Covenant be broken with David.*
 Jer. 33. Now Christ and his Seed, his Elect, are but one Party in this Co-
 20, 21. venant ; it was made with him, and with us in him, before the
 World began. See Paul ; *Who hath saved us, and called us with an
 holy Calling ; not according to our Works, but according to his own Pur-
 pose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World be-
 gan.* It was made as firm to us in Christ who do believe, as it was
 made to him, and only made with him for us ; to this End, even
 to secure Eternal Life for us, that we might not lose it : and it is
 as firm by the Decree and Counsel of God, as the Covenant of Day
 and Night. And thus it is of Grace alone ; the Reason of which
 Rom. 4. the Apostle gives us ; *Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be of
 16. Grace, to the end the Promise might be sure to all the Seed.* Pray
 observe it well.

5thly. This Covenant is sure to all the Elect, and gives them an
 Assurance of Everlasting Life ; because the execution of it is put
 into the Hands of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost is to see that all
 the Legacies left in Christ's last Will and Testament, are given to
 all Believers ; all Covenant-Blessings shall therefore be faithfully
 bestowed upon them, of which final Perseverance in Grace and Ho-
 lineſs is none of the least : *Christ's Will runs, none of them shall
 perish ; and it is the Father's Will, that none that he hath given to
 his Son should be lost.* Now the Spirit of God cannot fail, it is
 his Work to regenerate, sanctify and preserve, and to make meet
 all the Saints of God for the Eternal Inheritance ; therefore they
 cannot perish.

6thly. The Covenant is firm and sure, and doth secure all Christ's
 Sheep unto Eternal Life, appears further, because it is confirmed
 by the highest Witnesses in Heaven and Earth. (1.) The Father,
 (2.) the Son, (3.) the Holy Spirit, and all those wonderful
 Miracles that were wrought : this was one End of that mighty Te-
 stimony, viz. That all the Father hath given to Christ, or all that
 believe in him, may assuredly know they shall not perish, but have
 Everlasting Life.

7thly. This Covenant makes all the Blessings thereof sure to all Believers, because it is confirmed and ratified by the Blood of the Testator Jesus Christ : That Covenant that is confirm'd and ratified by Christ's Blood, must needs be *sure to all the Seed*, and secure all Blessings in it to them. We have also as a Sign and Token of this Confirmation of the New Covenant, the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper ; *This is the Blood of the New Covenant that is shed for you*, to make Peace for you, to procure Justification, Reconciliation, pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life for you : it is sealed to you by the Spirit through my Blood ; take, eat this, and drink this in token of it, as an Assurance of it.

8thly. The Covenant of Grace doth secure the standing of Christ's Sheep, or preserve all Believers to Everlasting Life, because of the Promise and Oath of God. We have,

(1.) The Promise of God to Christ ; *He shall see his Seed.* And *His Seed shall endure for ever.* How can that be, if any one that is begotten by Christ's Word and Spirit may perish ?

Isa. 53. 10.

Pfal. 89.

28, 29.

(2.) The Promises also are as made to us in Christ. This was Abraham's Title to the Blessings of the Covenant : *To Abraham and to his Seed were the Promises made ;* that is, to Christ and to all Believers in Christ. *For all the Promises of God in Jesus Christ, are not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen, to the Glory of God the Father :*

Gal. 3. 16,

29.

2 Cor. 1.

20.

From the Father through the Merits of Christ, and the Application of the Holy Spirit. Nay, God that cannot lie, promised them to us in Christ before all Worlds : See *Paul, In hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the World began.*

Tit. 1. 2.

If Believers do perish, what will become of the Promises of God, nay, of the Oath of God ? *For when God made Promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, &c.*

Heb. 6. 13,

17, 18.

Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath : That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope set before us. This Promise and Oath of God, doth respect the Salvation of all the Elect, or all that are Believers, who are the Heirs of the Promises. O let any take heed how they affirm, that any one of these may perish, since God's Oath is passed that they shall not ; and 'tis to this end that all of them might have strong Consolation.

9thly. I might proceed to shew you that the Covenant of Grace does preserve all the Sheep of Christ to Eternal Life, and shews us,

Ephes. 1.
13, 14.
Ch. 4. 30.
that it is impossible that any of them should so fall away, as eternally to perish, because they in this Covenant have received the Earnest of the Inheritance, and by the same Spirit it is sealed to them also. But I shall pass by that, having elsewhere spoken fully to it.

10^{thly}, and Lastly, This Covenant prevents the Saints final falling, because it is an absolute Covenant which can never be broken, but stands as firm as their Eternal Rock. See what the Prophet speaks, 'tis as absolute as the Covenant God made with Noah:
Isa. 54.
9, 10.
For this is as the Water of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn the Waters of Noah shall no more go over the Earth, so I have sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my loving Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither [mark it] the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath Mercy on thee. And now this Covenant is made with every Sheep and Lamb of Jesus Christ, as it appears by what the same Prophet speaks, *Incline your Ear, and come unto me; hear, and your Souls shall live; and I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David: that is, then you shall be brought actually into the Bonds of this Covenant, which is the Work of the Spirit; for who else can make the Dead to hear and live? So this Covenant secures you to Eternal Life.*

Let me sum up the whole of this Argument.

The general
Argument.

(1.) If the New Covenant be a Covenant of Grace, and not of Works; if it be not according to the first Covenant that was made with Adam, but of a quite contrary Nature.

(2.) If it be made with Christ for all his Elect, and in him with them, before the World began.

(3.) If Christ is the Surety of the Covenant, and hath engaged or obliged himself in this Covenant to the Father, to perform all the federal Conditions proposed to him, and undertaken by him on their behalf, namely to work out perfect Righteousness according as the Law requires, (of all that can be justified with God) and to die in their room, to satisfy for their Breach of the Law, and to quicken, renew, sanctify and preserve them all unto Eternal Life.

(4.) If it be an everlasting Covenant, well ordered in all things, and sure, for the Salvation of all that are given unto him, it being made upon the unchangeable Decree and Counsel of God.

(5.) If the Execution of all things that are required of Believers,

in

in order to their Interest in this Covenant, and their perseverance to the End, be put into the Hands of the Holy Ghost to work in them, and for them.

(6.) If the Covenant is confirmed by such infallible Witness; if it be ratified and confirmed by the Blood of Christ.

(7.) If it is also confirmed by God's Promise and Holy Oath.

(8.) If the Earnest of Salvation is given to them.

(9.) And they are sealed unto the Day of Redemption by the Holy Spirit.

(10.) And if 'tis an absolute Covenant like that of *Noah*: Then they all, and every one of them, shall certainly be saved, and none of them can fall away so as eternally to perish. But all this is true, and evidently so, therefore they shall all be saved.

No more at this Time.

J O H N X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, I am upon the Proof and Demonstration of the Doctrine which I raised from our Text, (*viz.*) That *none of the Sheep of Christ, or Saints of God, can so fall away as eternally to perish.*

Sermon
X.

The last time I spoke to the fourth Argument, which was taken from the Nature of the Covenant of Grace.

I shall proceed to the next Argument.

Fifthly, They who are the Sheep of Christ, Believers in Christ, or his Elect Ones, cannot finally fall away, because they are the Children of God, begotten of God, and born of God.

5th. Arg.
Taken from
their being
the Chil-
dren of
God.

Two things I shall do in prosecuting this Argument.

First, Prove that all Believers are begotten and born of God.

Secondly, Shew you how it doth appear from hence that they can never finally fall away, and eternally perish.

- First*, That they are begotten of God, appears from several Scriptures; *Of his own Will beget he us with the Word of Truth, &c.* Meerly by his own Grace, as the original Cause; with the Word by the Spirit, as the instrumental Means. Spiritual Generation is the Work of God, the Product of the Will of God, and not of the Will of Man: *Which were born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* Not of Blood, as in natural Generation, or not of the Blood of *Abraham*; Grace and Regeneration being not the Product of the State or Faith of believing Parents: This was the carnal Boast of the Jews, *We have Abraham to our Father.* Not of the Power of Man's Will, that cannot produce the New Creature in himself, nor in a Child or Brother: If it was in the Power of a godly Man or godly Minister to convert or to regenerate his Child, his Wife, or his Brother, would he let them perish? But alas, alas, this is out of Man's reach, out of his Power, he cannot renew himself: A Child may as easily beget it self in the Womb before it self was, as a Man can form Christ in his own Soul, or regenerate himself; 'tis God that doth it, the Holy Spirit begets us: *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begetteth, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* Whosoever hath that efficacious Soul, uniting Soul, transforming Soul, renewing Sinner-killing Grace of Faith, is born of God. 'Tis not a bare believing, Jesus is the Christ, no, but such a Faith that works by Love, or the Faith of God's Elect; *For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ.* Faith, saving Faith, the Faith of the Operation of God, produceth this glorious Effect, through the Spirit, in the Soul. From all which Scriptures it evidently appears, that all Believers, all the Saints are the Children of God, begotten, and born of God.

Quest. *Well what of this? (some perhaps may say) How doth this prove they cannot fall away so as to perish?*

2dly. I answer, This is my second Work, and you will soon see how forcible the Argument is from hence to prove, that none of them

them can perish. See what our Blessed Saviour saith, *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* John 3. 6. That which is born of corrupt Nature, or is the Product of the Flesh, is Flesh, or of the same Nature of that which did beget it: As it is said of *Adam, he begat a Son in his own likeness;* Gen. 5. 3. that is, a depraved, sinful and mortal Child: The Flesh bringeth forth Effects proportionable to the Cause. 'Tis thus in the first Birth: But if by Flesh you will have our Saviour intend the product of Man's natural Abilities, or the Effects of the highest Improvements of his natural Light, Understanding, Will, &c. why then it follows still, that a Man purely natural can produce nothing but natural Operations; for nothing in operation exceedeth the Virtue or Excellency of that Cause which influenceth it: So that no Man can by his Abilities, however improved, produce any divine or spiritual Operation; and this shews that Man must be born of the Spirit, that becomes or is made truly spiritual and fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. And saith our Saviour, *what is born of the Spirit, is Spirit,* or is of the same Nature with the Holy Spirit; that is, Spiritual, Holy, Immortal; since every Creature begetteth its own Nature, Qualities, and Image: Such as is the Cause, such is the Effect. Thus it is in Generation, and thus it is in Regeneration; it must be from a Divine, from a spiritual Cause, and not a Natural, that the Image of God is formed in the Soul. The Flesh cannot bring forth an Heavenly Babe: Can Corruption produce or be the Cause of Regeneration? Can a Worm, or an Ant bring forth a Man, sooner than Flesh ~~can~~ Or can any Man under Heaven beget, or form, and bring forth the New Creature in the Soul; which is called the *forming of Christ,* or the *Image of God in us?* But now pray consider, that such as is the Nature or Quality of the Begetter, such is the Nature of that which is begotten of him; therefore since the New Creature is begotten by the Holy Spirit, it must partake of the Nature of the Spirit. Christ saith, *it is Spirit,* it is *spiritual,* immortal or incorruptible. Hence the Apostle Peter saith, Believers partake of the Divine Nature; *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, that by these we might be partakers of the Divine Nature.* 2 Pet. 1. 4. Every Child of God is begotten by the Spirit through the Promise, as Isaac was: *I will come, and Sarah shall have a Son.* Gal. 4. 23. Compare this with that in 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth for ever.* Pray observe it, which liveth and abideth for ever.

ever. Mortal Seed in Generation begetteth and bringeth forth a mortal Babe, a corruptible Child; but the Word and Spirit of God, begetteth and bringeth forth an immortal or an incorruptible Babe: Such is the Babe of Grace, or Child of God; I speak of the New Creature, or the regenerated Part in Man.

From hence let me draw this Argument, viz.

Arg. 1. *That which is begotten and born of, and is brought forth by the Spirit of God, or of immortal and incorruptible Seed, is an immortal or incorruptible Babe: But the New Creature in the Soul of the Regenerate, is begotten and born of, or brought forth by the Spirit of God; therefore the New Creature in the Soul of the Regenerate is an immortal or an incorruptible Babe.*

Now if it be immortal or incorruptible, it can never die, but liveth and abideth for ever; and this the Apostle shews and affirms: Therefore it is impossible such should fall away, or suffer a Spiritual Death here, or an Eternal Death in Hell hereafter.

2dly, My second Argument from hence is this, Because the Child of a natural Parent cannot cease to be his Child whilst he liveth, or Life abideth in him; this every Man must grant: True, he may prove a Rebellious and a Disobedient Child, but still he is his Child, and the Man that begat him is his Father, that Relation cannot be lost; nay, and that Nature which the Child derived from his Father, continues, and must continue, he is of his Flesh and Blood still. Even so it is here; and impossible it is that it should be otherwise, that Man or Woman, whose Soul is begotten and born of God, cannot cease to be a Child of God, though he may prove disobedient to his Heavenly Father, and grieve and dishonour him, but yet nevertheless he is a Child of God still: and God who by his Spirit in a spiritual manner begot him, is his Father; and that blessed Relation continues; and that holy Nature or Seed of Grace which he derived from God, continues and must abide also in him, as long as that Life he hath in him, as a Child of God, doth remain; and that Life is, as I have proved by the former Argument, Eternal or Immortal.

3dly, Besides I have made it most evident by my former Arguments, that God in the Covenant of Grace, and through the Suretiship of Jesus Christ, hath provided that his Children shall never so rebel against him, as finally to depart: *I will put my Fear* Jer. 32. 40. *into their Hearts, and they shall not depart from me.* Though they Ch. 3. 14. may be backsliding Children, yet God saith, he is married to them, which

which denotes that intimate Union there is between the Lord Jesus and them, according to another Metaphor.

4thly. None of those who were truly Regenerate, or indeed the Children of God, as being begotten and born of him, though some of them grievously sinned against him, were ever cast out so as to cease to be God's Children. Where is he that can contradict this, by shewing some that were indeed Children begotten of God, who have by their Disobedience ceased from being his Children, or never were restored after they sinned and fell? Who fell worse than *David* and *Peter*? I have before clearly proved, though they may sin, and fall, yet they shall rise again.

Arg. 2. If all those that were the Children of God, who sinned, were restored, and not one Instance can be given of any one of this sort, *i. e.* that were truly regenerated, that sinned, fell, and rose no more; then none of the true Children of God can so sin, so fall, as eternally to perish. But all those that were the Children of God, who sinned, were restored; and not one Instance can be given of any one of this sort, *i. e.* that were truly regenerated, that sinned, and fell, and rose no more; therefore none of the true Children of God can so sin, so fall, as eternally to perish.

5thly. Those that are the Children of God, begotten by him, cannot sin, so as eternally to perish and lose Eternal Life; because all that are his Children, are Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ. This I grant is not always true of the Children of earthly Parents, or earthly Princes, for they are oft-times disinherited; but it is otherwise here, they are all born Heirs, their being regenerated and united to Christ, gives them a sure and undoubted Right and Title to Eternal Life. The Holy Ghost positively asserts this very thing; *And if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.* Rom. 8.17.

6thly. It is because the Children of God are the Seed of Christ, which the Father said Christ should see; *He shall see his Seed:* Isa. 53. Nay, the Father assured him, that his *Seed should indure for ever.* Psal. 89. And they are all given to him, and Christ will say at the last Day, *Lo here am I, and the Children that thou hast given me, none of them are lost.* 29.

7thly. I argue yet further upon this Argument, from that blessed Text in the first Epistle of *John*; *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin, for the Seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because Sin.* How Believers may be said not to commit because Sin.

1 Joh. 3. 9. *because he is born of God. I am very much mistaken if I have not my Argument here in express Terms*: Evident it is, the Apostle means not, that they do not sin at all; that's evident because he elsewhere
 1 Joh. 1. 8. says, *If we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us.* James also says, in many things we offend all; neither
 Ecclef. 7. is there, as Solomon declares, *a just Man upon the Earth that doth*
 20. *Good, and sinneth not.* Therefore that is not the sense of the Text,
 I will give you my understanding of it.

1. So far as he is born of God, he doth not commit Sin, or so he sins not; that is, the New Creature doth not sin, that never yields to Sin, but evermore wars against it, and resisteth it: This
 Rom. 7. 25. is that which Paul calls the Law of his Mind, it is the renewed or regenerated Part, or 'tis that which is born of God, that lusteth against the Flesh, or wars against it.

2. He doth not, nay, he cannot sin as others do: this appears by that I mentioned last, because of that new Nature or blessed Seed he hath received.

3. He cannot live in a *Course of Sin*, or make a *Trade of Sin*: He cannot live in a custom of Sinning, because all evil Habits are broken by Divine Grace in him. That Man that lives in any way of Sin, the old Habit of Lying, Pride, Lusts, Drunkenness, Covetousness, or any other Sin being not broken, is not born of God; for it is impossible a Child of God should so sin, *i. e.* live in a course and practice of committing of known Sins, or in a constant and continual omission of known Duties: Though he may fall into gross Sins, as *David* and other Children of God did, yet they continue not in a Course of such Sins that once possibly they were overcome by; nay, be sure they set a greater Watch against such Sins, and hate them rather more than all other Sins, because thereby they greatly dishonoured God, and wounded their own Souls.

4. Therefore Sin is not his Way, or Walk; he doth not commit Sin, as to walk after it; *he walks not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* He may step into the Way of Sin, but he soon steps out of it again, whereas others walk in that Way every Day; it is the high Way, the common Road of the Ungodly.

5. He doth not commit Sin with Liking, Allowance, and Love. Though the fleshly Part may like, love, and allow of it, yet he finds another Part in him that hates it: *What I hate, that do I.*
 Rom. 7. 15. And hence it is the Apostle saith, *It is not I that doth it, but Sin*
 -that

that dwells in me. I am against it, Grace hath the upper Hand in my Soul: I am for the Law of God, I give my Voice for Christ; I, that is my renewed part, that's the I he speaks of.

6. He cannot sin unto Death; sin so as to fall, finally fall, and perish for ever. 'Tis evident that this is intended here, though there may be a Truth in the other respects. *If any Man see his Brother sin a Sin which is not unto Death, he shall ask, and he shall give him Life for them that sin not unto Death. There is a Sin unto Death; I do not say he shall pray for it.* The Elect sin, but not unto Death; there is Pardon for all their Sins; if they ask, their Sins shall be forgiven them: but there is a Sin unto Death, a falling into Heresy or Debauchery, or such an Apostacy that shall never be forgiven; but thus they cannot commit Sin that are born of God, so as to perish. Which indeed the Apostle in the same Chapter shews to be his meaning, *All Unrighteousness is Sin; and there is a Sin not unto Death.* [Mind his next words] *We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not.* He clearly shews us what he intendeth by sinning not, namely, he sinneth not unto Death; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself that the Wicked one toucheth him not: This is the great Happiness and Advantage of the Children of God, who partake of his Holy Nature, they are furnished with a self-preserving Principle; the Seed remains, they shall never lose their New Nature, therefore cannot sin unto Death: *For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World;* the World in all its Snares, Sins, Allurements and Temptations whatsoever; that is, they shall at last overcome, *Because he that is in them, is stronger than he that is in the World.*

6thly, The very Relation of Children secures them, and fully shews they cannot, shall not sin, fall, and perish for ever: for what Father, a dear and tender Father will suffer any one of his Children to be torn into Pieces (and cruelly devoured) before his Face, if he be able to preserve and deliver it? Or should he suffer it, would not all say that he was a cruel and unmerciful Father, one that had no Love, no natural Affections to his poor Child? If therefore any one Child of God falls into the Enemy's Hand, I mean, into Sin's Hand, or Satan's Hand, and is torn into pieces, or is destroyed and ruined for ever; it must be,

(1.) Either for want of Love in God to that poor Child of his:

(2.) Or else for want of Power and Ability in God, he being not strong or able enough to save his distressed Child out of the Hands of those cruel Enemies.

Or, (3.) For want of Care and Watchfulness in God, from whence the Enemy took an Advantage, and destroyed his Child that was begotten and born of him.

Now it cannot be that God wants Love to all, or any one of his Children; we have shewed you, that he loves them with an everlasting, infinite, and inconceivable Love, such a Love as nothing can separate his Children from it: and to say he either wants Power to save them, or Care and Faithfulness, is *Blasphemy*. O what is the Love, the Care and Faithfulness of God? Besides, he has committed them into Christ's Hand, to keep and preserve them, as my Text holds forth: And can any think that Christ has not received a Charge to keep them from the Danger of Sin, that they be not finally lost thereby, as well as from any other Enemy? Or do you think Christ will fail in his Care and Faithfulness, who is their great Shepherd, Sponsor, Surety, or Trustee? Moreover, if he should (as I shall hereafter shew you) lose one Child, he loses one of the Members of his own Mystical Body.

Now from the whole, let me draw this general Argument; and so conclude with this:

*The general
Argument.*

- (1.) If every true Believer is begotten and born of God:
- (2.) If they partake of his Holy and Divine Nature:
- (3.) If Children cannot cease being Children, or that Relation continues as long as Life continues, however disobedient the Child may be; and if it be thus with the Children of God, who are begot and born of him, or by his Spirit, that they cannot cease being his Children, nor lose that Divine Nature they derived from him in Regeneration:
- (4.) If God hath provided so well for his own Children in the Covenant, that they shall not depart from him:
- (5.) If no Child that was born of God, did ever perish that we read of:
- (6.) If they are the Children of God, or Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ:
- (7.) If they cannot sin unto Death: Then no true Believer can so sin and fall away as eternally to perish.

But all these things affirmed, are true, certainly true; therefore no true Believer can so sin and fall away as eternally to perish.

Brethren, I shall apply this, and pass to the sixth Argument.

APPLICATION.

Infer. 1. From hence we infer, that those Men who affirm that such who are the Children of God, begotten and born of the Spirit, may perish, are strangely beclouded; for they must suppose that a Child may utterly lose the Nature and Relation of a Child, and degenerate so far, as to become a *Dog*, a *Swine*, &c. which is impossible in Nature, and much more in Grace: for as none but the Almighty Power of the Infinite God could change the Soul; so it is impossible for any Diabolical Power to turn or change that Holy Nature again; and that not only because the Divine Nature and Image of God is such in self, but also by reason of the Design and Purpose of God, in and by Jesus Christ in our Restauration, that being such, that it cannot be lost any more without the highest dishonour to God, and a frustration of his Eternal Purpose and Counsel, which was to destroy the Works of the Devil. If any should object, that *Adam* had the Image of God in him before he fell, and lost it. I answer, He was the Son of God by Creation only, not by Grace; he was not begotten by the Holy Spirit, nor did he stand as we do, in Christ.

Infer. 2. This may also therefore inform all Believers, that they are in a most happy and safe Condition, because they are born of God, and brought by Grace and Regeneration into an unchangeable State.

Exhort. O see that you are the Children of God, begotten of God; for if so, though you are but *Babes*, yet you are out of Eternal Danger.

Let me give you, Brethren, here a few Marks or Characters of Babes in Christ, or of a Child of God.

1. *Babes have all the Parts and Lineaments of a Man*, if it be a perfect Birth: So a Babe in Christ hath all the Essentials of a true Christian; he hath all the Parts and Lineaments of the New Creature. There is a Formation of God's Image, or a gracious Work of the Spirit in every Faculty of the Soul, and a partaking of every Grace; though at the first forming it is not come to full Growth and Perfection: there is not only Light in the *Understanding*, Convictions in the *Conscience*, but the *Will* is subjected to the Will of God, and Power

of Divine Grace ; and the *Affections* are renewed and changed also to love, as God loves ; and to hate, as God hates.

2. A Babe partakes of the Nature of the Father that begot him : So does a Child of God partake of his Divine Nature ; he
Eph.4.24. is *after God created in Righteousness and true Holiness. That which is*
John 3.6. *born of the Flesh, is Flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.*

3. It is observed, that *Babes come into the World crying : So a Babe*
in Christ, or one born again, comes into a State of Grace praying ;
Acts 9. *Behold he prays.* And though it be not universally true in Nature, yet it is so in Grace, always so ; he that prays not, is not renewed, nor born again.

4. *A Babe or Child new-born, desires the Milk of its Mother's Breast : So such who are born of God, desire after the sincere Milk of the Word, or the heavenly and pure Doctrine of the Gospel, that they may grow thereby.*
1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

5. *A dear Child loves and honours his Father who begot him : So every true Child of God does love and honour God : If I be a Father, where is mine Honour ?*
Mal. 1. 6.

6. *A Child is grieved when the Father is offended, and will take care that he doth not displease him, if a dear Child : So doth every Child of God mourn when God is offended ; and also takes special care and heed he displeases him not.*

7. *A dear Child loves all his Brethren and Sisters : So every one that is born of God, doth not only love him that begat, but also all those who are begotten of him.*
1 Joh. 5. 1.

8. *A dear Child will strive to follow and imitate his Father in all his Vertues : So a Child of God follows God, imitates God in all his imitable Perfections ; Be ye followers of God as dear Children.*
Eph. 5. 1.

3. *Reproof.* How doth this tend to reprehend the Enemies of God's People, who abuse, reproach, backbite, nay, persecute them ? How will they stand in the Judgment-Day, when Christ will say, what ye did to this and that Child of mine, you did it unto me ? *He that toucheth you, (saith Jehovah) toucheth the Apple of my Eye.*
Zech. 2. 8.

4. This greatly raiseth the Honour of Believers : What greater Dignity can be conferred on us, than to be begotten and born of God ? This is more than to be Adopted Sons, we are born of God, partake of his Divine Nature : *Behold what manner of Love the Father*
ther

ther hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God — 1 John 3. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, &c. If David thought it no small Honour to be the Son-in-Law to an Earthly King; what an Honour hath God conferred upon his Saints!

5. And lastly, You that are Saints, read your Privilege, *If Children, then Heirs.*

But no more at this Time.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

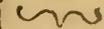
I Closed last Day with the fifth Argument.

Sixthly, I shall now proceed to my next Argument, to prove, *That none of Christ's Sheep can so fall away as eternally to perish.* And that shall be taken from the Nature of that Divine, Spiritual and Mystical Union that there is between every true Believer, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

By the way;

Let it be considered, that this Union by the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, is not a Personal Union, that is impossible; he doth not assume our Nature, and so prevent our Personality, which (as one observes) would make us one Person with himself: But he dwells in our Persons, keeping his own, and leaving us our Personality indefinitely distinct: But it is a Spiritual Union, a Mystical and Mystical Union, more to be admired, than undertaken fully to be defined by any Man under Heaven. Many Debates there have been about this Union amongst Learned Men, some carry it too high, and some too low; for though it be not a Personal Union, yet it is more than a Union in Love and Affection, or in Principle, in Design and Interest, which may be between one Friend and another.


Sermon
XI.


*The Sixth
Argument
taken from
the Soul's
Union with
Christ.*

Dr. Owen.

1 Cor. 6. 17. *First,* It is such a strong Union intensively, that Christ and a regenerate Man become one Spirit: *He that is joined unto the Lord, is one Spirit:* One Spirit (saith Reverend Charnock) as if they had but one Soul in two Bodies. What the Spirit doth in Christ, it doth also in a Believer, according to the Capacity of the Soul: The same Spirit which was the immediate Conveyer of Grace to the Humane Nature of Christ, is so to us; Christ hath an Essential Holiness in respect of his Godhead, but a Derivative Holiness as Man: and this Derivative Holiness proceeded from the Spirit's dwelling in him *without measure*, which we have in our Measures: And by virtue of this Union, by the same Spirit whereby we become one Spirit with Christ; not only that Grace which is in us, and in the greatest Apostle, is the same; but that Grace which is in us, and in our Blessed Mediator the Man Christ Jesus, are of the same Nature and Original: As the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Stars, are the same, but they differ in Degrees, not essentially. And as we say of Souls, *Anima sunt pares dignitate*, saith Charnock; though the Actions are not the same, because of the indispotion of the Organs, and the predominancy of some particular Humour. 'Tis the same Spirit in Christ and a Believer, as it is the same Soul in dignity, which is in an Infant and a Man of most refined Parts. It is more here, for 'tis the same Spirit in respect of his Person, which makes Christ very near of Kin to us; this Spirit must either desert Christ or us, before this Union can be dissolved: Not Christ, for he had it in the World not in Measures, and he is yet anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows: Not us, because the Promise of Christ cannot be broken. This being the Top-stone of the Comfort of Believers, in sending this Comforter that he may abide with us for ever. Evident it is, that it is such a Union that Believers are said to *partake of the Divine Nature*; that the Holy Spirit is promised to them, and in a spiritual manner is united to them, and dwelleth and abideth in them, and that for ever, cannot be denied. Christ shews us, that this Union arises from our spiritual eating of his Flesh, and drinking of his Blood: *He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* But when some were offended, and could not see how this could be, he said unto them, *ver. 63. It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing;* (it is not such eating as the Idolatrous Papists dream of) it is by the Holy Spirit, by the indwelling of the quickning Spirit, whereby we have a real participation

Joh. 6. 56.

icipation

cipation of Christ: He is in us by his Spirit, (as a Vital Principle, changing our Hearts, and working in us his own Holy Image, infusing Gracious Dispositions and Sacred Habits in the Soul) and we are in him by Faith, in a gracious, hidden, and mystical manner; and this Union cannot be dissolved.

Secondly, This Union must needs be most intimate, near and strong, if we consider by what Metaphors it is set forth in God's Word.

1. It is a Marriage-Union; like as a Man and his Wife are said to be *one Flesh*, so he that is joined to the Lord is *one Spirit*. No Man ever hated his own Flesh, but nourished and cherished it as the Lord the Church. He that loveth his Wife, loveth himself; a Man and his Wife is but *one Mystical Self*: and what is in Nature as to the Perfection of it, is much more eminently in Christ. Now since God hath fitted to our Nature a Care of our Body, this Care be sure is much more in Christ, when the Apostle shews what the Love of the Husband should be unto the Wife; and that a Man leaves both Father and Mother, and cleaveth to his Wife; and they two shall be *one Flesh*: Saith he, *This is a great Mystery; but I speak* Eph. 5. 31, *concerning Christ and his Church*; or of Christ and every believing Soul. The Union between Husband and Wife is near; ay but Death dissolves this Union, because they can be united, or be one no longer than both live: But Christ lives for ever, and the Soul of a Believer lives for ever: Nay, Believers have Eternal Life in them, and they shall never die; therefore it follows this Union abides for ever: He hath betrothed his Saints, his Spouse unto himself for ever. And can any then dissolve this Marriage-Contract and Conjugal Union? Is Christ able to preserve his Spouse, or the Soul that is united unto him? Is it in the Power of his Hands? Pray, Brethren, consider it well. Will any of you that have a Spouse, a Wife that you dearly love, suffer her to be torn into pieces, and basely murdered before your Eyes, if you could prevent it? And do any think that Christ, who hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, Power over Sin, the World, the Devil, yea, over Hell and Death; will he, I say, ever suffer his Spouse to be destroyed and murdered by Sin, World, or Devil? Strange! did he die for her, and has he married her, and made her one Spirit with himself; and will he leave her to conflict, to fight and war with an Enemy that he knows is too strong and mighty for her, and not come in, rush in to her assistance, to save and rescue her from such bloody, cruel, and barbarous.

barous Enemies? No doubt but he will rise up with Indignation and Jealousy, to save every Soul that is so related and united to him.

Thirdly, This Spiritual Union between Christ and every believing Soul, is set forth by that near and intimate Union which there is between the Natural Body and every Member thereof: The Head and Members make but one Body; even so Christ is the Head of his Saints, and they being many, are all Members of that one Body. Christ and all Believers make but one Mystical Christ: *Even as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body; so is Christ, that is, Christ Mystical.* Now this Relation of Head and Members, I say, holds forth this Spiritual Union between Christ and every Believer: *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bone.* And it is from their Head, Jesus Christ, that every Member receives Divine and Saving Influences of Life, Strength, Government and Guidance, as the Apostle shews; *From whom the whole Body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body, unto the edifying of it self in Love.* Our Union with Christ brings us into a fixed Settlement, and secures us from all Fears or danger of miscarrying, let all Enemies do what they can. Can the Members be lost that have such a Head? Our Union with Christ cannot consist in the communication of any thing unto us as Members from him the Head: But it must be in that which constitutes him and us in this Relation, (saith a Reverend Minister) he is our Head antecedently in order of *Nature*, to any communication of *Grace* from him as a Head, yet not antecedent to our Union it self. Herein then consists the Union of Head and Members; that tho they are many, and have many Offices, Places, and Dependencies, yet there is but one living, quickning Soul in Head and Members: The same Life that is in the Head, is in the Body, and in every Member thereof in particular; and he that offers Violence to one Member, offers Violence to the Body and the Head also: And as one living Soul makes the natural Head and Members to be but one Man, one Body; so one quickning Spirit dwelling in Christ, and in his Members, gives them their Mystical Union, and makes them but one Body: *As the first Man Adam was made a living Soul, so the last Man Adam was made a quickning Spirit.* It is he that quickens by his Spirit, or conveys a vital Principle to all his, by which they

live Spiritually, as from *Adam* all his live naturally : *Because I live, ye shall live also.* So long as there is Life in Christ the Head, there shall be Life in the Members ; because that Life that is communicated to the Head without measure as Mediator, was to this very End, that it might be communicated to every believing Soul that is united to him.

Now then if it be thus, if this be the Nature of the Soul's Union with Jesus Christ, that it is set out and opened to us by the Union that there is between the Body natural and its Members ; then I infer,

1. That by the Life that is in the Head, the Members live ; and because of that Life that is in him, they cannot die : it was by that Spirit that is in him that we were first quickned ; and Life is in us, and shall be continued to us.

2. I also infer, That if Christ be able, or can do it, he will prevent his losing of any one of his Members : And for any one to say it is not in his Power, is Blasphemy ; and to say he can, and will not, is a like Evil to assert, because it renders Christ less tender and careful of his Spiritual Members, than we are of the Members of our Natural Body. Which of us would suffer his *Hand* or *Foot* to be torn from us, nay, a *Toe* or *Finger*, if we could prevent it ?

3. Furthermore I infer, That all the Members of Christ's Mystical Body, as they were all given to him, so they are all known by him ; they are so many Members numerically, and no more, as it is in the Body natural. In God's Book are all his Members written, as *David* speaks of the Members of his Body ; which some conclude refers to Christ chiefly, and to the Members of his Mystical Body. Pl. 139-16.

4. I infer, That if Jesus Christ loses one Member of his Mystical Body, then his Body will be an imperfect Body, a maimed Body ; for so we know it is in the natural Body, though the loss be but of one of the least Members thereof.

3dly, The Union between Christ and Believers, is set forth by the Union of a Tree and its Branches : *I thou being a wild Olive-Tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the Root and Fatness of the Olive-Tree.* Now the Branches have a close and near Union with the Tree ; and being grafted into it, partake of the Juice and Fatness of the Root, the Tree and Branches being nourished thereby : There is the same fruitifying and fattening Virtue

Rom. 11.
17.

in the one that is in the other, only with this difference, in the Root and Tree it is originally, in the Boughs or Branches by way of Communication. This is brought by the Holy Ghost to open the Union of Christ and his Saints, both he and they are partakers of the same Fruit-bearing Spirit; he that dwells in them, dwells in him also, only it is in him (as to them) originally, in them by communication from him. Take a *Cyon*, a Plant, a Graft, fix it to the Tree with all the Art you can, and bind it on as close as possible, yet 'tis not united to the Tree, until the Sap that is in the Tree be communicated to it; which Communication states the Union: Even so and in like manner let a Man be bound to Jesus Christ by all Bonds of visible Profession imaginable; yet unless the Holy Spirit be in him to unite him to Christ, unless he hath that Divine Sap and Life communicated to him, he hath no real Union with him.

Object. But doth not our Saviour say, *Every Branch in me that beareth not Fruit, he taketh away.* And again, *If a Man abideth not in me, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered, and Men gather them and cast them into the Fire, and they are burned.* Doth not this prove, that such who have real Union with Christ may eternally perish?

Ans. I know this is brought as a grand Proof for final falling away: But to give an answer hereunto.

1. Some tell you that there is no need to translate the words so, but that it may as well be translated, *Every Branch not bringing forth Fruit in me*; that is, that have not real Union *in me*: For though there can be no true Fruit brought forth without real and saving Union with Christ, yet Men may bring forth some kind of Fruit, and such that looks like good Fruit; it is called Fruit: He may *pray, hear the Word, and lead an honest, moral, and sober Life*; yea, and give to the Poor, and yet not bring forth this Fruit *in Christ*, or from a real Union he hath with him: for all Acts of an External Profession in Religion, may be brought forth without any Divine Principle of Grace, or being rooted and grafted into Christ by the Holy Ghost; and such a one the *good Husband-man* will discover, for this Man's Fruit will not continue, but wither; *Having not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when Tribulation and Persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended.* Evident it is, that all that received the Seed into good Ground, or were sincere Christians, brought forth Fruit to Everlasting Life, though not all the like Quantity. But,

2. Let

Dr. Owen.

Joh. 15. 2.
6.

Mat. 13.
21.

2. Let it be considered, that there is a twofold being in Christ spoken of in God's Word; as Christ also is compared to a Vine under a twofold Consideration.

(1.) There is a Spiritual, Real and Invisible being in Christ, by Faith and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and these are grafted into Christ the Vine, spiritually considered, and so have that true Union with him of which we speak.

(2.) There is also an External or Visible being in Christ, by an outward profession: Hence those that are baptized in his Name, are said to be *baptized into Christ*. Paul saith of some, that *they were in Christ before me*. How did he know who were savingly, invisibly in Christ? No doubt he speaks of their visible being in him, by that Profession they made of the Gospel, and by their being baptized; and in this respect *Vine* is to be taken for the Church, which sometimes bears Christ's Name. Now evident it is, many that thus are in Christ, that is, by a Profession and Sacramental Implantation, may bring forth some sort of Fruit for a while; but for want of a real Union with Christ, they having not a Supply of Grace, and Divine Sap from the Root, they abide not in Christ, that is, in a visible Profession, but are cast forth as withered Branches, and at last will be cast into the Fire. But now whosoever bringeth forth true Spiritual Fruit, who is visibly in Christ the *Vine*, him will God purge that he may bring forth more Fruit. And that this is the true meaning of this Text, is plain, if we consider what Christ saith of all his Elect Ones, (as hinted to you before) *viz. That he had not only chosen them, but ordained them, that they should go and bring forth Fruit, and that their Fruit shall remain:* John 15. 16. And this he speaks to his Disciples soon after in this very Chapter, to comfort them, lest they might fear miscarrying, and become like such who are *withered Branches*. And this is sufficient to remove this Objection.

Thirdly, The Union of the Soul with Christ, as to the excellent, firm, and abiding Nature thereof, is further demonstrated and strengthened, by the consideration of the Union of Christ to the Father, and them, as it is expressed by our blessed Lord; *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in One. eis én, into one*: First, the Father in Christ, the *Fulness of the Godhead being in him bodily*; then, Christ in Believers: so that from that fulness of Grace, Strength, &c. that the Father communicated to the Son as Mediator, by virtue of his Union with him, (and which is

communicable to us) all his Members do receive from Christ by virtue of their Union with him. Our Lord prayed, in Verse 20, *That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, &c.* Now though it be hard to understand the Nature of this Union in some Respects, yet this is easy to comprehend, *viz.* that the Union between the Father and Christ is an inseparable Union, it is an abiding Union, or it is a Union that cannot be dissolved. Why then let us consider, since Christ prayed the Father, and was heard herein, that all *that the Father had given him, might be one, as He and the Father was one*: What can be a greater Argument to prove, that that Union which is between Christ and Believers is an inseparable, an abiding, and an undissolvable Union? The Union here doth not respect that Essential Union that is between the Father and the Son, but in respect of Christ, as he is our Head and Mediator; in which respect the Father poured into him of his abundant Fulness, that so we having a firm, perfect, and settled Union with him, might in a glorious manner receive from him, and be supplied with all things we need. And Christ being the Medium of our Union with God, both the Father's Union with Christ, and Christ's Union with us, are for the final Perfection, and compleating that Glorious Work he hath begun in the Souls of his People, until we all come to be with him where he is, and behold his Glory. If therefore we consider the Nature of this Union, and the Prayer of Christ, that it might be perfected and abide undissolvable, it must follow that it is impossible for any Soul that is thus united to the Lord Jesus, ever so to fall away as eternally to perish.

Fourthly, By this Spiritual Union with Christ, we partake of his Blessed Image or Divine Nature: So that the Head and Members are of one kind, and not like *Nebuchadnezzar's Image, a Head of Gold, and a Belly and Thighs of Brass, and Legs of Iron, and Feet and Toes, part of Iron and part of Clay*: This would be to make the Mystical Body of Christ a Monster, an Immortal Head, an In-corrutable Head, and a Mortal Body and Members, that may corrupt, putrify and become loathsome. No, this cannot be; such as is the Head (as to Nature and Quality) such is the Body, and every Member in particular, a living Head and living Members: a Head of pure Gold, and Members of pure Gold; also a Head that cannot die, and therefore the Members cannot die. For,

Fifthly,

Fifthly, It is a *Vital Union*, as you have heard, that is to say, the same Life that is in Christ, is in all Believers : And as it is in the natural Body, the Members have not only Life in the Head, but Life in themselves also ; and so long as there is Life in the Head, there shall be Life in the Members, so it is here : And this must therefore be for ever ; for by the same parity of Reason that one Member may die or corrupt, the whole Body may die and corrupt also. But Christ is our Life, and the Spirit, which is the Bond of this Union, communicates Life to every Soul in whom he resides and dwells ; and the Holy Spirit hath taken up his abode in Believers for ever : He that hath the Spirit, hath the Son ; and *he that hath the Son, hath Life.*—*I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* From hence I argue ;

Gal. 2. 20,
21.

Arg. 1. If he that believeth in Christ, or that hath Union with Christ, is a Part or Limb of Christ Mystical ; then not one Soul that believes in Christ, and has real Union with him, can eternally perish. Shall a Member of Christ perish or be torn from his Body ! Brethren, was it Christ's Natural Body only that was concerned in that Prophecy, *A Bone of him shall not be broken ?* Or did Christ take more care of the Members of his Natural Body, than of the Members of his Mystical Body ?

John 19:
36.

Arg. 2. If Christ's Love to, and Care of the Members of his Mystical Body, be greater than any Man's Love to, or Care of the Members of his Natural Body can be ; then not one of Christ's Sheep or Saints can eternally perish : But his Love to, and Care of the Members of his Mystical Body is far greater than theirs can be ; therefore it follows, no Believer can ever perish.

Arg. 3. If the Union between Christ and Believers be a Marriage Union, and that those that Christ does espouse, and bring into that Relation to himself, he doth espouse for ever ; if it is a Union like that Union that is between God the Father, and Christ as Mediator ; if it be an indissoluble Union, a Union which God nor Christ will ever break, nor Sin, Satan, nor no Enemy can ever break ; then not one Soul that is truly and really united to Christ, can ever so fall away as eternally to perish. But all this we have proved to be true, therefore not one Soul that hath true and real Union with Christ, can fall away so as eternally to perish.

Arg. 4.

Arg. 4. If the Love of God, and the Love of Christ abides firm for ever to every Soul that hath Union with Christ, which is the Spring, efficient and moving Cause of this Union; then not one of them who have Union with Christ can perish. But we have proved that the Love of the Father and Son abides firm for ever to every Soul that has Union with Christ; therefore not one of them can perish for ever.

Arg. 5. If Christ died, rose again, and ascended into Heaven, as the Head and Representative of all those that were given unto him, and have Union with him, then, as sure as he is now in Heaven, they shall every Soul of them come thither: But this hereafter I shall fully prove, and clearly (God assisting) make appear when I come to speak to the next General Argument.

Arg. 6. If the Union between Christ and Believers is so strong and firm a Union intensively, that Christ and they become one Spirit so, that as if there was but one Spirit in Christ and in them; or what the Spirit is to Christ, and doth to Christ as Mediator without measure, he is to every Believer, and does for every Believer in measure, according to each Believer's Necessity and Capacity; then this Union secures every Believer from falling so, as to perish for ever. But this we have proved is so; the Spirit must either desert Christ (as you heard) or them, if ever the Union be broken; not Christ, that all will say is impossible; not Believers, because of the blessed Union they have with him; and also, because Christ hath promised that the Spirit shall abide in them for ever. Nay, this is also the absolute Promise of the Father to the Son in the Covenant of Grace: *And as for me, this is my Covenant with them, saith Jehovah, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed's Seed, from henceforth and for ever.*

John 14:
19.

Arg. 7. By virtue of this Sacred Union, because Christ lives, the Saints (or those that have Union with him) shall live also, (which Blessing besides he has by a positive Promise assur'd them of;) then no Soul that hath real Union with him can perish: But this our Blessed Saviour doth assert; *Because I live, ye shall live also;* that is, the Life of Grace here, and the Life of Glory hereafter.

Arg. 8.

Arg. 8. If there is no Condemnation to such who are in Jesus Christ, or have Union with him: if they have Everlasting Life, because they have Union with the Son, and are passed from Death to Life, and shall not come into Condemnation; then this Sacred Union secures and saves all that are united to Christ from falling away so as eternally to perish. But that all this is true, we have proved, and it is in plain words asserted by the Holy Ghost: therefore this Sacred Union secures and saves them all from eternal perishing.

Rom. 8. 1.
John 3. 36.
John 5. 24.

Arg. 9. If *Christ in us* is a certain and sure Ground of the Hope of Glory, and that Hope is the Anchor of the Soul both sure and steadfast, that cannot be lost; then Union with Christ gives all such an assurance of Salvation; and that none of them that have Union with Christ, or have *Christ in them*, can eternally perish. But that this is so, the Holy Ghost doth positively assert; therefore none of them can so perish.

Col. 1. 27.
Heb. 6. 18,
19, 20.

Arg. 10. Lastly, If Faith in the Habit of it, through which by the Spirit we come to have this Actual Union with Christ, can never be lost, or shall not fail, then none that have Union with Christ shall ever perish. But that Faith in the Habit of it cannot be lost, or shall not fail, our Saviour affirms it, being one part of his Prayer when on Earth, and no doubt it is part of his Intercession now in Heaven; *I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not*: And he never asked any thing of the Father but it was granted him; *And I know thou hearest me always*: Therefore they can never perish.

Luk. 22.
John 11.
42.

I might add here that Communion which flows necessarily from this Union, which affords a strong Argument for the Saints final Perseverance: Union cannot be without Communion, for whilst the Members are united to a living Head, there will be (as one observes) an Influx of Animal Spirits whereby they shall partake of Life and Motion: and though a Believer, I grant, may lose the sensible Experience of Communion with Christ, yet the Spirit from their Mystical Head, will be working in them, providing for them, and standing by them.

Charnock.

To conclude with this Argument, I argue,

- (1.) If our Union be by the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- (2.) If our Union with Christ be a Conjugal Union, a Marriage-Union.
- (3.) If it be as near a Union as is between the Body, the Members:

Members of the Natural Body. (4.) If it be such a Union as is between the Tree and the Branches. (5.) If it be such a Union as is between the Father and Son, as Christ is Mediator. (6.) If it be a Union of Spirits, as if but one Soul was in two Bodies. (7.) If it be such a Union, that Believers partake of the Divine Nature. (8.) If it be a Vital Union. (9.) If it be such a Union that cannot be dissolved by all the Powers of Darkness, the Seed of Grace remaining: Then it is impossible for any Believer that hath Union with Christ to perish Eternally. But all these things are true; therefore no true Believer can Eternally perish.

APPLICATION.

First, These things being so, we may infer, that our Union with Christ is a most glorious Spring of the greatest Comfort to Believers imaginable.

1. From hence, Brethren, comes in your Actual Justification: No Man is personally justified, before he receives Christ by Faith, before he has actual Union with him: But every Soul that is in Christ, is actually justified and discharged from all the Guilt of his Sins, and stands in Christ compleat in his perfect Righteousness, without Spot, before the Throne of God.

2. Such are made near and dear to Christ: O how near is the Wife to the Husband, or the Members to the Body! even so near and dear is every Soul that hath actual Union with Christ unto him.

3. From hence flows our Communion with Christ; for by virtue of our Union we come to have our Natures changed: It is thereby that we come to behold, *as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is impossible that a brutish and swinish Creature, as all unrenewed Men and Women are, should have Communion with the Holy God, or with the Holy and Blessed Jesus. *What Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? Or what Communion hath Light with Darkness? Or what Concord hath Christ with Beelial?* If we would have Communion with Christ, we must be Holy, and touch not the unclean thing: And impossible it is that we should be Holy, until we come to have Union with Jesus Christ, by which means we come to partake of his pure Nature, and have the evil Habits of our vile and filthy Hearts and Souls changed. The Tree must be first made good, and then

the Fruit will be good. Man naturally is united to the Devil, and to his own Sin and Iniquity, and hath Enmity in his Heart against God : The Prince of Darknes is the Head of this dark and wicked World. The *Understandings, Wills* and *Affections* of all Men are under diabolical Influence, ever since *Adam* betrayed us into the Enemies Hands ; and abide so, until that Union be dissolved by the Power of Divine Grace, and the Soul united by the Spirit unto Jesus Christ. We are united to the first *Adam* by a Likeness of Nature ; and how can we be united to the *Second* without a Principle of Life, by which another, a new Nature is formed in us ? We were united to the *First* by a living Soul ; and we must be united to the *other* by a quickning Spirit. By Nature Man is dead in Sins and Trespases ; and how can he have Communion with a living Christ without a Principle of Life ? Would any go about to join a stinking Carcass to the Holy Jesus ? Would not any think it a great Plague to him, if he had a dead and rotten Carcass united to him ? O remember it is from your Union with Christ, your Communion with him follows, yea, and your Communion with the Saints too ; you can take no delight in Heavenly Company, nor Heavenly Things, without an Heavenly Heart.

3. By this Union you that are Believers come to have interest in, and a right unto all things Jesus Christ hath purchased by his Death ; nor shall any ever have any share or part in all those Spiritual and Eternal Blessings, except they obtain this Union : As the *Cyon* cannot partake of the *Sap* and *Fatness* of the *Olive-Tree* without it is grafted into the *Stock*, no more can we partake of the *Fatness* and *glorious Fulness* of the *true Olive* Jesus Christ, unless we are grafted into him by Faith, and have the Indwellings of the Spirit ; and then all things that Christ merited for us, and are laid up in him for us, are ours.

4. It is by virtue of this Union that we have, and may expect a Supply of all Grace according to our Wants and Necessities : Like as the Wife needs not to fear Want if it be in her Husband's Hand, (provided he be a loving and faithful Husband) and that by reason of that Union she hath with him, and that Relation she stands in unto him. Christ is a Head of Influence to thee, O Believer ; Thou holdest *the Head, from whence all the Body* Col. 2.19. *by Joints and Bands having nourishment ministred, and knis together, increaseth with the Increase of God.*

5. This also shews us, that we shall be fruitful to Christ, because we are united to him, have Union with him : *We are married*

Rom. 7.4. *to him, that we should bring forth Fruit unto God; even all the Fruits of Holiness and good Works, yea, such Works and good Fruit as is acceptable to God: And that because we are accepted in Christ, our Persons are first accepted as Abel's was, and then our Sacrifices or Performances. The good Lord help you to weigh well, and seriously ponder these things.*

6. *Terror.* One word to you Sinners, which will be first by way of *Terror.* What will you do that have not yet obtained Union with Christ? Tremble, for your State is deplorable! All that are not united to Christ, stand united to dead *Adam*, condemned *Adam*, lost *Adam*; and if you die before you obtain Union with Jesus Christ, you are lost for ever, nay, you are (as you heard just now) united to your Sin, and to the Devil; all your Sins stand charged upon you, and cleave to you.

But may be you will say, Is there no Hope, no Help for us?

Answ. God forbid; Jesus Christ is tender to Sinners as Sinners: And those that have now Union with him, once were in your State and Condition; but know this, you must labour after Divine Grace, and come to this resolve, *viz.* to break your Affinity with Sin. While you see not your Folly in keeping your Agreement and Affinity with Hell, there is but little Hope: O throw down your Arms, fight against God no more; when once you come to hate your old Lovers, and are resolved to leave them, forgo them, and seek after this Union with Christ, there is ground to hope you are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, I am upon the Proof and Demonstration of the last Proposition or Point of Doctrine raised from these words, viz.

~ ~ ~
Sermon
XI.
~ ~ ~

That none of the Sheep of Christ, or Saints of God, can so sin and fall away as eternally to perish, but that they shall all certainly be saved.

The last Time I was upon the *Sixth general Argument*, which was taken from the Nature of that *sacred, high, and sublime Union* which is between Christ and every true Believer.

I shall proceed to the next Argument.

Seventhly, The Argument which I shall now insist on and produce further, to prove this great and comfortable Doctrine, shall be taken from the Death of Jesus Christ: For it is indeed, I find, that great Argument the Apostle makes use of to prove the final Perseverance of the Saints, or Elect of God. See *Rom. 8. 33, 34.* *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth.* Who can plead such, or put in an Accusation against them, that shall be heard, admitted, or allowed at God's Bar? He brings in four or five Reasons why none can. (1.) From their Election; they are God's Elect. (2.) Their Justification; they are actually justified, they are acquitted, declared Righteous in Christ, and that by God himself: *It is God that justifieth.* If the Supreme Judg, he whom they have offended, doth acquit and discharge them, who shall bring in any Accusation against them? To which he adds, *ver. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.* Such a One (as our Annotators note) may throw down the Gauntlet, and challenge all the Enemies in the World; let *Conscience, carnal Reason, the Law, Sin, Hell, the Flesh and Devils*, bring forth all they can say, and shew what they can do, yet after all they can-

*The Seventh
Argument
taken from
the Death
of Christ.*

not bring under Condemnation that Soul; all that they can do will fail to condemn those that Christ died for. The (3.) Reason is, because *'tis Christ that died*; because he died *for them*, that is, in their stead or room. Should one be condemned for High-Treason against the King's Person, and he should accept of another, who is his Surety, to die for him; whose Death, according to the Constitution of the Kingdom, and Laws thereof, would every way serve and answer for the Offence of the guilty Criminal; and yet the King should afterwards take the Offender, and hang him for that very Offence for which his Surety was put to Death; would not all cry out and say, it was a piece of great Injustice? Even so here, should God condemn and cast into Hell one Soul for whom, or in the room and stead of whom Christ died, would it not be great Injustice in God? *O shall not the Judge and King of Heaven and Earth do right?*

Brethren, It was God himself who substituted his own Son to die instead of the Elect, and to that End, that they should not die or perish for ever. But it may be some will object,

Object. *It is granted that Christ died for us, and satisfied for all Sins we committed before Grace, before we were called; or for all Sins against the Law: But if we believe not, or sin after Grace and Conversion, we may be condemned for ever.*

Ans. I answer; Do not these Men think that Christ did not die for Sins committed against the Gospel, and for the Sin of Unbelief, even for all such Sins that a Believer does commit after Grace and Regeneration, as well as Sins against the Law, or Sins committed before they were renewed? Alas, how long do some of God's Elect Ones continue in a State of Unbelief, and refuse the Offers of the Gospel, before they do believe and close with Christ? Why now, if Christ did not die for those Sins, (which were committed against the Gospel) as also for the Sins they do commit after they are in a State of Grace, there is not one Soul can be saved, because *without shedding of Blood there is no remission*; that is, without the shedding of Christ's Blood: *It is the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son, that cleanseth us from all Sin.* Christ satisfied the Justice of God for all the Sins a Child of God hath, doth, or ever shall commit against him, Original and Actual, from the Day of his Birth, unto the Day of his Death. So that if a Believer perishes for any Sin or Sins, he perishes for that Sin or Sins for which Christ died, and suffered for in his stead.

Object. I like not, say some, your Notion, viz. That Christ died in our stead or room: For though he died for our good, yet not in our stead, I doubt of that: And if you can make it appear that he so died for us as you affirm, namely, in the room or stead of all his Elect, then your Argument is not to be answered.

Ans. I answer; That Jesus Christ did not suffer Death for our Good only, but in our room or stead, also I shall prove and make clearly to appear.

1. This Notion (if you will so call it) of Christ dying for us, must denote his dying in our stead; because it is so always generally taken, when one Person is said to die for another, one is condemned, and another dies for him, that is, in his Room, to save the guilty Person from Death. And should not this be granted, we should be all confounded, and not know either what Men or the Scripture means, when they say, such a Man, such a Person, died for another, or for others, when the Person for whom that great Love and Favour was shewed to, was as a Criminal, and condemned to die; which moved his Friend or Surety to step in and suffer the Penalty for him, or in his stead. Now it was so here, we were all Criminals, guilty of the highest Treason against the God of Heaven; and were by the holy Law of our offended Sovereign, condemned to die, and to bear Eternal Wrath; and our Blessed Saviour was chosen in our room, and given up as an Act of the Father's Infinite Love and Favour (and as an Act of no less Love, Favour and Compassion in Christ) to die for us, and to satisfy Divine Justice for us, or to bear the Punishment we were to have born, and must (had not he born it for us) for ever.

2. Is it not plainly foretold, that *the Messiah should be cut off*, Dan 9. 26. *but not for himself?* Now since he had no Sin of his own, and yet was cut off for Sin, it follows, he was put in our Place, and stood charged with our Guilt or Debt, and so was *penally cut off*; he was cut off for us, to save us from Divine Wrath and Vengeance: It was not for himself, it was not for the fallen Angels; it was therefore for us, that we might not die, but live eternally.

3. Pray, Brethren, see what our Saviour saith upon this Account; *Greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends.* Can this Expression intend any thing more or less, than in the room or stead of his Friend, or die for them? Thus Christ died. *Even the Just for the Unjust*; the Just in the place or stead of the Unjust, or us the guilty Persons. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God*; *Because he laid down his Life for us, we ought to lay*

down

down our Life for the Brethren. These Texts fully prove the Notion; He that lays down his Life for his Brother, or dies for the Brethren, dies in their stead to save them from Death, as some have done: *For scarcely for a righteous Man will one die; yet peradventure for a good Man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* Now then seeing Christ underwent Death, and bore that Punishment that was due for Sins, and there being no Cause in himself why he should suffer that Pain and Penalty, it unavoidably follows, that it was because he stood in our Place charged with our Offences.

4. Again, it must be thus taken and understood, because it is said, *The Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all*: Our Sins were made to meet in him—*He was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities.* It was not by Christ's praying and interceding to the Father for us to forgive us our Iniquities; No, no, that was not enough, it was his dying for them: *He bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree.* He prayed again and again, but that Cup could not pass by; if we are delivered and saved from our Sins, he must die, nay his Soul must be made an Offering for Sin.

5. That Christ died in our stead, will further appear, because *he was made Sin for us, that knew no Sin. He bore the Sins of many*, that is, the Punishment of them. Our Sins were charged upon him, though he had no Sin of his own in a moral Sense, but was pure from all Iniquity; yet in a judicial Sense he was made Sin, as he was constituted and put in the Sinner's Place, dying and making Satisfaction in our stead, as our blessed Head and Surety. And how frivolous is the Cavil of the Socinians, who would have it be understood, where it is said, Christ was *made Sin*, that *he was accounted a Sinner by wicked Men.* This cannot be the meaning of the Place, because as he was made Sin for us that knew no Sin, so it was *that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* Do wicked Men account Believers to be made the Righteousness of God in him? Or does not God look upon us, or count us in him so to be?

6. But why is it said by the Holy Ghost, *But when the fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law?* &c. Had he not stood in our Law-place, why is it thus expressed? Certainly God saw it necessary to substitute him, and to accept of him in our stead; and therefore he was made under the Law, *i.e.* he was obliged

obliged to keep the Law perfectly for us, God requiring that of us in order to Justification, which we being fallen, were not able to do, therefore he did it for us, and in our Nature; being *made of a Woman*, he took our Nature upon him, and suffered Death, making a full and compleat Satisfaction for our Breach thereof; whose Sufferings and Obedience, upon the account of his being God as well as Man, had an infinite Worth and Merit in them. And if this which the Apostle saith in this place, doth not prove that he suffered in our room, I must confess I know nothing of this great Gospel-Mystery.

7. That he suffered, not only for our Good or Profit, but also in our room and stead, doth further appear, because it is said, *He died for our Sins; Who was delivered for our Offences, and rose again for our Justification.* “ This Particle, saith a Learned Man, joined with an Accu- Rom. 4. 24.
 “ sative, doth generally signify the *impulsive* Cause, and not *final*, Mar. Mr. F.
 “ 10. 22. & 13. 5. & 14. 9. John 20. 19. 2 Cor. 4. 11. And par- Dr. Owen
 “ ticularly when it is used in reference to Sufferings, it hath that shows the
 “ signification and no other; see *Levit. 26. 18, 28. Dent. 28. 11.* same, and
 “ 2 Kings 23. 26. Jer. 13. 22. John 10. 32. In all these Places many others.
 “ it necessarily signifies the Meritorious and Impulsive Cause, and
 “ nowise the *Final*; for our Offences must needs be understood, that
 “ our Offences were the Meritorious and Impulsive Cause of
 “ Christ’s Sufferings. Another Particle the Holy Ghost useth, is
 “ *ὑπὲρ*, Rom. 6. 8. For when we were without strength, Christ
 “ died for the Ungodly. *He spared not his own Son, but de-* Rom. 8. 32.
 “ *livered him up for us all. I lay down my Life for my Sheep. This* John 10.
 “ *is my Body that is given for you.* Now the Particle *ὑπὲρ*, among 15.
 “ other Significations (saith he) that it hath, signifieth some- Luk. 22.
 “ times the Impulsive Cause, *Phil. 2. 13. Ephes. 5. 16. Rom. 15. 9.* 19.
 “ Sometimes the Substitution of one in the room of another,
 “ 2 Cor. 5. 10. *Philem. v. 13. μαλὸν ἢ ἐγὼ τῆς ὑπὲρ σὲ ποιῶ,* De-
 “ most. *Ego pro te molam,* Terent. Particularly when the Suf-
 “ ferings of one for another is expressed by it, it always signifies
 “ the Substitution of one in the place of another. Whenever it
 “ is used to imply one’s dying for another, it signifies the dying
 “ in his stead; even as the Son of Man came to give his Life a
 “ Ransom for many, repeated again, *Mark 10. 45.* This Preposi-
 “ tion, (says he) whenever applied to Persons or Things, it al-
 “ ways imports a substituting of one in the room of another.
 So that from the whole we may confidently conclude, that Christ
 did not only suffer for our Good, but in our room.

Heb. 9. 28. 8. *Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of many.* Now to bear Sin, usually in Scripture-Phrase, is to bear the Punishment of Sin, *Levit. 5. 1. & 7. 8. Numb. 14. 33. He hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows. For the Transgression of my People was he stricken.* Which clearly shews the Ground and Cause of his Suffering, and not the Issue and the Event.

Isa. 53. 4,
5, 6, 8.

9. If all the other pretended Grounds and Causes are frivolous and vain, that Men bring of *Christ's dying for us, suffering for us,* besides this of dying in our stead or room; then that is the proper and only meaning thereof: but all other pretended Grounds are vain and frivolous. How idle is it for any to say, He died only to remove or take away the *rigid Law of Works,* and to merit a milder Law of Grace? Which seems to imply, as if God repented he ever gave the Law of perfect Obedience: Or as if God could allow of Sin; or else, as if the Law of perfect Obedience did not result from his Holy Nature, but that he might have given a Law at first, like their new Law of Grace: Or according to others, that he died to fulfil and take away the Ceremonial Law, and to be a Pattern of Abasement, Humility, and Self-denial. Now had that been, could not God have substituted *Peter* to have been such a Pattern as well as his own Son, and set him up as an Example; or else some other most choice and renowned Saint or Prophet; or have caused an Angel to be *incarnate* to have done it, that we might have followed his Steps? And how vain is that which some of the *Arminians* assert, *viz.* That he died to satisfy for Original Sin, or for the Breach of the first Covenant, and to purchase Salvation upon the Condition of Repentance, Faith and Obedience, or to merit God's Acceptance of the Creature's Faith, Love, Holiness, and sincere Obedience, instead of perfect Obedience to the Law of Works, so that God is become reconcilable through *Christ's Death*? But that he may be actually reconciled, lies wholly upon the Creature as his part; and thus he died for the Good of all Men, but not in the place or stead of any one. Now by this Notion, Salvation is principally wrought out by the Creature, God having put Man into a Condition or Capacity to work it out for himself: And according to this Notion Man may or may not be saved, God having left the whole of Salvation, in order to the making *Christ's Death* to become effectual, to the *Will* of Man. So that *Man's Will*, as I before intimated, determines the Case, whether *Christ's Death* shall effect any Eternal Blessing unto Sinners in general, or to any one Sinner in particular, or not.

God

God (as one of them once preached) puts Man into a Capacity to work and to do, but works not in any *the Will or the Deed of his own good Pleasure*. Now how false and frivolous all these pretended Grounds or Designs of Christ's Death are, I have already shewed.

Arg. 1. And from the first Argument taken from the Death of Christ, I argue thus; *All those that Jesus Christ died in the room or stead of, shall never die or eternally perish. But Christ died in the room or stead of all his Elect, or all such who believe and are his Sheep; therefore not one of them shall die, or eternally perish.*

Arg. 2. *If Christ died for all the Sins of his Elect, both before Grace, or before they are called; and for those committed after Grace, or after they are called, so that they might not be condemned for any of them; then none of them can eternally perish. But this I have proved; therefore none of them shall ever eternally perish.*

Secondly, The Death of Christ doth deliver every true Believer from Eternal Wrath and Condemnation, I prove thus; Because the Sufferings of Christ, or the Sacrifice of Christ, is imputed to them, or is accounted to them that do believe: This follows from what I said last, He took our Sins upon himself, and satisfied for them, as if he had actually sinned, and freely of his own Grace gives us the Benefit of his Suffering, as if we had actually suffered; our Sin was imputed to him, that his Righteousness and Obedience might be imputed to us, even both that which is called his *Active and Passive Obedience*. Sin was imputed to Christ, yea, every Sin we have, or ever shall commit; so that in Christ we have born already all that vindictive Wrath and Vengeance of God that was due to them, according to his Holy Law and Threatning denounced against us. Christ and his Elect are as one Person, or as one entire Corporation; and what he did, was as if every one that he represents had done it. The Sufferings of our Saviour was in lieu of the Life of the Sinner; *the Just for the Unjust*. By his ^{1 Pet. 2.} *Stripes we were healed*: And that by God's charging our Sin ^{24.} *judicially* upon him, he as our Surety standing in our room. ^{Ira. 53.5.} *He was (as the Apostle says) made Sin for us that knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

Arg. 3. *If Christ hath born all that Vindictive Wrath that was due to his Elect for their Sins, then not one of them can eternally perish. But Christ hath born all that Vindictive Wrath that was due to his Elect for their Sins; therefore not one of them can eternally perish.*

The Justice of God hath nothing to lay to the Charge of God's Elect, because it is Christ that died; he whose Death hath an infinite Worth and Satisfaction in it: this is the Apostle's very Argument; If God's Justice is satisfied, and his Wrath appeased in Christ's Death; if our blessed *Jonah's* being thrown into the Sea of Divine Wrath, hath made so *sweet a Calm*, that God declares in him, *i. e.* in his Son, he is *well-pleased*, and that *Fury is not in him* now no more for ever towards Believers; who can or shall then condemn them? Jesus Christ hath turned away God's Anger, by impairing of his Right and Sovereignty, without derogation from his Perfections: So that now he can and doth receive us who believe, into his Eternal Love and Favour, through the Death of his own Son; it being the *Judgment of God, that they who sin are worthy of Death.* But that Death which Sin incurred, and the Sinner deserved, Christ hath endured for his Elect, and delivered them for ever from the Pain and Punishment thereof, and stand acquitted of and justified from for ever.

Christ the Antitype of the Scape-Goat, and carried away our Sins.

Levit. 16.
21, 22.

Thirdly, It is because Jesus Christ who was the *Antitype* of the *Scape-Goat*, hath carried away all our Sins who do believe: The *kill'd Goat* made the Atonement for the Sins of all God's *Israel*; and because one *Goat* could not prefigure the whole of Christ's Undertaking, therefore there were *two Goats* appointed: *And Aaron shall lay both his Hands upon the Head of the live Goat, and confess over him all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their Transgressions in all their Sins, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and shall send him away by the Hand of a fit Person into the Wilderness. And the Goat shall bear upon him all their Iniquities unto a Land not inhabited, &c.*

Brethren, pray observe, here is mention four times of all the Sins of the Children of *Israel*, *all their Iniquities, all their Transgressions, all their Sins.* And again, *the Goat shall bear upon him all their Iniquities.* The *Goat* was a *Type* of Christ, to shew that not one Sin of a Child of God shall ever be laid upon him, charged upon him, because Christ had them all laid upon him: and he hath carried them all away, all their Sins, great Sins as well as smaller Sins; Sins before Grace and after Grace were all laid upon

upon Jesus Christ; yea, Sins of all sorts, Sins of Commission and Sins of Omission; no Sin could be expiated without the Death and Blood of Christ: Also a full and free Confession was to be made upon the Head of the *Scape-Goat* of all Sins. Brethren, as the smallest Sins needed such a Sacrifice, such an Atonement, namely, the Death of Christ, so the greatest Sins were not excluded from that Atonement and blessed Benefit of his Death.

Moreover, the *Scape-Goat* carried all their Sins away into the Wilderness, or into an unknown Land, or into a Land of Forgetfulness, never to be remembred any more; this hath our Lord Jesus done: *Christ hath put away Sin*, and put it away for ever, and that *by the Sacrifice of himself once for all: He hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all*, and also all our Iniquities. He could not be supposed to have suffered for our Sins, if our Sins, respecting the Guilt of them, were not laid upon him, or charged upon him, and imputed to him: his Sufferings otherwise would have been Arbitrary and Unjust, had he not been substituted by the Father, and called forth as our Surety, (nor could his Death been accepted) the Law no where condemning or punishing any one who in a Law-sense is an innocent Person.

He was made Sin, without knowing Sin: He knew the Guilt by Imputation, but he knew not Sin any otherwise, neither Original nor Actual; He was born without Sin, and lived without Sin, *in his Mouth was found no Guile*: yet he had our Sins upon him, and carried them away; he being the Antitype of the *slain Goat*, satisfied for all our Sins; and as he is the Antitype of the live Goat, he hath born them away for ever.

Arg. 4. *If any one Sin of the Children of God shall ever be charged upon them as to that Vindictive Wrath that is due to Sin, so that they may come under Eternal Condemnation of it; then hath not Christ born all their Sins, nor carried them away into the Land of Forgetfulness. But Christ hath born all their Sins, and carried away all their Iniquities, as he is the Antitype of the slain and living Goat; therefore their Sins shall never be charged upon them, as to the Vindictive Wrath that is due to them; so that they can never come under Eternal Condemnation.*

Fourthly, None of Christ's Sheep, or no Believer, can fall so as eternally to perish, upon the Consideration of the Death of Christ.

Christ by his Death hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law.

1. Because Christ hath by his Death delivered them from the Curse of the Law, as well as from the Guilt of Sin; the Law is the Strength of Sin, it is by that Sin condemneth the Sinner: The Law lays every Man under the Wrath and Curse of God; and unless it be answered, God might be said to change his Will should he justify any Man; nay, it would seem to reflect upon his Holiness: the Precepts must perfectly be kept by Man, or his Surety; the Breach we had made of it by Sin must be satisfied, for, both these Jesus Christ hath done, not for himself; he needed not to have come to keep the Law to justify himself, for as God he is infinite Holy; but as Mediator he did this for us, he obtained a perfect Robe of Righteousness to give away and put on us; *He hath brought in everlasting Righteousness, and made an end of Sin.* How made an end of Sin? Not that there shall be no Sin any more in the World; No, but he has made an end of the condemning Power of it; the strength it had to kill and damn the Soul is took away for ever from all that believe, from all that he hath put his Righteousness upon. God's justice being satisfied, we are furnished with an *exact and compleat Righteousness*, that shall last for ever; 'tis an Everlasting Righteousness that every Believer hath in Christ. *Who therefore shall condemn? Christ hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* Sin is our Sicknes, Sin is that by which we stand charged, and the Law condemns us, pronounces a Curse against us; but Christ hath cured us of this Sicknes, and delivered us from this Curse: *As it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them.* Till we believed, we lay under that fearful Curse; but from this we are discharged, and Christ hath undergone that great Curse for us, and there is no other Curse can come on Believers; all separation from God and Wrath is by the Curse of Law: but this is ended and gone for ever to every one that believeth. Nothing therefore now can separate them from God; the Curse is taken away, and the Blessing is put on us.

2. From hence it appears that the Veracity of God is engaged to acquit all them that believe in Christ, as his Justice is obliged to leave Sinners under the Curse of the Law that believe not, because nothing but a perfect Righteousness can deliver from the Curse thereof.

3. Moreover, God is obliged, upon the account of his Covenant with his Son for us, to discharge us for ever, because Christ hath fully performed all things as the federal Conditions of our Restoration

Restoration and Deliverance from Sin, and the Curse of the Law, which he covenanted to do.

Arg. 5. All that are delivered from the Curse of the Law, and to whom there remains no more any legal and just Cause in God of Wrath and Separation from him unto their Eternal Condemnation, cannot eternally perish. But all that believe in Christ are delivered from the Curse of the Law, and to them there remains no more any legal and just Cause in God of Wrath and Separation from him unto their eternal Condemnation : therefore no Believer shall eternally perish.

Fifthly, Christ dying for our Sins, was a full and compleat Payment of all our Debts, which bound us over to Death and Condemnation ; we owed ten thousand Talents, and Christ our Surety was charged with it, even with all we owed to Justice ; and by his Death he paid the uttermost Farthing : Now the Principal and the Surety are legally and judicially one Person ; so that in Christ we paid all, though it was God and not we that found out the Surety, and paid himself with his own Money ; and therefore we are acquitted in a way of Sovereign Grace ; we have it in a way of Mercy, though in a way of Righteousness also : *That God might be Just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* Christ hath born all God's Vindictive Wrath due to Believers. Rom. 3. 23. 24, 25, 26.

From whence I argue ;

Arg. 6. All those for whom Christ hath paid all their Debts, or made a full Compensation for, shall never perish. But Christ hath paid all the Debts of Believers, or made a full Compensation for them ; therefore they shall never perish.

Would it not be look'd upon as an Act of Injustice in a Creditor to arrest and throw a poor Debtor into Prison for those Debts his Surety paid for him, and laid down every Farthing of his Money ? Now then say I, either some of the Sins of Believers, or some of their Debts Jesus Christ did not die for, pay, or satisfy for, or else all must conclude it is impossible (because God is Just) any one of them should perish.

Now who is it that dares to affirm, that Christ did not die and satisfy for all the Sins of Believers, or for his Elect Ones ? *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.* John 1. 9. He will not exact from us the Satisfaction which he hath accepted in the Atonement of his own Son our Surety, and in his own way applied ; God will not require double Payment.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, From the Death of Christ I further argue; No Believer can eternally perish, because his Death was the highest and greatest Expression and Demonstration of Divine Love, both in the Father and Son. Now say I, (as I hinted once before) He that gave the great Gift, will not deny the lesser: Sure if God gave his Son to die for our Sins, he will give us Grace to resist Sin, to mortify Sin, and will also pardon all our Sins: And if Christ died for us, spilt his Blood for us, he will pray for us, he will not refuse to intercede for us, that our Faith may not fail, or we lose the Benefit and Blessings purchased for us by his Death.

He that would not pray for his Friend, or for his Neighbour, will not die for him: But on the other Hand, if he yields himself up to die for him, he will pray for him. Christ died for his Sheep, he will therefore both feed them, heal their Diseases, and preserve them, that they may not be devoured by any Enemy whatsoever; neither by Sin, nor the Devil, &c. See *Rom.* 5. 10. *Rom.* 8. 32.

*Christ by
his Death
purchased
Grace for
us.*

Seventhly, Jesus Christ by his Death purchased Grace, and all things his Saints need or shall need, in order to make them meet for Glory; therefore they shall not perish. Do they need Faith, need Patience, need Power against Sin, need Pardon, need Purg-
ing, &c. all these things, and whatsoever else they stand in need
Phil. 4. 15. of, they shall have: *My God shall supply all your need according to
his Riches in Glory, by Jesus Christ.* All Grace is in Christ, as
Joh. 1. 14, the Fruit of his purchase; *And of his Fulness all we receive, and
16. Grace for Grace:* And this is to shew forth the Riches of God's
Glory. Will he lose his Glory? Shall Satan insult over the Ma-
jesty of Heaven after this manner, *viz. Lo, here is one of them for
whom thou gavest thy Son to die, whom thou hast left to me, and I
have destroyed him for ever?* Will God, think you, suffer this,
since his main Design in the Gift of Christ, is the Glory of his
own Rich and Sovereign Grace? Nay, and after he has with such
large Expence of rich Treasure, and such Pains restored his *lost
Image* to a poor Believer, will he suffer Sin and Satan utterly to
deface it again whilst he looks on? *Our Opposites* are Men for *Nat-
ural Reason.* Now Sirs, what think you of this; is there any
reason for you to believe God will suffer either of these things to
be done?

Eighthly,

Eighthly, The Death of Christ preserves all Believers to Everlasting Life, because he hath by *one Offering perfected for ever them* Heb. 10. *that are sanctified.* Christ as the Effects of his Death, before he ^{14.} hath done, will bring all for whom he was a Sacrifice to Heaven: Justification in the Perfection of it shall be continued, Sanctification shall be compleated; our Interest in him shall not be lost: Can any think that Christ will not maintain Life in that Soul which he made alive by his own Death?

Arg. 7. *If therefore Christ's Blood was shed for none in vain, but that he shall have his whole Purchase; then none of his Sheep or Elect Ones shall ever perish. But Christ's Blood was shed for none in vain; therefore he shall have his full Purchase, none of his Elect shall perish.*

No Man would lay down a Sum more in value than a whole Kingdom, but would first see himself sure of it, upon laying down that Price: the Father's Covenant and Promise also made all the Elect certain of Eternal Life upon Christ's dying for them: Besides,

Beloved, the Sacrifice of Christ unites all the Holy Attributes together to secure a Believer's Interest; *Justice* and *Mercy* are both agreed in Christ, they meet together, and kiss each other, yea, and join Hands to help and save every Believer. The Flood-gates of Mercy are opened, and the Fire of Divine Wrath confin'd in its Flames, or rather quenched by the Streams of Christ's Blood, that Mercy might flow down to us abundantly: Christ's Blood hath eternal Virtue in it, it is called *the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant*, therefore extendeth to the Expiation of Sins to come, as well as what are already past. *Christ's Death* hath glorious Effects, as the Apostle shews: *For if the Blood of Bulls and Goats, and Ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself to God, purge your Consciences from dead Works to serve the living God?* To talk of Christ's Death, and see no Effects of it, alas, what's that? All that Christ died for, shall see and feel too its Glorious Effects and Operations upon their Souls and Consciences; though the Sacrifice be over, the Virtue and excellent Causality of it abides for ever.

Ninthly, Christ by his Death redeemeth his People from all Iniquity, and this was his End in dying. What signifies such a *Christ by his Death re-* Redemption, that leaves a poor Slave in his Chains and Irons, *deemeth us-* without procuring a Release for him? In this lies the Glory of our *from all Sin.* Redemption.

Redemption by Christ; 'tis not only from the Curse of the Law, and Wrath of God, but from a vain Conversation also: See the
 Tit. 2. 14. Apostle's Words; *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.* If this was his End and Design in his Death; do any think he will see himself frustrated in it? Shall any Enemy of the Soul bring Christ under a Disappointment? Compare this with
 1 Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19.

Tenthly, and Lastly, Jesus Christ hath by his Death purchased
 Eph. 1. 13, 14. Eternal Redemption, or Everlasting Life, for all his Sheep; and by his Spirit hath also given to them the Earnest of it; therefore his Death preserves them to Salvation: *In whom ye also trusted after ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation: in whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the Praise of his Glory.*

Now I should come to speak more particularly to the Effects of the Death of Christ, and enlarge upon some things that I have but a little touched upon; but that I must leave until the next Time, and shall only speak something by way of Improvement of this Argument.

APPLICATION.

First. To you that are Believers: O praise and bless God for a Crucified Saviour. What in Heaven and Earth is cause of greater Wonder and Admiration! Christ's Death is the meritorious Cause of all Spiritual and Eternal Joy and Comfort; all Grace flows out of the Wounds the Spear and Nails made in his Blessed Body, and from the Death and Pangs his Soul underwent. Nothing is a greater Evidence of Christ's Love to us, than the Death of his Cross.

2. Apply his Blood, draw Virtue from his Blood, fly to his Death; see how that stands to save thee from the Justice and Wrath of God: in his Death is thy Hope and Succour, when pursued by Satan, and under all Temptations.

3. Triumph in the Cross of Christ; thou, O Child of God, wast crucified with Christ, thy Sins were punished in him, and thou art acquitted in him, and raised in him. O labour to
 Phil. 3. 10, 11, 12. know Christ and him crucified; *Labour to know him and the Power* of

of his Death, and the Fellowship of his Sufferings, &c.

4. And as to you Sinners, is not here Ground of Hope for you? Christ died for the chiefest of Sinners; *And whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life.* But wo to such who slight this bleeding Saviour, that sin because Grace hath abounded, or that make the Death of Christ an Incouragement to them to continue in Sin. Tush, say some, trouble not your self with me, Christ died for Sinners. O Souls, will you crucify Christ again? I tell you, if you do not feel the Effects of his Death, in vain is all your present Hope.

John 3.16.

5. This may serve also to detect such, and severely to reprehend them that say, Christ died to save all, or for all, and every Man and Woman in the World. Brethren, if he died for all, that is, in the Stead and Room of all, then all shall be saved; God will not condemn such whom Christ laid down his Life for, or in the place or stead of, as I have proved from God's Word. But further, to detect this Error of General Redemption,

*Affertors
of General
Redemption
reprehended.*

1. Consider, that Redemption is a Word easy to understand; it is the saving of a Person, that is in Slavery or Captivity, commonly procured or obtained by a Price paid, or a Ransom: but if the Person is indeed redeemed, he is set at Liberty. To say a Man is redeemed, and yet left in Chains and strong Bonds, out of which he cannot come, unless the Redeemer break those Chains and Bonds to pieces, is to speak untruly, or in plain English, a Lie. Now are all Men redeemed? Redemption cannot be more universal than it is in Matter of Fact. If ten Men were in Slavery in *Argiers*, and a Sum of Money was paid to redeem them, and yet after all, care is not taken to make that Ransom to be effectual for their Redemption, but six or seven of them are left in Captivity; can any Man say all the ten were redeemed out of that Slavery and Thralldom wherein they are held? Even so it is here; for Men to say, that the Redemption by Christ is for all the World, and yet the greatest part of Mankind lie in Bonds, under the Power of Sin and Satan, and have not the Death of Christ made effectual to them, is a great Mistake, and indeed not true as to Matter of Fact.

2. Are we redeemed only from the Curse of the Law, and from the Wrath of God; and are we not also redeemed from Sin, and from being under the Power of Satan? That Redemption that is by Christ, is (you hear) from all Iniquity; and are all so redeemed? The Apostle Peter saith, *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not re-*

1 Pet. 1.
18. deemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from a vain Conversation, but with the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, &c. So many as are, and shall be redeemed from all Iniquity, from a vain Conversation, or whom Christ hath redeemed from the Power of Satan, he setting them at Liberty who naturally are bound, and bringing them out of the Prison-House, so many, and no more, did he die for; and no further doth Redemption by Christ extend.

3. If there are many left in the Enemies Hand, and under their Power, and eternally perish, then there is no general or universal Redemption; but there are Multitudes so left, and perish.

4. That Grace, Love, and blessed Price that doth not procure Universal Salvation, is not, cannot be an Universal Redemption. But God never shewed such Grace and Love by the Price of Christ's Blood that doth procure Universal Salvation; therefore there is no Universal Redemption: for that Price or Paiment which doth not actually pass or terminate in Salvation, is no Redemption at all: an Attempt to redeem unless it be effected, is no Redemption.

5. Brethren, is Christ an Universal Saviour of the Souls of all Men? Why there can be no Universal Redemption, unless there be an Universal Redeemer, (as I said before) but there is no such Universal Redeemer.

Object. *We do not plead for an absolute Universal Redemption, but for a Conditional; and that Condition is to be performed by the Creature, and many perish because they do not perform it; the Condition is Faith, Regeneration, Sincere Obedience, and Holiness, &c.*

Ans. The Condition they say is Repentance, Faith and Regeneration. Now were it thus, as these Men affirm, then how is Christ rendred, even more weak and inconsiderate than any Man of Understanding? For what Man would lay down ten thousand Pounds to redeem a Captive out of *Slavery*, when he knew a cruel Tyrant had him in his Hands and in strong Chains, and would not let him go, nor regard at all the Sum laid down for his Ransom, there being no treating with him: he'll take no Price; but unless he is conquered, and the Person redeemed by Power, the Money is lost. This is the Case, Christ's Blood is the Ransom that was laid down to satisfy the Law and Justice of God; but all and every Man and Woman in the World is under the Power of Sin and Satan: and unless Christ delivers the Soul out of the Hands of these Enemies by the Power of his own Arm, his Blood would be of none

Effect

Effect to redeem any one Soul. Therefore God by this Conditional Universal Redemption, rather seems to mock Men, according to these Mens Notion; for this is the purport of it, *You are redeemed, Sinner, yea all of you by Christ's Death, if you can redeem your selves.* Do but your part, and you are redeemed: What is that? Why answer the Conditions, *viz.* change your own evil Hearts, make you a new Heart, believe in Christ; get out of Satan's Chains; raise your selves from the Dead, and you shall be redeemed. Is this possible? Strange! doth the Righteous God make that the Condition of Salvation on the Creature's Part, which he knew the Creature was no more able to do than to give sight to the Blind, or raise the Dead?

2. Besides, it renders Christ to be but a Conditional Redeemer; could the Creature answer the Condition; yea, and it puts Christ but into a possibility also of being a Redeemer, (as one well observes) he is not actually so whilst he stands under that Conditionality; for the Conditionality doth not only lie upon the Person to be redeemed, so that he cannot be a redeemed One, till the Condition is performed: But it puts also a Bar to the Purchaser, he can't in any good sense be called the Redeemer of such a Person, till the Person hath performed the Condition. As for Example, if I lay down an hundred Pounds for the Redemption of a Person in Slavery, upon this Condition that he yield to serve me seven Years after, I must have his Consent to these Terms before I can redeem him; and therefore upon this Condition I am certainly suspended from being a Redeemer, and am no Redeemer to the said Person, if he refuse the Terms; all that I have done is but a Proffer of Terms. Hence (saith the said Reverend Author) for Christ to be a Conditional Universal Redeemer, is a Contradiction; for it's to be but a Redeemer of some that perform the Condition, and no Redeemer to them who do not.

*Examen
confectionis
pacificæ.*

6. To which let me add, this Notion of Conditional Redemption, renders Salvation not to be freely of God's Grace, no not the very Purchase it self; because in the Design of it, it was not to be had without the Creatures Money, I mean without his answering the Condition of *Repentance, Faith, Regeneration, and final Perseverance, &c.* which to do, they deny Christ's purchased Grace and Power for all or any one; or hath he promised to perform it for them, or to work it in them? No, but it is that which absolutely the Creature must find Power, Strength, and Skill to do, or perish for ever, the Redemption being intended for

him on no other Terms : all depends on the *Will* of Man, 'tis as Man's *Will* determines it.

7. Moreover, who can suppose Christ would shed his Blood, and lay down such an infinite Sum, to redeem such whom he knew would not answer those Conditions propounded ? Nay, and which is worse, to lay down his Life to redeem Multitudes upon such Conditions, which he knew they were no more able to perform, than to create a World ? Can this stand consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of Jesus Christ ? This Assertion of theirs (saith the same Author) is as if they should say, *A. B.* purchased an Estate for me, and in my Name, upon Condition that I should take up the *Monument* and carry it over the Bridg.

8. All those that have Redemption, or that Christ died to redeem, have or shall have remission of Sin : But the greatest part of Men have not, nor ever shall have remission of Sin, therefore Christ did not die for the greatest part of the World ; Redemption and Forgiveness of Sins is of equal extent.

9. Again, I might argue thus ; Those that Christ did not pray for, he did not die for ; those that he never would put up one Prayer, one Sigh to the Father for, certainly he never purchased Remission of Sins and Eternal Life for : *I pray for them, I pray not for the World ; but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.* Now it is easy to know what World it was Christ prayed not for ; namely, those that were not given to him by the Father ; for all that were of the World, that did belong to the Election of Grace, though then under the Power of Sin and Unbelief, he did pray for : *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their Words :* the Elect, whilst Sinners, may be called the World as well as any others.

10. If Christ died for all, he intended to save all : But Christ did not intend to save all ; therefore he did not die for all. Strange ! will any say our Lord Jesus did that which was contrary to his Purpose and Intention ? And if it was his Intention to save all, who could frustrate him in it ? Why then are not all saved ? Sirs, the Death of Christ cannot extend to the Salvation of any one Soul, further than the Intention and Purpose of God, or the Election of the Father, and Application of the Holy Spirit.

11. Those that Christ died for, he purchased Grace for, Remission of Sin for ; and all things in order to make the Redemption of his Blood effectual unto, he purposed to bestow the lesser Grace and Gift upon them, as well as the greater. Would a Man give

a Million to purchase such an Estate for a Man, and will he refuse to part with five Pounds in order to have it made sure to him for whom he laid down so great a Sum?

12. That Purchase of Remission of Sin, and Salvation, that leaves Men under a Certainty of Damnation, is not esteemed Redemption at all; but a Purchase of Remission and Salvation, upon the Condition these Men talk of, leaves most under a Certainty of Damnation, because it is an impossible Condition in respect of Man, he being *dead in Sins and Trespasses*, therefore can't perform it; and also in respect of Christ, because he never purchased Grace for them to enable them to perform that Condition.

*Examen
confectionis
pacifice.*

13. If the Death and Resurrection of Christ shall have its proper Effect, to the Eternal Salvation of all them for whom he died; as a Corn of Wheat that falleth into the Ground, or is sown in the Earth, in that respect hath its Effect; then all for whom he died shall be saved: But his Death, &c. shall have like Effect; see his own Words, *And Jesus answered them, saying, The Hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily verily I say unto you, Except a Corn of Wheat fall into the Ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much Fruit.* See here, all that are and shall be saved, our Lord ascribeth unto his Death as the absolute Effect thereof; all his Elect being virtually in him, as all the Increase virtually is in that one *Corn of Wheat* that is sown into the Earth, that is produced by it.

See Reverend Dr. Chauncy, "If (saith he) there be the same Eternal and Unchangeable Cause of Redemption, as of Application, as to the same Persons; then whosoever is redeemed, shall have Redemption applied, and be saved eternally: But there is the same Eternal and Unchangeable Cause of both; Ergo.

*Dr. Chauncy in his
Treatise of
the Doctrine
of Godli-
ness, p. 203,
204.*

3. All that are redeemed, must be saved; or if they be not saved, the Reason is from the Insufficiency of his Redemption: and whatsoever is not efficient, is not sufficient to attain the End, either from want of Virtue in the Thing, or Will in the Efficient. Now if Christ's Intention were to redeem all, he intended that which he could not do; if he intended not to redeem all, whatever the simple Virtue of his Obedience might have done, had it had an Intention of the Agent annex'd to it; yet having it not, it is limited by it, and becomes insufficient.

4. If

“ 4. If the Death of Christ be sufficient to redeem all, and all are not actually redeemed, so as to be saved, it is Nonsense to talk of Universal Redemption; for an Universal Redemption, without Universal Salvation, is an Absurdity of the first Rate.

“ 5. If Christ's Death be universally sufficient, then it is irresistible in attaining its End; and if so, Man's Will cannot hinder it. But these Men that hold Universal Redemption, will say, That notwithstanding this Redemption, some Men will not be saved; therefore this Redemption is not sufficient to save all, for it seems it doth not conquer every Man's Will, so as to make him willing to be saved: and it seems by them, Christ is such a Redeemer as cannot save whom he will; and therefore not being an Alfsufficient Redeemer, cannot be a sufficient Redeemer to save all.

“ 6. He that died to redeem all, died instead of all. But Christ did not die in the room or stead of all. The *Major* wants no Proof, and all Opposition to Christ dying in our stead, is but a meer Wrangle: And that Point is yielded of late by our soberest and most Learned *Universalists*. I proceed to the *Minor*; Christ did not die in the stead or room of all; for if so, in what Christ suffered in their stead that are not saved, he was injured: To pay this or that Man's Money, and be accepted and taken Debtor and Paymaster in his stead, and yet for all this if the Man is not discharged, nor one Farthing of his Debt, both Christ and the Sinner must needs be fallaciously and injuriously dealt with.

“ 7. It is not fit Christ should die for all, seeing his Father elected not all, and gave not all to him; for Christ to redeem more, were to disobey his Father's Will, and not to do it. If any say God elected all, it's most absurd to talk of chusing some from among many others. When a Man takes the whole Number, this is no Election: or if any say that Election is Conditional, provided a Man will, this also is no Election; for if Election be upon the Condition of Man's free Will, one Man is not chosen and not another; but all have equal previous Designation to the End, and so there is no Election at all.

“ 8. All that Christ shed his Blood for, he loved with a Conjugal Love; and therefore must be married to them in Application, and they must necessarily be saved.

“ 9. The Works peculiarly ascribed to each Person, according
 “ to their Divine Order and Manner of working, are of equal
 “ Extent ; whom the Father elects, the Son redeems, and the
 “ Holy Ghost sanctifies *.

* Joh. 17.
 19, 20.
 & 10. 11.
 & 16. 13,
 14:

Thus far the Reverend Dr. *Isaac Chauncy*.

I might add divers other Arguments against this pretended Universal Redemption ; but because what I have already said under this Argument taken from the Death of Christ, doth so fully overthrow such a pretended conditional Universal Redemption, I shall say no more unto it.

Object. *But doth not the Scripture say, that Christ died for all, and for the whole World, and for every Man ?*

Answer. 1. It cannot be taken for every Individual Man and Woman in the World, for the Reasons we have given.

2. It is evident by All, that the word World, doth in many places only intend some of all sorts, by a *Synecdoche*, a part being put for the whole : As it is said, *All Judea and Jerusalem, and all the Regions round about Jordan, went out to be baptized of John. Behold, the same baptizeth,* (speaking of Christ) *and all Men come to him.* Again. Christ saith, *When I am lifted up, I will draw all Men to me.* Also Paul saith, *That the Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal.* Hath every Man and Woman in the Holy Ghost in them, and the eminent Gifts thereof ? The Apostle says, *That every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused ; that is to say, every Creature of God is good for Food.* Now, pray, are not these words to be taken with restriction ? Are not *Toads and Snakes*, and a multitude of other Creatures and Things the Creatures of God, and are they therefore good for Food, or intended here ?

I even wonder to see how Men run into Mistakes, through ignorance of some Texts of Scripture ; As Mr. *Joshua Exel* lately, and very confidently and boldly hath asserted in print, That *John the Baptist* did certainly baptize all universally, even both *Men, Women, and Children* ; because the Text says, That *all Judea, Jerusalem, and all the Regions round about Jordan, went out and were baptized of him* ; which I have answered, and shewed his weakness in asserting any such thing from thence : [*All*] there, no doubt, intends but a Part, and may be not the 20th Part of all the People of *Judea* and *Jerusalem* neither. Also how have some pleaded for eating of

A Minister in Glostershire, as I am told, of the Presbyterian Perswasion.

Blood

Gen. 9. 4. Blood from hence, which is *the Life of the Creature*; which was forbid to the whole World in *Shem, Ham, and Japhet*, after the Flood, and before any *Ceremonial Law* was given forth; yea, and as soon as the *Flesh of any Creature* was given to Man to eat, (or he was allowed to eat the *Flesh thereof*); as also Blood is positively forbidden, as *Fornication and Pollution of Idols* in the New Testament, *Acts 15. 20, 29.* Alas, how easy are Men led to abuse the Sacred Scriptures, to favour an Opinion they have received, for want of farther Light. And as to the word *World*, 'tis evident that does not sometimes extend to *all* universally, but to a part. Moreover, all that are in Unbelief, or that believe not, though some of them may be given to Christ, yet they are (as I hinted before) as much the *World* as other ungodly Ones, until called out of it: *I have chosen you out of the World.* From hence it appears they were in, and of the *World* before, else they could not be said to be chosen and called out of the *World*. Now it was for this *World* Christ died, even all the ungodly *World* that were given to him, and for all and every one of them, and no more, upon a *Spiritual Account*, *viz.* to save them, or die in their stead. Yet,

Joh. 1. 29. 3. Christ is said to *take away the Sin of the World*: What *World* is that which Christ takes away the *Sin* of? I affirm, there is not one *Sin* taken away from the *World*, nor one in the *World*, but only of such that Believe, (of the *Adult*): all Unbelievers are under the *Guilt and Punishment of Original Sin*, and *Death* is to such a *Fruit of the Curse* still, which God denounced against *Adam, &c.*

4. In one sense he may be said to buy or save the whole *World*, *i. e.* externally; for it was by Christ's *Mediation and Death* this *World* was saved (and all in it) from perishing immediately upon the *Sin and Fall of Man*: *all live, move, and have their being in him as God*, and through him as *Mediator*; he is in this respect the *Saviour of all Men*; but especially, or with an especial and eternal *Salvation*, he saves none but *them that do believe.*

1 Tim. 4.
10.

So much shall serve as to this Objection, and at this Time.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BELOVED, the last Day I was upon that Grand Argument, to prove, *That none of Christ's Sheep can fall away, so as eternally to perish, (viz.)* taken from the Death of Christ.

Sermon
XIII.

I shewed you that *Christ died in their stead*; he bore all that *Vindictive Wrath* that was due to them for their Sins, so that they might never bear it, or suffer in Hell.

I shall now proceed.

Eighthly, My next Argument shall be taken from the Effects of Christ's Death and Resurrection. Though I have spoken something already touching the Effects of the Death of Christ, yet I shall, before I pass it, add something further to it.

*The Eighth
Argument
taken from
the Effects
of Christ's
Death and
Resurrecti-*

First, We have shewed you, that the appeasing of God's Wrath was the Effects of the Death of Christ; he put an end to all *Vindictive Wrath* and Vengeance that was due to all Believers or Elect Ones: The *Pangs of Hell* due to us, seized upon him, and he bore it in our stead upon the Cross: He was *delivered for our Offence*, and rose again for our Justification. Now when Christ was discharged, all his Elect were virtually discharged also, because he suffered and rose again *as a publick Person*, representing all that were given to him by the Father: those things which he did in his own Person in this respect, we are said to do together with him. Brethren, the benefit of his Performances doth redound unto us; we are said to *die with him*, and to be quickned together with him, and entred into the Holy Place with him; the whole Victory over Sin and Death being obtained, and the Quarrel removed; the condemning Power of Sin being destroyed: all things about making an end of Sin are done and passed through. Now what saith the Apostle, *He that is dead, hath ceased from Sin*. Well, what of this? Likewise, saith he, *Reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin; but*

Rom. 6. 5;

Col. 2. 12;

13.

1 Pet. 4: 1:

Rom. 6. *alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Knowing that Christ be-*
 10, 11. *ing raised from the Dead, dieth no more; Death hath no more Power*
over him. Now this being done by us, and for us in our Head, can
we henceforth die any more? Shall Eternal Death have Dominion
over us? No, no, we are to reckon our selves to be as absolutely
freed and discharged from Sin and Eternal Death, as Christ is
discharged and freed from Death, and dieth no more: And this
comes to us as the Effects of his Death, by his suffering for us, and
 1 Cor. 5. *in our room. If one died for all, then were all dead, (that is, all*
 15. *those for whom he died) they were dead, and died likewise with*
him their Sponsor, and are delivered from the Curse due for Sin;
so that we now might and shall live to him that died for us, and rose
again. This was the End of his Death, and is or will be the Effect
thereof on all for whom he died.

Reconcilia-
 tion the Ef-
 fect of
 Christ's
 Death.

Eph. 2. 16. *Secondly, Reconciliation, from hence it doth appear, is also another*
 Effect of Christ's Death. The Design of God was to bring us to
 Happiness; and this he doth as the Effects of the Death of his
 own Son the Lord Jesus, *who hath made our Peace by the Blood of his*
Cross. He hath reconciled both Jews and Gentiles to God in one Body,
having slain the Enmity thereby. Divine Justice, you heard the last
 Rom. 8. 34 *Day, has nothing to charge upon God's Elect, because it is Christ*
that died.

1. Observe; Christ's Death hath reconciled God to us: *When*
 Rom. 5. 10 *we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.*

2. And then also, as an Effect and Fruit of his Death, he having
 obtained the Spirit for us, we are actually reconciled to God:
 And thus *our Days-man lays his Hands upon both; he brings God to*
 us, and us to God; he is not the Mediator of one, but God is
 1 Tim. 2. 5 *one: There is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ*
Jesus.

3. Therefore as the Effects of Christ's Death and Resurrection,
 Reconciliation is made with God for us, and that for ever: it is
 not a Peace made for such a time, or for so long, but for ever, so
 that there shall never be any destructive Breach any more, no
 more War between God and Believers; let Sin and Satan do what
 they can, they cannot break this League of Peace and Amity. 'Tis
 not a Peace upon Condition that we are to keep, and may break
 it; No, no, the Peace was made by Christ, and he that made it,
 maintains it, as he sits upon the Throne: He it was that made it
 as he is a Priest, and he maintains it *as he is a King upon the Throne;*
 Zech. 6. he
 13.

he will never suffer Sin to get such Head in us, that we shall cast off God any more, or violate our Covenant with him, nor will he suffer Satan to do it; therefore they who are reconciled, shall never perish, no not one of the Elect of God.

Thirdly, The Gift of the Holy Spirit is another Effect of the Death of Christ: *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are Witnesses.* Acts 2. *And having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.* Acts 2. 32, 33. The Father promised unto his Son upon his dying for us, that the Holy Spirit should be given to all his Seed: *I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed.* Isa. 44. 3. Indeed, Christ receiving the Holy Spirit without measure for us, in his own Person as Mediator, antecedent to our believing, is the fullest Security to us imaginable: We are *blessed with all spiritual Blessings in Christ*, that is, in him as our Head. And although Christ received the Spirit before he suffered, yet it was upon the account of his Sufferings; the Father trusted his Son, took his Son's Word, and gave him part of his Wages from the beginning: for all the Saints under the Old Testament, had the Spirit upon no other Account than as we have it, namely, as the Fruits and Effect of Christ's Death and Purchase who was to die.

Now, Brethren, pray consider what the Work of the Holy Spirit is, which is promised to abide with the Saints and Seed of Christ for ever.

1. His Work is at first to quicken them: *You hath he quickned.*

2. To renew, to regenerate, to sanctify them; this is the Work and Office of the Spirit: *I will sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your Filthiness.* Ezek. 36. 25. And hence the Gentiles are said to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost. But pray take notice of this, *the Rock in the Wilderness was first smitten before Water gush'd forth.* Rom. 15. 16. So Christ was first smitten, first crucified, 2 Thess. 2. 13. then the Spirit like Water was poured forth: It is, Sirs, wholly the Effects and Fruits of his Death.

3. It is the Work of the Spirit to cause us to walk in God's Ways, and to keep his Statutes: *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them.* Ezek. 36. 27. We should not do this were it not for the Spirit; we could not keep God's Precepts, nor walk in his Paths, but God puts his Spirit into us that we shall not depart from him; that is, we shall not finally apostatize from him, but shall keep his Precepts to the End.

4. It is the Work of the Spirit to help us to pray, and breathe forth our Desires to God : *We know not how to pray, but as the Spirit helps our Infirmities, and maketh intercession for us with Groans that cannot be uttered.* Christ having redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, it is, that this Blessing of *Abraham* might come upon the Gentiles : *Gal. 4. 5, 6. And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

5. The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit, is to enable us to mortify Sin : *Rom. 8. 13. If ye through the Spirit mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* And hence it is also that Sin shall not have Dominion over them ; and therefore Believers cannot perish, they having such a Helper : He destroys all that Dominion Sin and Satan had in them, and Power over them : The Spirit utterly spoils Satan's Kingdom in them, *Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World,* saith *John*, speaking to the Saints. This is such a Helper that can never be worsted.

6. It is hereby we perform all our Holy Duties : By the Spirit Ministers preach to profit, and Hearers hear to their profit ; hereby we read to profit, and sing God's Praise to our profit and sweet comfort : for as we pray with the Spirit, so we sing with the Spirit ; and the same Measure, the same Fillings of the Spirit that enable us to do the one, enable us to do the other. By the Spirit we are also helped to meditate on God, and on his Word ; and hereby our Meditations of him are sweet to our Souls.

7. 'Tis by the Spirit we resist and repel Satan's Temptations : Or if he doth at any time worst us, the Spirit will help us up again.

8. It is the Holy Spirit that doth confirm and establish us in the Truth.

9. In a word, All Grace is from the Spirit ; and it is by the Aid and Assistance of the Spirit, that we are enabled to exercise that Grace : for as he first formed the Habit in our Souls, so it is he helps us to do the Act also, or that doth influence us in the Exercise thereof.

Eph. 1. 14. 10. The Holy Spirit is also *the Earnest of the Saints Inheritance* : 'Tis given to them as an Earnest of that Glory they shall one Day absolutely be possessed of : 'Tis given to assure them, that as certainly as they have received the Holy Spirit here, and he is in them, so certain it is that they shall be saved, or have the Eternal Inheritance. True, I have mentioned this two or three times already, yet it is of so great Importance, I cannot pass it by here : It is

no small Matter that God gives us, when he gives the Holy Spirit to us; for as he is that Principle of Life in us, so he gives us a full Assurance of Eternal Life hereafter: and it is upon this Earnest-Money a Saint may be said to live, whilst in this World; nay, and it will defray all his Charge, and supply all his Need and manifold Wants, as long as he lives upon the Earth, even until he comes to the full possession of his Inheritance above.

11. And as the Spirit is the Earnest of Glory, or of Everlasting Life, so he is also the Witness of God in our Souls; yea, such a Witness, whose Testimony every Christian may trust to, and rest upon: *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are Rom.8.16. the Children of God.* It witnesseth to us our Adoption, that we are Children, and so Heirs, *Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.* There is a twofold Witness of the Spirit.

(1.) The Spirit witnesseth by a *direct Act*, we taking hold of Christ, and of the Promise: Saith the Spirit to the Soul, I testify that Christ and Eternal Life is yours; you believe, and therefore you have Christ, and shall be saved.

(2.) There is the witnessing of the Spirit by a *reflex Act*: A Man finds such and such gracious Effects of Divine Grace upon his Soul, and by these the Holy Spirit testifies he is gracious. One that loves God, that hates Sin, is changed, renewed, lives a godly Life; therefore is in Christ Jesus, and shall be saved.

12. It is also by the Holy Spirit that Believers are *sealed unto the Day of Redemption.* *Also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise.* Strange! Can these fall away? Can such perish that have received the Earnest of Heaven, and have the Witness of the Spirit, and have it sealed to them? No, no, God hath put his Seal, or Mark, upon them; he by his Seal hath secured them to and for himself: and all this is the Effects of Christ's Death and Resurrection. Eph. 1.14.
& 4.30.

13. The Spirit also thus purchased by Christ's Death, and given as the Fruits and Effects thereof to Believers, the Promise of the Father is, that *it shall abide with them for ever*; it is the great Promise made to Christ in the Covenant; *My Spirit which is upon thee — shall not depart from thee, nor from thy Seed, henceforth and for ever*: See the Words, *Isa. 59.21.* there is the Promise of the Father; it is an absolute Promise, and it runs thus, it shall be in Christ and in his Seed, *henceforth and for ever.* The Spirit is called: *the Promise of the Father.* Also we have a Promise of the constant abiding of the Spirit in all Believers, made by Christ, the second Person:

John 14. Person in the Trinity; he told his Disciples, *The Spirit of Truth, the Comforter should abide with them, and be in them forever.* Unto these, add the Testimony of the Holy Ghost himself; for it is he that doth in the Word assure us of his own abiding with us; he hath chosen our Souls to be his own Temple and Habitation for ever; and also assures us, *That all the Promises are in Christ, yea and amen, to the Glory of God.* So that we have this great Truth sealed and confirmed to us by the *Three that bear witness in Heaven.*

Col. 1. 14. *Fourthly, Pardon of Sin is another Effect and Fruit of the Death of Christ, In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, that is, as the Effects of his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin.* True, Jesus Christ satisfied God's Justice for our Sins, he paid our Debts, it is not Remission without a Satisfaction, but yet we are freely forgiven; we have it of God's Free Grace, but it is through the Blood of Christ; Remission of our Sins follows Redemption, as the necessary Effects thereof. Christ hath procured this Favour and Blessing for us, and Gospel-Remission or Pardon of Sin is for ever: *I will remember their Sins no more, they are blotted out for ever; he hath cast our Sins into the Depth of the Sea, put them behind his Back; yea, he hath put them far away from him, as the East is from the West.*

Gal. 4. 5. *Fifthly, Adoption is the Fruit and Effect of Christ's Death; He hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* God takes us through Christ, or by virtue of Christ's Death, into the Relation of Sons; which Privilege we have for ever, we shall never cease being Sons and Daughters of God.

Heb. 10. *Sixthly, Free Access to the Throne of Grace, or unto the Father, is the Effect of Christ's Death: Having therefore, Brethren,*
 19, 20. *boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and*
 Reader, *living Way, which he hath consecrated for us through the Vail, that is*
these things to say, his Flesh, Christ's Blood: His Death opened this Way, it
 were en *is by him we have access to the Throne of Grace.*
 larged upon
 when this

Sermon was
 preached,
 which I am
 forc'd to
 leave out
 here.

Seventhly, Another Fruit and Effect of the Death of Christ, is, Redemption from all Iniquity: He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, &c. Tit. 2. 14. Therefore this Glorious Effect his Death shall have upon all Redeemed Ones; it

was

was not to redeem only from the Curse of the Law, as some talk, but from the Guilt, Pollution, Power and Punishment of Sin; therefore Believers shall never perish.

Eighthly, Justification is also another Effect of the Death and Resurrection of Christ; which is to acquit, absolve, and to pronounce us Righteous in God's Sight; God accepting us Righteous by the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness which is ever the same. Now Christ's Death being the Meritorious Cause thereof, we are said to be justified by his Blood, Rom. 5. 9. And pray see the Apostle's Argument from hence; *Much more then being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him*: It is more to be reconciled and justified, than it is to be saved; such are justified, and Christ's Blood having done the former, will much more effect the latter: those that Christ justifies, he will glorify; nay, and his Death and Resurrection cannot be without this Effect: *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, &c.* The Word Acts 13. Justified is opposed to Condemnation; those that are justified, 39. are justified for ever. Justification is not a gradual Act, as Sanctification is; it results not as the Fruits of our Repentance, or inherent Holiness, but as the Fruits of Christ's Death and Merits; it is never less nor more: as our Holiness cannot add any thing to it, so the Sins and Infirmities of true Believers, cannot diminish any thing from it; there may be additions to our inherent Sanctification, but not to our Justification: Christ rose again for our Justification. I may also challenge all the Men in the World to prove, that any Man that was justified in the sight of God, did ever fall away and come under Condemnation.

Ninthly, Sanctification is another Effect of the Death of Christ: You may again read that Text, *Heb. 9. 13, 14.* Christ died not only to justify Believers, but to sanctify them also.

Object. But some may say, *A Man may be sanctified, and yet be defiled again: We read of some that escaped the Pollution of the World through the Knowledge of Christ, yet were again entangled and overcome.* 2 Pet. 2. 20.

Answer. 1. If any sincere Christian be defiled again, through any Sin or Corruption, they shall be washed and cleansed again.

2. Those that Peter speaks of, were such that only had escaped gross Pollution through the common Operations of the Spirit; it appears, their *swinish Nature* was never changed: he therefore
faith,

Ver. 22. *faith, It is happened to them according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his Vomit again, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire.* Such therefore never were sanctified in Heart, they never experienced the Effects of Christ's Blood, not that Soul purifying Virtue that is in it; they were cleansed from gross Idolatry, through the Knowledg of Christ, and also from some gross Acts of Prophaneness; they had obtained a reformed, but no renewed Life of Grace and Holiness; therefore such fall into Sin again, and are so overcome, that the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning. As to true Believers, see what the Apostle

Heb. 10. *says; For by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are*
 14. *sanctified.* By this one Offering our Lord Jesus hath procured our Sanctification perpetually to be continued; the Death of Christ hath special influence unto the mortification of Sin: in the Death of the Cross, Our Old Man is crucified, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed: Sin is mortified, and we are sanctified by virtue of the Death of Christ; and we hereby through his Grace come to be planted into the Likeness of his Death. And as Paul

Rom. 6.5. *in another place saith, Being made conformable unto his Death:* This
 Phil. 3.10. *Conformity is not in our Natural Death, or in our being put to*
 11, 12. *death for him; but Christ dying for our Sins is the procuring Cause of our dying to Sin: therefore we must look for the Death of our Sins in the Death of Christ, as the proper Effect thereof. Virtue goeth from the Death of Christ, to the subduing and destroying of Sin; his Death was not only a Passive Example, but is accompanied with Power, conforming and charging us into his Likeness: 'Tis the great Ordinance of God to this very End, it is by a fellowship or participation in his suffering; we are never made conformable to the Death of Christ, till we die to Sin: the Death of Christ was designed to be the Death of Sin. And as certain as Christ died for the Sins of all the Elect, so certain it is they shall all, first or last, feel the powerful Effects thereof in the Death of their Sins. The Cern fell into the Ground and died, and shall produce all the Increase that virtually was hid in it: Christ is our Life, the Spring, Fountain and Cause of it; therefore we have nothing but what we derive from him.*

Object. He is, say some, the Author of Life; and as he taught the Way of Life, so he is our Life.

Answer. He is our Life as he is our Head; and it would be but a sorry Head that should only teach the Feet to go, or the Members to act and move, without communicating Strength unto them,

them, and to the whole Body. Christ, *Brethren*, is an Head of Influence; and in these spiritual Influences, or Life, that Strength which he communicates to us, doth consist in the killing of Sin; *He loved his Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify Eph. 5.25, and cleanse it with the washing of Water, that he might present it to 26, 27. himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be Holy and without Blame.* And if this was his End in his Death, be sure his Death shall perfectly effect this glorious Work in the End upon every Soul of his.

Tenthly, and lastly, Glorification is also an Effect of the Death of Christ; it is the Fruit of his Suffering, it was by his own Blood he entred as our Head and Representative once into the Holy Place, *having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.* The Crown of Heb. 9.12. Glory is the Purchase of his Blood: and as sure as his Righteousness, his Holy Life and Obedience, and Meritorious Death carried him to the Father, and set him down at the right Hand of the Majesty on high; so will his Merits as certainly bring all the true Heirs to that Glory above, where the Fore-runner is for us already entered: *For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many Sons to Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings.* First he brings those Sons into a State of Grace, as the Effects of his Death and Resurrection, and unto a State of Glory: *And whom he justified, them also he Rom. 8.30. glorified.*

I shall draw up the Sum of this Argument: If such are the certain Fruits and Effects of Christ's Death; (1.) If it hath appeased The general Argument. the Wrath of God for all that are in him: (2.) If it hath made their Peace, and for ever reconciled them unto God: (3.) If the Holy Spirit is purchased, and procured as the Effects of his Death for them, by which they are renewed, quickned and helped to mortify Sin; and is to them an *Earnest, a Witness, and Seal* of Everlasting Life, and shall *abide with them for ever*: (4.) If Justification is the Effect of Christ's Death, and they are for ever acquitted from all Sin, and accepted as Righteous in Christ's Righteousness: (5.) If all that believe in him are sanctified, as the Effects of his Death, and shall be perfected for ever: (6.) If Pardon of Sin is an Effect also of Christ's Death, and all Believers have and shall have their Sins forgiven for ever, or remembered no more: (7.) If they are adopted Sons and Daughters to God, as the Effect of

Christ's Death: (8.) And also if Glorification is an Effect of his Death; and as certain as is the Cause, the Effect will be; or as sure as Christ is glorified in Heaven, all that are his Members shall be glorified. Then it is impossible that any one of them should so fall away as eternally to perish: But all these things are true, and none dare to deny them so to be, therefore they cannot fall, so as eternally to perish.

I shall apply this, and come to the next Argument.

APPLICATION.

First, To Sinners.

1. Hath the Death of Christ such Virtue in it, even to renew, quicken, regenerate all that believe in him? Is God through the Death of his Son reconciled, and shall all that take hold of him be justified? &c. O then, Sinners, look up unto him and never cease looking, until you find the Effects of his Death in your own Souls.

Object. 1. But alas, Sir, I am a vile and abominable Sinner.

Ans. Well, notwithstanding that, yet there is Virtue enough in Christ to save you.

Object. 2. But I have been a Drunkard, a Swearer, an Adulterer, a Thief.

Ans. So had some of those Paul speaks of, 1 Cor. 6. 11. *Such were some of you, but you are sanctified, but you are justified.*

Object. 3. But I have been an Old Sinner.

Ans. Well, let it be so, yet but a Sinner, and Christ died for Sinners, for the chief of Sinners, therefore there is hope for you; nay, if you can believe, and apply the Virtue of Christ's Blood, you shall find Mercy.

Object. 4. But I fear Christ did not die for me.

Ans. 1. If he died for the Chief of Sinners, why not for thee? And if those that crucified him found Mercy, why not thee?

2. Thou hast as much ground to believe that Christ died for thee, as any ungodly Person hath that dwells on the Face of the whole Earth. Sinner, look up. Nay,

3. Thou hast as much ground to believe that Christ died for thee, as any of those had once who now feel the Effects of his Death.

4. Did ever any Sinner throw himself at his Feet as a poor lost and undone Creature, and take hold of him, that was rejected?

Query. *What is the first Effect of Christ's Death?*

Answer. The first Effect of Christ's Death in the Soul, is Life; Life is infused: And if thou hast a vital Principle in thee, thou wilt cry out under the Sense of thy Sin. Thrust a Sword into a dead Man's Bowels, and he will not stir nor cry out. Sin is in wicked Men, like a Sword in the Sides of such as are dead; but as soon as Life is infused, there will be Sense, and a crying out. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in the Heart, and said* Acts 2. 37. *unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, What shall we do?* Some of these had been the Murderers of the Lord of Life and Glory, yet they found Mercy.

2dly. Another Effect is this, viz. You will perceive a mighty Famine in your Soul, as it was with the *Prodigal Son*; all your old Hopes of Heaven will be gone, Poverty of Spirit will overtake you: An awakned wounded Sinner despairs of all Supplies or Help in himself; he is distressed with pinching Hunger, and so flies home to his Father: (1.) Yet may not get Power over Sin presently. (2.) But O he trembles at the Thoughts of God's Justice, by beholding the Spear in Christ's Side. (3.) He throws down his Weapons as being conquered and overcome, and resolves to do as the four Lepers did, 2 *Kings* 7. 3, 4, 8, 9. (4.) He sees nothing but Death if he abides where he is, and believes not: And if he returns to his old Course, he sees he must die; and therefore ventures to throw his Soul upon Christ, or ventures himself on Christ, and lies at the Feet of Christ, and says, If I perish, I perish, I can but die; and if he will pardon me, heal me, and have compassion on me, I shall live. O Sinners, that you could but do thus.

Secondly, We may infer from hence, that it is in vain for any Person to talk of Christ's Death, or to say Christ died for Sinners, nay, for the whole World, and therefore for me, unless they come to feel the Virtue and blessed Effects of his Death on their own Souls. O see you rest not, without finding the Power of the Death of Christ. Sirs, though the Sacrifice is over, yet the Virtue and excellent Causality of it remains; and not only to justify and absolve a believing Sinner, but also to quicken, regenerate, and to sanctify and make him Holy also. Therefore I bow to know and experience the Power of Christ's Death.

Thirdly, From hence also we may infer, that this is the only Way to know Christ died for us; namely, when we find the Effects of his Death, that we die to Sin, that the Body of Sin is crucified in us with him. Hath the Life of your Sins been let out? O see to this you that profess the Gospel.

Fourthly, This shews us also what a dangerous thing it is for any to build their Faith upon the general Love of God to Mankind. What say some? I believe Christ died for me, because he died for all; and because for all, therefore for me. Brethren, I am afraid this is the ruin of many Souls, because it may be but a false Faith that those poor Creatures have, they may not experience the Effects of Christ's Death; may be it is not prest upon their Consciences, but this of Christ dying for all, they think is enough. Now pray consider, and O that all such mistaken Persons would consider it also;

1. That a general Faith, *viz.* to believe that Christ died for all, gives no Man any particular saving Interest in Christ's Death: for if it did, then every Man that so believeth, hath a saving Interest in his Death. But thousands perhaps so believe, and yet are as vile and ungodly People as any in the World: Therefore to build on that general Faith, without a particular Application of the Promise, or Promises of God, and experiencing the Effects of Christ's Death, is a false Faith, and deceives the Soul.

2. That that Faith which a Man may have, that may leave such that have it and trust in it, under the Power of Sin, is a false Faith, and will deceive the Soul: but Men may have that Faith, namely, believe Christ died for all, and therefore for them, and yet be under the Power of Sin; therefore that may be a false Faith.

3. That Faith that doth not change the Heart, purify the Heart, is a false Faith: But many that believe Christ died for all, and therefore for them, have that Faith, and yet it doth not change their Hearts, purify their Hearts; therefore it is a false Faith:

4. From hence I argue, that it follows undeniably, that all those People that believe Christ died for all, must come to a particular Application of Christ's Blood, and not trust to that general Application; they must feel the Effects of Christ's Death upon their own Souls, or else they are undone: nor do I doubt in the least but many of them of that Judgment do so, divers of them being as gracious Christians as any others; and have Experiences that clearly contradict their own Principles.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, and Lastly, Here is Comfort for Believers. O see what the Death of Christ hath and will effect for you, and in you. 1. God's Wrath is appeased in him towards you. 2. Justice is satisfied in him towards you. 3. The Law is silenced. 4. Peace and Pardon procured. 5. Life is infused. 6. The Guilt, Power, Pollution and Punishment of Sin, removed and gone for ever. 7. You are justified. 8. Satan is conquered. 9. The World is overcome, you are and shall be sanctified, and Heaven is opened; you are in Christ's Hand, and shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life.

J O H N X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, there are but two Arguments more that I intend to insist upon, for the farther Proof and Demonstration of the *Saints final Perseverance*; or to prove, *That none of the Saints or Sheep of Christ, can so sin and fall away as eternally to perish.*

Sermon
XIV.

I spoke the last Day to the Effects of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ: I might proceed to speak to the Intercession of Christ also, but I shall take that in the Arguments I shall next enter upon.

Ninthly, The Saints are in the Hand of the Father, and in the Hand of the Son considered as Mediator.

And from hence I shall prove, That it is impossible they should so fall away as eternally to perish.

9th Arg.
taken from
their being
in the Hand
of the Fa-
ther, and in
Christ's
Hand.
First,

First, I shall shew you in what respect they may be said to be in the Hand of the Father; and what is meant by his Hand, and how that doth secure them.

Secondly, Shew you what is meant by their being in the Hand of the Son; and shew you how that may be said also to secure their firm standing, and tends to their final Perseverance.

Thirdly, Shew you in what respect they may be said to be in Christ's Hand.

First, By the Hand of the Father, doth intend his Power: *Behold, the Lord's Hand is not shortned that he cannot save*: As if God should say, I am not grown weaker than formerly, I am God Almighty still, and as Omnipotent as ever. *Hand* here, and so in my Text, by a *Synecdoche*, is put for Strength or Power. So also *Isa. 50. 2. Is my Hand shortned at all that it cannot redeem? or have I not Power to deliver? Behold, at my Rebuke I dry up the Sea, I make the Rivers a Wilderness, &c.* Read the next Words following my Text, *My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.*

Secondly, By the Hand of the Father may denote God's Eternal Purpose, or his Counsel; for *Hand* sometimes is put for the Purpose or Counsel of God: *To do whatsoever thy Hand and thy Counsel determined to do.* And if it may thus be taken here, then this may be the Sense of it, *viz.* All the Elect, all the Sheep and Lambs of Christ are, by God's Eternal Purpose and Counsel ordained to Eternal Life, and none can pluck them out of his Election, or change his Purpose: For like as the Death of Christ was determined by the Hand or Counsel of God, so were the Effects thereof, I mean, what Persons should be saved thereby, even all and every one of them that he had given unto his Son as he is Mediator. The Design and Purpose of God, by Jesus Christ, was to save all the Elect; and the End and Design of Christ's Death cannot be frustrated, they are in God's Hand, that is, it is his Purpose and Counsel to save them; and *his Counsel shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure.*

1. All the Counsels of God then from Eternity, and all his Promises and Declarations that hold forth those Counsels, having a special Relation to Christ's dying for his People, and their actual Salvation, must and shall have their absolute Accomplishment; for the End of a thing is that for which the thing it self is: And

had it not been for that, the thing had never been at all, it being that the chief Agent principally aimed at, and purposed to bring about.

2. Therefore the Salvation of Christ's Saints must be certain, *from the consideration of the Immutability of God*, in which the Perfection of his Divine Nature shines forth, and requireth a correspondent Affection of all the Internal and External Acts of his Mind and Will.

3. From his Sovereignty, in making good and executing all his Purposes, which will not admit of any Mixtures of Consults as among Men, (the Lord may do what he will with his Creatures, we are but as Clay in his Hand; and such as he will make Vessels of Honour, who shall contradict him or resist his Will?) Shall any change God's Mind, or render his Thoughts liable to Alteration? Also is it not from his Sovereign and Distinguishing Grace to some, that makes the Apostle break out, *O the depth of the Riches both of Rom. 11. the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding-out!*

4. If we consider how his absolute Purposes doth excite his Omnipotency to the actual accomplishing of them, who can once suppose any one Believer should miscarry! *The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.* As God is able to do whatsoever he hath purposed, so we may assure our selves there is nothing that shall fail which is according to his determinate Counsel; *He is of one Mind, and who can turn him?* Isa. 14. 24.

5. And what Folly and unreasonable Incredulity is it once to imagine, there should be any manner of suspending the Acts and Purposes of the Will of God, upon any actings of the Creatures whatsoever, seeing it cannot be done without subjecting Eternity to Time, and the Will of Man to the Will of God, or the *First Cause* to the *Second*, the Lord to the Servant?

6. Now then seeing God hath taken the Salvation of his Elect into his own Hand, Power, and Eternal Purpose, and hath been at such vast Expence of Rich Treasure, in order to the accomplishing of his great Design herein, who can imagine that any one of his Saints should miss of Everlasting Life? Suppose a Prince should have a wonderful Project in Hand, which he carries on with the Advice of his Council, to make so many of his Subjects that his Love and Affections are let out upon, Great and Happy on Earth; and in doing of which, should expend all, or the greatest

part of his own Riches, nay, sacrifice his own Son; Would he, after all, (if he could help it) suffer his Design to miscarry in the Advancement of any one of them? Or should a most wise and cunning Artist, contrive a curious Piece of Workmanship, which might cost him thousands, it being his whole Work, and taking up all his Time, for forty or fifty Years, to bring it to Perfection; suppose it be a rare Piece of Clock-work, would he suffer any one part of it to be disjointed from the rest by an Enemy, whilst he look'd on, if he could prevent it, or were it in the Power of his Hand? Alas, what are all the rarest, the richest or most curious Things in Nature, that are or ever have been in the World, to this Work of God in the Redemption and Salvation of his Chosen Ones? What Treasure hath he spent, (as I may say)? Hath it not cost him the parting with *the Pearl of great Price*, even the breaking of it into pieces, that so he might enrich and make great and glorious every one of his Elect? Nay, and after he hath curiously formed his own Image upon each of their Souls, to the Joy and Wonder of the Holy Angels, and to the Perplexity and Sorrow of Devils, and this as the Contrivance of his Eternal Council; will he, after all, think you, suffer Satan to deface this his Image in the Souls of any one of them, and so spoil and bring to nought part of that glorious, expensive, and curious Piece of his own Workmanship, which was the absolute Result of his Council to compleat and deliver from miscarrying from all Eternity? Now then seeing that all the Elect, or all true Believers, are thus in the Father's Hand, *viz.* put under his Absolute and Eternal Decree and Purpose, to save, through Jesus Christ, what can obstruct or hinder this God from effecting of his own Glorious Design herein? To talk of Conditional Purposes concerning *Perseverance*, saith Dr. Owen, are either *impossible*, implying Contradictions, or *ludicrous*, even to an unfitness for a Stage. See the 29th Verse, *My Father that gave them me, is greater than all; and none can pluck them out of my Father's Hand.*

My Father, as if Christ should say, is equally concerned with me about my Saints Preservation, and final Perseverance; and they are in his Hand, he hath put them into his own Power, and he is greater than all, he is greater than me as I am Mediator, tho as God I and my Father are one; tho he hath put them into my Hand, as I am Mediator and their Surety, yet he hath not let go his own hold of them, he will see not one of them be lost for whom I lay down my Life. If any would get them out of my Father's Hand, it

must

must be against his Will, his Purpose, his Decree, and they must do it by Force, by Violence, they must pluck them or rend them out of my Father's Hand: Mind the word *pluck* twice mentioned; *Neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.* Not that any are able to pluck them out of the Hand of Christ as Mediator: But our Saviour adds that, in this 29th Verse, as a farther Confirmation, and as an assurance of their safe standing. Who is too strong for Omnipotence it self? Can any bring his Counsel to nought, or destroy such that he holds in the Hand of his Eternal Decree, in the Hand of his Everlasting Love and Affection, and also in the Hand of his amazing, inconceivable and irresistible Power? That Enemy that will destroy one Saint, must be a Match for the Infinite God, and overcome him, and rob him of his chiefest Treasure, or of his precious Jewels. O who dares to say this can be done! Well then, assure your selves, that not one Sheep of Christ can perish: Sin must be stronger than God if it destroys one of the Elect; and Satan more mighty, greater in Power than God: which to think is Blasphemy. Why should our Saviour here add, *My Father is greater than all*, were it not to signify the impossibility of their perishing, or to shew how impossible it is that any Enemy should destroy them?

Thirdly, By their being in the Father's *Hand*, may be meant Jesus Christ, who is called *the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*; ^{1 Cor. 1.} because by and through him, God exerts his Power, or his ^{18.} Strength to save; or the Glory of his Power is manifested, as well as of all his other Attributes. Sin seem'd to eclipse the Power of God in saving his People, because Divine Power could not save in a way of Omnipotence, to the Impeachment of his Justice and Holiness; but in Christ Justice and Holiness is as much magnified as Mercy and Goodness; and thereby so too, that the Power of God might shine forth in its full Glory: *Father, glorify thy Name*, saith John ^{12.} Christ. *Then came a Voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it,* ^{28.} *and will glorify it:* Thy Name, that is, however thou art made known, or glorify all thy Glorious Attributes. Almighty Power was seen in creating the World; and also as it wrought in conjunction with Divine Justice, it shone forth in casting the Angels out of Heaven, and Adam out of Paradise; as also in the Flames of Sodom: And as Divine Power joined with Divine Mercy and Goodness, it shone forth in saving the *Israelites* at the Red Sea. But the Strength and

Col. 1. 15. Glory of every Attribute never shone forth in their equal brightness and splendour, as all are united and in conjunction together, and meet in sweet Harmony, as they do in the saving of Man by Jesus Christ; so that Jesus Christ may be well called the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God. Christ is *the first-born of every Creature*: And as the First-born is the Strength of the Parent, so is Christ the Strength of God. The transcendent Excellencies and Glories of the Divine Being, that were scattered (as it were) in the Creation, are all united and gathered in Christ; that like as when a bundle of Rods united and bound up together cannot be broke, or as so united are very strong, so God in Christ shines forth, as having all his Glorious Perfections united in one; and in this sense Believers may be said to be in the Father's Hand, and so that none can pluck them out, God hereby appearing in his united Strength.

Psal. 80. 15. And thus Christ may be said to be, *that Branch that God hath made strong for himself*. And again, *The Man of thy right Hand, the Son of Man whom thou hast made strong for thy self*, in whom thou shewest the greatness of thy Power to save, or to manifest his Almighty Power by. O what a Hand is the Hand of God in Christ! Who can pull one Soul out of the Father's Hand, or out of Christ, who is the Father's Hand of Power to save all his Elect? Believers are in Christ's Hand, and Christ is the Father's Hand, yea the Father's Right Hand: the Power and Glory of all the Divine Attributes are united together in Christ; herein they shew the Perfection of their Strength, and are all exerted in the Salvation of every Believer; therefore it is impossible one of them should perish. In the uniting of all the Attributes of God together doth the strength of God appear to save. And in this respect Believers are in God's Hand, God is concerned to see the Salvation of his People perfected by Christ as Mediator; who is, as so considered, his Right Hand, or the Greatness of his Power, or the Perfection of his Power and Strength.

Secondly, To proceed; as they are in the Father's Hand, so he hath, you heard, put them into Christ's Hand as their great *Sponsor, Mediator and Surety*; and that before the World began, in that Covenant and Blessed Compact the Father and Son entered into, in order to the Eternal Salvation of all his Saints: And the Holy God hath fixed on such Ways and Means, and in such manner, that the Thing designed cannot miscarry. Men indeed may miss of their Ends they aim at; but what is directly in the Hand of God, and

and is put by him into the Hand of his Son, to effect and finally to accomplish, shall never miscarry, it being, as I have told you, done according to his Eternal Counsel. God's Absolute Purpose shall stand, let it be what it will; much more that Grand Purpose and Design of his, of saving all true Believers by Jesus Christ.

First, There is a proof of it already as to Matter of Fact: Many thousands of the Souls of his Elect are gone to Heaven, in spite of Sin, Hell, Death, World and Devils.

Secondly, In the Salvation of Believers by Christ, all Interests concerned are secured.

(1.) God is Just, and herein he declares his Justice with a Witness. And,

(2.) Yet the Sinner is justified.

(3.) Vengeance hath to the full took hold of Sin. And yet,

(4.) Mercy is magnified to the highest Degree in saving the Sinner: Justice is satisfied, and yet the Sinner is forgiven.

(5.) The Law of God hath its full and just Sanction; and the Violence offered to it is retrieved.

(6.) And Jesus Christ who did all this, in beholding his Seed and Fruit of his Soul, and their Eternal Blessedness secured for ever, is well pleased and fully satisfied.

Thirdly, The way of accomplishing this Design, is such as will certainly compass the End, Divine Power being engaged in it, which resteth not in the least on the Concourse or Compliance of any frustrable Instruments; nay every Attribute being hereby magnified, they join hand in hand for the effecting of it.

Fourthly, No Power can supersede God's Decree, nor obstruct Jesus Christ in his completing the Whole of his Work: *I will work, and who shall let?* And again it is said, *He shall bring forth Judgment unto Victory.* He shall not fail nor be discouraged: *The Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his Hand.* And seeing then that the Final Accomplishment of the Salvation of every Believer is put into Christ's Hand, for a farther Demonstration how this tends to secure them all from Danger, and to preserve them to Eternal Life,

Iſa. 42.3.
& 53. 10.

Take here a short Induction of Particulars.

1. Consider the Nature of that Covenant, by virtue of which all the Elect are put into Christ's Hand: It is a Covenant made and entered into by the Son as Mediator with the Father; not only to redeem and purchase Life for them, and to infuse Life in them, but to preserve them in a State of Life, so that none of God's Co-

venant-Children might depart from him any more for ever, which the first Covenant failed in ; and therefore God found fault with that, or rather with them with whom it was made, who failed in continuing their Obedience thereunto, but sinned, and fell from God. Now say I, God to prevent the like again, hath entered into a New Covenant with his Son for us, which is so *well ordered in all things, and sure*, as that not one Soul shall ever eternally miscarry that is comprehended therein. O remember that this Covenant was the Result of Infinite Wisdom, as well as it resulted from inconceivable Love and Goodness in God ; and it was to frustrate and destroy the Works of the Devil for ever, so that he might never have Cause to insult over the Majesty of God, in getting out of his Hand one Soul that he designed in his Eternal Counsel to make happy, and save for ever.

2. Consider, Jesus Christ to this End, in this Covenant, hath took all that the Father gave unto him into his Hand as their Surety. Pray consider, all Believers are thus in the Hand of Christ : Hence Heb. 9. 22. he is called *the Surety of a better Covenant*. He is their great Sponsor ; if any be lost, he must answer for them. Let me read that Text in 1 Kings 20. I shall only allude to it to clear up this Matter the better to weak Capacities ; *Thy Servant went out into the midst of the Battel, and behold, a Man turned aside, and brought a Man unto me, and said, Keep this Man : if by any means he be missing, then shall thy Life go for his Life*. I know this was spoken by the Prophet parabolically, yet it may serve to shew you the Nature of Suretiship, where one engageth for another, or for others. Thus Judah became Surety to his Father for Benjamin ; *I will be Surety for him ; of my Bond shalt thou require him : if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever*. Gen. 43. 9. Reuben also became Surety for Benjamin ; *And Reuben spake unto his Father, saying, Slay my two Sons if I bring him not to thee, and deliver him into thy Hand*. This was more indeed than was required of him, or that his Father Jacob could accept of without Sin, had he failed. But O see the Nature of Suretiship ; Jesus Christ hath taken all his Saints into his Hand, as their Surety to the Father ; and God hath accepted him in this Case, and looks for them all at his Hand ; the Father substituted him, not to be a Shepherd only, but a Surety also.

3. And let it be considered, that Jesus Christ became not our Surety to pay our Debts, or to satisfy for our Sins which we stood charged with before our Conversion, but also for all our Sins after

we believe: his Blood was a plenary Satisfaction for all; so that Christ says (as it were) to the Father, as *Judah to Jacob*, I thy Servant am become Surety for these, and every one of these that thou hast given to me; and if I bring them not to thee, and set them not before thee in Heaven, then let me bear the blame for ever. Or he may say, as *Paul* speaketh concerning his Son *Onesimus*; *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my Account.* Phil. 18, 19. I Paul have written it with my own Hand, I will repay it, &c. Thus Christ may say, Father, charge the Sins, the Debts that my Saints have, and shall commit, to me, I will be accountable for them: And indeed he hath already done it, once for all; and not only so, but to bring them all to Heaven, and this in a most high and sublime Covenant and Holy Compact he made with the Father before the World began: therefore not one Soul of them can perish.

4. Consider also, that in pursuit of this Covenant and Suretyship, Jesus Christ hath suffered Death, spilt his own precious Blood, which the Father doth accept of as their full Discharge: and shall any once suppose that one Soul of his People for whom he thus struck Hands and died for, and took into his Care and Charge, shall eternally miscarry?

5. Consider, that as they are in Christ's Hands, and he hath suffered Death for them, and in their stead, so also, that the Merits of his Blood might become effectual to them, he is every ways fitted, endowed and qualified with all things whatsoever that is necessary, in order to his actual Discharge of this great Trust he hath taken upon him.

(1.) He hath received the Spirit without measure, to the end he might have that and all Grace that is needful, to communicate to every one of his Saints as he sees necessary for them; and it is laid up in his Hand, not given all at once to them; but they shall have all their Wants supplied according to his Riches in Glory.

(2.) He hath Wisdom enough also, for he is Wisdom it self. Phil. 4. 19.

(3.) He is clothed with Power also; he is a Saviour, a great One: Pray hear what he himself saith; *I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save.* Isa. 63. 1. All Power is given to me in Heaven and Earth, Mat. 28.

&c. He cannot fail for want of Power as Mediator, let the States or Straits of any Soul of his, be what they will, or of any that rely upon him or come unto him; *Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.* Hcb. 7. 25. Nay, and this Power is given to him to this very end, namely, not only to quicken and renew them, but also to perfect Holiness in them, and to bring them

them to Heaven at last : *As thou hast given him Power over all Flesh,*
 Joh. 17. 2. *that he should give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him.*

6. Consider the strict Charge the Father hath given to Christ, as he hath put all Believers into his Hand.

(1.) A Charge to redeem them ; he laid down his Life as the Father commanded him.

(2.) See that in *Isa. 49. 9. That thou mayst say to the Prisoners, Go forth ; and to them that are in Darknes, Shew your selves.* He had a Charge to call his Elect out of the Grave of Sin, and to knock off their Fetters, to open their Eyes, and to heal their Wounds.

(3.) He hath a Charge to lead them : *For he that hath Mercy on*
 Isa. 49. 10. *them shall lead them, even by the Spring of the Waters shall he guide them.* Christ hath the Conduct of these redeemed Captives, which we have fully proved by his being called a *Shepherd.*

(4.) He hath received a Charge to receive all the Father hath
 Joh. 6. 37. given him ; and those that come unto him, he saith, *he will in no wise cast out.* And this he doth not only out of his own Affections and Bowels to all such poor Sinners, but also as in discharge of his Office, as all are put into his Hand.

(5.) He hath received also a Charge to perfect that good Work
 Mar. 12. that he hath begun in them : *The bruised Reed shall he not break,*
 20. *and the smoking Flax shall he not quench, till he hath brought forth Judgment unto Victory.* He will carry on that Work in the Soul till it is compleated ; He shall do this, saith the Father, this is part of his Work and Office which he hath accepted of : And our Saviour takes notice of this thing as his Father's Will and Charge
 John 6. 39. given unto him ; *And this is the Father's Will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day.* My Father sent me to cherish and take care of the poorest and weakest Soul that he hath given me, and to see that none of them be lost ; I must, as if he should say, strengthen their Faith, subdue their Corruptions, and never leave them till I present them all before my Father, without Spot, at the last Day.

(6) He must give an Account of them also at the last Day, and he will present them all without Blame before the Father, in Love, and say, *Behold, here am I, and the Children which thou gavest me, none of them are lost.*

7. Consider in what Relation all Believers stand unto him in, as well as he hath them in his Hand ; they are his *Brethren,* nay
 more,

more, his Seed, his Off-spring, his own Children begotten, and born of his own Spirit; they are the Members of his own mystical Body, his own Spouse, yea, of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bone: and will not this, think you, greatly move him, excite and stir up his tender Heart to hold them fast in his Hand, and keep them from perishing?

8. Consider his Faithfulness; is it look'd upon as one of the worst Blots any Mortal can have upon him, to betray his Trust, or not to discharge it with all care and faithfulness, especially where the Life of a Person is concerned? And shall not our Lord Jesus faithfully discharge his Trust? Will he fail any poor Believer under Temptation, or leave him to the Power of Sin and Satan, when the Life of the Soul is concerned? O what is the Natural Life of the Body, to the Eternal Life of the Soul? Now are all the Godly put into Christ's Hand, and hath he accepted of this Trust, viz. to keep all the Father hath given him unto Everlasting Life, and not suffer the Soul of any one to be lost, and will he not be faithful? O how faithful hath he been to the Father in all things, and to the Souls of those that are already safely landed on the other side of the Grace; and will he not be as faithful to all that yet remain in this lower World? Alas, he knows how weak and frail we are, and that without him we can do nothing: *He is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; and will also with the Temptation make way for our escape, that we may be able to bear it. For in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted:* He has a Fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, and hath Compassion of the Ignorant, and such that are out of the Way.

1 Cor. 10.
13.
Heb. 2. 18.
Heb. 5. 1, 2.

9. Consider of the Greatness of that Love he hath to all that are in his Hand, or are committed to his Charge, which I have already spoken unto.

10. Consider what he says in my Text, take notice of his Resolution, and Purpose of his Soul; *Neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.*

Quest. *What is meant by any?*

Ans. The World shall not, the Devil shall not, the Flesh shall not, Sin shall not, Temptation shall not, Prosperity shall not, Adversity shall not, Death shall not; no Enemy whatsoever shall be able to pluck them out of my Hand, viz.

1. They shall not break that Union there is between me and them, but it shall abide indissoluble for ever.

2. Nons.

2. None shall be able to remove my Love from them; I will love them still, love them to the end.

3. None shall cause me to cast them off, or throw them out of the Covenant into which I have brought them.

4. Neither shall any be able to do it; they shall not be able by Force to do it, nor by Flattery to do it, I will keep them, and safely protect them: The Enemy will attempt to do it, (as if our Saviour should say) they will strive, they will pluck and pull, and do what they can to get them out of my Hand; but, says he, they shall not do it: Reproaches, Persecution, Poverty, Hunger, Nakedness, Peril nor Sword, these, nor any of these, shall ever be able to pluck them out of my Hand.

In what respect the Saints are said to be in Christ's Hand.

Thirdly, I shall now shew you in what respect, the Saints may be said to be in the Hand of Christ, or under what considerations.

I shewed you at first, in opening our Text, that he hath a seven-fold hold of them, which is held forth in part in the Sacred Scripture, by several Tropical Allusions.

1. They are (as you have heard again and again) in his Hand, by virtue of his Covenant which he made with the Father; so that they are in his Hand, As when a Man makes a Bargain to do such or such a piece of Work, which he ingageth and promiseth he will go through with, and will not cease until he has perfected it. Now upon this Account we say, that Work is in his Hand: And thus Christ hath undertaken the Work of our Salvation; we, and that Work of Grace in us are in his Hand, and he will perform it, and perfect it before he hath done.

2. God the Father hath given us into Christ's Hand, we are in his Hand by the Father's gracious Resignation; and he hath accepted of the Trust, Care and Charge of us, as our only Sponsor and Blessed Trustee, to pay our Debts and supply all our Wants.

3. We are in Christ's Hand, as Sheep are in the Hand of a Shepherd, to feed; lead, and preserve us, and defend us from all Enemies.

4. As a Bride is in the Hand of the Bridegroom, to love, comfort, cherish, and delight in us; even so Believers are in Christ's Hand.

5. We are in his Hand, as a blind Man is put into the Hand and Care of a faithful Guide, to lead, protect, and save in the midst of all Dangers; and he hath promised to guide us by his Spirit into all Truth: *And I will bring the Blind by a Way that they knew*

knew not, I will lead them in Paths that they have not known: I will make Darkness Light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. Isa. 42. 16.

6. They are in his Hand, as little Babes are in the Hand of a tender Mother or faithful Nurse, to feed and preserve, bear up in his Arms, and protect from all Dangers.

7. They are in Christ's Hand, as Subjects are in the Hand of a faithful Sovereign; yea, such Subjects that are his own Children and beloved Favourites, that he keeps company with, and delights to honour.

8. They are in Christ's Hand, as a Patient is in the Hands of a wife, able, and faithful Physician, whom he hath undertaken to cure of all Diseases whatsoever.

9. As a Garden is in the Hand, and under the Care of a skilful and painful Gardiner, who is to plant it, to weed it, to water it, and to watch it Day and Night; or as a Vineyard is in the Hand of a Vine-dresser.

10. They are in his Hand, as a Ship sent out to Sea in a Storm between Rocks and Sands, which is committed into the Hand of a skilful Pilot to steer and preserve from Danger.

But pray observe, *Christ exceeds all Covenant-Servants*; they may be unfaithful, or negligent, or want Wisdom or Power to do what they undertake; but in none of these things he can, nor will fail: he exceeds all Shepherds; they may lose a Sheep, do what they can, a *Lion* may tear it from them; but so they cannot from Christ, as I formerly shewed you. *He exceeds all Bridegrooms*; others may cool in their Affections, or want Wisdom, or Wealth to enrich, or Power to save their Spouse; but so doth not Jesus Christ to his People that he hath betrothed unto himself. *He exceeds all Physicians*; others may not know the Cause of some Distempers, nor how to cure them, or may want Care or Tenderness: but so doth not Jesus Christ, he knows the Causes of all our Sickneses, and wants no Skil, Care, nor Tenderness, in order to heal all his Children, whatever their Diseases may be. *He exceeds all Guides*; they may let go their hold, or gaze about and let the Blind fall into a Pit and perish: But so will not he, he holds them fast, and will not let his hold go, he hath faster hold of us than we have of him: When *David's* hold was near gone, and his Steps well nigh slip, yet nevertheless (saith he) *I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right Hand.* Psal. 73. 23. Christ exceeds all Mothers; Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should

Isa. 49. 15. *not have compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the Palms of my Hands, thy Walls are continually before me. Christ exceeds all Kings on Earth; for he to make his Subjects Rich, became poor himself. Others may take an Offence against their very Favourites, though Children, and turn them out of all Places of Honour, and utterly degrade them: But so will not he. Christ exceeds all Gardeners or Vine-dressers; a Drought may come and spoil a Garden or Vineyard, let the Dresser do what he can; or through his carelessness Weeds may overrun and utterly spoil it: But he hath*
 Jer. 17. 8. *promised to prevent the Danger of Drought; his People shall then not cease bearing Fruit, Sin shall not have dominion over them; those Weeds shall never spoil his Garden. Christ exceeds all Earthly Pilots; they may lose a Ship in a Storm let them do what they can, it may be drove either upon Rocks or Sands: But Jesus Christ hath the command of the Wind, the Winds and Sea obey him; he can lay any Storm that may arise in the Soul at his Pleasure, and save from all Rocks of Presumption, or Sands of Despair. O happy Soul that art in Christ's Hand, be thou whosoever thou wilt!*

11. Believers are in Christ's Hand as an Inheritance or Habitation, which he hath bought and purchased for himself, and hath taken actual possession of: or as Jewels or choice Treasure is in the Hand of the Owner; even so are the Saints in Christ's Hand. Brethren, what will not a Man do to keep and preserve his Right, or his Riches? True, Thieves may notwithstanding get all he hath from him, or Fire may consume it, or by Injustice it may be torn away; but Christ's Riches, his Inheritance, his Jewels, which are his People, who are to him of an inestimable Value, there is no Theft, no Fire, or no Violence that any can use, can deprive him of the least part of; I mean, of the poorest or meanest Saint.

12. The Saints are in Christ's Hand, as a curious Piece of Workmanship cast in a rare Mold by a skilful Artist is in his Hand, which hath cost him vast Treasure, Time and Pains, which is not fully compleated, nor can any do it in all the World but himself alone: Even thus, I say, are all Believers in Christ's Hand, who hath cast them into the Mold of his own Likeness, whom he, as the great spiritual Artist, after infinite Cost, Time, Wisdom and Labour, hath renewed or regenerated; and none can finish or make up that Work begun in them, but himself only; nor is it by the Father put into any other Hand, but into his alone to do it.

And

And as the finishing any curious Piece of Workmanship is counted no small part of the Curiosity or Art, so it is here, the perfecting of the Saints is no small part of the Workmanship of God: And shall Christ leave that to the Wisdom of Man to do, or shall he suffer the loss of all his Travels, Cost and Time? For if the Work be not perfected, all is lost that ever Christ did. O think on this, you that are such *rare Artists*, as to venture to take Christ's Work out of his Hand, or that say it is the Work of the Creature; for that is the Purport of your Doctrine.

13. They are in Christ's Hand as a great Victory is in the Hands of a prevailing Conqueror, who hath brought the Strength of his Enemies down, and there remains only some scattered Forces who lurk in Holes, which he is also concerned to root out, and finally to subdue; and should he not pursue his Conquests, (for alas, they may get Head again) all his Pains and Expence of Treasure would prove in vain: Thus I say the Soul of every Believer is in Christ's Hand, the Body and Power of Sin is destroyed, and there only abides in them some remainders of Corruption, which none but he by his Spirit can finally vanquish, overcome, and root out for ever: And should he not pursue his Victory, all he hath done will prove fruitless and in vain; therefore be sure he will never cease, until he hath brought all his Foes, not only under his Foot, but destroyed them for ever more.

14. They are in Christ's Hand, as a poor *Orphan* is in the Hand of his Guardian, who commits himself wholly to his Care, Faithfulness and Compassion, whilst in non-age, not being able to help himself or shift for himself: Thus, I say, Believers are in the Hand of Jesus Christ, they are as poor helpless *Orphans*, under-Age, and have every one of them chosen him to be the only Guardian and Trustee of their Souls, or have wholly committed themselves to his Care by a holy Resignation of themselves to him, to be his and no more their own for ever; and will not he be faithful, think you, to every one of them, especially considering they did it also at his Command, and by the Influence of his Spirit? Will he betray his Trust, who hath taken them into his House, and under his own Conduct, or leave them to shift for themselves? They first gave themselves to the Lord, and unto us by ^{2 Cor. 8. 5.} the Will of God. And as David saith, *The Poor committeth himself* ^{Psa. 10. 14.} unto thee; thou art the helper of the Fatherless. He yields himself up to thee, Himself, his Matter, his Cause: And what, says he further, *Thou shalt keep them, O Lord; thou shalt preserve them from* ^{Psal. 12. 7.}

Verse 5. *this Generation, and for ever.* He tells us in the 5th verse, who they are, even the *Poor and Needy*. Brethren, this lays a great Obligation upon a Guardian when he sees what a Child, or any Person hath done in chusing him, in confiding in his Fidelity, and putting his whole Trust and Dependence in him. What Man that has a Principle of Honesty or of Morality, will deceive or fail such a One, after he hath taken the sole Care and Charge of him? And shall Christ be more unfaithful to the Souls of his People? *God forbid.*

From the whole I infer.

The general Argument.

(1.) If all Believers are in the Father's Hand, or under his Eternal Purpose and Counsel to save: (2.) If God's Purposes are Immutabile: (3.) If he hath not left it to any mixtures of Counsels; if he is Omnipotent, and can and will bring all his Absolute Purposes to pass: (4.) If it be folly to imagine any of his Purposes should be subjected to the Will of Man: (5.) If Christ be the right Hand of God, or in whom all his Attributes are united to the Perfection of his Power to save Believers: (6.) If Christ also hath them all in his Hand, as God's faithful Servant, and as their Surety or Trustee: (7.) If many of them are gone to Heaven already: (8.) If all Interests concerned in our Salvation are well pleased in Christ's Undertaking: (9.) If the Glory of every one of the Divine Attributes are raised in the Salvation of each Believer: (10.) If Christ hath received a Charge to keep every one of them, and to lose none, as he hath promised to do: (11.) If Christ is every ways fitted to supply his Saints with all things they *need* or can *need*: And (12.) if they are all in Christ's Hand, in all those respects I have mentioned; then it is impossible any one of them should so fall away as eternally to perish. But all this is undeniably true; therefore not one of them can so fall away as eternally to perish.

I should make some Improvement of this, but having but one Argument to add to prove the Proposition, I shall leave the Application to the last, wherein I shall shew you how Christ doth preserve his Saints in a way of Holiness and Obedience unto Eternal Life.

JOHN X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, though I hope I have sufficiently, through Divine Assistance, proved the Proposition, *i. e.* That none of the Saints can so fall away as eternally to perish: Yet I shall add one General Argument more, and then come to the Application, and answer such Objections which I have not as yet met with.

Sermon
XV.

Tenthly, That the Saints of God, or every true Believer, shall persevere or hold out to the End, and obtain Everlasting Life, will appear from the Nature of true and saving Grace. That therefore which I shall in the last place do, shall be to demonstrate that true Grace, though never so weak and *small*, even like a *Grain of Mustard-seed*, yet it shall be preserved in the Soul, and at last become *victorious*. See *Matth. 12. 20.* *A bruised Reed shall he not break, and smocking Flax shall he not quench, till he hath brought forth Judgment to Victory.* Hierom, as I find him quoted by a Learned Author, thinks, that our Saviour alludes to a Musical Instrument, made of a Reed which Shepherds used to have, which when it was bruised, sounded ill, and therefore 'tis flung away. But the Lord Jesus Christ will not cast away a poor Soul (saith that Worthy Person) although he cannot make so good Musick in God's Ear as others, or answer not the breathing of the Spirit with that Life and Vigour, but he will take Pains with them and mend them; who in a spiritual sense are like a bruised Reed, broken and bruised under the sense of their Sins, Weaknesses and Unworthinesses. *Smocking Flax*, or a little *Flax* that hath a *Spark of Fire kindled* in it; or a *Wick of Candle*, wherein there is not only no Profit, but some Trouble and Noisomness. Tho' the Soul is noisom, by reason of the stench of its Corruption, yet he will not blow out that expiring Fire which smoaks; and though no Fire is seen, yet there is Fire in it, and it is kindled by the Lord, and for some great and good Design. By the Spark of
Fire

Fire in the Flax (let our Saviour refer to what he pleases) is meant, no doubt, Divine Grace in the Soul of a poor, weak, and desponding Christian, and this Christ will not quench; that is, he will tenderly cherish it, and cause it to kindle more and more, until he makes it flame forth and burn clearly: And he will heal, cure, and strengthen the bruised Reed; that is, he will never cease until the Soul doth obtain a perfect Victory over Sin, Satan, the Flesh, the World, and over all Enemies. Grace shall prevail over Corruption, though there seems more Smoke than Fire, more Sin than Grace, more Weakness than Strength, more Darkness than Light, more Fear than Faith, yet Grace shall be victorious; Grace is that Principle of Life in the Soul, the Law of God written in the Heart, which shall never finally be obliterated any more, or God's Image, that shall not utterly be defaced. Again, Grace as the Seed of Glory, shall abide in the Soul in spite of all the Opposition Hell can make.

And this I shall endeavour to prove, and fully demonstrate:

First, From the Nature of Grace it self.

Secondly, In respect of the Fountain from whence it doth proceed, *i. e.* the Blessed God and Father of Mercy.

Thirdly, From Christ the Purchaser, and more immediate Author, the Beginner and Finisher of it in the Soul; he is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Grace.

First, From the Nature of Grace it self.

- Mat. 13. 31. Seed, to a Grain of Mustard-seed, which becomes, after it is sown, a great Tree: If ye have Faith as a Grain of Mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you. The Mountain of Guilt, of Pollution, of Corruption, of Opposition, shall be removed out of the way of that Person sooner or later, that hath never so small a Measure of Grace, such is the Nature of it: I do not judg that our Saviour chiefly refers here to the Faith of Miracles; but our late Annotator, no doubt, is right: "I take the plain sense of the Text to be this, (saith he) that there is nothing which may tend to the Glory of God, or to our Good, but may be obtained of God, by a firm exercise of Faith in him."
- Mat. 17. 20. The Mountain of Guilt, of Pollution, of Corruption, of Opposition, shall be removed out of the way of that Person sooner or later, that hath never so small a Measure of Grace, such is the Nature of it: I do not judg that our Saviour chiefly refers here to the Faith of Miracles; but our late Annotator, no doubt, is right: "I take the plain sense of the Text to be this, (saith he) that there is nothing which may tend to the Glory of God, or to our Good, but may be obtained of God, by a firm exercise of Faith in him."

“ him. Whether our Saviour speaketh here of a Faith of Miracles, or no, I will not determine ; I rather think that he speaks here of any true Faith, &c. A weak Faith put into exercise shall prevail and overcome at last : *This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith* : it doth and shall overcome in every Soul at last. *This Seed* I have proved already *doth remain*, it can never be rooted out of the good Ground : where it was received into honest Hearts, it brought forth Fruit unto Everlasting Life. 1 Joh. 5. 4.
Mat. 13.

2. Grace in the Soul is compared to a Well of living Water : *The Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of living Water, springing up unto Everlasting Life.* Grace in the Soul, is like a Well that hath a never-failing Spring at the bottom. Grace proceeds from the Spring or Well of Salvation, which continually supplies the Soul until it comes to Heaven. We have a glorious Figure of this in the Water that gushed out of the Rock smitten in the Wilderness, that never ceased following the Israelites until they came to *Canaan*. True, this Water may not rise up always alike, but may sometimes be low like our Rivers, it may have its Ebbs as well as its Flows ; but when it is a very low Tide, it rises again, and may be by degrees higher than ever it was before : *They shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine, the Scent thereof shall be as the Wine of Lebanon.* Joh. 4. 14.
Hos. 14. 7.

3. Grace is compared to Leaven, *which a Woman hid in three Measures of Meal, till the whole was leavened,* the whole Soul. Mat. 13. 33. Grace is of a diffusive Quality. It works also like *Leaven* gradually, it diffuseth it self first into the *Understanding*, and *leavens* that with blessed Gospel-Light : It also diffuseth it self into the *Will*, and bows and subjecteth that to the Power of Divine Truth, and to a full Acceptance of Jesus Christ, chusing him, and relying upon him for Righteousness and Eternal Life : It also diffuseth it self into the *Affections* of the Soul, and then the whole is *leavened*. It *leavens*, or makes gracious every Faculty of the Soul, and all its Powers, the Body and all its Members : Grace, like *Leaven*, makes the Creature a new Lump, and of the same Nature with it self, Holy, Spiritual, Heavenly, &c. *Leaven* is a quickning thing ; so *Grace* through the Spirit, is the quickning Principle in the Soul. Grace, when received, will, like *Leaven*, do its Work, and never cease till all is in a spiritual manner leavened therewith. Grace compared to Leaven.

Grace compared to Fire.

4. Grace is also compared by the Spirit of God to Fire.

(1.) 'Tis a Divine Spark that God kindles in the Soul, which he taketh pains to do of his own abundant Goodness.

(2.) And as he will not quench it himself, as you heard, so none else can: And if it cannot be put out, then be sure it will burn; it is the Nature of Fire to seize on whatsoever is combustible. Now Sin is that proper Fuel which Grace will never cease consuming, until it hath quite brought it (as it were) to Ashes.

(3.) Jesus Christ came on purpose from Heaven to kindle this Fire, to burn up Sin, and all Corruptions in the Souls of his People: And can any think it is in the Power of Satan, by his Temptations, to quench it for ever, and so frustrate his gracious Design? If the Devil could not quench it when it was but a small Spark, like *smoking Flax*, when it was first kindled in the Soul, how should he be able to do it then when it has got a greater head? All know it is much easier to put out and get the mastery of a Fire at first kindling, than it is afterwards: Yet mistake me not, I do not say that this Divine Fire burns always alike in the Soul; No, Satan and Corruption may damp and lessen its burning: but what tho? for notwithstanding the Operations of Grace may be interrupted by the Law in the Members, *the Flesh lusting and warring against the Spirit*; and it may suffer an Eclipse, and a poor Christian may lose the sense and feeling Influences of it at some times, as to the comforting Operations thereof, yet the Habit of Grace can never be lost.

Grace is a Vital Principle.

5. The Spirit of Grace is a Vital Principle; it is the Life of the Believer, or of the Soul of a Child of God: Nay, and this Life is Eternal, it is in them an Eternal Vital Principle, as I have proved since I was upon this Text; therefore Grace through the Spirit, prevents their eternal perishing; those that have the Spirit in them, and Grace in them, have Christ and Everlasting Life in them. Moreover, should any say that Grace is not immutable in it self, yet say I, with relation it stands in unto Christ, (*viz.* having a Spring at the bottom) it is an abiding Principle, it will and must live: Moreover, it is a powerful and permanent Principle; *Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World*, that is, the Holy Spirit in the Graces, and blessed Influences thereof. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the Law, but under Grace.*

1 Joh.

Rom. 6. 14.

6. Grace is a holy and sanctifying Principle, it resisteth Sin, and purgeth the Conscience; *It teacheth us to deny all Ungedliness and worldly*

worldly Lusts, to live soberly, godly and righteously in this present *Tit. 2. 12*
World.

7. Why is Grace called *saving*, if Men may have it and yet *True Grace* perish? Certainly that Grace that a Man may have, and be damaged, is not saving Grace. *is of a saving Nature.*

Secondly, Grace shall abide in the Souls of Believers, in respect of the Fountain of it from whence it proceeds, namely, the Holy God.

1. Grace, as I may say, is the *Off-spring of Heaven*: And what doth God love on Earth, above his own Grace in the Souls of his People? 'Tis God's Gift, though it be Christ's Merit. And as Reverend *Charnock* notes; " Grace hath great *Allies*; the greatest Power that ever yet acted upon the Stage of the World, had a Hand in the birth of it. Should we see all the States of the World engaged in bringing a Person to a Kingdom, and maintaining therein his Right, we could not rationally think that there were any likelihood they should be baffled in it. The Trinity (saith he) sat in Consultation about Grace: For if there were such a Solemn Convention held about the first creating of Man, much more about the new and better creating of him, and raising him somewhat above the State of Man; the Father decrees it, the Son purchaseth it, the Spirit infuseth it: The Father appoints the Garison, what Grace should be in every Soul; Christ raiseth this Force, and the Spirit conducts it; the Trinity hath a hand in maintaining it: and all this is but the carrying on the New Creature. The Father is said to beget us, *John 1. 13.* and we are said to be the Seed of Christ, *Isa. 53. 10.* and born of the Spirit, *John 3. 6.* therefore that which hath so strong a Relation and Allies, cannot be lost. Thus *Charnock*.

2. The Father is the Root and Foundation of Grace, as it is the Effect of his free Love and Favour; and every Grace is part of the Divine Nature, in it there is an imitation of one or other of the Divine Attributes, and it exemplifies the Divine Perfections in its Operations: The Design of God in infusing of his Grace into our Souls, is to shew forth his Vertues, or his Praise and Glory, in all the Parts of it, and doth glorify one or another Attribute of God. *God the Father is the Foundation of Grace.* *1 Pet. 2. 9.*

3. What is Grace, and the Work of Grace in the Soul, but God's Workmanship, which as you have heard, he hath shewed *Grace God's Workmanship in the much Soul.*

much Skill and heavenly Wisdom about, and also hath been at more Cost to effect in us, than in making the World; he will not therefore suffer that Work to be marr'd and brought to nought:

Eph. 2. 10. *We are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good Works.* Did he give his Son, purchase Grace; and will not the same Love engage his Power to preserve and perfect it in us?

The Power
of God concerned to
preserve
Grace in
us.

4. And since God's Power is concerned in preserving Grace in us, and us in a State of Grace; can it be thought that Satan, that strong Man armed, when he had full possession of the Soul, and also had so strong a Party in us on his Side, and yet could not prevent an overthrow, he being vanquished and turned out, should ever get possession again, especially since now the Soul is so well armed, and hath the strongest Party on its Side against him; besides such wonderful Allies to stand by it to oppose its Enemies, and to aid and assist it against him and all his Abettors? If Grace, when a Babe, gave Satan such a fatal Defeat and Overthrow, certainly now it hath got such strength in the Soul, it will never be

1 Pet. 1. 5. overcome by him: *We are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* And Christ hath prayed that our Faith fail not, and was heard therein. Brethren, is the Power of the Omnipotent God limited to a Faith of the Creature's getting, and to his Care in securing? If so, it is as much as to say, the Nurse will keep the Child in her Hand, if it doth not get out of it and stray away from her. We say God keeps us by his Power through Faith, because he hath ordained Faith and Holiness to be the Means (which he by his Power will maintain in us) as well as Happiness, or the Salvation of our Souls to be the End.

5. God hath promised to help us, to uphold us, to strengthen us, and to preserve us unto the End: *The Steps of a good Man are secured by the Lord; and he delighteth in his Way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his Hand.* If he falls into Sin, into Temptation or Affliction, the Lord will not leave him, but help him up, and bring him out of all his Diltresses: He hath promised, *never to leave us nor forsake us:* He hath also promised to be our God and our Guide, even unto Death; and hath assured us, *That the Righteous shall hold on their Ways; and he that hath clean Hands shall grow stronger and stronger;* and to put his Fear into our Hearts, that we shall not depart from him. Again, the Apostle asserts, *That he that hath begun a good Work in us, will perform it to the Day of Christ.*

Phil. 1. 6.

6. In a word, it cannot stand consistent with the *Wisdom, Love, Faithfulness, Holiness*, nor the *Glory of God*, to suffer any of his own Children, and redeemed Ones, to be pulled away from him by Sin, Satan, the Flesh, or this World, or any Enemy whatsoever, and Grace to come to nothing in them.

It cannot stand consistent with the Wisdom of God, and all other Attributes, to let Grace utterly fail in us.

1. Can it stand consistent with his *Wisdom*, to suffer his own Eternal Counsel to be frustrated? Or hath any Man the true Grace of God, and yet not as the Result of God's Purpose from Eternity? If so, how comes it to pass that *Paul* tells the Saints, That they were saved, and called 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? Can it stand consistent with Divine Wisdom, to let Satan insult over God himself, and boast after this manner; Thou hast sent thy Son to die for these Persons; thou hast renewed them by thy Grace, and made them thy own Children, and espoused them to thy own Son, and this according to the greatness of thy Love and thy Purpose, before all Worlds; and didst it also to destroy and bring to nought my Design and laborious Work in seeking to devour them; but see how thou art defeated and frustrated in all thou hast done: I have tempted them to Sin, I have again deceived their Souls, and set thee against them; and thy Design in saving of these, is by me made of none effect; I have turned those Saints into Swine, and robbed them of all that Grace and rich Treasure thou gavest to them, notwithstanding thou hadst put them into the Hand of thy own Son to preserve and keep?

2 Tim. 1.9.

2. Can it stand consistent with his tender *Love*, to leave his Saints in the midst of so many cruel Enemies, who are unable to save themselves (as poor Babes of two or ten Days old) out of their Hands, and yet suffer them by Sin and Satan to be torn to pieces, whilst he stands by and looks on; and yet they are such that are his own Children, begotten and born of him by his Spirit? Or shall his Love be so great in begetting Grace, or in infusing Grace, and no more Love shewed in keeping and preserving that Grace in their Souls? What! purchase such Riches for them by the Blood of his Son, and let them be robbed of it all in a Moment?

3. Can it stand consistent with the Faithfulness of God, who hath said, *I will help thee, I will uphold thee by the right Hand of my Righteousness; and I will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able, &c.* The Work I have begun in thee, I will perform to

the Day of Christ; and as thy Day is, thy Strength shall be; and yet notwithstanding all this, will leave them, and let their Grace wither and come to nothing, and Sin and Temptations be too hard and strong for them, and so cast them off for ever?

4. Can it stand consistent with his *Holiness*, to let his precious Grace, which is an Impression of his own Image and Likeness in the Soul, be blotted, blurr'd and defaced for ever; this Likeness being a Likeness unto him in that most high and beloved Perfection of his Nature, *viz.* his Holiness, which Work on the Soul is curiously wrought by his own Spirit, and more valued by him, than ten thousand Worlds; will he, I say, neglect that which is so dear and like unto him, and suffer it to be crush'd under the Foot of filthy Corruption by the Lusts of his implacable Enemy?

5. Can it stand consistent with the Honour of God's most Sovereign Majesty, to let Grace be destroyed and come to nothing in the Soul, whose End in all he doth is principally to advance his own Glory? What is it, I pray you, that tends more to bring Honour to God in the World, than that Grace which he hath infused into the Hearts of his People? If Sin brings the greatest Dishonour to him, then certainly Grace brings the greatest Honour to him, which strives to root out and utterly to destroy Sin, so that God and Jesus Christ might reign alone in the Soul. If a King hath but one special Favourite that asserts and maintains his Right, and seeks to uphold his Throne, be sure he will, if possible, preserve him, and suffer none to undermine and supplant that Favourite, so as to root him out of the Kingdom.

Christ is the Purchaser, the Author and finisher of Grace. Thirdly, In regard had to Jesus Christ, who is the Purchaser and immediate Author of Grace, I further argue; Grace shall at last become Victorious, or never finally be suppressed in the Hearts of Believers.

1. Christ by his Death purchased that Grace which every true Christian is possessed of: He died to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works. It is upon the Account of his Death, as the Effects of his Death, the Spirit and the Graces of the Spirit are shed abroad in our Hearts: *Acts 2. 33.* Therefore being by the right Hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which you see and hear. Certainly if he purchased us, and Grace for us, when we were his Enemies, he will preserve it in us since we are actually now reconciled to him. Shall he be at the expence

pence of his Blood to buy it, (as one notes) and spare his Pow- *Charnock,*
er to secure it ?

2. Christ was manifest to take away Sin, to dispossess Satan, and will he let Satan take Possession again ? He came to destroy the Works of the Devil ? And what are Satan's Works but Sin ? Will not Christ accomplish that which he came into the World to do ? 1 Joh. 3. 5, 8.

3. He is called the Author and Finisher of our Faith : If this be so, we may assure our selves he will perfect it ; he that begins it, will end it ; he hath not left it to another after he hath begun the Work of Faith, to finish it : No, no, he still keeps it in his own Hand, and he will see it done. Heb. 12. 2.

4. It is for the Honour of Christ, that Grace lives and is strengthened in his People : *Wherefore also we pray for you, that our God would account you worthy of this Calling, and fulfil all the good Pleasure of his Will, and the Work of Faith with Power.* Part of the good Pleasure of the Will of God had been fulfilled in them ; they were called, justified, adopted, and the Work of Sanctification was begun ; and *Paul* prays, that with Power it might be compleated, and then shews us how it tends to the Glory of Christ to have this done ; *That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified, and you in him according to the Grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.* Brethren, the Glory of Christ, and the final Salvation of the Saints, are wrap'd up together ; Grace tends to Christ's Glory here, and to his Eternal Praise and Glory hereafter. Verse 12.

5. Jesus Christ's Work, now he is in Heaven, is to intercede for his Saints : And be sure as he prayed when on Earth that the Faith of his *Peters* might not fail, so he makes the like Intercession for them in Heaven. Hence the Intercession of Christ is part of the Saints Holy Triumph, in that of *Romans* 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth ? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who also maketh Intercession for us.* *The Intercession of Christ, secures the Saints in a State of Grace.*

Now the Intercession of Christ hath great Power and Prevalency in it, in order to our final Perseverance in Grace.

1. Because he pleads continually with God the Virtue of his own Merits : what he hath purchased for us, he intercedes for ; but he purchased Grace for us, and he prays for the final continuation of it in us ; therefore it shall abide in us to the End.

2. By his Intercession, he prevails with God that we may be delivered from all our Spiritual Enemies, that they may never have
Power

Power over us, of whom Sin is the chief: That which Christ intercedes for, he is heard and accepted in; but he intercedes that we may be kept and delivered from the Power and eternal Punishment of Sin, therefore Sin shall never have Power to condemn us.

3. He intercedes that our Prayers may be heard, and that we may be helped to pray; and part of our Prayer is that Sin may nor have Power over us to condemn us; therefore Sin never shall so condemn us, because Christ causes our Prayers, with the Incense of his own Intercession, to come up as a sweet Savour in the Nostrils of God.

4. Christ intercedes that all our Sins may be pardoned and covered: *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father.* He carries this Cause for us in the Court of Heaven; therefore our Sins shall never work our Ruin.

5. It is by his Intercession we come to the Throne of Grace with boldness; Christ our Friend and High Priest appearing evermore in the Presence of God for us.

6. And also it is through Christ's Intercession that all our Good Works and Holy Services are accepted of God.

So much shall serve to the tenth and last Argument; And from hence I argue,

The general Argument.

If Grace, though never so weak, shall be victorious; if Grace be such a Blessed Principle, such a Spark that Sin nor Satan can't quench, such a Seed that no Enemy can get out of the Ground of our Hearts; if Grace through the Spirit is Life, Eternal Life in the Soul; if Grace be the Darling of Heaven, hath such great and Almighty Allies; if the whole Trinity, sate in Council about the Birth of Grace, or the Way of its infusion into the Soul; if it be the Gift of the Father's Free Love, and a part of his Holy Nature; if it be wrought in us to shew forth his Praise; if Grace be God's great and glorious Workmanship; if the Power of God be engaged to preserve it in us; if God hath promised to maintain its Life in us; if it cannot stand consistent with God's Wisdom, Love, Faithfulness and Holiness, to let it be totally overcome and vanquished in the Souls of his Elect; if Christ purchased Grace for us; if he was manifest to take away Sin; if Christ be the Author and Finisher of Grace in the Soul; if the Life of Grace tends so much to the Honour of Christ; if Christ's Work now in Heaven is to interceed for the continuation of Grace in us, that it may never fail in the Seed or Habit of it; Then no true Believer can fall so from Grace, as eternally to perish.

perish. But all this is true; therefore no Believer can so fall from Grace as eternally to perish.

APPLICATION.

First, Of Information.

1. First from the whole we may learn, that the State of Believers, through the Redemption by Jesus Christ, is far better than Adam's was by Creation: for though we have no natural and inherent Power of our own, yet we have a supernatural Power engaged to help and uphold us; we are kept by the Power of God. He stood by the Strength of Nature, and Power of Free-Will, before the Fall: We by the Strength of Grace, and Power of the Mediator, who hath a Charge to uphold us in a State of Grace, which was not allowed to Adam, nor the Angels; we have not only the Word of Grace to encourage us, but also the Power of Grace to establish us. Adam stood by his own Original Righteousness; our standing is by the Suretyship, Righteousness and Undertakings of Jesus Christ: *Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.* Adam's Life was in himself, our Life is hid in Christ; and so out of the Power of our worst Enemies to come at it, or deprive us of it: and as Adam and all his were condemned, so Christ and all his are justified. I Cor. 1-30.

2. It may inform us, that such who make a Profession of Religion, without attaining to a State of true Grace and real Union with Christ, are in danger of eternal Ruin, notwithstanding whatsoever their Knowledge, Gifts and common Improvements may be, and their Hopes thereupon; and that they are of this sort that frequently fall away and perish in their Sins: which if well weighed, may put every Professor into serious Thoughts, and upon a thorough Work of Self-examination about their present Condition; and therefore in this respect, there is need enough of those Cautions and Take-heeds in the Scripture, *Let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall.* How many are there who do but think they stand, or that their State is safe and good, when in truth they are in no better Condition than the Foolish Virgins, or the thorny and stony-ground Professors?

Mat. 13.

3. It also may inform us, that all those that shall be saved, are such who take care to make their Calling and Election sure. It is a palpable Demonstration, that they are under strong Delusion, who suppose Election only refers to the End, and not to the Means;

Means; or that Men that are elected, shall be saved, let them live how they please: No, no, the Case is quite otherwise; we are elected to be Holy, as well as to be Happy; the whole Design of God herein, being to make us Holy, and also to preserve us in a Way and State of Holiness: Therefore if thou dost begin well, hast obtained true Grace, and dost continue in a Way of well-doing; or dost bring forth good Fruit, and dost not waver nor faint in thy Mind, it may be an Evidence, that thy State is Good, and that thou art one of Christ's Sheep, who follow him constantly, and wilt so follow him unto the End.

Secondly, This may be Matter of great Comfort to weak Believers, and such who may be under spiritual Deadness, and feel Corruption too strong for them. O do not be discouraged, the weakest Grace gives a deadly wound to Sin, and a good ground of Hope thy State is safe: your Names are written in Heaven, which is, as our Saviour notes, the greatest Cause of Joy; which it could not be if their Names might be blotted out again. 'Tis no wonder Sin is in thee, and makes thee mourn, when it made *Luke 10. 20.* Paul to cry out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death!* 'Tis one thing to have the Law of Sin in our Members, and to have Sin in our Conversations; and another thing to have it reign in us, or to have it in our Affections. Soul, remember that weak Grace, weak Faith, shall become victorious: Thou hast Grace enough in thy Head, though thou hast but little in thy Hand. O cry to God, be much in Prayer that God would give thee more Grace, and supply thy Wants, and quicken and revive thy Soul, as he hath promised. A weak Faith renders the Soul as perfectly justified in Christ, as the strongest Faith any Man hath whosoever he be; and gives a Title to Eternal Life: he that had but a weak or a dim Eye, that look'd up unto the Brazen Serpent, was as well healed, as he that had a strong Sight or good Eyes.

2. This Doctrine yields much Comfort to the strongest Saint also; for if he that hath never so strong and lively Faith, might fall finally away and perish, what would Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, &c. signify to him? Would not his Spirits droop, and his Fears torment him! But here, by virtue of the Doctrine of final Perseverance, is Comfort both for the Weak and Strong, both have equal Interest in Christ, in God's Love, in the Covenant; both are elected, both are in Christ's Hand. Such who have

have now a strong Faith, had once but a weak Faith; it was but a little Seed once: and Christ's Charge extends to those that are weak, *He carries the Lambs in his Arms*: and the Stock in Christ's Hand is sure, and his Promise of supply shall not fail; and the Strong cannot stand of themselves. Iſa. 40. 11.

Thirdly, Caution. Judg not of the Truth of thy Grace by the weaknes of it; a little Gold, a Dram is Gold as well as a great Wedg.

2. Let not this encourage thee to be negligent or remiss in Duty: God has promised thee Victory, but thou must fight: *Grace Tit. 2. 11, teacheth us to deny all Ungodliness.* He that is not under the Influence of Grace, never had the Truth of it in him. 12.

Fourthly, Always consider this in thy Heart, that thy standing is by Grace, and that thou art in Christ's Hand: O depend on him for all, and fly to him for whatsoever thou dost need.

J O H N X. 28.

And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.

BRETHREN, I closed the last Time with the Confirmation of the Doctrine which I have for several days been upon. I shall now proceed to consider of the *Objections*, and give an Answer to them that are usually brought against this great and comfortable Doctrine of the *Saints final Perseverance*. Several of which I have answered already, (as I met with them occasionally, under divers of those Arguments I have spoken to in clearing up the Truth of the Proposition); therefore shall labour to answer such that remain, which take as they here follow.

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Sermon  
XVI.  
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How could the Birth of Christ be said to be Matter of Joy unto all People? And the Angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People; For unto you is born this Day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Ans. 1. I answer; *All People* doth not intend every individual Person; to *all People*, that is, the good News is not to you only, but to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. I have shewed you before that [*all*], and [*every*], and [*whole World*], is taken in many places of Holy Scripture with restriction, and takes in but a *part*; as on the contrary, when the *Universality* of the Subject is intended, it is expressed by singular; *If a Man die, shall he live again?* Which refers to every Man. *He that believeth shall be saved*; it signifies all that so do. So, I will pour out of my Spirit upon *ALL* Flesh, as you have it in *Joel*; that is, upon Persons of every *Age, Sex, and Degree*; upon *Young, Old, Masters, Servants, Sons and Daughters*: so it may be taken here, and in several other places; as that in *1 Tim. 2. 4. Who will have all Men saved, &c.* that is, *Kings* as well as *Peasants, Noble* as well as *Ignoble, Rich* as well as *Poor, Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, or some of *all sorts*. The Gospel is said to be preached in *Paul's* Time to every Creature under Heaven, whereas it reached then but to a small part of the World, one great part not being at that time known or found out (as one well observes).

2. Was the Birth of Christ Matter of Joy in the Effects of it to *Judas*, and to the unbelieving *Jews*, and to many more?

3. I argue thus; If the Birth and Death of Christ was cause of greatest Joy to all Persons, individually considered, it must be thus either in respect of the Design, Purpose and Intention of God, because of such Joy unto them, or else in respect of the certain Effects of his Birth and Death: But (1.) Who will say that God, according to his Eternal Purpose and Design, did intend it for the Salvation of every individual Person? None can be so weak sure to assert that; for who shall resist God's Will, or withstand God's absolute Design, Purpose and Intention? Christ must accomplish or effect the Salvation of all, if in that sense it was Matter or Cause of Joy unto all, or that he died for all, or that God would have all, that is, every individual Man and Woman in the World saved. (2.) And as to the Effects of the Death of Christ, it is evident quite otherwise, for Multitudes have no saving Benefit thereby: Therefore it follows clearly, that that is not the sense

sense of the Text nor Mind of the Spirit of God; though in some sense the Birth and Death of Christ was Cause of Joy to all, since every one received all that Good thereby whatsoever it is they are possessed of.

4. Did not *Simeon* by the Holy Ghost say, that *this Child* (Speaking of Christ) *is set for the Fall; and rising again of many in Israel?* Unto some the word is a *Savour of Death unto Death*, and Christ a Stone of stumbling; the Reason is, because they that believe in him shall be saved, and they that believe not shall be damned. We freely grant the intervening of Mens Unbelief, Malice and Opposition to Christ and his Gospel, is the proximate meritorious Cause of the Fall and Ruin of any Soul. Luk. 2. 34.
Mark 16.

5. Also it is said, *Every Man shall have praise of God*, 1 Cor. 4. 5. which can refer to none but to good Men, or godly Men only: So it is said, God is the Father of *all*; *One God and Father of all*, Eph. 4. 6. Yet as Mr. *Cole* observes on that place, the Devil is the Father of the greatest part of the World. Christ is said *to reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in Earth or things in Heaven*, Col 1. 20. Yet what a multitude are not, nor ever shall be reconciled to him. [*All*] certainly intends none but the Elect: So it is said, *it is written in the Prophets, they shall all be taught of God*, John 6. 45. It respects only Believers, or God's New-Covenant-Children. Now seeing the word [*all*.] and [*every*] in many Places, refers only to the Elect, and is taken with such Restriction, why should it be taken Universally here, and in those other Places mentioned, especially considering the Arguments I have laid down to prove that Christ did not die for any but those that were given to him by the Father; we having also proved he died in their stead, for whom he suffered Death, so that they might never die Eternally?

Object. 2. *If there be such a Decree of Election, and that none shall be saved but those that God hath ordained to Eternal Life, what need Men seek after or regard the Salvation of their Souls?*

Ans. This Objection we have largely answered under our first Argument, to prove the Saints final Perseverance, taken from the Election of Grace, to which I refer you. See p. 174,
175. of this
Treatise.

Object. 3. *This Doctrine of Election and Final Perseverance, tends to make Men loose and remiss in the Service of God.*

Doctrine of
Election
and Perse-
verance, o-
pens no Door
to Sin.

Ans. 1. What can be a greater Mistake? Do the certain Grounds of Hope of obtaining the Victory, tend to make a Soldier remiss and careless when engaged in the Battel? Or do they not much more animate him to fight courageously?

2. Shall a Child be taken off from his Duty, or be remiss in serving his Father, because his Father tells him he shall never be disinherited?

3. Did not Christ know that the Angels had Charge over him, yet was he less careful of his own Preservation? And did not *Paul* assure all that were in the Ship with him, that they should all be saved; yet did that take him off from pressing Care and Diligence on the Mariners?

4. That God who hath ordained the End, I tell you again, hath also ordained the Means; *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* We are chosen in Christ, that we may be holy, and without blame before him in Love. Nor can any ever come to any well-grounded hope he shall be saved, or know he is elected, unless he is holy, heavenly, spiritual, watchful and diligent in all Gospel-Duties, which is the Fruits and Effects of Election.

Heb. 12.

14.

Eph. 1. 4

5. The Decree of Election considered absolutely in it self, without respect had unto its Effects, is no part of God's revealed Will; that is, it is not revealed, that this Man is, and that Man is not *Elected*: This therefore can be made neither Argument nor Objection, about any thing wherein Faith and Obedience are concerned.

6. The Sovereign and ever-to-be-adored Grace and distinguishing Love of God, is laid down in the Word of God, to be the greatest Motive to Holiness imaginable: *Who maketh thee to differ from another?* O that God should open my Eyes, call me by his Grace! may a Believer say. Shall I sin against him, because his Grace so abounds to me? *God forbid.* If God hath elected me, I may live in Sin, walk as I list, is the Language rather of a Devil than of a Man, much less of a Saint. I speak the more to this, because I would shew you that are Believers, what Improvement you ought to make of God's Free Grace and Love to you: *Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, Holy and Beloved) Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.* And as *Moses* said, Consider what great things God hath done for you.

1 Cor. 4. 7.

Col. 3. 12.

Object. 4. If I shall persevere to the End, what need is there of those Take-heeds in the Scripture? Why are we bid to watch, and take heed lest we fall?

Ans.

Ansiv. This is all one with the former, besides I answered it largely when I first entred upon my Work ; but, yet let me add a word or two further.

1. A Child of God may sin and fall grievously, and greatly dishonour God, and bring Reproach on the Gospel, which may tend to grieve some, and harden others ; nay, he may lose his Comfort and Joy of God's Salvation, therefore hath need to watch. Satan is a strong, a vigilant and cunning Enemy : O see what Reasons you have from thence to watch and pray.

2. If you grow careless, carnal, or indifferent in the Matters of Religion, it may be a sign that your Hearts are not right with God : Many of the Members of the Churches to whom the Epistles were directed, were no more than Professors ; and if so, they were liable to fall away and perish for ever.

Object. 5. *But some Branches in the Vine may bear no Fruit, but may be cut off and wither, &c.*

Ansiv. I have also fully answered this Objection already ; see the Argument taken from our Union with Christ : There is a two-fold being in Christ, an External being in him by a Profession, and a true Spiritual being in him.

Object. 6. *If Christ died not for all, what ground have I to believe he died for me ?*

Ansiv. 1. What doth it signify to believe Christ died for all, unless thou findest the Effects of his Death in thee ? Many thousands shall perish, notwithstanding Christ died for them in their Judgment that make this Objection, yea the generality of them for whom he died ; therefore unless all were saved, what Encouragement is there to believe from hence ?

2. He that believes, shall be saved : If thou therefore dost believe, thou shalt be saved. Is not this a better Ground of Faith, than that of Christ's dying for all ?

3. A bare believing that Christ died for all, I have proved is no Ground of thy Interest in his Death, for that may be without any Fruits or gracious Effects.

4. Thou hast the same Ground to believe as any have, or as such had who do now believe before they did believe ; or as they had once, who now are in Heaven.

5. Christ died for the chiefest of Sinners ; and the Promises of Mercy upon believing, are made to the vilest Sinners on Earth.

6. Great:

6. Great and black Sinners have found Mercy, and are now in Heaven, even some of them that put Christ to Death; And is here not Ground of Faith and Hope for thee?

Mark 16. 16. 7. Remember, that if thou believest not, but dost continue in thy Sin and Rebellion against God, thou shalt be certainly damned, thy rejecting of Christ will have that Effect at last upon all Unbelievers.

Isa. 45. 12. 8. Moreover, Christ calls to stout-hearted Sinners, such that are far from Righteousness; He brings his Salvation near to them: He calls upon a People not called by his Name: He hath received Gifts for the *Rebellious also, that God might dwell among them.* And is not here a good Ground to venture thy Soul upon Jesus Christ, be thou who thou wilt?

9. No Person is excluded by the Lord that we know of: Can any Man say there is no Mercy for him, unless he hath sinned against the Holy Ghost, which may be not one in an Age is guilty of? The Nature of which Sin I purpose to open, after I have closed with this Text. Thy Condemnation, O Sinner, will be of thy self: God will judg the World in Righteousness: this we are all agreed in, and set down as an undeniable Article of our Faith. None shall have this to plead at the last Day, *I was not Elected:* God will vindicate his Justice and Righteous Proceedings in the Day of Judgment; and all Mouths shall be then stopped, and every Man's Conscience be a Witness for, or against him: And though foreseen Faith and Holiness is not the Cause why any are elected, yet foreseen Wickedness is the Cause why Men are reprobated: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self; but in me is thy help.*

Phil. 2. 12. Object. 7. *But is it not said, Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling?*

Ephes. 2. 8, 9, 10. *Ans. 1.* This Text the *Papists* do abuse as well as the *Arminians*, who strive to make Man a Co-worker or a Partner with Christ in our Salvation: But this the Apostle intends not, because we are saved by Grace. *For by Grace are ye saved, through Faith, and that not of your selves; it is the Gift of God: Not of Works, lest any Man should boast. For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good Works.*

2. Whoever it is that brings in this Text as an Objection against the Doctrine of the Saints Final Perseverance, you may be sure is a corrupt Person in his Judgment, and one that pleads for a Covenant of Works, or joins the Creature with Christ as a Co-worker.

in the Salvation of Man. For if it be to be taken in their sense, then it would follow that Man is his own Saviour; for if I procure my own Salvation by Works, or by working it out for my self, *I save my self*, or am my own Saviour; or I do appropriate part of it to my self, which is the worst part of *Poper*y: They say, that Christ's Merits, with their own good Works, do justify and save them. And what do the *Arminians* say less, who join Faith, Inherent Righteousness, and Sincere Obedience, with the Merits of Christ, both in Justification before God, and in the Salvation of their Souls? They say, all Men are in a capacity, or have Power to work out their own Salvation if they will. Mr. *William Allen* says on that Text, *Rom. 4.* Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness; That they are the Works of the Law: he doth not say, *That he that loves not*, &c. So that Love, Gospel-Obedience and Holiness, according to these Men, are not excluded as the Matter of our Justification before God, but are a part of it: They plead for Gospel-Works in point of Justification, though not for the Works of the Law. Pray, what Difference is there between these Mens Doctrine, and that of the *Papists*?

Rom. 4, 5.
Allen's
Glas of
Justificat.

But I having lately in my Treatise, called, *The Marrow of Justification*, so fully confuted this Grand Error, I shall add no more to it at this Time, but come to examine the Text.

1. It is evident, that the Persons to whom the Holy Apostle wrote this Epistle, were Saints and Justified Persons, or such who were quickned, renewed or regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Therefore,

What Work
of Salvati-
on Man can-
not work
out.

2. Let us consider what Part of Salvation it was which they were required to *work out*.

1. They could not appease the Wrath of God, nor satisfy Divine Justice; that sure was not in their Power to do, nor is it here intended.

2. They could not deliver themselves from the Curse of the Law, because by their uttermost endeavour they could not arrive to a compleat or perfect Righteousness, nor satisfy for the breach of it, by Original Sin, and by Actual Sins formerly by them committed.

3. They could not change their own Hearts, or *create in themselves a new Heart*, they had no *creating Power*; certainly they dare not say they had Power, or were capable to *form Christ* in their Souls, or *restore God's lost Image in them*. Again,

4. They

Ephes. 2. 1, 2. 4. They could not raise themselves from the Dead, for they were once *dead in Sins and Trespasses*; and sure they will say, that to raise and quicken the Dead is Christ's Work only: *You hath he quickned*; he does not say, *you have ye quickned*.

5. They could not bind the strong Man armed, who formerly had the ruling Power in them, and in whose Chains and Fetters they were once bound: Will they say, that all Men have a greater Power in them; than is the Power of Satan, so that Man may translate himself if he will, *out of the Power and Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of God's dear Son*, as all Believers by the irresistible Power of God are?

6. They could not believe of themselves, because Faith is a Fruit of the Spirit of God; and 'tis said expressly, *It is not of our selves, but it is the Gift of God*. Now all things are as parts of our Salvation, or appertain thereunto; and none of all these things can be here meant by the Apostle, because the Persons to whom he wrote, had all these things work'd out for them, and in them before.

Quest. *What Work is it then? What were they to work out?*

What Work
it is we are
to work
out.

Ans. I answer; The Apostle means, that good Work of Mortification of Sin, and all Works that are the Fruits of Faith; that is, they should lead a Holy and Godly Life, they having received a Principle of Grace from Christ to this very End, there being a Necessity that the Tree be first made Good, before the Fruit can be Good; and that a dead Man have a Principle of Life infused into him, before he can either move or work.

Quest. *But can the Creature do these things you mention of himself?*

Ans. The Apostle seems very jealous of these Saints, lest they should catch up some *Arminian Notion*, (which is too much rooted in Man's corrupt Nature); and therefore to vanquish Free-Will, or the Power of the Creature for ever, (nay, the Power that is in regenerated Persons) he adds, *For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure*; who worketh in them powerfully, effectually carrying on the Work through all Difficulties and Obstacles with victorious Efficacy: God works not only Grace in them at first, but still by his Spirit, through fresh Supplies, does aid, influence and assist them, and will until the Work is perfected, or *until the Day of Christ*. We cannot mortify Sin, pray, nor do any good Work without the Spirit: *If ye through*

Phil. 1. 6.

Rom. 8. 13. *the Spirit, saith Paul, do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

So then this is the Sum, In Holiness and all good Works we *act and do*; But how? even as we are *acted, moved, and influenced of God*: It is as when God acts, works, and moves in us by his Spirit. And as to do all with fear and trembling; this is only to shew how low we should lie at the Foot of God, and be humble, and not lifted up with Pride, since all our Power and Sufficiency is of God. But so much to this Text and Objection.

Object. 8. But what say you to that Text in Jer. 22. 24. Though Coniah the Son of Jehojakim King of Judah were the Signet upon my right Hand, yet would I pluck thee thence?

This Place of Scripture is sent me as a grand Objection against Final Perseverance.

Ans. We must distinguish between one that might be near to God, or as dear as a Signet on the right Hand, in respect of Place or External Dignity as a King, and God's bringing him from thence by Temporal Punishment; and one that is a Signet upon God's right Hand, in respect of Divine Grace and Favour in Jesus Christ, or as touching his Eternal Election: the latter this Text does not refer unto.

Object. 9. Is it not said, If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you? &c.

Ans. The Supposition, *If ye do*, doth not always denote a Possibility that a Person may not do so. See *John 15. 10. If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love, even as I have kept my Father's Commandment, and abide in his Love.* Was it possible for Christ not to abide in his Father's Love? Our Saviour uses these Expressions as an Argument of Comparison.

1. This shews how acceptable Holiness and Obedience is to God.

2. It also implies thus much, *i. e.* That God hath ordained his Saints to Faith, Love and Obedience, as well as to Eternal Life.

If my Word abide in you, &c. Now elsewhere God saith to Christ; *And the Words which I have put into thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed*, which are Believers, they shall have his Word abide in them for ever: *The Law of God is in his Heart, none of his Steps shall slide*; it is written in the Hearts of all New-Covenant-Children, that so it might remain in them for ever.

Observe that Passage of our Saviour, *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of God.* Mat. 18. 31

This our Lord spoke to his Disciples who were converted, no doubt but they had pass'd through the New Birth before that time, yet by reason of Pride that budded forth afresh in them, they must be humbled again, repent again, or find, as it were, a second Conversion, or they could not be saved: No Person that yields to Sin, unless he repents and turns from it, can enter into God's Kingdom. But doth the Words of our Saviour signify a Possibility that they might or might not repent, and so might or might not be saved? No such matter, but rather the absolute Necessity of Humility, and leaving off every Sin in all that shall be eternally saved.

1 Tim. 1. 19. Object. 10. *But did not some make Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience?*

Ans. 1. The Apostle speaks not there of the Grace of Faith, but of the Doctrine of Faith, particularly that part of it concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, in saying, *that it was past already, by which they overthrew the Faith of some.*

2. As to a good Conscience, that may refer to a Conscience that doth not accuse; as *Paul* before his Conversion had a good Conscience: *Men and Brethren, I have lived in all good Conscience before God, until this Day*; I have acted according to my Light, and my Heart doth not reproach me. A Man may have a Moral good Conscience, that never had an Evangelical good Conscience, I mean, not have his Heart sprinkled with the Blood of Christ: For that which may in one respect be said to be good, may in another be said to be evil. Those Persons *Paul* speaks of might once have Moral Sincerity, in owning and maintaining of that Truth which now they destroyed, and also might not live in any gross Immoralities.

3. But should it be an Evangelical good Conscience, and they be sincere Christians; What of this? May not a true Believer make a Breach upon a good Conscience, by falling into Temptation? As concerning making Shipwreck, that says the Text was concerning Faith; and those Persons being delivered to Satan by Excommunication, it was, that they might not learn to blaspheme, and might therefore be restored again: and nothing to the contrary doth appear it is evident from the Text, therefore in vain it is brought to prove a final falling away.

Object.

Object. 11. *But a Righteous Man may turn from his Righteousness, Ezek. 18. and die in his Sin: And if so, then Believers may fall away finally.* 24.

Ans^w. There is a twofold Righteousness spoken of in the Scriptures.

1st. A Moral and Legal Righteousness.

2^{dly}. A Gospel or Evangelical Righteousness.

1st. There is a Righteousness that is a Man's own, such as *Paul* had when a *Pharisee*; a Righteousness which ariseth from a Man's own *Reason, Will,* and natural Improvements; or by *common Grace,* Godly Education, awed by Fear and legal Terror, and maintained by some failing Spring; which as our *Annotators* observe, may easily be dried up; these Righteous Ones may totally and finally fall away: Pray read *Ezek. 33. 13.* *When I say to the Righteous, that he shall surely live: if he trust to his own Righteousness, and commits Iniquity, all his Righteousness shall not be remembered: but for his Iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.*

Pray observe that here are two things expressed for which he must die: First, If he trust to his own Righteousness; and secondly, If he turn from his Moral Righteousness, and committed Iniquity; the first is damning as well as the second: But if he hath a Moral Righteousness, and yet after all doth not trust to it, but lies to the Righteousness of Christ, he shall live; but if he be Righteous, and trusteth to it, he must die in his Sin, as the Righteous *Jews* and *Pharisees* did; *who being ignorant of the Righteousness of God, went about to establish their own Righteousness.* Rom. 10. 3. Now from hence it appears, contrary to what our Opponents say, That that Righteousness which these Men turn from, could not save them; though it is true, it is said, *If the wicked Man turneth from his Wickedness he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his Soul alive.* A doing that which is right, is to renounce all his own Righteousness in point of Justification, and by Faith to throw himself upon Jesus Christ; and he that doth thus, shall save his Soul alive. Therefore let all Men know that this Text only shews, that a Man that has attained to no more than to a Moral and Legal Righteousness, must perish as well as he that turns from it and committeth Wickedness.

2^{dly}. Those that have attained to true Gospel or Evangelical Righteousness, have an *Everlasting Righteousness*; and if it lasteth for ever, they that have it cannot lose it so as eternally to perish.

Object. 12. *It is said that some were twice dead, Jude 12.*

Ans. What of this? They were originally dead, dead by Nature, and dead by their own Actual Sins, and also dead after they seemed to be made alive: There is a common quickning, as well as special; they had the common Life of Grace, or that mutual Life that flows from common Quicknings: Others thought them once alive, and they professed themselves to be alive; but now they became as bad, nay worse than ever, and so are for ever lost and undone; they falling from that Grace and Life they once had, their Apostacy rendred them miserable, and no hopes of renewing them for ever.

Object. 13. *But is it not said, God would have all Men saved?*

1. Tim. 2. 4.

Ans. 1. God will have all Men saved that believe and accept of Christ, all that repent: And they that say God would have any others saved, than Believers or renewed Persons, contradict the Word of God; he will not have impenitent Persons be saved, such who live in Sin, and die in Sin, but all that turn to him through Christ: Of all sorts and degrees of Men God would have be saved; this Doctrine we preach, and they themselves acknowledg, that God would have none but these be saved; therefore to what End is this Text urged? But though I have spoken to this Objection already, yet consider,

2. If they will take all Men here for the Universality of Individuals, then I ask them, (1.) What Act it is of God wherein this his Willingness doth consist? Is it in the Eternal Purpose of his Will that all should be saved? why then is it not accomplished? Who hath resisted his Will? (2.) Or is it an Antecedent Desire that it should be so, though he fails in the End? Then is the Blessed God miserable, he being not able to accomplish his Just and Holy Desires. Or, as Reverend Owen notes, (3.) Is it some Temporary Act of his, whereby he hath declared himself unto them? Then, I say, grant that Salvation is to be had in a Redeemer, in Jesus Christ, and give me an Instance how God in any Act whatsoever, (saith he) hath declared his Mind, and revealed himself to all Men of all Times and Places, concerning his willingness of their Salvation by Jesus Christ a Redeemer, and I will never more trouble you in this Cause. Secondly, Doth this Will equally respect the All intended, or doth it not? If it doth, why hath it not equal Effects towards all? What Reason can be assigned, that all they whom

whom God equally intended Salvation for by Christ, have it not? However they who have Salvation, either have it as the Effects of Free-Grace, or of Free-Will; Who will assert the latter? Besides, this would follow, *i. e.* God will have some Men be saved, to whom he wills not the Means of their Salvation, for so he doth not to one great Part of the World.

But since we have proved that there is not a Sufficiency of Grace granted to all universally, that is Grace subjective to enable them to believe and change their Hearts, but to some only, I shall say no more to this; for if it were sufficient, it would have the same Effect on all as it hath on some: that which is sufficient to such an End, would be made, no doubt, efficient by the Will of the great Agent, who worketh all our Works in us, and for us, of his own good Pleasure, and without whom we can do nothing.

Object. 14. *Well, say some, say what you will, if this Doctrine of Election and Final Perseverance be true, we see not to what purpose we should preach the Gospel to Sinners any more, or press Saints to Holiness.*

Ans. 1. I am weary of these impertinent Objections: God hath ordained the preaching of the Gospel as the great Ordinance, to call in his Elect, and to beget Faith in them: *It pleased God by the foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe:* And not only to beget Faith, but also to strengthen that Faith, and to perfect the Saints more and more in Holiness. These Men dream of an Election without the Means, and of a Salvation without Faith and Regeneration, and a preserving Men to Eternal Life without a Perseverance in Grace and Holiness: It is a Perseverance in well-doing we plead for, and this we say Christ will, in the use of Means, not without it, enable all his People to do; he will help them, strengthen them, and keep their Souls alive. Pray consider the Ways by which Jesus Christ preserves his People unto Everlasting Life; the Saints are said to be *sanctified by the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. 1. 21. Jude 1.

1. It is in a Way of Holiness: And from fainting, or being weary in well-doing, he stirs us up by his Spirit to wait upon him, and promises, *That they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their Strength; they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint; or grow stronger and stronger, both in Faith and Patience.* Isa. 40. 31.

2. Christ preserves us in a Way of Perseverance in well-doing, by shewing us our own Weakness, and that without him we can do nothing, but that we must wholly rely upon him in the Way of our Duties for all things we need.

3. By increasing Grace in us : He by his Word shews, that the Grace we have already received, is not sufficient to keep us from falling ; therefore he stirs us up to seek to him for more Grace, more Faith, more Patience, more Humility, more Wisdom, &c.

4. By succouring us under all Temptations : *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour them that are tempted.* He has purchased Help and Succour for tempted Saints ; His Bowels move him to help us against Sin, and against Satan : He hath a soft and tender Heart, and hath a fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, which is a Spring of great Comfort to tempted Christians.

5. By warning and forewarning us of the Danger we are in by our spiritual Enemies, and charging us by his Word always to be upon our watch, and not to sleep as others do.

6. By putting his Fear into our Hearts, that we may not depart from him ; that is, not finally to depart ; which he doth when at first he infuseth Holy Habits in us.

7. By his putting upon us that Holy and Spiritual Armour, *Ephes. 6. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.* Do these Men think Christ's Soldiers can expect the Victory, and not fight ? or overcome their Enemy, though they throw away their Sword, which is the Word of God ? The Preaching of the Gospel is of wonderful use, to them it is the Word of Command, their Captain speaks to them thereby, and shews what they are, and are not to do, and how they should keep their Ranks, and maintain true Order and Discipline in themselves, Church and Families.

8. By his continual Intercession for them, he prays for us that we may be kept in the World from the Evil of it, that we may not be finally overcome thereby.

These things being considered, pray, Brethren, remember that as the Saints cannot perish as Hypocrites and Unbelievers may, so they cannot sin, live in Sin, and in neglect of Holy Duties continually, as unsound Persons may do.

And now, Brethren, I having answered all the grand Objections that are usually brought against the Saints final Perseverance, I shall shew you some of those Absurdities which do attend the contrary Doctrine, viz. *That Christ died to save all and every individual*

vidual Person in the World, and that the Elect may fall totally and finally away, and perish for ever.

1. It renders the Death of Christ as to its Effects, and the Success thereof, uncertain, as to the Salvation of any one Person.

2. It doth imply a Deficiency in God, or want of good Will in him to prosecute his Design to perfection in Man's Salvation, they affirming that Christ died for all, even every individual Traitor, who lies in strong Chains and Fetters under the Power of Sin and Satan; but he will not break off the cursed Irons, and bring out of the Prison-house but a very few of them only.

3. It would also follow then, that the Purpose of God, yea his Eternal Counsel in Christ Jesus, may be disappointed, and Eternity be subjected to Time, the Will of the Creator to the Will of the Creature, the first Cause to the Second; and all or many of God's Absolute Acts to be suspended unto the actings of sorry Man, and so the Lord submit to the Servant: Yea, as saith a Reverend Minister, "It sets God at an uncertainty, because it doth subject the Grace of God to the Will of Man: it hangs the Glory of his Grace in all the Motions of it, and the Efficacy of the Promises upon the slipperiness of Man's Will and Affections. It makes the Omnipotent Grace of God follow, not precede the Motions of Man's Will; to be the Lacquey, not the Leader, either in converting or preserving, which is at best to make the Glory of God's Grace as volatile as a Feather; at the best, sometimes up, sometimes down; the Soul is this Moment embraced by the Lord with the dearest Affections, the next cast out as a Vessel wherein is no Pleasure, and the succeeding Moment admitted to fresh Communications; this Hour the Temple of the Holy Ghost, the next an Habitation for Dragons and Satyrs: The Will of Man giving one Time the Key to the Spirit, the next Time to the Devil.

The Absurdities that attend the Doctrine of final Apostacy.

Charnock.

4. It gives occasion to Man to boast, and so contradicts the whole Design of God in the Gospel of his own Free Grace, which is to take away for ever any Cause for the Creature in himself to glory.

5. It brings in that great Absurdity of the Repetition of Regeneration, whereof there is no mention made in all the Scripture; unless they do believe all that fall away so as to lose the Seed of Grace, or from being in a State of Grace, are lost for ever, or fall irrecoverably: but a Repetition of Regeneration seems to be maintained by one of the chief of them, from *Heb. 6. 6. If they fall.*

* See Dr. Owen, in his Answer to Mr. John Goodwin, pag. 114, 115, 116.

fall away, to renew them again, &c. * 'Tis impossible, he denies, to renew some to Repentance; but others he would infer from thence may be renewed. Now a renewing again to Repentance, may be where the Seed of Grace was never lost, but the Strength and Exercise of it, as in *David's* and *Peter's* Case; therefore 'tis not a total falling which Believers are liable to, but a partial only. But to suppose that such who are regenerated may fall totally, and be renewed again to Repentance, doth presuppose a Repetition of a former Birth, or a second Regeneration. To prove which, these Men mention that Text, *twice dead, pluck'd up by the Roots*. Now evident it is, that if true Believers may fall totally from Grace, and none of them can be renewed again, then all such that so fall, sin against the Holy Ghost. But if they may be renewed again, then there is a repetition of Regeneration. When I come to speak to that Text in the 6th of the *Hebrews*, I hope I shall sufficiently prove, by the Assistance of God, that those there mentioned, were not true Believers; as I have proved no true Believer can so fall as to need another Regeneration, though they may fall as to need a gracious Restoration, or to be healed of their backsliding: *Restore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation*.

Pla. 51. 12.

6. It tends to frustrate the absolute Design of Christ, and his Promise made to his Saints, or makes it of none Effect; who hath said, *I give them Eternal Life, and they shall not perish*, & $\mu\upsilon\delta\ \alpha\pi\theta\lambda\omega\nu\tau\tau\epsilon\iota$; not, not perish, as some read it.

7. It renders the Death of Christ in the Effects of it uncertain to any; Unless they are such who have found out another way of Salvation for some than for others, for some affirm, that there is an Election of a certain Number, and they shall infallibly be saved; and there is a way for others to be saved too: some the King sends his Chariot of Free Grace for, to bring them home to himself; and others must trudge home on their own Feet, which they may do if they will: which idle Notion deserves no Breath nor Paper to confute.

8. That a Man may be in God's special Love to Day, and his dear Child, having his Image stamp'd upon his Soul, and to morrow be hated by him, and be the Child of the Devil, and have his Likeness and Image upon him. And from hence it renders God's Love mutable, and as if he did not foresee all Emergencies from Eternity. Can these Men fancy infinite Bowels and Affections so unconcerned, as to let the Apple of his Eye be pluck'd out, or he be as a careless Spectator, whilst he is robbed of his precious

precious Jewels by the Powers of Hell; to have the Delight of his Soul (as reverend *Charnock* notes) lost like a Tennis Ball between himself and the Devil.

9. It doth cast a Disgrace upon the Wisdom of God, in contriving no better a way for the Restoration of Man, and his Establishment, but that which dependeth wholly upon the voluble and inconstant Temper of the Creatures corrupt Will to perfect in them.

10. Such who assert that those may eternally perish whom Christ died for, or in the stead of, seem to charge God with Injustice, as not to acquit those whose Transgressions are answered for by their Surety; or else that the Sufferings of Christ were not sufficient to effect a Discharge due to them: Or doth it not insinuate (as one notes) a Deficiency of Power, or want of good Will in Christ to prosecute his design to Perfection?

*Practical
Discourse,
pag. 125.*

11. It suspends the Virtue and Success of all that Christ hath done for Men, upon some thing to be done by themselves, which Christ is not the doer of; and consequently, that Men are Principals in procuring their own Salvation: And so Christ shall have his Thousands, (in truth saith he his Nothings) whilst freedom of Will (or he might have said Free-Will) shall have his Ten thousands. Is this to exalt the Lord alone, or to raise and sing the Praises of our Beloved *David*? And further,

12. It would also foilow, as he observes, that those who are gone to Heaven, have nothing more of Christ's to glory in, and to praise him for, than those who are perished and gone to Hell: For, according to the Principle of General Redemption, Christ did and doth for all alike, and not a Jot more for one Party than for another. Also, as he notes, it tends to make Men presumptuous and carnally secure. How many have sooth'd up themselves in their Impenitency and hardness of their Hearts, and fenced themselves against the Word, upon this very Supposition, that Christ died for all, and therefore for them, and why should not they look to be saved as well as others? To which I might add, their Notion of that Power which they say is in the Creature to believe, leads Men out to defer looking out for Salvation: for why may they not delay to do that to Day, which is in their Power to do to Morrow, and may be perhaps some Years hence as well as now? But let them and all others know, Christ's Death will have its Effect on their Hearts, if he died for them, and they

must look to him when he calls, and wait upon him for the moving of his Spirit, in the use of that Means which he hath ordained in order to Faith and Regeneration, and in the season of it, who says, *To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts, &c.* but the *Will*, the *Deed*; they must wait upon the Lord to give unto them, and work by his Spirit in them.

APPLICATION.

I shall in the last place make a little Improvement of what I have said, and so finish with this Text.

1. *Inform.* This may serve to inform and convince all Persons concerning the absolute Sovereignty of God. He may save Man if he please, and not Angels; or may send a Saviour for some of the lost Sons of *Adam*, and not for all; *Who shall say to him, What dost thou?* If he had vouchsafed a Saviour for none of *Adam's* Posterity, had he been unjust, any more than he is in casting off for ever all the fallen Angels?

He called *Abraham* out of his own Country, and revealed himself to him, and let others remain then under the Power of Sin, Ignorance and Idolatry, calling them not.

Deut. 7. He revealed himself to *Isaac*, and rejected *Ishmael*; he chose *Jacob*, and refused *Esau*; he afterwards chose the *Children of Israel* to be a peculiar People for himself, and let all other Nations of the Earth abide in Darknes.

Mat. 11. 25. And in the Gospel-Days Christ chose a few poor *Fisher-Men*, and refused the Learned and Wise Men after the Flesh: nay, and hid the *Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven from the Wise and Prudent*; and all this as an Act alone of his Sovereignty.

And in these days, what Reason can be alledged, why we, and a few Nations more, have the Knowledge of the Gospel, when the greatest part of the Earth lie in *Popish, Mahometan, and Pagan Darknes*, but that it is his good pleasure so to do? He bath Rom. 9. 18. *Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

2. Praise God for the Knowledge you have of the *Mysteries of Christ*, and the Gospel of *Free-Grace*: Brethren, next unto the Grace of God in my Conversion, I have often said, I do look upon my self bound to admire the Riches of God's Love and Goodness to me, in opening my Eyes to see those *Arminian Errors*, which

which when I was Young, I had from some Men of corrupt Principles sucked in ; nay, and when I was about 23 Years Old, I wrote a little Book for Children, in which some of those Errors were vindicated ; which after, my Eyes were inlightned, and the Book with Alterations being again Reprinted, I left out, and now do declare my dislike of the first Impressions, and do disown what I there asserted : *When I was a Child, I thought as a Child, I understood as a Child*, as the Apostle speaks. And let me intreat you to study the Nature of the Covenant of Grace ; for until I had that opened unto me, I was ignorant of the Mysteries of the Gospel.

3. O do not forget, that the Design of God in contriving our Salvation in his Eternal Wisdom by Jesus Christ, was wholly to advance his own Glory, and the Freeness and Riches of his Grace, and to abase and humble Man unto the Dust ; therefore be sure never err on that Hand : And I think it is not easy for Men well to err on the other, I mean, in exalting God alone, Christ alone, though I deny not but that some good Men, who in seeking to advance Free-Grace, perhaps have erred, and taken up some unsound Notions, as that of Actual or Personal Justification, before Faith and Actual Union with Jesus Christ. O what need have we to ponder well the Paths of our Feet, and not with Pride to magnify our selves, or strive to promote any corrupt Notion, under any Pretence whatsoever ! Our Days are Evil, many dangerous Errors abound, and it is cause of greatest Grief to see what a Generation of Men are risen up of late, who strive to mix God's pure Gold with their Dross, and his Wine with their Water. Though on the other Hand, let us bless and praise the Lord for raising up so many brave Champions in the mean time, of our Brethren of the *Congregational Way*, to defend the Gospel of God's Grace, and the Truth as it is in Jesus : Yet I could wish there was not so much Gall in some of them against us their Brethren, who in all the great Truths of Christianity are of one Mind and Judgment, and yet are exposed to Reproach for witnessing to a Truth of Christ that lies as plain in the Gospel as any one Truth or positive Precept of Christ whatsoever ; I mean, that of Believers Baptism. Why should we be censured for maintaining that Truth which the Holy Ghost so fully bears witness unto ? I long to see more of the Spirit of Love and Charity ; would to God that Chapter, *1 Cor. 13.* was more read and considered.

4. This may also serve to reprehend such who strive to cast Reproach upon this Holy Doctrine, and such that maintain it as if it tended to incourage People in Sin, or open a Door to Licentiousness: Let all for ever forbear such Reflections; Is not this the Purport of that Doctrine which we vindicate?

(1.) That there is wrought and preserved in the Minds and Souls of all Believers, by the Holy Spirit, a Supernatural Principle of Grace and Holiness, whereby they are made meet, and enabled to live unto God, and discharge all Duties of Obedience which he requireth of them, and accepteth through Christ; which Principle or Habit of Grace is essentially distinct from all Natural Habits, Intellectual and Moral, however, and by what Means soever acquired or improved.

(2.) That the Holy Spirit by his effectual Operations, doth enable us, according as we are required by his immediate Influences, in all Acts of Obedience; whether internal only in Faith and Love, &c. or External also; even so, that all the Powers of our Souls, and Members of our Bodies, are or ought to be in a spiritual manner governed and influenced thereby, and unto all Duties of Holiness, in our daily walking with God: and that all this is the Effect of God's Free-Grace to us in Jesus Christ, who hath communicated of the Spirit without measure, to our Blessed Head and Mediator, that he may give it forth to all his Saints that have Union with him, and believe in him.

Brethren, God hath circumcised the Hearts of his People, to
 Deut. 30. 6. love him with all their Souls, and with all their Strength: He writes
 his Law in our Hearts, as he promised; *I will put my Law in their*
 Jer. 31. 33. *inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts.* This gracious Habit or
 Principle in the Soul, is nothing but a Transcript of the Holy Law
 of God, implanted and abiding in our Hearts, whereby we are en-
 abled, with Cheerfulness and ready Inclination of our Spirits, to
 act in the Duties of Obedience and Holiness unto God, as he re-
 quireth of us: and also our Likeness and Conformity unto God,
 doth consist herein; I say, it doth consist in this Divine and Sa-
 cred Principle, or Spiritual Habit that is infused into the Soul, it
 is our Spiritual Life, whereby we live unto God; it is the Founda-
 tion and Sum of all Internal Excellencies; no Works, no Duties,
 are accepted, where this Principle is not. It is a Vital Principle
 of Holiness, and it makes Religion co-natural to us: Moreover,
 it is a certain, a permanent, and an abiding Principle; it is that
 Seed

Seed that remains in Believers, and will have good and spiritual Fruit to attend it : therefore this Doctrine must needs promote Holiness, that is thus founded on such a Sacred Principle, and the Motives are every way as strong.

5. It appears, Brethren, ~~that~~ our standing by Grace is most firm and sure, it is like the standing of those who are in their consummate State in Glory : The Good Angels, and Blessed Souls above, are confirmed in that State by superabounding Grace ; For by Nature (as one observes) the Angels are mutable : What was the Reason some of them fell, who beheld the Face of God ? The bare beholding the Face and Glory of God, will not continue one Creature in a happy State, without an Act of Divine and Confirming Grace ; it is a continual Addition of Grace, and Supplies of Grace, that preserves our Souls in a State of Life : and to this End are we united to Jesus Christ ; I mean to such an Head, that of and from his Fulness we might have a Communication of Strength, and all Divine Influences, as our Souls do stand in need.

6. And this being so, labour after the Exercise of Grace, rest not in a small Degree thereof ; the more Grace you have, the more Glory you will bring to God, and the more easy it will be for you to resist Temptations.

7. The more Grace, also the more Peace : Holiness is that which God calls for ; it is that which becomes his House for ever, and without it no Man shall ever see the Lord. Therefore let this be the Use of all the Sermons you have heard from this Text, even to work up your Hearts to Thankfulness, to Holiness, in all the whole Course of your Lives, and to depend upon Christ alone, into whose Hand you are committed by the Father, that he would give you fresh Supplies of Grace, and keep you from falling. To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be Glory and Praise for ever. *Amen.*

The Trial of the False Professor :

O R

The Danger of Final APOSTACY ;

Opened in three S E R M O N S, preached lately at
Horse-lie-down : Wherein the Nature of the Sin
against the Holy Ghost is discovered.

H E B. VI. 4, 5, 6.

*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightned,
and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made
Partakers of the Holy Ghost, ver. 4.*

*And have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers
of the World to come, ver. 5.*

*If they fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance :
seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,
and put him to an open shame, ver. 6.*

Serm. I.

*Afterwards
I was inform-
ed who it
was that
sent it to
me.*

BELOVED, this Place of Holy Scripture was sent to me
in Writing some Months ago, I know not by whom, per-
haps by some who hold a Total and Final Apostacy from
a State of True Grace.

But before I entered upon this Text, I resolv'd, in the Strength
of God, to endeavour to prove the Impossibility of their final
Falling, who are True Believers, or such who have Real Union with
Jesus Christ, which I hope I have effectually done.

I know that this Text is brought by some to prove, That True
Believers may fall, not only foully, but also finally : Which certainly

tainly is a great Mistake, which I shall endeavour, God assisting, to make appear.

Mr. John Goodwin, speaking of this Place, and that in *Heb. 10. 26. If we sin wilfully, &c.* With, *Evident it is from these two Passages, the Holy Ghost, after a serious manner, and with a very pathetic and moving strain of Speech and Discourse, (scarce the like to be found in all the Scripture) admonisheth those who are at present true Believers, to take heed of relapsing into the ways of their former Ignorance and Impiety. This Caveat or Admonition he presseth by an Argument of this import, that in case they shall thus relapse, there will be very little or no hope at all of their Recovery or Return to the Estate of Faith and Grace, wherein now they stand before the Faces of such Sayings and Passages as these: rightly understood, and duly considered, there is no standing for that Doctrine which denies a Possibility, either of a total or final Defection of the Saints, &c.* He adds, That the Supposition or Hypothetical Proposition, *If they fall away*, doth denote here a Possibility of it: which I will not deny; but that these Persons of which the Apostle speaks, were true Believers, I see no ground at all to believe, but do utterly deny it: yet I readily grant, this hath always been look'd upon as a very difficult place of Scripture to be rightly understood, I have therefore consulted the best Authors and Expositors I could meet with upon it.

Mr. John Goodwin's sense of the Subjects here meant.

1. And I find that some of the Antients, mistaking the Drift and Design of the Holy Ghost herein, would take no Repentance from such who fell under Temptation in Times of Persecution, especially if they fell into Idolatry.

The Sense of some of the Antient Fathers of this Text.

2. Nay, such as fell into scandalous Crimes, as Adultery, and the like, they would not admit by Repentance into the Church, or have Communion any more with them. And from hence I find that *Tertullian* reflects upon the Bishop of *Rome*, that had admitted an Adulterer upon his Repentance. Also *Novatus*, as I find him quoted by a good Author, denied all Hope of Church Pardon unto such Persons that had fallen into gross Sins, after they had made a Profession of the Gospel, and that from hence. Which may seem strange, considering that *Paul* admitted the incestuous Person upon his Repentance, that being so notorious a Crime, as most do or can fall into. But no more as to this.

Brethren, before I proceed, let me premise three or four things.

1. That the Apostasy here spoken of, is not a bare falling into this or that Actual Sin, be it of whatever Nature it will: For do we not read how grievously some of the Saints of God sin-

ned.

ned and fell, and yet were restored again by Repentance?

2. Nor is it a *partial Apostacy*, or a falling upon Temptation or Surprizal, in Time of Persecution, though it be to the denying of Christ; for did not *Peter* so fall, and yet was restored afterwards?

3. Neither is it a falling into some *Capital Error*, as some of the *Corinthians* fell, by denying the Resurrection of the Dead, whom *Paul* laboured to recover: Or like that of the *Galatians*, who fell by denying Justification by Faith alone, but mix'd Works with God's Free Grace in that great Point of Faith.

4. Nor is it a falling of Ignorant Persons, who never made any Profession of Religion; such are not capable so to sin as is here mentioned, because it is expressly said to be such who were *once enlightened*, &c.

5. And lastly; Neither is it a falling away of such who are justified Persons, or of those who have savingly been enlightned and quickned by the Spirit of God; for such I have sufficiently proved cannot fall totally and finally so as to perish. Thus far in the Negative.

But in the Affirmative:

1. This Apostacy is a total and final falling away; and that because it is said, It is impossible to renew them again unto Repentance.

2. It doth intend, or comprehend, such Persons that have received the Knowledge of the Truth, or of the Way of Righteousness, according to that in 2 *Pet.* 2.20, 21. They are such who have not only been enlightned, but also are such who had *tasted of the Heavenly Gift*.

3. Yet never were savingly illuminated, wrought upon, or regenerated by the Spirit and Grace of God. Brethren, there are great Attainments which Persons may arrive unto, without one Dram of true saving Grace; as the *young Man*, altho the *foolish Virgins*, and those meant by the *stony and thorny Ground*, *Mat.* 13.

I shall now come to the Text it self: And,

First, Consider the Words, with the Connexion of those things preceding and succeeding.

Secondly, The Subjects or Persons spoken of, under their divers Qualifications.

Thirdly, What it is that is said concerning these Persons.

First,

First, As touching the Connexion of the Words with what preceeds, it is evident, that the Hebrew Church, or some among them, had been slow and dull of hearing, or very ill Proficients in the School of Christ, *viz.* they had not attained to that Knowledge and Experience which for the time they had they might have arrived unto, *Chap. 5. 12.* They seemed but Infants or Babes in Knowledge, and had need to be taught again which were the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. And from hence the Apostle acquaints them with the Danger of not persevering in the Knowledge of Christ, and of not pressing forward, or going on to Perfection: And also intimates, that this would give just Cause or Ground to fear, that they were not sincere Christians; and from thence gives them an Account of those that might sin the Sin against the Holy Ghost, or of the miserable State and Condition of such who after high Illuminations and great Knowledge of the Divine Truth, and a Profession of the Gospel, do fall away; whose Apostacy, though at first it might be but partial, yet might (they not being truly regenerated) end at last in a total and final falling away: And that deadness, dulness, and non-proficiency in Godliness, might and would end (if their Hearts were not right with God) in a final Apostacy: Or, as a worthy Writer notes, he presupposeth, "Except they study to make Progress, they shall go backwards; and that going backwards, tendeth to Apostacy: And that voluntary and compleat Apostacy from known Truth, doth harden the Heart from Repentance, and cutteth off a Man from Mercy: He accounteth our natural Security so great, that there is need of most fearful Threatnings to awaken us out of it; and that the way to be freed from final falling, is to make a good Progression. From hence note,

Mr. David
Dickson.

Doct. 1. *That the severest Doctrine is not only useful, but exceeding necessary towards Persons that are observed to be remiss and slothful in their Profession.*

Yet Charity becomes a Minister nevertheless, and not to censure a People from hence. And this we may gather from what he saith, with the Connexion of the Words with what succeeds: *But Beloved, we are perswaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation, though we thus speak, ver. 9.*

Secondly, We shall consider the Persons here spoken of, under their divers Qualifications and great Attainments, which are five-

T t

What the
Persons are
that the A-
postle here
folds; intends.

fold ; and yet notwithstanding all that, they might fall away and perish for ever : and if they did fall totally, before they were truly regenerated, their Apostacy would be final ; or it would be impossible for them to be renewed again by Repentance, either to that State in which they were before, or unto a better, from whence there is no possibility of their final falling.

In this general Description of the Persons here mentioned, let us consider four or five things more particularly.

1st. Consider the Apostle's Design, which is to declare or discover the fearful State and just Judgment of God against the Persons here meant or intended.

2^{dly}. That those five Attainments he here speaks of, are acquired by some who had been Professors of the Gospel, and look'd upon as eminent Christians, such that had made a Profession of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, and had been baptized, and owned all other Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. See *ver.* 1, 2, 3.

3^{dly}. That all those high Privileges and Attainments, whereof they were made Partakers by the Gospel, they afterwards despised ; or, when under their Apostacy, did contemn : which loudly proclaims their Destruction from God to be just and deserved.

4^{thly}. That all their Privileges and Attainments, (as Reverend Dr. Owen observes) do consist in certain Operations of the Holy Ghost, under the Dispensation of the Gospel ; and therefore not such Persons that never professed it, or had been enlightned thereby.

5^{thly}. And let it be well and for ever observed, that the Apostle mentions not one of those special and distinguishing Marks or Characters of true Believers or Sanctified Christians. As,

1. Here is not a word of the Covenant of Grace into which they had been received, nothing spoken of the Faith of the Operation of God in all those five Attainments they had arrived at.

2. Not a word of their having attained to Union with Christ, or of the Implantation of the Holy Spirit, though they had had some kind of taste thereof.

3. Not a word of Regeneration ; he doth not say, *It is impossible for such that have been born of God, begotten of the Spirit* : No, no, nothing of that.

4. Here is nothing spoken of their being justified, or of Justification unto Life.

5. Not a word in all their *fivefold* Attainments of Sanctification by the Spirit; we read not of any effectual Calling they had arrived unto.

6. Nothing is mentioned of their Election, of Adoption, nor of their Love to God or to his poor Saints; none of these things are expressed or assigned unto them, which do all appertain to every true Christian.

6thly. It ought also carefully to be noted, that when the Apostle comes to speak of his Hope of the Saints to whom he wrote, *i. e.* that they were not such, he lays down or describes by way of Intimation, the Characters of true Believers, by other distinguishing Qualifications: *But Beloved, we are perswaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation, though we thus speak.* Now observe, if those Persons he mentions that had been once enlightened, and had tasted of the Heavenly Gift, &c. had been true Christians; what better things could the Apostle be perswaded was in these *Hebrews* than was in them? Are there better things than *Union with Christ*, than *Justification*, than *Regeneration*, true *Faith*, *Pardon of Sin*, *Love to God* and to his People, *Sanctification of the Spirit* and *Adoption*? No, no, there are no better things that any Christian can attain unto in this Life than these. Moreover,

7thly. The Apostle clearly intimates, that they were such who were like the Ground which the Rain falls oft upon, that nevertheless brings forth Briars and Thorns, and no good Fruit.

8thly. There is one thing particularly noted by the Apostle concerning these Hebrew Christians, which they had, and which the other had not, therefore not gracious Persons: See *ver. 10.* *For God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work of Faith and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister.*

(1.) This he mentions as a Reason of his good Opinion of them, and why he was so perswaded of them; and which was better than all those high Attainments of which he speaks concerning such that are in danger of Final Apostacy: Love to the poor Saints in ministering to them for the sake of Christ, or because they are the Members of his Body, is more than all those five Attainments mentioned in the 4th, 5th and 6th Verses. Now also let it be considered, that if this Fruit of true and saving Grace, I mean, Charity or Love to the poor Saints, as such, had been in the Persons he speaks of, who were in danger of falling finally; how then could this be an Argument of such Confidence in Paul concerning

Love to the poor Saints, a blessed sign of true Grace.

them, or of Comfort to those Saints he wrote unto? Alas, what are common Illuminations? What is it to have some *transit taste of the Heavenly Gift*, or to be made Partakers of the common Operations of the Spirit in Convictions of Sin or of Duty, to the Inhabitation of the Spirit, or unfeigned Love to Christ and to the Children of God? Or what is it to have some taste of the good Word of God, to a spiritual feeding and digesting it, or to be affected with the powerful Doctrine of the Gospel in respect of the World to come; or with the Resurrection of the Dead and last Judgment, to the gracious Experience of the Power of Christ's Resurrection, and so feel in our Souls a Discharge from the Judgment of the Great Day, through Faith in Jesus Christ?

(2.) The Apostle was persuaded concerning these Hebrew Christians, that they had such things in them that *did accompany Salvation*; that is, such things that are inseparable from Salvation; *i. e.* such who have them shall certainly be saved. He describes such who are sincere Christians, by the Fruits and Effects of true Grace, namely, *the Work of Faith, and Labour of Love*, by which their Obedience unto God did appear.

1. He notes the Principle from whence they acted in their Duty to God.

2. The Constancy of their Obedience; they continued in bringing forth of that good Fruit, they had ministred to the Saints, and still did minister to them.

3. He takes notice of the Principle from whence they acted, or did what they did, *viz.* they ministred to the Saints in Love to God, and to Jesus Christ; it was Love shewed to his Name.

4. He adds that in their Preservation in their happy State, the Faithfulness of God: *God is not unrighteous to forget your Work of Faith, &c.* which comprehends his Covenant and Promise to them; which for their farther Comfort, he enlargeth upon, *ver. 13 to ver. 19.* to which he subjoins the Promise and Oath of God made to all that are sincere Believers, or Heirs of the Promise.

But to proceed, to speak to those *five Qualifications* or Attainments of the Persons he speaks of in our Text, who may fall away and finally perish for ever.

First, The first is their being *once enlightened*. They might be instructed in the Doctrine of the Gospel beyond many, or be illuminated, not only by learning the literal Knowledge of the Gospel, as Men learn *Philosophy*, but also may attain to some supernatural Light by the common Illuminations of the Spirit; and may understand

derstand many profound Mysteries of the Gospel: yet remember, *Knowledg puffeth up*; they might have knowing Heads, but graceless Hearts. Note from hence,

Doct. 2. *That it is a high Privilege and an Attainment for Men to be enlightned with the Knowledg of the Gospel; yet nevertheless Men may attain to much Light therein, and yet not be savingly enlightned, but may finally fall away and perish notwithstanding at last.*

First, I shall shew you what the common Illuminations of the Spirit are that Men may fall from.

Secondly, Shall shew you what the saving and special Illuminations of the Spirit are, and how they differ.

1st. Common Enlightnings of the Word and Spirit, may tend to convince the Conscience of a Sinner of Sin.

The Nature of the common Illuminations of the Spirit.

1. As to the horrid Guilt thereof, as it exposeth the Soul to God's Wrath: Thus was *Judas* enlightned, his Conscience was convinced that he had *betrayed the Innocent Blood*: Thus also *Felix* was enlightned under *Paul's* preaching.

2. From these Convictions they may also with much horror confess their Sins: *Cain, Judas*, and many others did this.

3. From these Illuminations and Convictions, they may reform their Lives, and do many things, like as *Herod* did upon his hearing *John the Baptist*.

4. Nay, common Illuminations may discover to the Sinner much of that Evil that there is in Sin, that God abhorreth it, and that it is contrary to his Nature, as well as a violation of his Holy Law; and this Light they may receive, from what God declares concerning Sin, and of his abhorrence of it in his Word, as also by those fearful Judgments which he inflicteth upon, and pronounceth against such that sin, live in Sin, and make a Trade of it. Likewise by the Knowledg they may attain concerning Christ's suffering for Sin, and by the Punishment of the Damned in Hell; and no doubt but the Devils know the great Evil of Sin in all these respects.

But pray observe, that although these Persons may know that Sin is against God, contrary to his Holy Nature, and that he doth abhor it; yet this Light and Knowledg they have, never brings them to loath and abhor it in themselves because of the evil Nature of it, and as it is against God.

2dly. They

2dly. They also by these common Illuminations, may come to know that God is Man's chiefest Good : The *Heathen* found this out by the Light of Nature, considering in themselves that nothing in this World could satisfy the Soul, &c. But these Persons attain unto a farther Sight and Knowledg of it, by the Word, in a supernatural manner ; but yet remember that the Light they have, never leadeth them to make choice of God as their chiefest Good and only Happiness.

3dly. They may attain unto the Knowledg of all the great and essential Principles of the Christian Religion, and be able to dispute and contend for them also, against Opposers ; nay, may be able
 Mat. 7. 22. Preachers of that Holy Doctrine : *Have we not prophesied in thy Name ?* &c. No doubt but *Judas* was a great Preacher as well as *Peter*. Yet observe, and note it well, they may be utter Strangers to that *Grace, Faith, Love* and *Regeneration*, which they may open, explain, and press upon others.

4thly. They may know that Christ is a most blessed and precious Object ; but yet never experienced him to be precious above all things to themselves.

5thly. They may know the True Church, and also know what is required of Persons in order to their becoming Members thereof, namely, Repentance, Faith and Baptism : Nay, and they may have some kind of Repentance ; *Judas* repented : Also they may believe ; *Simon* believed : They may have a common Faith, the Faith of Credence, or an Historical Faith ; believe the Report of the Gospel and Revelation of Christ, and the Sum of the Christian Religion ; nay, believe or receive the Word with some sort of Joy, *Mat. 13. 20.* Moreover, they may be baptized and received into the Church, and be look'd upon to be true Believers : But because these things are daily opened to you, I shall not enlarge further upon them : You that have that excellent Book, called, *The Almost Christian*, may see how far a Man may go and be but a false Professor. O take heed you rest not on any External Knowledg or Revelation of Divine Things. You can talk of Religion, dispute for those great Points of Faith ; you know *Truth* from *Error* ; and so you may, and yet perish for ever. Moreover consider, that all Convictions that end not in *Regeneration*, or in true *Conversion*, or that change not the Heart and Life, will avail you nothing.

Secondly, I shall shew you the Nature of True Illuminations, and how the one differs from the other : it appears by what the Holy Ghost

Ghost intimates here and in other places, as well as by all our Experiences, that Light or Illumination is the first thing God doth create in the Souls of all that are renewed; and if it be but a common Light, the Work that flows therefrom will be but a common Work of the Spirit; and if that Light that is in Men be Darkness, *Mat. 6. 23. how great is that Darkness!*

Now as touching the special and saving Illuminations of the Spirit, they differ from the common.

1. In respect of Convictions of Sin: Evangelical Illuminations of the Spirit, discover to the Soul its fearful State; not only that Sin is of a hateful Nature, but that he is condemned as a Person dead in Law, and trembles at the sight and sense thereof, not knowing but that the Sentence may be suddenly executed upon him: *They were pricked in the Heart, and cried out, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* It was their Sin that made them cry out. But pray observe, that the sight and sense of Sin never breaks the Heart thoroughly and kindly, till the Soul sees the pardoning Grace of God in Christ. Shew a Condemned Malefactor a Pardon from his Prince, (that was hardned before under the Sense of the Severity of the Law) O then he is melted and wounded, Goodness and Mercy overcomes him; so it is with a poor Sinner, when he sees God's Love and Grace in Christ; or a bleeding Christ, who has born the Punishment due to him for his Offences: then he is kindly broken, and mourns that ever he grieved or offended God; *They shall look unto him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn: It was Jesus that you have crucified, the Lord of Life and Glory, whom God hath made both Lord and Christ.* *Acts 2. 37.* *Zech. 12. 20.* *Acts 2. 36.*

2. Common Convictions reach only to some Sins, perhaps scandalous Sins; they chiefly, if not only, torment the Conscience, under some awakening Providence, or under the preaching of Wrath and Judgment; *And as he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come, Felix trembled.* Doubtless Felix lived in some gross Sin, and now his Conscience was awakened, and terrified him for those Evils, he hearing of the Judgment to come. But special Illuminations in Convictions, cause the Soul to see all its Sins, its secret Sins, yea, Heart-Evils: *Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* Christ's Word laid all the Evils of the Heart open to her sight. *I was, saith David, shapen in Iniquity; and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* All Sin afflicts the Soul, Original Sin as well as Actual Sin. *Joh. 4. 29.* *Psal. 51. 5.*

3. Common Convictions make a Person sensible of the Punishment of Sin, and to feel the Wrath of God which is due unto him: *My Punishment is greater than I can bear, saith Cain.* But special Illuminations, under Convictions make the Soul to groan under the Filth and Pollution of Sin; *They shall loath themselves for the Evils they have committed.* But when is that? Even when they see that I am (saith the Lord) pitched towards them: *And ye shall remember your Ways, and all your Doings wherein you have been defiled, and ye shall loath your selves in your own sight.* Hence Job cries out, *I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and ashes.* Moreover, upon this respect it was that David compared his sin and Pollution to a loathsome Disease. The one cries out, that he has offended an angry God; this is the Nature of legal Convictions, such would fain get out of God's Hands, he flies from him: But the other cries out, I have grieved a Good and Gracious God, and he flies to him, as the *Prodigal* did to his loving and compassionate Father.

4. Common Illuminations in Convictions, lay the Soul half dead, he sees he is Wounded; but special Illuminations of the Spirit, discover the Soul is quite Dead: *When the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.* The one discovers that the Person is a Sinner, but not in a helpless State; for though he sees he is undone by his Sin and Disobedience, yet he thinks he may rise by his Duties and Obedience: But a Person truly enlightned, sees he must have a Principle of Life infused, before he can rise, live, or act; and that all his own Righteousness he hath, or is capable of obtaining, is but as *Dung* and Filthiness in his sight.

5. Common Illuminations cause a Man to see Sin, as it is a great Evil against himself; *I have killed a Man to my hurt,* saith one of this sort: But special Illuminations discover Sin to be the greatest Evil, as it is against God: the one may know that God hates Sin, but the other is brought to hate it himself, and because God hates it: *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this Evil in thy sight.* O saith a poor Believer, what have I done? I have contemned, despised, and spit in the very Face of God; the one is afraid of God, but the other fears God; the one is afraid of him because of his Justice, the other feareth God because of his Goodness; *They shall fear the Lord and his Goodness;* or shall fear and worship God in Christ, because of his Goodness, Grace and Mercy.

6. Common Illuminations give a Person a sense of Death and Wrath due to Sin; but special Illuminations give a Man a sense and an effecting sight of the Death of Christ, and of that Wrath and Curse he hath born for him in his stead: Legal Convictions discovered only to them under the Law (who saw no further) that the Life of the poor Beasts went for Sin; but Evangelical Convictions shew that nothing can atone for our Sins, and satisfy God's Justice, but the Life of the Son of God, not the Blood of Bulls or Lambs; no, it must be the Blood of the Lamb of God.

7. Common Illuminations are a Man's Torment and Affliction, and fain he would be eased and freed of them, and of the smart thereby; but the special ones tend to make a Man fear that he is not troubled enough, he would be searched thorowly: *Search me*, Psal. 139. *and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts; see if there be any evil Way in me.* O lance my Soul, Lord lay open my Sore, let me not be slightly healed: The one would fain shake the Trouble off, he thinks it is enough, nay, too much; the other would have it lie faster on: O let not my Sore be skinned over. The Devils cried, *Why dost thou torment us before the Time?* So unsound Persons would not be tormented; but Conscience hath got hold of them, and they cannot get out of its Hand. But one truly enlightened, saith, with *David, I will be sorry for my Sin*; I chuse it, I desire it: The one desires to be freed from the Effects of Sin, from the Pain and Punishment thereof; but the other cries out to be delivered from the Sin, which is the Cause of all Pain and Punishment: The one is like the Swine, who likes not the Whip, yet loves the Mire; they like not the Lash of the Law, but hate to come under the Yoke of the Gospel: The one cries out for a Plaister to ease his Conscience, may be he is willing to let some Boughs and Twigs be lop'd off; but the other would have the Ax laid to the Root of the Tree; he would have the Body of Sin, as well as the Branches, to be destroyed; he is for cutting off the right Hand, Lusts of Profit, and for pulling out the right Eye, Lusts of Pleasure: The unsound Soul is, like *Saul*, for sparing some of the Fat of the Cattel, and *Agag* the King, I mean his chief and beloved Lusts; but a sincere Christian is for yielding up all to the Sword of the Spirit.

8. Common Enlightnings work Terror, which may be at last drive the Soul further from God; as it is said of *Cain, He went out from the Presence of the Lord*: But special and saving Convicti-

ons, cause the Soul to draw nearer to God in Jesus Christ: The one is like a Slave under the Rod, fain would get away from his Master; the other is like a Child under the Rod, that desires to see and behold his Father's reconciled Face and Favour. The common Illuminations wound, but the Soul sees not the Way of Cure, nor will he bear the Instrument which would let out the Life and Power of Sin, but perhaps catches up some thing or another to apply to his Sore, may be his changed Life, his Duties and good Deeds: from hence he hopes that his State is good, he being as he thinks not the Man he once was. But as he who is under special Illuminations, comes to be wounded, by beholding a bleeding Saviour, which is the alone way of Cure; so he chiefly desires that Faith, that Grace which will destroy the Life and Power of all Sin, and thorowly cleanse and purify his Soul. Brethren, the Spirit of a Sinner may be torn into pieces by legal Terror, the Heart of Stone may be broken, and yet no Heart of Flesh be given; the Ground may be plow'd up in part, yet the Seed of Grace not sown in the Heart: Sensuality, saith one, may be kept down by a Spirit of Bondage, when it is not cast out by the Spirit of Adoption: They have the Law to convince them, but not Grace to renew them; it is not being once enlightned that is sufficient, unless truly enlightned; it is not great Knowledg, unless it be sanctified; it is not the fair Fruit of Reformation, nor Oil in the Lamp of the outward Life and visible Profession of Religion; it is not your seeming pious Duties nor legal Convictions that discover you to be a true Christian: no, nothing short of Union with Christ, and Faith that works by Love, avails any thing.

1 Cor. 7.

10.

Gal. 5. 6.

1 Theff. 1.

3.

9. Common or Legal Illuminations doubtless flow from a sense of God's Power, who is able to punish and reward the Creature according to his Work; not that they would be like God, but can't alas get out of the Hand of God: But true spiritual Enlightnings rise from a sense of God's Holiness, by beholding the Excellency of it, and seeing a necessity of a Conformity thereunto; the Convictions of the one at the best is at a stay, they do not grow, however they never terminate in Conversion; the Effect cannot exceed the Cause, they only tend to reform the Life, and oft-times such return with the Dog to his Vomit again: but the Path of the Just, in spiritual Convictions, is as a shining Light that shineth more and more to a perfect Day. Spiritual Enlightnings lead the Soul to Christ; the Spirit in them doth not only convince

Prov. 4.

28.

vince

vince of Sin, but also of Righteousness; such see all their old Props and Supports to fail them: 'tis Christ now, and none but Christ; the World is nothing to them, a Name is of no worth to them: Knowledge and Gifts without Grace will not satisfy them; they see the Vanity of the Creature, and the Fulness of the Mediator. Christ is the chiefest of ten thousand to all such: Others may see some things Christ hath purchased that may affect them; but these see an Excellency in his Person; *To you that believe, he is precious.* He is an Honour, or honourable: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none on Earth that I desire besides thee.* These have their Eyes opened to see the Nature of God, the Holiness of the Law, the Weakness of the Creature, the Sinfulness of Sin, and the Sufficiency of Jesus Christ. Others are convinced of many Sins, and of some degree of Evil in Sin; but these see that Sin is exceeding sinful, and that no Sin is so odious as the Sin of Unbelief, in which respects common Convictions fail. Now considering what Enlightnings Men may have, and yet not be savingly enlightned, what little reason is there for any to conclude, that the Persons in our Text were sanctified, holy, and true Christians, because the Holy Ghost says they were *once enlightned?* They may have, or attain unto a great Change, but not a true and thorow Change; and they may be such who arrive to Light in spiritual Things above thousands, nay, may be, exceed many true Christians in Knowledge, Abilities, Gifts, and in their Lives and Conversations too, in some respects, and may not doubt of the Goodness of their State, nay and may suffer for Religion, yea *give their Bodies to be burned,* and yet be destitute of saving Grace, *1 Cor. 13.* or of true Love to God, and therefore not self-condemned Hypocrites, whose Hearts condemn them, and yet be far from the State of sincere and renewed Christians.

1 Pet. 2. 7.
Psal. 73.
25.

1 Cor. 13.
1, 2, 3.

APPLICATION.

1. O see what Light, what Spiritual Light you have received, and what Convictions you have had the experience of.
2. Which do you account the greatest Evil, Sin or Suffering, the Torture or Pain you feel, or the Sin you have committed? Do you groan most under the sense of Sin, and want of Holiness; or under the presages and fear of Hell and Damnation? May be you cry out, your State is sad; but what think you of your Sin which is the Cause of it?

3. Be exhorted to labour after true Spiritual Illuminations, and thorow Convictions of Sin.

Motives.

1. Sin will be your Pain and Sorrow, first or last, either here or hereafter.

2. Consider what a good and gracious God you have offended.

3. Without effectual Convictions, there will be no true Conversion; and where the first is indeed wrought, the last will follow; those that God kills in this respect, he will make alive.

4. Remember the Word never comes with Power, until Convictions come with Power, and also abide on the Soul and Conscience of the Sinner.

5. Consider that it is better to be broken in Mercy than in Judgment, better here than in Hell.

6. Remember that true and thorow Convictions tend to let out the Life or Power of your Sin; and consider also what Means of Convictions God is pleased to afford you.

7. Sinner, Christ was wounded for thy Sin, look up to him; nothing breaks the Soul rightly, you have heard, but a sight of a broken and crucified Christ.

H E B. VI. 4, 5.

For it is impossible for those, &c.

Serm. II.

I Have closed with the first Qualification or Attainment of these Persons spoken of in my Text; I shall now proceed to the Second, *And have tasted of the Heavenly Gift.*

What meant by the Heavenly Gift.

1. By the Heavenly Gift, some understand the Heavenly Doctrine: In that sense it may be true, for Herod had some kind of Taste of the *Heavenly Doctrine*, which John the Baptist preached; he heard him gladly, or with Joy. As the Baptism of John is said to be from Heaven, so all the Truths and Ordinances of the Gospel may be said to be but one intire Heavenly Gift.

2. Others by the Heavenly Gift understand the Holy Ghost, according to that in *Acts* 8. 20. *Thou hast thought the Gift of God may*

may be purchased with Money. So *Acts* 10. 45. That on the Gentiles also was poured the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Quest. But what Gift of the Holy Ghost is it which these Persons are said to have a taste of?

Ans^r. 1. The miraculous Operations of the Holy Ghost in the Times of the Gospel, in the extraordinary Gifts thereof, which are said to come down from Heaven in a way of Eminency, as *Acts* 1. 4, 5. and of those Gifts these Persons might have some taste, either by their receiving those Gifts themselves, (for that unsound Persons may do, *And in thy Name we have cast out Devils*: so *1 Cor.* 13. 1, 2. *And though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing*:) or else they may be said to have a taste of those Gifts, by being wonderfully affected, by beholding the miraculous Operations of this Heavenly Gift wrought by others.

2. By tasting of the Heavenly Gift, it may refer to the Doctrine of the Gospel, it may denote their making some trial by Hearing, and diligently attending on the Doctrine of Salvation; there is a tasting for trial, either to receive, or refuse, as we commonly do Meats or other things: Every tasting is not a digesting, Men taste before they eat, and digest food. These Persons may taste of the Doctrine of Justification, taste of the Heavenly Gift or Doctrine of God's Free Grace, taste of the Ordinance of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and seem also to like the Heavenly Gift well in all these and in other respects, yet may feed all the while on some one Lust or another, on the Love of this World, or on their carnal and sensual Pleasures; and because they were never savingly renewed, having no new Nature, they could not feed on spiritual Things so as to digest them. No doubt it was, or is such a tasting as the full Stomach takes sometimes of Food, a full Stomach will taste, yet refuse to eat, they have no *Appetite*, these being glutted with the Love of other things; the Heavenly Gift is not so sweet to them, as Food is to an hungry Man.

The Sum then is this, these Persons had, or may have, some Experience of the Holy Ghost in the miraculous Gifts, either in themselves, or in others, their Understandings being enlightened, (for it is evident that 'tis a Taste by Illuminations, by what we before shewed) and they also might taste the Heavenly Doctrine or Ministration of the Gospel, and might find the Truths, the Institutions and Worship thereof to be good; they making a trial of it so far as their carnal and unsanctified Hearts were capable
to

to do; yea they might find the Ways of God better than once they thought before they were enlightened, and from thence embraced them to appearance, owned and walked therein for a time.

Doct. 2. *That there is a Goodness, and an Excellency in the Heavenly Gift and Heavenly Doctrine of the Gospel, which such may taste of that never receive the Truth in the Power and Love thereof.*

Doct. 3. *That the rejecting, and utter casting off the Gospel, and the Ordinance and Worship thereof, after some Tastes and Experience of it, is an high Offence to God, and a fearful Aggravation of Sin, and a certain Presage of Damnation.*

So much as to their second Attainment.

How some unrenewed Persons may be said to be partakers of the Holy Ghost.

3dly. *And were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost.* This seems to be more than a bare tasting.

Object. *Doth not this seem to interfere with your Exposition of the Attainment you mentioned last?*

Ans. 1. To this take Dr. Owen's Answer. "It is (saith he) ordinary to have the same thing twice expressed in various words, to quicken the Sense of them."

2. "The Holy Ghost is mentioned before, as he hints, as the great Gift of the Gospel-Times, as coming down from Heaven; not absolutely, not as unto his Person, but with respect unto an especial Work, namely, the changing of the whole State of Religious Worship in the Church of God."

3. But here in these words when it is said, *They were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost*, it is spoken chiefly in respect unto external actual Operations.

1. They partake of the Holy Spirit in the common Operations of it themselves; they tasted the Heavenly Doctrine as it was administered by others, as it is hinted before: but here is a Reception, or a partaking of the Holy Spirit, whereby it had some great and visible Operations upon their Hearts and Lives, though not saving Operations, not such that changed them into a State of Grace.

2. Nay they partake not only of common Gifts, but common Grace also, even such Grace that doth reform their Lives, *bridle, restrain*, and curb their inordinate Lusts and Passions; so that through the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, they esteeming him as their Blessed Saviour, they are said to escape the Pollution of the World, as *Peter* plainly declares, though afterwards they are again intangled therein and overcome.

2 Pet. 2.
2°

3. They

3. They did no doubt by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, leave and forsake those evil Ways, and prophane Courses and Practices in which they lived before: May be they were *gross Idolaters, Adulterers, Blasphemers, &c.* but the Spirit by its common Operations did so far strive and prevail with them, that they became other Men: As it is said of King Saul, *The Spirit of God will come upon thee, and thou shalt be turned into another Man, but not a new Man; And God gave him another Heart.* 1 Sam. 10. 6. 9.

4. These Persons may partake of such Grace which the foolish Virgins had, to keep their Lamps of Profession burning for a Time.

Doct. 4. *The Holy Spirit may be with Persons, nay in them. by his common Operations, with whom he is not by his gracious Inhabitation; they may partake of common, but not of saving Grace.*

4^{thly}. The fourth Attainment of these Persons, or these false Professors, is this, *viz.—And tasted of the good Word of God.*

Four things I shall do in speaking unto this.

First, Shew what is meant by the Word of God.

Secondly, Shew why it is called the good Word of God.

Thirdly, Shew what a taste an unsound Christian may have of the good Word of God.

Fourthly, And also shew what a taste it is that a true Christian hath of it.

First, By the Word of God is meant, the Word of the Gospel; *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.* Again it is said, *From you sounded out the Word of God, that is, the Gospel of Christ.* Rom. 10. 17. 1 Thess. I. 8.

Secondly, It is called the good Word of God.

1. Because it bringeth good News to Sinners, the Tidings it brings are good and profitable to all that receive it in Truth.

2. Because it is a Declaration of that good and gracious Counsel and Purpose of God in saving poor Sinners by Jesus Christ: it is Heavenly, Sublime; the Nature and Glory of God in all his Attributes is made manifest thereby.

3. It is good in the blessed Effects thereof. That which is excellent and precious in it self, and also doth as much good, we esteem very good. Now as divine Truth is pure, *Thy Word is pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it; so it is precious above Gold, in the Effects of it on the Heart.* Pf. 19. 10. 1. It

Why the Word of God is called good.

1. It enlightens the Eyes, it illuminates dark Minds, it is a shining Light; *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Path.*
 Pſal. 119. 105.

2. It quickens and revives a Soul under Deadneſs, therefore it is good; *Thy Word hath quickned me.*
 Pſal. 119. 50.

3. It is that which enriches the Soul: *Let the Word of God dwell in you richly. We have this Treasure in earthen Veſſels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.* Hence Miniſters, by preaching the Goſpel, though they may be externally poor, yet make many ſpiritually rich.
 Col. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 7.

4. It may be ſaid to be Good, becauſe of the powerful Effects it hath on Mens Souls, where it comes not in Word only. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged Sword.* It makes the Dead to live, infuſing through the Spirit, Life, and regenerating Grace into the Hearts of Sinners; it ſearcheth and purges out all Corruption; by the means of it young and old come to have their Hearts and Ways cleaned: *Now ye are clean through the Word which I have ſpoken unto you.*
 1 Theſſ. 1. 5. Joh. 15. 3.

5. It is our Sword by which we offend and wound our Enemies, and defend our ſelves againſt all their Assaults and Temp- tations.

6. It is good in reſpect of that diſcovery it makes of God, of Jeſus Chriſt, and of Salvation, as alſo of future Glory; there is contained in it a Revelation of the Incarnation of the Son of God, with all the Effects of infinite Wiſdom in the glorious Contrivance of our Redemption: What doth the Pagan World underſtand of our Redemption: What doth the Pagan World underſtand or know of theſe things, who have not the good Word of God with them?
Reader, theſe things were enlarged upon, but I am forced to leave out the Enlargements here.

7. It hath a comforting, a healing, and ſtrengthening Virtue in it; and it alſo preſerves from Sin, therefore it is good: *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* It gives peace and quiet to a diſturbed and diſtreſſed Mind, when the Promiſes are ſet home with Power upon the Conſcience: How many hath that one Word revived, that have been ready to drop into Hell in the ſenſe of their Sin; *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.*
 Pſal. 119. 11. Mat. 11. 28.

8. It is our Food, I mean, the Food of our Souls; yea, both Milk for Babes, and ſtrong Meat for Men of riper Age: nay, it is ſweet, ſatisfying and Soul-fatning Food, therefore it is good.

Sirs, if you have never taſted how good the Word of God is, your State doubtleſs is bad; but it is not enough to have a taſte of it,

it, but you must feed upon it : *Eat, O Friends ; drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved.*

Thirdly, I shall proceed to shew you what a kind of taste an un-sound Christian may have of the Word of God. It is evident, that the Apostle here carefully keeps himself to such Expressions as we have in the Text, to shew he intends not such Persons, who by Faith truly receive and spiritually feed on Jesus Christ ; therefore it is said, *have tasted.* True, by tasting sometimes is meant a spiritual feeding ; *O taste and see that the Lord is good :* Compared with that in *Peter, If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* Psal. 34. 8.
1 Pet. 2. 5.

Brethren, every one that feeds, may be said to taste, though he doth more than taste ; but every one that tasteth, may not be said to feed ; no, nor be said to love, approve of, nor digest that which he tasteth of. Pray remember, to feed is more than to taste ; *I did but taste a little Honey,* saith *Jonathan :* And it is said of our Saviour, *When he had tasted thereof, he would not drink ;* he Mat. 27. tasted, but did not drink : So Men may taste, and yet may not 34. eat, not feed upon that they tasted of.

I shall now come to shew you what a taste they may have of the Word of God.

1. As tasting respecteth Experience, or simple Knowledg of the Truth of a thing, so these Persons may have a taste, *i. e.* may have a simple Knowledg or Experience of the Truth of the Word of the Gospel ; they may taste in this sense, they may believe or be fully convinced in their Consciences by what they have heard, and have met with by such Operations of the Spirit that have past upon them, that the Gospel is true, and that Christ is the only Saviour, and that the Institutions and Ordinances of the Gospel are his Blessed Appointments. Thus many of the Jews tasted of Christ's Word, *i. e.* *They believed in his Name, when they saw the Miracles which he did ; But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all Men :* They gave a true Assent to the Proposition of his Word, yet did not close in with him, they did not consent to receive him, to desire, love and obey him, they had no Union with him by saving Faith ; and the like may be said of these Persons in our Text. John 2.
23, 24.

2. Nay, these Persons finding Jesus Christ to be the true and great Saviour, they may taste the Word, or believe with some kind of Joy, though it be a false Joy ; Who would not be saved, or have Christ as a Saviour ? This they like, they would be

saved from Hell and Wrath, but do not consider that Christ came to save his People from their Sins; He will save none who abide in their Sins, who hold them fast, and resolve not to let them go: Many may taste some sweetness in hearing of the Power of Christ to save, who go on presumptuously in their ungodly Practices: It is expressly said, that the stony-ground Hearers *received the Word with joy*, they had a taste of it. A common Faith seems to give a taste, the Name of a Saviour relishes sweet.

Mat. 13.
20.

3. They may taste of the Promises of the Word, but may not like the Precepts of it, or what sometimes follows and overtakes such who profess the Gospel; or may like some Precepts, but not like some others of them; every Word of God with these is not precious, they cannot deny themselves and follow Christ whithersoever he goes: They are not like *David*, who saith, *Every Word of God is pure, therefore I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea, above fine Gold. Therefore I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false Way.*

Psal. 119.
127, 128.

4. A bare taste or a simple taste of the Word is enough for these; a great deal of the World may be they think is too little, yet a little Religion, a little of the Word, short Prayers, and little Preaching will suffice them: A great Portion is too little for their Children, but Six-pence or a Shilling they may think is too much for the poor Saints, or a small matter a great deal to be given to the Children of God. It is evident these Persons gave little or nothing to the poor Saints, by what the Apostle speaks in the Verses following our Text, and therefore no sincere Believers: For *God is not unrighteous to forget your Work of Faith and Labour of Love, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, &c.* You, as if he should say, are not of that sort I am a speaking of, they do not love the Children of God, though they have had a taste of the Word: This one Vertue, Brethren, is more than all those five Attainments mentioned in my Text, when that which a Man gives is given in love to Christ.

5. Yet this bare taste, as you have heard, might have some Effect upon these Mens Hearts.

1. They might find some kind of delight in that Knowledge they have of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and might speak in the Commendation and Vindication thereof. Thus *Balaam* seemed wonderfully to be affected with the State of *Israel*, and with the Tabernacle and Tents of *Jacob*, yet he loved the Wages of Unrighteousness.

2. It may work, as you heard last Day, a visible Change in them, such a Power may go along with that taste; they, like *Saul*, might become other Men.

3. They might have the same *Lamp of Profession* with true Christians, and be taken for real Converts, not known to the Godly but to be such. The wise Virgins doubtless thought well of the Foolish, they did not know they were unsound or foolish Ones.

4. Such a Work and Effect the Holy Spirit and tasting of the Word might have, that they might be full of great Expectation of being embraced by Christ when he comes, if they fell not away before. 'Tis said, the foolish Virgins *went out to meet the Bridegroom*; they had much Confidence, may be more Confidence (tho it was Self-confidence) than the Wise, for true Believers may be attended with many Doubts.

Dr. *Owen* speaking of this sort mentioned in my Text, saith, (and no doubt saith the Truth) "That there is an inferiour common Work of the Holy Spirit in the Dispensation of the Word on many to whom it is preached, causing in them a great Alteration and Change, as to Light, Knowledg, Abilities, Gifts, Affections, Life and Conversation, when the Persons so wrought upon are not quickned, regenerated, or made new Creatures, nor united to Jesus Christ; that in the Persons thus wrought upon, there is or may be such an Assent, and Light, and Conviction of the Truth proposed and preached to them, as in its kind is true, not counterfeit, giving or affording to them a Profession of the Faith. That is, they are blinded, and know not that they are unsound in the Main, their Hearts for want of true Light deceive them, as in the Case of the foolish Virgins; nay, and they may perhaps hold out in their Profession constantly unto Death; nay, *may give their Bodies to be burned*. O see, Bre-^{I Cor. 13.} thren, that your Faith is the Faith of God's Elect, and that you^{1, 2.} are savingly renewed: O look about you since it may be thus. The Doctor adds, "That among these Persons are oft-times some that are endued with excellent Gifts, and lovely Parts, Qualifications and Abilities, rendering them very useful to the Church of God, being Vessels in his House to hold and convey to others the precious Liquor of the Gospel, though never had their own evil Hearts changed.

To which let me add, they are such, or of this sort of Persons who are liable to sin the Sin against the Holy Ghost, or so fall, that it may be impossible for them to be renewed by Repentance:

Yet before they so fall, it may not be impossible for them to become true Converts. The Nature of which Sin against the Holy Ghost, I purpose to open before I close with this Text.

What a kind of taste a Believer hath of God and his Word. *Fourthly*, I shall proceed to shew you what a taste of God, and of his good Word it is which all true Believers have.

1. 'Tis a taste that arises from Spiritual Hunger: There is a true sense of Want, they have a craving Appetite, and nothing but God in Christ can satisfy their Souls; *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God*, saith David. And hence it is that they are pronounced blessed; *Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled*; not have only a taste, No, no, but they shall be filled, they shall eat to satisfaction. They see that they want a Righteousness whereby they may be declared Just and Righteous before God, namely, the Righteousness of Christ; and also a Righteousness that may declare them to be righteous before Men, namely, a holy and blameless Life: the one is the Righteousness of Justification, the other is the Righteousness of Sanctification. Others may have a taste of both these; they may behold a Worth in, and a Want of Christ's Righteousness, but do not hunger after it, and so accept it as a poor hunger-starved Person on Gospel-Terms; and may attain to some degree of inward as well as outward Sanctification.

2. These therefore *taste* and *eat* also, and that too out of pure Necessity: If I, saith the Soul, feed not upon Christ, *eat not his Flesh, and drink not his Blood*, I shall perish. Give me Christ or I shall die, is the Voice of this sort: Others take a taste, as if they cared not whether they eat or eat not.

3. A true Believer doth taste, eat, and also digest the Word; 'tis that which they live upon, and hereby they come to have Union with Christ by Faith: The Soul partakes of the Divine Nature. But a common Tasting, or a common Faith, or a bare Credence of the Truth of the Gospel, doth not do this, which the Persons in our Text only had.

4. The good Word of God is to all true Christians as their necessary Food; nay, esteemed more, or above their necessary Food, as *Job* experienced it; therefore to these the Word, and God in the Word, Christ in the Word, is exceeding sweet: How sweet is Food to a hungry Person? O says the Soul, the Lord is good, his Word is good, his Promises and his Ordinances are exceeding good; *Ps. 19. 10.* I can relish the Word of God, I esteem it *above Gold*; it is also *sweeter*

sweeter than Honey, or the Honey-comb; I have an appetite to it: *O how love I thy Law! it is my Meditation all the Day.* This disco- Psal. 119.
 vers to us the goodness of our Condition, when there is nothing 97.
 that we value or esteem, love and delight in, above God's Word:
Thy Words were found, and I did eat them, and thy Word was unto me. Jer. 15. 16.
the joy and rejoicing of my Heart. He did not taste only, but did
 eat and greedily digest the Word also.

4. The Word of God, without the God of the Word, will
 not satisfy these Mens Souls; 'tis not a bare Ordinance, no, no,
 but they must have God in and with the Ordinance; 'tis not the
 Shell without the Kernel, it is not the Cabinet without the Jewel;
 it is not a Lamp without Oil that will satisfy the wise Virgins;
 Prayer and Preaching will not do with these, though they pray
 and hear every Day, except they meet with God and Christ in
 those Duties; the Word and Ordinances without Christ, are but
 like dry Bread and lean Meat, that have but little Juice or Nourish-
 ment in them; they must be delighted with Fatness, knowing it is
 such things God has prepared for them; *Eat ye that which is good,* Ist. 55. 2.
and let your Soul delight it self in Fatness; they eat it appears to full
 satisfaction. Others labour for that which satisfies not; but of all
 true Believers *David saith, They shall be abundantly satisfied with* Psal. 36. 8.
the fat things of thy House; and *thou shalt make them drink of the Ri-*
vers of thy Pleasures. And in another place, saith he, *My Soul* Psal. 63. 5.
shall be satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness; and *my Soul shall praise*
thee with joyful Lips.

5. That which true Believers taste and eat, is turned into Spi-
 ritual Nourishment in the Heart: And in order to this,

1. There is required a laying up the Word, or hiding of it: Psal. 119.
 No Nourishment can be had by Food, unless it be received into the II.
 Stomach, where the Cause of Digestion and Communication are Luk. 1. 66.
 fix'd: And if the Word be not received into the Heart by fixed
 Meditation and Delight, it may affect and please a Person for a
 while, but it will not nourish the Soul.

2. Every Physician will tell you, that Food must be mixed and
 incorporated with the digestive Humour, Power and Faculty of the
 Stomach, whereinsoever it consists, or it will not nourish. Give a
 Man never so much Food, if there be any noxious Humour in the
 Stomach hindering it from mixing with the Power of Digestion,
 saith a worthy Writer, it will no ways profit the Person: *But the Dr. Owen,*
Word preached did not profit them, not being mix'd with Faith in them P. 50, 51.
that heard it. Meat nourishes not without Concoction; so unless Heb. 4. 2.

the

the Soul receives and digests the Word through Faith, so that the Word and the Heart are united together, all is nothing; but a bare taste will never do this. And,

3. Like as Food when it is well digested is turned into Flesh and Blood, and Spirits; so where a Person feeds on the Word by Faith, or eats and digests it, it is turned into a Principle of Life and spiritual Strength: As some Men who have for want of Food been brought so low and faint, that they were ready to die away; but by feeding on good Food, and digesting it, soon perceive a renewing of their Strength, Life and Vigour seems to return to them again; so by feeding on the Word, the Strength of the Soul abides, it communicates abiding Strength, Faith and Experience; and 'tis hereby the Soul grows Day by Day, and his Love to God is increased, and by the Power of it he walks with God in Holiness and Lowliness of Mind, and brings forth all the Fruits of the Spirit, like as the Ground bringeth forth, by the Showers of Heaven, Herbs meet for him by whom it is dressed.

Heb. 6. 6, 7.

4. These are delighted and cheered by the Word, as in a Banquet of Wine, and get great Power over their Corruptions: But such a tasting and eating as this, and such blessed Effects of the Word on the Soul did the Persons never attain unto, who are said in our Text to have *tasted the good Word of God*, &c. Evident it is, that the Apostle clearly notes concerning the Persons in my Text, that whatsoever taste they might have of the Doctrine of the Gospel, called the Heavenly Gift, or of the good Word of God, yet they were fruitless Souls, even like the Earth that the Rain fall upon, and yet brings forth Briars and Thorns; See *ver. 7, 8.*

APPLICATION.

1. Learn from hence the deplorable Condition of all such who satisfy themselves with the meer Notion of Truth and empty Speculations about it, without getting so much as such a taste of the goodness of the Word, which may be had by those who are not savingly renewed. How many thousands are there at this Day, that do not desire so much as a taste of heavenly Things, their Hearts are so filled and glutted with the things of this World, nay, with their abominable and filthy Lusts.

2. But for the Lord's Sake take heed you rest not satisfied with a bare taste of heavenly Things, or with some seeming relish there-
of :

of: Such indeed may not be far from the Kingdom of Heaven: But alas, alas, if they go no further, they will never come there; and if they totally fall away, their State will be worse in the end than it was at the beginning; nay, far worse than their Condition who never were enlightned at all, but remain under the Power of natural Blindness, &c.

3. You that are Professors, may also, from what hath been briefly hinted, perceive whether you have had a right taste of God, and of his good Word, or not: Whether you have received Christ, and do live upon the Bread of Life, or not: Or whether you have by Faith applied the Word, and by Meditation digested it, or not.

4. Hath the Word changed your Hearts? Have you got Power over your Corruptions and Temptations thereby? Doth nothing satisfy your Souls short of God and Jesus Christ; and it is as well a Likeness to him as an Interest in him? Will not the Word and Ordinances quiet you, unless you meet with Christ in them?

5. This may be for a use of *Terror* to such who rest satisfied with the common Operations of the Word and Spirit of God; they may go far, yet fall away, nay so fall, as it may be impossible for them ever to be renewed by Repentance. But,

sibly. I shall now come to the fifth and last Thing or Attainment mentioned in our Text concerning these Professors who are in danger of Final Apostacy, *And of the Powers of the World to come:* They have not only tasted of the good Word of God, but also of the Powers of the World to come.

Two things I shall propound to do here.

1. Shew you what is meant by the World to come.

2. Shew what a kind of taste these Persons may be said to have of it.

1. Some by the World to come assert, is only meant, the Gospel-Church-State, or Spiritual Kingdom of the *Messiah*, which begun in the Apostles Days: Nay, I find Reverend Dr. Owen is much of this Perswasion, as you may see in his Exposition of the first Chapter to the *Hebrews*; "By the World to come, saith he, "the Apostle in this Epistle intends the Days of the *Messiah*, that "being the usual Name of it in the Church at that time, as the "New World which God had promised to create, whereof these "Powers, by Signs, Wonders, and mighty Works were then "wrought by the Holy Ghost, according as it was foretold by the
"Prophets.

What is meant by the World to come.

“ Prophets that they should be so, *Joel 2. Acts 2.* These the Per-
 “ sons spoken of, are supposed to have *tasted*; either they had
 “ been wrought in and by themselves, or by others in their sight,
 “ whereby they had experience of the glorious and powerful
 “ working of the Holy Ghost in the Confirmation of the Gospel.
 “ Yea, (saith he) I do judg that they themselves, in their own
 “ Persons, were partakers of these Powers in the Gift of Tongues,
 “ and other miraculous Operations, which was the highest Ag-
 “ gravation possible of their Apostacy. I will not deny this to be
 intended by *the Powers of the World to come*: But this Exposition
 seems too much to interfere with the *second* and *third* Attainment
 mentioned of these Persons: and if this be granted to be intended
 hereby, yet it must be carried also further, I mean, to the after-
 State of Christ’s Kingdom; for the Kingdom that is now expected,
 and the latter-day-Glory, we all allow to be the Kingdom of the
Messiah: Nor can any doubt of a World yet to come, or glo-
 rious visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ to be set up in the last Days;
 the Holy Ghost positively affirming, That *the Kingdoms of this*
 Rev. 11. *World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*; And
 15. that when the *seventh Angel soundeth his Trumpet*, and not till then,
 which brings in the *third* and *last Wo* upon the *Antichristian State*
and Kingdom. Yet I question not but that the beginning of the
 Kingdom of the *Messiah* was in the Apostles Days, and did com-
 mence from the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, being
 ushered in and established with the miraculous Gifts and Opera-
 tions of the Holy Spirit: Which wonderful Appearance of God’s
 Power, doth no doubt appertain to the Kingdom of Christ as
 such: And at the pouring forth of the latter Rain, we may ex-
 pect as great, nay a greater miraculous working-Power, than ever
 accompanied it to this Day; because *the Glory of the latter House*
shall exceed the Glory of the former. And there seems to me to be
 the like Parity of Reason for those miraculous Operations in the
 last Days, in order to the spreading the Gospel over all the World,
 and the establishment of Christ’s more visible Kingdom, as there
 was at first; the Appearance of Christ will be with Power and
 great Glory.

2. Therefore let it be considered, and not doubted of, but that
 there is yet a World to come, and another kind of World than
 this World is, and a more glorious Kingdom of Christ than at
 present we behold: That the World to come will consist of *a*
new Heaven, and a new Earth, which we look for, as the Apostle

Peter observes, is evident according to God's Promise, this present World, yea, these Old Heavens and Old Earth shall pass away and be dissolved: *Nevertheless we, according to his Promise, look for a New Heaven and New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.* It was not then come, but expected to be revealed in the last Days. 2 Pet. 3. 13.

3: It will be a World between this and the ultimate Glory in the Kingdom of the Father, I mean, when Christ shall give up his Kingdom to the Father, that God *maybe all in all*; that is, Christ will yield up his Rule and Government as Mediator: for his Mediatorial Kingdom shall cease, and the Kingdom and Glory of God, *i. e. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, shall only be magnified; Christ shall then, as Mediator, no longer sit and rule upon his Throne, his Work will be done, and the Date of his Commission be expired. *What is meant by Christ's delivering up the Kingdom to the Father.*

4. Let it also be considered, that the World to come in the Glory of it, shall not be revealed until this present World passes away, is burnt up and dissolved, and therefore cannot be expected until the Resurrection of the Just; For *Man lies down and rises not till the Heavens be no more.* This the Holy Ghost clearly shewed also to *John*, *And I saw a new Heaven, and a new Earth; for the first Heaven, and the first Earth were passed, and there was no more Sea.* And that the World to come shall begin in its greatest Glory at the Resurrection, doth appear by our Saviour's own words; *But they which shall be worthy to obtain that World to come, and the Resurrection from the Dead, neither marry, nor are given in Marriage: Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the Angels, and are the Children of the Resurrection.* It appears, the World to come, or Kingdom of the *Messiah* in its greatest Glory, and the Resurrection, commence together, or at one and the same time. And this is further confirmed, because in one Place it is said, that those who follow Christ, and suffer for him, shall be rewarded *at the Resurrection of the Just*, as *Luke 14. 14.* And in another Place it is said, *in the World to come*, as *Luke 18. 30.* Job 14. 12. Rev. 21. 1. Luke 20. 35, 36.

So much shall serve to shew you what is meant by the World to come; but before I speak to that *Taste of the Powers of the World to come*, which the Persons spoken of in our Text are said to have, let me add a word or two as touching the Nature and Glory of the World to come, though we have as yet but only some dark glimpse of it. But to proceed:

The Nature
and Glory
of the World
to come
opened.

Rev. 22. 3.

Isa. 55. 13.

Rom. 8. 21.

Acts 3. 21.

2 Pet. 3.

13.

Isa. 60. 21.

Dan. 7. 27.

Dan. 7. 27.

Rev. 21. 4.

1. It shall be a World, not under the Curse of Man's Sin as this World is : The Earth is under the Curse, *Briars and Thorns* are the Fruit of the Curse, and all Creatures groan under the Curse the Sin of Mankind hath brought upon them : But when the new World comes in, *there shall be no more Curse ; instead of the Thorn shall come up the Fig-tree, and instead of the Briar shall come up the Myrtle-tree.* The Creature groans under the Curse, *But it shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* Envy shall depart from the Creatures, they shall not tear and devour one another in the World to come, as they do in this World ; see *Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.* It is in the World to come that all things shall be restored to that glorious State signified by the Restitution of all things ; *Whom the Heavens must receive until the Times of the Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the Mouth of all his Holy Prophets since the World began.* That which all the Prophets have spoken of and expected, shall certainly come or be fulfilled.

2. The World to come shall be a World without Sin, a Holy World, a Righteous World : this present World is a wicked World, an ungodly World ; but all the Inhabitants of that World to come shall be Holy, they shall be all filled with Righteousness : Hence it is *Peter* saith, *We, according to his Promise, look for a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.*

3. The Government of that new World shall be alone in the Hands of the Saints, no wicked Man shall be in any Place of Power there ; no *corrupt Judges*, nor *Justices*, Righteousness shall then bear Rule : *The People also shall be all Righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever, the Branch of my planting, the Work of my Hands, that I may be glorified.—The Kingdom and Dominion, and greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High.* Whether they shall have the Kingdom before *Christ* comes, or not, I cannot determine, (though I suppose part of this Prophecy will be fulfilled before then) but be-
fore then they shall have all Kingdoms under the whole Heavens, and the Glory and Greatness of them for ever.

4. The World to come shall be a World without Sorrow, and that is because it shall be a World without Sin ; whilst Sin remains, Sorrow will remain, but then no more Pain nor Misery shall any of God's Children endure for ever : *And God shall wipe all Tears from all Faces, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more Pain, for the former things*

things are passed away. *The Inhabitant of that City shall not say, I am sick.* Isa. 33. 25.

5. There shall be no Devil to perplex, to tempt, nor to disturb God's People, *Satan shall be bound*; though others think that shall be before this World begins in the greatest Glory of it.

6. It shall be a World of great and wonderful Light; which may be taken, as I conceive, both literally and mystically: *The Sun shall no more be thy Light by Day, neither for Brightness shall the Moon give Light by Night; but the Lord shall be unto thee an Everlasting Light, and thy God thy Glory.* Compare it with *Revelation 22. 4, 5.* *And there shall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither Light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them Light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.* God will never withdraw himself from his People, nor hide his Face in that World, as oft-times he doth in this.

7. It shall be a joyful World, nothing but Joy and Singing in that World; those who will not sing now, if Godly, shall sing then: *Behold my Servants shall sing for Joy of Heart; but ye shall howl for Vexation of Spirit.* The World to come will be a sad and woful World to the Ungodly, for there is a World to come for them, I mean, Eternal Misery in Hell: But Believers shall sing in *the Heights of Sion, and flow together in the Goodness of the Lord.* In the Heights of Sion, or in the Time of the greatest Glory of the Kingdom of the Messiah: Moreover it is said, *They shall rejoice even with joy and singing.* Isa. 65. 14. Jer. 31. 12. Isa. 35. 2.

8. They that dwell in the World to come, shall have good and blessed Company, glorious Company, Christ's Company, and the Company of all his Saints: *They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God.* *Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them.* He shall come then in the Clouds with Power and great Glory, *and we shall be taken up to meet the Lord in the Air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* To meet him in the Air, he does not meet us, we shall not be going up to Heaven, as soon as raised; no, no, but Christ will come down to us, to dwell and reign with his Saints on Earth when that World begins: *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth. He hath made us Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the Earth.* All the Godly are under this Promise, therefore it must refer to the World to come, and not be fulfilled till the Day of the Resurrection. Rev. 21. 3. 1 Theff. 4. 16, 17. Mat. 5. 3. Rev. 5. 10.

9. It will be a World of great Riches, Wealth and Glory; the chief City in that World, the Walls of it shall be Jasper, and

the City was of pure Gold. Though this City may be a Figure of the Church, yet no doubt there is more intended, it is that City *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* sought for, that had Foundations; every Saint in that World shall have a Kingdom, and a Crown of Glory: though it be all but one Kingdom, yet it shall be as if every one only possessed it himself; *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge will give to me in that Day, and not only to me, but to all them also that love his appearance.* Some Saints have hardly enough Bread to eat in this World, that shall have a Crown, a Kingdom in the World to come.

2Tim. 4. 8. *Hearken my beloved Brethren; Hath not God chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith and Heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? They shall sit upon Thrones; Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the World? Even such poor Saints that this World disdain and do contemn.*

Jam. 2. 5.

10. This World will have an End, and the Time is near; and the other World will begin in the Glory of it. The World to come, Brethren, that shall never end, it is an Eternal World; tho the administration of it as in the Hands of Christ as Mediator, shall cease and have an End, yet the Kingdom and Glory of the World to come shall never have an End: the Riches of it, the Glory of it, and the Joys of it, shall abide for ever; it is a Kingdom, and a Crown that fadeth not away.

Lastly, It will be a peaceable World; Wars will cease, Jerusalem shall be a quiet Habitation: Nation shall not rise up against Nation, nor learn War any more in that World.

I should now come to speak to the second Thing, namely, to shew what a *raste* it is that the Persons in our Text had or may have of the Powers of the World to come; but I shall make a little use of this first.

APPLICATION.

1. By way of Reprehension: Brethren, what Fools be they who value this World above the World to come? These are like the vain *French-Man*, who said, he would not part with his part in *Paris* for a part in *Paradise*: Alas, he knew not what a Place *Paradise* is. O the Vanity of Mens Minds, how blind and deceived are poor Mortals!

2. This shews, and clearly may demonstrate, that God's People are Men and Women of greatest Wisdom, they are not satisfied with

with corruptible Things ; it is God and his Eternal Riches, Kingdom and Glory their Eyes are set upon : they are Rich it appears in Reverſion, though they have but little now in Poſſeſſion ; they love Riches, though not the Riches of this World ; they ſhall have one day rich and immortal Robes, Robes beyond thoſe of beaten Gold : *At thy right Hand did ſtand the Queen in Gold of Ophir.* It is not a few little Houſes, no nor earthly Palaces ; 'tis not Bags of Gold and Silver that can ſatisfy them ; no, no, it is nothing leſs than a whole Kingdom and Crown of Glory in the other World ; of which they are joint Heirs with Chriſt : *They ſhall inherit all things,* all Riches and Happineſs.

1. Riches that enrich the Soul, ay and the Body too : the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be enriched in the World to come ; our vile Body ſhall be changed and made like Chriſt's Glorious Body.

2. They ſhall have true Riches ; the Riches of this World are falſe Riches, deceitful Riches, counterfeit Riches, ſhadowy Riches ; they are but a Figure or a Shadow of the Riches of the World to come.

3. They have right to incorruptible Riches ; not like the Worldings Riches that canker and corrupt, and the Ruſt of which will riſe up as Witneſs againſt them at the laſt Day.

4. They are certain and abiding Riches ; the Riches of this World are uncertain Riches, they are but for a Moment, and are gone : *Charge them that are in this World,* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God.* O how poor and miſerable are ſome Men who are rich in this World !

5. The Riches of the World to come, are Soul-ſatisfying Riches : Gold and Silver ſatisfy not, but Believers ſhall ſee God in the other World, have a glorious Viſion of God ; *they ſhall be like him, for they ſhall ſee him as he is.* Nothing but a Poſſeſſion of God, and a Likeneſs unto him, will ſatisfy a gracious Soul : *I ſhall be ſatisfied,* ſaith David, *when I awake in thy Likeneſs :* I ſhall not be fully ſatisfied until then, (as if he ſhould ſay) but then I ſhall be ſatisfied to the full indeed. What is there more for a Man to deſire than God ? They that have God for their Portion, may ſay with Jacob, that they have all.

6. The Riches of the other World are had without Care, without Perplexity : Alas, Cares and Snares attend the Riches of this World ; there is Pains in getting them, and Cares in keeping them, and Fears of loſing them ; and theſe things eat out the ſweetneſs.

Rom. 8.

Rev. 21.
The Riches
of the World
to come
opened.
Phil. 3. ult.

Jam. 5. 2,
3.

1 Tim. 6.
17.

1 Joh. 3. 2,
3.

Pſa. 17. ult.

ness that seems to be in them: but as there will be no Cares in keeping of the Riches of the World to come, so there will be no fear of losing them.

7. The Riches of the World to come will be the Perfection of Riches. No Man can be perfectly rich here; tho he hath some Riches, yet he hath not all Riches; and though he be rich in some things, yet he is not rich in all things; and though he be rich externally, and for a time rich, yet he may be spiritually poor: But they that attain to the Riches of the World to come, are every ways rich, perfectly rich, rich in the Body, and rich in the Soul; they are such Riches that Christ and the Angels do possess.

*The Honours
of the World
to come.*

Secondly, The Honours of the World to come will be great, far surpassing all the Honours of this present evil World.

1. 'Tis no small Honour to be the Sons of God; now are *we the Sons of God*: This is a Privilege that appertains to the present Spiritual Kingdom of Christ; *but it doth not appear what we shall be*; that is the Time of the manifestation of the Sons of God: then Christ will honour his Saints, and God will honour them: *If any Man serves me, him, saith our Saviour, will my Father honour.*

Mat. 12.

2. Will it not be an Honour to be crowned with a Crown of Glory? Glory, Honour and Immortality is the Portion of all who by well-doing seek it.

3. Will it not be a great Honour to judg the World, yea, to judg the fallen Angels?

4. Will it not be an high Honour to be the Lamb's glorious Bride, to be the Spouse of the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, to have the Attendance of the Holy Angels, and to have the Wicked to bow down to your very Feet and lick up the Dust?

5. Will it not be a great Honour to sit with Christ on the Throne? Besides, it will be Eternal or Everlasting Honour, it will abide for ever.

*The Joys
and Plea-
sures of the
World to
come.*

Thirdly, The Pleasures of the World to come will be transcendent Pleasures, far surpassing all the vain and carnal Pleasures of this present World.

1. I once told you when I was speaking of Eternal Joys, that the Pleasures of the World to come will not only delight the Soul, but the Body too; though not carnal sensual Pleasures, yet the glorified Bodies of the Saints shall be filled with Delight and Pleasure, as well as their Spirits, you may be sure, and that in a wonderful manner.

2. The

2. The Joys of the World to come will be the Fulness of Joy and Delights: *Thou shalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy Pleasures.* Rivers of Pleasures denote fulness, Pleasures to full satisfaction: all the Pleasures of this present World are but a Shadow of the Pleasures of Heaven, and of the World to come; and though these satisfy not, yet those will satisfy the Soul. Psa. 36. 8.

3. They are Pleasures for evermore; we shall swim in Pleasures in that World. *Thou wilt shew me the Way of Life; in thy Presence is fulness of Joy, and at thy right Hand are Pleasures for ever more.* Psa. 16. 11.

4. The Joys and Pleasures of the World to come will be so sweet, that, as Mr. Caryl saith, a whole Eternity will seem to be but as a Moment.

5. They will be Pleasures without Pain, without a Sting: O what a Sting have some Men found to be in, or to attend their carnal Pleasures! Here are Sorrows cleaving to Men as well as Joy; Pain and Misery, as well as Delights and Pleasure: but in the World to come there will be all Sweet, and no Bitter; all Pleasure, and no Pain; all Joy, and no Sorrow.

6. Is God able, think you, to delight, to rejoice, and to fill the Souls of his Saints with Joy and Pleasure? Be sure then he will do it: God's Love is such, so infinite, so inconceivable to his Children, that he will fill them with the fullest Joys imaginable: Will not earthly Parents make the Lives of their Children as sweet and happy as they can? They are called *Joys unspeakable and full of Glory*: All the lawful Pleasures of this World are, Brethren, but a Figure or Shadow of them: *The Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for those that love him.* The Eye hath seen much, and the Ear hath heard of more than the Eye ever saw, and the Heart conceives of more than ever the Ear heard; but the Heart cannot conceive how sweet the Joys of Christ's Kingdom will be, or comprehend how transcendent the Joys of Heaven are. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

7. The Pleasures of the World to come, are the Effects of God's infinite Love and Goodness, according to the Perfection thereof: And as none know the Power of God's Anger and Wrath in Hell, that is let out against ungodly Sinners that hate him; so none know the Power of his Infinite Love, Grace and Goodness, let out in Heaven to delight and ravish the Hearts of all them that love and serve him.

8. The Pleasures of the World to come never will cease indeed, no shorter a Time than an endless Eternity can serve to let out the infinite Goodness of the Eternal Deity, and those varieties of Joys and Delights that flow and will flow like Rivers from him : as none can imagine what the Nature of that personal Communion which the Saints shall have with Christ will be, so also they will be Eternal ; Eternal Joys, saith one, are the longest, and yet the shortest. Longest in respect of Duration, yet the shortest in respect of Apprehension. An Eternity of Joy will seem to us no more tedious than one Minute or small Moment, 'twill be so full of Joy and Pleasure : 'tis such Satisfaction that breeds no wearisomeness, it doth not cloy nor glut the Soul ; we living at the Fountain-head of Joy and Comfort, in immediate Communion with Christ, our Delights will renew as much as continue. They are certainly blind or unthinking Persons that do not see how the Deity or Holy God delights in Varieties ; it may easily be discerned, by beholding the different Varieties of Creatures, Faces, Colours, or varieties of things to delight all our Senses here in this World. O no doubt, the Joys and Varieties of the World to come, will be Wonderful, and take up a whole Eternity for God to let out ; Joys will be as it were every day fresh, and renewed upon us.

From hence saith a beloved Writer, fresh Appetite, and fulness of Satisfaction, are perpetually interchangeable, the Joys are so many, the Years seem so few. Eternity of Joys makes Eternity but as a Moment, as eternal Pain and Torment makes every Moment seem an Eternity.

These things being so, O who would not desire an Interest in Christ ! O happy, happy Believer, what a Choice hast thou made !

Exhortation. Sinner, what sayst thou ? come seek a Portion, a Part in the World to come : you are very busy to get a Part or Portion in this present evil World ; Alas, alas, what good can all these things do you, and how long can you keep them ? Come be perswaded to seek this better Country ; Christ hath redeemed us from this present evil World, and hath purchased for us another World, even this World to come ; Will you seek it ? You may have a share and part in the World to come.

Quest. You will say, which Way, or how may we get a part in it ?

Answ. I answer, You must marry the Prince and Heir of that World, and so you shall have a Portion in it, and a true Title to it ; you must by Faith espouse Jesus Christ, there is no other way

*How to
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to have an Interest in the World to come. Sinners, you may gain the World to come, and save your Souls; but whilst you seek to gain this present evil World, you may lose your Souls: *What will it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?* Mat. 16. Also you may have an Assurance of the World to come: O strive 26. to make it your own peculiar Inheritance, take hold of the Foretop of Time. Now I may say Time *is*, hereafter it may be said Time *was*; and then Time is past and lost for ever. Remember that in this World, while you are here, the World to come in the Glory of it, will be got or lost for ever; if you obtain Grace, you shall have Glory; but if you have no Grace in this World, no Glory you are like to have in the World to come.

Lastly, Remember this World is near at an End, 'tis ready to pass away; and the World to come in the Glory of it is just about to begin, it is not far off: *He that testifieth these things, saith,* Rev. 22. *Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.* 20.

H E B. VI. 4, 5.

And of the Powers of the World to come.

THE last time I spoke of the World to come, and of the Powers of it; especially of the Powers, Glory, and Pleasures of the World to come, respecting the State of the Saints therein. I shall now proceed to shew you, what a kind of taste of the Powers of the World to come, the Persons mentioned in our Text may be said to have, which is the next thing propounded to be done under this Head. Serm. III.

Secondly, The Persons here meant, I have proved are not true and sincere Believers, though such who come very near unto such, being almost Christians. Now the last Qualification or Attainment they are said to arrive unto, is this, *Of tasting of the Powers of the World to come.*

First, I shall shew you what may be meant by the Powers of the World to come.

Secondly, Shew what a kind of taste they may have of those Powers, &c.

1. By the Powers of the World to come, (of which they are said to have a taste) I understand are meant the Glorious Effects of God's mighty Power, that was and shall be further exerted in bringing in the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, first in those miraculous Operations which (being to assure us of the certainty of the new World) were wrought before these Mens Eyes.

2. The Powers of the World to come, do doubtless consist also in the dissolving of this present World, and all the States and Kingdoms of the Earth. *Thou hast of old laid the Foundation of the Earth; and though the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands, they shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea all of them shall wax old like a Garment; as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:* compared with 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11, 12, 13. The mighty Power of God shall be put forth in dissolving this old World.

3. And not only so, but also that God by his Almighty Power will bring in and establish the Kingdom of the *Messiah* in the Glory of it; for as the dissolving of the old World appertains to the Power of the great God, so doth also his bringing in, according to his mighty Power, *the new Heavens and the new Earth: The Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat; and the Earth and the Things therein shall be burned up.* And all this is but to make way for the World to come, or for *the new Heavens and new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.*

2 Pet. 3.
10.

4. The Resurrection of the Dead also appertains to the Powers of the World to come, and in it lies no small part of God's mighty Power neither; *Who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.*

Phil. 3. 21.

5. The Power of the last Judgment and definitive Sentence, together with the eternal Punishment of wicked Men and Devils, may also be here intended; *Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power.*

2 Thess. 1.
9.

6. Moreover, the exerting of God's mighty Power, the Power of his Grace, Divine Love and Goodness in his glorifying of the Saints,

Saints, may be meant also here by the Powers of the World to come; *When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* For as the letting out of the Power of his Wrath and Vengeance in the World to come upon the Wicked, as was hinted before, may hereby be comprehended, so likewise the letting out of the Power of his Love and Goodness on the Godly.

Secondly, I shall shew you now what a kind of taste the Persons in our Text may be said to have had of the Powers of the World to come.

What a taste of the World to come a false Professor may have.

1. They had, or might have, a taste of the Truth and Certainty of the World to come, which they clearly saw confirmed by those miraculous Operations in the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and wonderful Works that were wrought by the Apostles, nay which perhaps some of them had Power to do themselves; for many shall say at the last Day, *Have we not prophesied in thy Name? and in thy Name cast out Devils? and in thy Name done many wonderful Works? To whom Christ will say, I profess I never knew you; depart from me ye that work Iniquity.* No doubt but as Saul and Balaam prophesied, so Judas might as well as the other Apostles cast out Devils, and do other wonderful Works.

Mat. 7.22.

2. And as by those miraculous Operations they might have a taste of the Powers of Christ's Kingdom as it began then, so this might cause them stedfastly to believe the Truth of the Powers of the World to come, in the future State and Glory thereof: Many Persons do not firmly believe this, and therefore regard not how they live here in this present World, but say, *let us eat and drink, for to Morrow we shall die.* So also in another Place by the same Prophet it is said, *Come, say they, I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our selves with strong Drink, and to Morrow shall be as this Day, and much more abundant.* These ungodly Wretches fear nothing of those Judgments that are come, but lay their Hearts loose upon the Neck of their Lusts: But the enlightened Persons in our Text did believe, or give stedfast Credit to the Truth of that future State, both of the Resurrection and Judgment-Day, even of that Day of Reckoning, when Sinners shall be punished for all their abominable Wickedness; they believed God's Word, and the Revelation thereof, touching what will come upon the Ungodly in the World to come, and so are said to *taste of the Powers of it*: and this Persons may do and yet perish.

Isa. 22. 13.

Isa. 56. 12.

3. They might not only have a *taste* of the World to come, by a common Faith, or by giving stedfast Credence to the Truth and Certainty of it, but might also be under great Convictions of the Evil of Sin, knowing that all the Sweet thereof will be turned into Bitter, and that Sin in the World to come will be punished, and the Sinner condemned to Everlasting Burning, and that God will reward every Man according to his Deeds; and might know also, that some shall find greater Condemnation, or a hotter Hell than others, more intolerable Pain in that Day. As,

(1.) All such who draw others into Sin, whether it be Drunkenness, Pride, Theft, Uncleaness, &c.

(2.) All such who sin after strong Convictions and great Illuminations, or that sin against Light and Knowledg.

(3.) Such who have been often reprov'd, and yet live in their wicked Practices, and harden their Hearts; let Ministers and godly Parents say what they will, they regard it not.

(4.) Such who have greater Means of Grace than others, or who live under an awakening and powerful Ministry, and yet go on in their Sins, in Pride, Swearing, Drunkenness, Uncleaness, &c.

(5.) Such who sin under Judgments, or when God's Hand is lifted up, and his Wrath poured out upon Men for their Abominations, and greater Wrath denounced and ready to break forth.

(6.) Such who sin boldly, impudently, in the Face of the Sun; *Shew their Sin as Sodom, and hide it not.*

(7.) Such who expose the Holy Name of God which they profess, to Reproach, and harden the wicked World in their Sins, and open the Mouths of many to blaspheme God, and speak evil of his Ways and People.

(8.) Such who delight in Sin, or take pleasure in their Wickedness; do boast and glory in that which is their shame.

(9.) Such who despise and contemn Jesus Christ and his Ministers in their Hearts, and wilfully cast off all Counsel.

(10.) All those who abuse God's Patience, Goodness, and Long-suffering; and make that an encouragement to them to continue
 Rom. 2. 4. in their evil Ways, which should lead them to Repentance; and may be, hate, reproach and persecute the People of God; nay, and are guilty of blood, crucifying Christ afresh in his Members. Now I say they might be convinced of all these, and many more great Aggravations of Sin; and yet after such a taste, fall away themselves, and become as bad as the worst of them I have mentioned.

4. They

4. They might have a taste of the terrifying Powers of the World to come ; even such a taste as *Felix* had, who trembled Acts 24. when he heard *Paul* preach of Hell, Wrath, or of Judgment to 25. come. This I find our late Annotators intimate to be meant hereby : “ Some of them (say they) were affected with the powerful “ Doctrines of the Gospel concerning the Final Judgment, as “ their Natural Conscience was wrought on by the Spirit in the “ Word ; they felt it as if it were begun in them, the Sparkles “ of God’s Wrath having set their Consciences in a light Flame “ for their Sins. This is a tasting of the Powers of the World to come with a Witness.

5. They may taste of the constraining Powers of the World to come ; so that their Consciences might curb them, and put a Bridle on their Lusts, so that they might not run into Sin as others do : the fear and dread of another World keeps them in awe, and restrains them for a time from committing any open or secret Acts of Wickedness ; and by the Power of this constraining Grace they might, as you have heard, reform their Lives as to become other Men and Women.

6. Moreover, as *the Powers of the World to come* may refer to the Everlasting Joy and Comfort of the Saints, they might also have some seeming taste of the sweetness thereof, I mean, they might have a sight and sense of that happy State the Righteous shall be in in the World to come ; and they finding Christ to be a Redeemer, and that he came to save Sinners from Wrath, and to purchase Everlasting Blessedness, may have some hope of Interest in that Redemption from Wrath, and of being made happy eternally in the World to come : they might promise to themselves a part in the first Resurrection, and their Hopes herein might be as a sweet taste of the Joys and Consolations of that Day. Mr. *David Dickson* speaking of this Passage, saith, They may taste of the Powers of the World to come, that is, saith he, in contemplation of the Blessedness promised to the Saints in Heaven ; and have a natural desire of it, as *Balaam* desired to die the Death of the Righteous. Thus many of the Jews rejoiced in *John’s* Doctrine : *He was a burning and shining Light ; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his Light :* It was but a taste of Joy, it did not continue, it was but for a Season. Joh. 5. 35.

1. It is but a Taste or Savour that arises from an enlightned Conscience, not from a renewed Heart.

2. It is not a taste that makes them out of love with this World, or to be weary of it, or to die to it : though they seem taken with the Thoughts of the World to come, yet they value this World, no doubt, too highly ; 'tis this World that is in their Hearts.

3. It is not a taste of the World to come that changes them into a meet and fit State to be partakers of the Glory and Blessedness of it, as the Saints are said to be *giving Thanks unto the Father*, Col. I. 12. *which hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. 'Tis not a bare taste can do this, no, nothing but a thorough change of Nature, or a spiritual receiving and feeding by Faith on Jesus Christ.

4. It was not such a tasting of the Powers of the World to come that made them long for it, and to seek it with the full bent of their *Wills*, and urgency of their *Affections*, and to contemn all the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this present evil World for it ; as *Moses* and all the Holy Patriarchs did : *For they that saw such things, declare plainly they seek a Countrey; and confessed they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth*. Heb. II. 13. Ver. 13, 14.

5. It was a *tasting* not a *feeding* on Jesus Christ, and a digesting of his Word ; they come not to experience the Powers of the World to come were begun in them, setting them against Sin, Satan, and this World.

6. And lastly, It was a tasting, but no saving Relish, no Soul-craving after a true Interest in the Glory of the World to come ; they did not find the Power of the Resurrection and last Judgment in themselves : And that tasting that doth not secure the Soul against a total and final Apostacy, as Union with Christ doth, is not to be valued or accounted of.

APPLICATION.

1. I told you, Brethren, at first, that touching these Persons Attainments, here is nothing spoken of Union with Christ, of the Faith of God's Elect, of Regeneration, Love to God and to his People, nothing of Adoption, Justification nor Sanctification, and so nothing that is peculiar to a true Christian, nothing of those things that accompany Salvation.

2. It appears they are like the Ground, that oft receives the Rain that falls upon it, and yet bears or brings forth Briars and Thorns, therefore they are nigh unto cursing, whose End is to be burned ; and this the Apostle hints of them in *Verf. 7, 8*.

3. This

3. This informs us that Men may go a great way in a visible Profession of the Gospel, by common Influences of the Spirit, and Light improved by natural Powers, and yet be in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity.

4. O bless God for the least degree of saving Grace: Have you love to God, to his poor Saints? Do you minister unto them for Christ's Sake? then have you obtained to a higher degree of Attainment than those ever had, and no cause to fear your spiritual State and Condition.

Thus I have passed through the second thing I first propounded to speak unto, namely, What those Attainments are that are spoken of the Persons in our Text. I shall now come to the last thing, to shew you what is spoken of them.

Thirdly, What is spoken of these Persons, consists of two Parts.

1. That they may fall away.
2. That it is upon their so falling away, impossible for them to be renewed by Repentance.

It is the last of these I purpose to speak of, viz. That it is impossible to renew them again unto Repentance; either to such a Repentance they once had, or to true, saving, and Evangelical Repentance: The Reason is by the Holy Ghost added; *Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame.* How it is impossible for these to be renewed unto Repentance. Heb. 6. 6.

1. It is not doubtless impossible, in respect of God's Absolute Power, had he not limited himself by an unchangeable Decree: But if he hath determined to deny Grace, and all saving Influences of his Spirit, to these Apostates, that makes it impossible for them ever to be renewed; which shews us that the Power to change the Heart is not in the Creature, it is God's Work on the Soul, 'tis he that stamps his own Image upon us; and if he withdraws the Influences of his Holy Spirit from Men, or refuses to give Grace to them, in order to bring them to Repentance, and to believe in Christ, they must perish. Now God will not afford these Persons that so fall away, the Assistance of his Spirit, in order to the working the great Work of Faith in them; therefore it is impossible for them to be renewed. "He saith not (saith one) it is impossible they should be saved, but that it is impossible they should be renewed unto Repentance; these Apostates Salvation is impossible, because their Repentance is impossible. He that never

repenteth, can never be saved; for he that repenteth not, shall not have Remission of Sin: and if the Holy Spirit be utterly withdrawn from Men, it is impossible they should ever be renewed to Repentance.

2. The Persons therefore here intended, do not repent, cannot repent, Repentance is hid from their Eyes; they never endeavour after Repentance, they are left to hardness of Heart, and to final Impenitency by the Lord, as a just Judgment for their horrid Evil and cursed Apostacy: possibly they may fall under *Terror and Despair*, yet never desire or look after Repentance on God's Terms. Brethren, it is not impossible for the greatest Sinner in the World to be renewed, that hath not sinned against the Holy Ghost, or whom God hath not wholly given up to blindness of Mind, and to hardness of Heart: *All manner of Sins and blasphemy against the Father and the Son, shall be forgiven unto Men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto Men. And all Unrighteousness is Sin, and there is a Sin unto Death.*

Mat. 12.
31.

3. God leaves these Persons for ever, he utterly casts them off: And *wo unto them* (saith he) *when I depart*: And may say unto them, and much more, as he said once unto Ephraim; *Ephraim is joined unto Idols, let him alone.* He commands his Ministers to *let them alone*, and not strive with them, reprove nor exhort them any more. He saith unto Conscience, *Let them alone*, check, curb, restrain nor rebuke them any more. He saith unto his Spirit, *Let them alone*, move them, or excite them to perform Religious Duties no more, strive with them no more for ever; No Doctrine, no Word, no Rod, no Affliction or Judgment shall do them good any more for ever. This Spiritual Judgment is the worst of all Judgments, and so makes it impossible for them ever to be renewed unto Repentance; for there *remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.*

Heb. 10.
26, 27.

4. God puts an end unto all expectation concerning them; he looks for no more Good from them, he exercises no more Care about them, no more Labour, Pains nor Patience towards them; God affords no more Means of Grace for their Conversion, Repentance is hid from their Eyes; he says, *Let this Ground lie barren for ever*, it shall never be plowed, sowed, nor watered any more for ever: He looks for no more Fruit, he will not dress it nor dung it any more; his Sun shall shine upon it no more, nor shall the Rain fall upon it from Heaven any more: *wo unto such Souls;*

Souls; God saith to them, as Christ said when he cursed the barren Fig-tree, *Never Fruit grow on you any more.*

5. God in Judgment and Wrath gives these up to a reprobate Sense, to hardness of Heart, to blindness of Mind, and to a feared Conscience; and they become notoriously Wicked, being filled with Rage and Madnes, full of Envy and Malice against God, and against Christ, and against all that fear God.

6. And usually they are left in severity to their sensual Lusts, and become notoriously Wicked and Prophane, nay rather worse than the worst of Carnal Persons that never were enlightned at all. *And so he gave them up to their own Hearts Lusts, and they walked in their own Counsel:* They are left, or given up unto Satan, to be led, acted and influenced by him; and are commonly also carried away into pernicious Errors and Delusions, even to *believe a Lie, that so they may be damned, because they received not the Truth in the Love of it, that they might be saved:* And many times they become Persecutors of God's People, reproaching, vilifying and contemning all Religion. Ps. 81. 12. 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Quest. *What a kind of Sin is the Sin against the Holy Ghost? And what sort of Persons are they who may sin this Sin?*

Ans. 1. I shall shew you, first in the Negative, what a Sin it is not; Namely, all Sin or Sins whatsoever that any carnal Person, who to this Day abode under the Power of Natural Ignorance, and never was enlightned by any Operations of the Spirit, commits; for such cannot commit the Sin against the Holy Ghost, it being positively said, *That they are such who were once enlightned.* *What is not the Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

2. It is not every Sin which is against Light and Knowledge: for no doubt but *David* and *Peter* sinned against Knowledge, and the Light of their own Consciences, and after they had been enlightned, yet were recovered and renewed unto Repentance.

3. The Sin against the Holy Ghost, is not every Sin that is committed against the Holy Ghost; for he that grieves the Holy Spirit, and that quencheth the Holy Spirit, sins against the Holy Spirit; nay, all wicked Men who sit under the Preaching of the Gospel, no doubt, sin against the Spirit whilst they resist the Strivings and Motions thereof.

4. It is not any hainous and abominable Sin, as Whoredom, Perjury, Murder, no not Self-Murder; not the murdering of the Saints of God. nor putting Christ himself to Death by wicked Hands, or the murdering of the Lord of Life and Glory. *Paul* was guilty of the Blood of *Stephen*; and many of the Jews were

pardoned who might have a Hand in the barbarous Murder of the Son of God.

5. It is not every wilful and presumptuous Sin; for multitudes of wicked ignorant Persons so sin daily, for whom there is Mercy and Pardon upon Repentance, though they have a *Where's Forehead*, and refuse to be ashamed.

6. It is not every degree of Apostacy or Backsliding from God: A true Child of God may be guilty of a partial *Apostacy*; for thus Israel sinned and fell from God, nay, backslid so far, as to turn to cursed Idolatry, yet God offered them Pardon: *Return, backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, &c.*

7. Nay, I will not say that every malicious Sin against God's People is the Sin against the Holy Ghost, when Men hate the Saints for their Religion and Goodness; though it be one of the highest Degrees of Wickedness, because therein their hatred against God himself is manifested: But what may not a Man do that is acted and influenced by the Devil in the Times of his Ignorance?

8. It is not the Sin of Unbelief, though that be a damning Sin, yea [the damning Sin] as it is a Sin against the Remedy God hath provided, and against the highest manifestation of God's Goodness, and against the highest Testimony and Witness: yet many that thus sin, nay continue at present in and under the Power of Unbelief, may come to see their horrid Evil, and by the Grace of God may believe, and be forgiven this as well as other Sins.

1 Joh. 3.9. *Lastly*, I have shewed you that no true Believer can commit this Sin; *He that is born of God, cannot commit Sin*, viz. he cannot sin unto Death. So much in the Negative, what Sin the Sin against the Holy Ghost is not.

What the Sin against the Holy Ghost is. *Secondly*, I shall shew you, in the Affirmative, according to that Light I have, what Sin this Sin is, or open the Nature thereof, and what sort of Persons they are who do or may commit it.

1. The Persons that may commit the Sin against the Holy Ghost, our Text informs us, are such who have *been once enlightened*, and that have attained to the Knowledge of the Truth, or true way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, and have had such a kind of Taste of the *Heavenly Gift*, and of the *good Word of God*, and *Powers of the World to come*, more or less, of which I have shewed: they have received the Gifts and common Graces of the Spirit.

2. And also have escaped the Corruptions of the World, through the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, or attained to a great Reformation of Life, in so much that they were look'd upon as Saints and eminent Christians, many of them being Professors of the Gospel, and might be great Preachers thereof: Tho' it seems that others who never professed the Gospel, were and may be guilty of committing of this Sin, as those *Jews* no doubt were, who said, our Bleis'd Saviour did cast out Devils by *Beelzebub the Prince of Devils*. 2 Pet. 2. 20. Mar. 12.

3. It is a sinning wilfully, after a Person hath received the Knowledge of the Truth, or Gospel of Christ; *For if we sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin*. Though every wilful sinning is not this Sin, yet every one that is guilty thereof, doth sin wilfully, and that in the highest degree. Pray note it, 'tis a wilful casting off and forsaking the Truth of God, and an utter deserting the Church and People of God, nay, a wilful rejecting the Truth which they before had embraced, and tasted some sweetness in, opposing and contradicting that which the Holy Spirit testifies to their Consciences is the Truth of Christ; therefore they wilfully reject the Motions of the Holy Ghost, nay condemn the Operations thereof. Heb. 10. 26.

4. And as it is a rejecting of the Motions and Operations of the Holy Spirit, after those Illuminations they had received, so also it is done maliciously, or from Spite and Malice; *And hath done Despite unto the Spirit of Grace*: They wilfully desert the Assemblies of God's Church and People, and *esteem the Blood of Christ* (whereby he was consecrated a Sacrifice unto God, or (as some) whereby they thought once they had been sanctified) an unholy Thing, and accounting the Motions of the Holy Spirit, and his Operations, a meer Delusion of the Devil: And thus some of the *Pharisees* sinned. Christ healed one possessed of an unclean Spirit, a Work wrought by the Power of the Holy Ghost; they imputed it to the Devil, saying, *This Fellow casteth out Devils by the Prince of Devils*. This was a wilful Sin, and done no doubt in Malice, and against the Convictions of their own Consciences: for they could not certainly but know, that he was the Son of God by the wonderful Works he did. See *ver. 31, 32*. Upon this our Saviour doth intimate, that they were guilty of sinning the Sin against the Holy Ghost, that shall never be forgiven unto Men. Mat. 12. 22, 24.

5. It is a *treading under Foot the Son of God*, contemning and vilifying him, as these *Pharisees* seem'd to do; and which, as it is

thought by many, *Julian the Apostate* was guilty of, who in disdain, when he was wounded, threw his Blood up towards Heaven, crying, *Thou Galilean thou hast overcome me*, or to that purpose; he in reproach and hatred, seemed to call Christ a *Galilean*, would not call him by any one of his own proper Names.

6. And lastly, It doth consist in a fatal and utter renunciation of the Christian Religion, and all the Institutions, Doctrines and Principles thereof, and a turning to Judaism or Idolatry, or else to perfect Atheism; and all this, as *Dr. Owen* signifies, with an avowed and professed Enmity to Christ and Christianity, and therefore not without the highest Reproach and Contempt imaginable, against the Person of Christ, as well as against the Gospel, embracing the Love of Sin, or of the Riches and Honours of this present evil World, valuing their Lufts above the Comfort of the Holy Ghost. We have, as if they should say, tasted of the Spirit, and of heavenly Things, and do disclaim him and them, and witness against him, and by that Experience we have had, do disown all that pretended Good that some boast of to be in their Divine Things, and condemn that Spirit they glory in and are led by.

APPLICATION.

First, Take heed of those Sins that tend or lead to this unpardonable Sin.

1. Take heed of a malicious Thought against the Holy Ghost; don't think it is the Devil that disquiets and disturbs you about Sin, Wrath and Hell; you convicted Sinners look to it, that you charge not these Convictions you have of the Evil of your Sin upon Satan. He you may be sure will not trouble you for your Sins, but let you go on peaceably in your wicked Ways; though when you are awakened, he may persuade you that there is no Mercy for you. Doubts and despairing Thoughts commonly rise from Satan, but not Sorrow and Grief for Sin: No, no, that is from your Conscience as it is influenced by the Holy Ghost.

2. Beware of harbouring a malicious Thought of Religion, or of praying by the Holy Spirit; as I heard lately of a wicked Man, who hearing a Minister pray in a most excellent manner, that said, *How doth the Devil help him?* or to that effect; O this is dangerous!

3. Take

3. Take heed of blasphemous Words against the Holy Spirit : Will any dare to say, that the Devil is in God's People, that they are so resolute in their Ways, and will not conform to the National Church ?

4. Beware, you that make a Profession of Religion, and that have been enlightned, how you fall away and turn again to Folly, and to your sinful Practices ; for this is the high Way to the unpardonable Sin, or Sin unto Death ; you know not but that a *partial* Apostacy may end in a *total* one at last.

5. Above all things, look to it that you rest not on a common Work of the Spirit, without a real Work of Faith and Regeneration : Rest on nothing short of Christ, neither on Reformation, Duties, nor inherent Grace, for it is dangerous so to do.

Quest. *But why is it impossible for these to be renewed unto Repentance ?*

Ans. 1. It is because the Decree is gone out against them, God will not renew them, and none else can.

2. More directly and immediately it is, because the Holy Ghost hath utterly forsaken them, and withdrawn all his Operations from them for ever ; whose work it is alone to renew and work Repentance in the Hearts of Sinners : Men cannot repent, when the Holy Spirit hath utterly left them ; no, nor have any desire to repent : think of this you that magnify the Will of Man.

O Sinners, love the Holy Spirit, cherish the Motions thereof, and do not grieve him, nor resist his Motions and Operations.

Secondly, By way of Consolation to Believers.

1. Here is still comfort for you that are the Children of God, born of God, you cannot sin this Sin, you cannot sin unto Death, the Seed remains in you : you mourn that you cannot repent as you would do ; your Hearts are tender, you need not fear your Condition. Do you fear to offend God, to grieve the Spirit ? O that is a blessed Sign : Do you love God, love his People ? do you minister as you have ministred to the poor Saints ?

2. O remember you are in Christ's Hand : *We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation, though we thus speak.*

Quest. *What things are they that accompany Salvation ?*

I answer. Union with Christ, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, inherent Holiness and Perseverance in Grace. O see that you endeavour to make your Calling and Election sure, by adding to your Faith, Vertue; and to Vertue, Knowledge; and unto Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity. And if you do those things (and these things you shall do, if you are true Believers) you shall never fall; For so an Entrance shall be ministred to you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To whom with the Father and Holy Ghost be Glory, Honour, and Praise, for ever. Amen.

H Y M N S of P R A I S E.

A New Song sing unto the Lord
 For mighty Wonders done,
 His right Hand, and his glorious Arm,
 Hath our Salvation won.
 Let all poor Sinners taste and try
 That thou, O Lord, art good;
 Nay let them feed, Lord Christ, on thee,
 And wash them in thy Blood:
 That they with Saints with one accord,
 May joy with Holy Mirth,
 Before the Great and Glorious Lord,
 And shew his Praises forth.
 Come Sinners, come, and feed on Christ,
 Before that you do die;
 Come to the Wedding-Dinner, come,
 See here's Variety.
 All Good is in the Lord ye need,
 Let not a Taste suffice;
 But search to find where the Sweetness
 Of Gospel-Dainties lies.
 Truly enlightned Souls may sing,
 Who special Grace receive;
 True cause of Joy to such does spring,
 Who savingly believe:
 Such Souls shall never fall away,
 But ever happy be;
 Such shall be fed with Christ's own Lambs,
 And sing eternally.

Break forth and sing now, all ye Saints,
 Lift up God's Name on high,
 In sacred Songs to celebrate
 His Praise continually:
 Exalt the living God above,
 Your standing is most sure;
 Thy Mercy, Lord, and tender Love,
 Will keep our Souls secure.
 When we do fall, Lord, we shall rise
 By thy own Blessed Hand;
 Thou set'st our Feet upon a Rock,
 Where we most safely stand.
 With Saints of old we'll sing therefore,
 And say, Spring up O Well,
 And send thy Waters forth for to
 Refresh thy Israel.
 The Pleasures of the World to come
 Let's taste of every Day,
 And long when Jesus on the Throne
 Shall the bless'd Scepter sway.
 What shall we hear, what shall we see,
 When raptured in Bliss,
 When we with Blessed Jesus be,
 What Happiness like this?
 We therefore sing the Lamb's sweet Song,
 And Him we will adore;
 The Day is near when Saints shall be
 With him for ever more.

The Great Salvation :

O R,

The Salvation of the Gospel

Great and Glorious.

Delivered in several SERMONS,

By BENJ. KEACH.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?

IN the precedent Chapter, the Apostle sets forth the Excellency, Glory and Dignity of the Person of Jesus Christ.

1. Above *Moses* and the Prophets, ver. 1, 2, 3. *God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets; Ver. 2. Hath in these last Days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things. Ver. 3. Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himself purged our Sins, sat down on the right Hand of the Majesty on High.*

2. Above the Holy Angels: ver. 4. *Being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath by Inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they.* Christ doth not only surpass *Moses* and the Prophets, but also all the Angels of God.

Sermon
I.

Reader,
This Treatise is swollen so big already, that I can give thee little more than the Heads of the Sermons on this Text.

1. In respect of his being God, of the Substance of the Father, and the express Image of his Person, the Essential Glory of God shining forth in him.
2. In that he as God created, and also doth uphold the World, and all things in it, *by the Word of his Power.*
3. In that he hath obtained a more excellent Name than they, *verse 4.*
4. In that Angels are required to worship him, *ver. 5, 6.*
5. In that Angels are but his Servants, *ver. 7, 14.*
6. In respect of his Scepter and Kingdom, *ver. 8.*
7. In respect of his glorious Exaltation at the Father's right Hand, *ver. 13.*

The Apostle having laid down these things so fully and clearly, to illustrate and confirm the great Doctrine of the Gospel; he in the beginning of this second Chapter, proceeds to make the necessary Improvement of it: *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest Heed to the Things which we have heard, lest at any Time we let them slip,* *ver. 1.* For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, &c. (and from hence he brings the Words in our Text) *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation? &c.*

The Words contain an *Interrogation*; which doth imply a strong and most vehement *Negation*; *How shall we escape if we, &c.* That is, we cannot escape, or it is impossible we, or any Persons whatsoever, should escape, if we or they neglect so great Salvation. *Escape what?* That is implied here, which is not expressed, namely, the Wrath of God: How shall we escape the dreadful Judgment and Indignation of God, or Eternal Damnation in Hell, *if we neglect or slight, despise or reject the Means of this Salvation?*

He confirms what he asserts, or aggravates the Greatness of their Sin who do neglect this Salvation, and the impossibility of such ever to escape God's Wrath.

1. From the Power and Authority of Christ, who not only wrought this Salvation out, but only first declared it, or made it known; *which first began to be spoken by the Lord.* Which some think may refer to his first declaring of it from the beginning to Adam upon his Transgression, and to the Fathers under the Old Testament: But I conceive he means chiefly our Lord's preaching this Salvation in the Days of his Flesh, when he entred first on his Ministry, as *verse 1.* of the first Chapter; *God hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his Son.*

2. From

2. From the confirmation of it, by *Signs and Wonders*. I shall be very brief in speaking unto the Terms of our Text.

How shall we escape, avoid, get clear of, or deliver our selves from God's Wrath and Vengeance.

If we neglect, if we mind other things more than this Salvation, or seem to be indifferent in and about this great Business, like those that made light of the Invitation to the *Marriage-Supper*, Mat. 22. Luke 14. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

So great Salvation, namely, the Salvation of the Gospel. *Great*, as it refers to God, denotes the glorious Perfections of his Nature, the *Great God*; it signifies the infinite Power, Wisdom, Holiness, Mercy and Glory of his Majesty. *Great*, as it refers to things, may be considered as to the Nature and Quality of them, as *Great Riches*, *Great Light*; as the Sun is called a great Light, that is, a Glorious Light, excelling all other Natural or Created Lights, or Artificial Lights. *Great Peace have they that love thy Law*; that is, Glorious Peace. So, great Salvation denotes Glorious Salvation, exceeding all Temporal Salvation. *So Great*, this [*so*] raises the Greatness and Glory of this Salvation. *God so loved the World*: So, how? Even so, that it cannot be conceived, much less expressed. So, this great Salvation is so wonderful, so amazing, so glorious, and so affecting, it calls for all to admire it, consider it, imbrace it, and by no means to slight or neglect it.

From hence I shall note three Points of Doctrine.

Doct. 1. *That the Salvation of the Gospel is a Great and Glorious Salvation.*

Doct. 2. *That the Means of this Salvation may be neglected.*

Doct. 3. *That all such who do neglect this Salvation, shall not, cannot escape.*

I purpose to speak to all these three Propositions, and shall begin with the first, namely, That the Salvation of the Gospel is a Great and Glorious Salvation.

First, I shall prove, and fully (God assisting) demonstrate the Truth of this Doctrine.

Secondly, I shall improve it by way of Application.

First, *It is a Great and Glorious Salvation comparatively*: or when it is compared with all other Salvations.

Gospel-Salvation great comparatively.

1. That was a Great and Glorious Salvation which God wrought for *Israel* at the *Red Sea*. But what a Salvation was that? Who were they saved from? It was from *Pharaoh*, a bloody and cruel Persecutor; but this is from Satan and all cruel Enemies of our Souls.

2. That was from the Wrath of Men; this is from the fearful Wrath of God, which none are able to conceive of: according to thy Fear, so is thy Wrath.

3. That was a Salvation of the natural Lives of the Children of *Israel*; this a Salvation of our Immortal Souls and Bodies too for ever.

4. That was a Type of this Salvation; a Shadow of it: and as far as the Substance exceeds the Shadow of a Thing, so far doth this Salvation exceed that and all other Salvations.

5. That was a Temporal Salvation, this is an Eternal Salvation. Now that Salvation at the *Red Sea* being one of the greatest Temporal Salvations that ever was wrought, I need not mention any other. *Israel* had many great Salvations wrought for them afterwards, and so have many of the Saints had great Salvations and Deliverances wrought for them in the Times of the Gospel.

Nay, we in these Nations have seen and heard of great and wonderful Things which God hath wrought for us, and for our Forefathers. It was a great Salvation that was wrought in 1588, at the Spanish Invasion, and from the *Powder-Plot*; and also that in 1688, when We, and the Protestant Interest, were brought very low, and we could not see which way Relief and Deliverance could come. But alas, what are all these Salvations to this in my Text? Pray remember that Gospel-Salvation is Great and Glorious comparatively. But,

Gospel-Salvation great in it self.

Secondly, *The Salvation of the Gospel is not only great comparatively, but also positively*: not only in respect of all other Salvations, but also in regard of it self. And to demonstrate this, consider, that it is great and glorious in respect of the Time (or rather that Eternity) in which it was contrived and graciously promised.

Rev. 13. 8.

This Salvation, Brethren, was contrived and found out by the Wisdom of God, before the World began. Hence Christ is said to be a *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*; that is, in the Decree, Counsel and Purpose of God: Christ was set up from Everlasting as the great and glorious Mediator and Saviour of all that should believe in him, or that were given unto him by the Father.

The

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his Way, before his Works of Prov. 8. old. I was set up from Everlasting, or ever the Earth was. When 22,23,24 there were no Depths, I was brought forth. As these Scriptures prove the Deity and Eternal Generation of the Son of God; so also there was a Designation of him by the Father, as Mediator, to be our Saviour before all Worlds. Hence God saith of miserable Man, Deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a Ransom. And as it was found out before the beginning of the World, or from Eternity, so it was also as early promised to us, as the Elect in Christ, in hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised before the World began: Compared with that in Timothy, Who hath saved and called us with an holy Calling; not according to our Works; but according to his Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the World began. Job 33.24. Tit. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 9.

God thought of us poor Sinners, and found out this way of Salvation before we had a Being, yea even from Eternity, foreseeing us fallen in the First Adam, brought into a deplorable Condition of Wrath and Misery.

Thirdly, The Salvation of the Gospel is great and glorious, in regard of that Counsel that was held before all Worlds about bringing of it in. Christ the great Saviour was delivered up according to the determinate Counsel of God, Acts 2. 23. Should all the Wise Men and Great Potentates of the Earth be called together, and sit in Council about the doing of some great and wonderful thing, which unless it was effected, all the Kingdoms and States of the Earth would sink and be dissolved, would not all say, that would be an amazing Thing, and an important Concernment? Gospel-Salvation great in respect of that Counsel held in Eternity about it.

Alas! what is a Counsel held by all the wisest Men and greatest Potentates on Earth, of the highest Concernment here, to that Council held by the Glorious Trinity in Eternity, about bringing in of this Salvation? O of what Moment is the Salvation of our Souls? None but the Great God could effect it, it was the Result of Infinite Wisdom and Counsel. God seemed, Brethren, to call a Council about the first Creation of Man; Let us make Man after our own Image, &c. But how much more of the Glory of God's Wisdom, according to his Eternal Purpose, shines forth, as the Result of that Counsel held about the Restauration of Fallen Man, than what shone forth in the first Creation of him? And the Counsel of Peace was between them both; that is, between the Father and the Son. Zech. 6. 11.

*It is a great
Salvation
in respect of
the Design
of it.*

Fourthly, *The Salvation of the Gospel is great and glorious in respect of God's Design therein: Which more generally and comprehensively I may open in three respects.*

1st. His own Glory in all his Attributes.

2^{dly}. The confounding and baffling of Satan, and the utter Destruction of his Kingdom and Hellish Design.

3^{dly}. The Eternal Salvation of Man; I mean, all that believe in Jesus Christ, or are given to him by the Father.

1st. God before all things hereby designed his own Glory, or to make all the Perfections of his Holy Nature manifest to the Creature which he had made, and to open a Way by which each of his Attributes might gloriously appear, and to vanquish that Cloud that seem'd to eclipse their shining.

1. For God's Mercy could not be extended in another Way to the Help and Relief of Mankind under Wrath and Misery, because Justice was injured, and called for the Sentence to be executed on us for our Sins.

2. And his Justice could not be executed, but his Mercy and Goodness would have been brought under Obscurity, and been veiled for ever. And had Mankind for ever been brought under the just Desert of Sin, God had, it is true, glorified his Justice; but Mercy is as well a Property of his Blessed Nature as Justice: and had that been done, how had any of his Creatures known any thing of his Mercy and Goodness? certainly Mercy had never been manifested at all, no more than is seen in the casting off the Fallen Angels. God to them appeared only Just, not Gracious; but in Christ to Mankind, he appears not only Just, but also Good and Gracious. Yet the Salvation of our Souls could not consist with the Holiness and Justice of God in a way of Mercy, without a Satisfaction be made to Divine Justice. Therefore Infinite Wisdom in substituting Jesus Christ to die in our Nature and Stead, makes God's Justice a full Compensation for the Wrong and Injury we had done by our Sins and Transgressions; and from hence it appears that Infinite Wisdom, Justice, Holiness, Power, Mercy and Goodness, &c. are discovered and magnified equally in God's bringing in this Great Salvation of the Gospel: and this was, I say, the grand Design of God herein, by which he removes and solves all those seeming Contradictions and great Difficulties that appeared in the way of our Eternal Recovery, and magnifies the entire Glory of God, that seem'd to be lost by our Sin, or was before hid under Obscurity; it is hereby fully repaired, and to the Joy of
Saints.

Saints and Angels is made known and magnified in Christ. And from hence it is that the Gospel is called *the Wisdom of God*; and Christ is also called *the Wisdom of God*, and *the Power of God*, because in him all the Strength of God, I mean the Power and Glory of all his Attributes, are joined or united together, and shine in equal Glory in our Salvation. 1 Cor. 2. 6.
1 Cor. 1.
24.

But more of this hereafter.

2dly. Hereby also Satan is overthrown, and his grand Design marr'd and frustrated for ever, and his Kingdom spoiled; our Lord Jesus *having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it*: and this was done by the Death of his Cross, and by his Resurrection; *To this purpose was the Son of God manifest, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.* Col. 2. 15.
1 Joh. 3. 8.

3dly. Moreover hereby God designed to make Man, even all that believe in Christ and embrace this Salvation, happy again, and blessed for ever; nay (as I shall shew you, before I have done with this Text, God assisting me) even to raise him up into a higher and better State than that was in which he was at first created.

Fifthly, *The Salvation of the Gospel is Great and Glorious, if we consider how low Man was fallen and sunk by his Transgression, and what kind of Wrath he was laid under*; As also if we consider how helpless he was, having no Friend nor Brother that could give to God a Ransom for him; no nor could the Angels of Heaven do it, whose Power is very great: No, no, none but Christ alone, with his Almighty Arm, could save us from the threatned Wrath and Vengeance of an angry God. Besides, this Salvation must needs be great and glorious, if we consider the seasonableness of it; it was a timely Salvation, it was brought in just as the Hand of Justice was up, and ready to strike the fatal Stroke. Justice stood (as it were) with his Ax in his Hand to cut off all our Heads; and Christ to save us, stepped in and laid down (as I may say) his own Neck, and took the Blow: Or we may conceive that Justice stood with his Spear in his Hand, ready, as it were, to run it into our Bowels; and Jesus Christ run in between Divine Wrath and our poor Souls, and cried out, *Let thy Spear, O Justice, be thrust into my Heart, I will die for these condemned and guilty Wretches.* See what Paul says, *When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the Ungodly.* So *Vers. 8. While we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* Gospel-Sal-
vation great:
considering
how low
Man was
fallen, and
the season-
ableness of it.
Rom. 5. 6.

Though I deny not but that this Text may refer to the Fulness of

Time.

Time prefixed by the Almighty for Christ to come, and take our Nature upon him, and to die in our room; and that was the due Time, or Time God had appointed: Yet Christ was as a Lamb slain from the beginning of the World, nay, before the Foundation thereof. And we may say, that as soon as our *first Parents* sinned, even then, and at that very Season, Jesus Christ step'd in, and yielded up himself to God as a Sacrifice for us: and had he not then been accepted, we had been lost for ever. O how refreshing, how sweet and how welcome is it to a poor condemned Criminal, when he is brought to the Place of Execution, to see the Sheriff pull out an Arrest of Execution, a Reprieve, nay, an absolute Pardon, and tell him, You have met with a Friend, the King has accepted of one that he ordained and substituted to be your Surety, and to die for you, and satisfy the Law and Justice for you; Friend, you are acquitted. Brethren, thus it is here, Christ offered himself, and the Father accepted him in our stead to die for us, and to bear that Wrath that was due to us for our Sins; and this he did then, even when we first sinned in *Adam*. So that we may say, in due time Christ died for the Ungodly, just as the Stroke of Wrath and Divine Justice was falling on us, for it was all one as if he had then actually suffered: And also his Blood was as efficacious to save and absolve *Adam*, and all that did believe, and apply the Virtue thereof, before it was shed, as it is to us who believe in these latter Times of the World, after it has been shed more than sixteen hundred Years. Would not such a guilty Malefactor I mentioned, say, O this is a great Salvation indeed! nay, stand and admire at it, he expecting nothing but Death, and had none to help him, or afford any hope or relief to him in the least!

APPLICATION.

1. We may from hence infer, God's Love to Mankind is inconceivable; nay, his Love to sinful Man, to lost Man, rebellious Man: *Job 7. 17.* *What is Man that thou art mindful him?* such a vile Creature, a Worm, a filthy and loathsome Worm, a cursed Rebel and Traitor against God, that God should let out his Thoughts from Eternity upon him, when the Sentence was past against him, and he ready to go down to the Pit of Everlasting Wrath and Misery; that he should say, *Job 33. 24.* *Deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a Ransom.* 'Tis not he (that is, Man himself) hath found a Ransom:

Ransom : No, no, I have, saith God, found a Ransom ; *the Just for the Unjust*, or in the room and place of the guilty Sinner. It is not, I have found Man's good Works, Man's reformed Life, his Repentance, his Faith, his Tears, his sincere Obedience ; no, but it is the Obedience of Christ, the Blood of Christ, the Sacrifice of Christ, the Merits and Righteousness of Christ, this God hath found to be our Ransom. God hath found a full Ransom, a perfect Ransom. God accepted of Christ's Sacrifice for a Compleat Satisfaction ; it is more satisfactory than if we had lain in Hell for ever, for we must always have been paying, but never could have made Satisfaction. O who could have thought of such a Ransom, of such a way of Salvation ! in this lies the Depth of Divine Wisdom, and the Great Mystery of the Gospel : How should we adore and admire the Grace of God in Jesus Christ !

2. To you poor Sinners let me speak one word by way of Exhortation : Did God so early contrive our Salvation ? O then do you set your Hearts on work to seek this Salvation, I mean, an Interest in it ; be early at it, do not defer it : You young Men, think upon it in the morning of your Days, this Salvation calls for your utmost diligence to understand and find out ; the Gospel is a Mystery, 'tis not easily understood. The preaching of a Crucified Christ is to some Men Foolishness ; but to them that are saved, it is the Power of God. Many stumble at the Stumbling-stone God hath laid in *Sion*. Christ is to some a Stumbling-stone, and a Rock of Offence, but take heed he is not so to you.

3. Was there a Council held in Eternity about our Salvation ? O then consult with all Wisdom the grand Design of God herein : It is to exalt his own Glory, his own Name, his own Free Grace ; and this being so, let it be all your care to advance the Riches of his Grace, and let God be wholly exalted, and do you lie low at his Feet. O close in with God's Counsel, accept of this way of Life, do not think there is any other way.

4. And lastly, Consider that the Greatness of God's Mercy and Divine Goodness to us, was also one grand End and Design in finding out this Salvation : It doth display his unspeakable Love and Bowels towards his poor Creature Man. True, he had the like regard to his Justice ; but his Justice had been magnified in our Destruction, if his Mercy had never appeared. But that his Mercy might be manifested, what hath he done, his own Son hath born our Sins, he hath laid the Hand of his Justice, and let out that Wrath that must have lain upon us for ever upon his own

Son, that Mercy might flow forth to us. This should teach us to study Acts of Mercy, and contrive that way to be like unto the Holy and Merciful God: This is that which he requires of us, even to *do justly, love Mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.*

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

Serm. II.

I AM upon the Proof and Demonstration of the first Point of Doctrine raised from our Text, *viz. That Gospel-Salvation is a Great and Glorious Salvation.*

I have spoken to this already under five Considerations.

Gospel-Salvation great, considering the Persons that brought it about.

Sixthly, The Salvation of the Gospel is Great and Glorious, if we consider the Glory and Greatness of those Persons who sat in Counsel about bringing of it in, and working of it out for sinful Man. We commonly judg of the Greatness of the Undertaking, and the Glory of the Work, by considering the Dignity, Glory, Wisdom, Power and Greatness of the Persons concerned in it.

Now if this Work, I mean the Salvation of sinful Man, had been put into the Hands of the mighty Angels, and they had called a Council about it, and shewed their uttermost Skill, Wisdom and Power, in order to the actual accomplishment thereof, would not all say, this must needs be some great and wonderful Work, or a great Salvation? But alas, they could neither have found out a way of Salvation for us, much less have wrought it out: Could they any way have thought how the Glory of every Attribute of God might have been raised, and have shone forth in equal Lustre? could they have secured the Glory of God's Justice and Holiness, and have made up the Wrong we had done to God by our Sin, and so have opened a Way for Mercy and Goodness to run down like a mighty Stream, and secured the Sanction of the Law, and yet have delivered Man from the Curse thereof? God must not, will not lose the Glory of any one of his Attributes, let what will become of the Rebellious Sinner. Alas, they could never have

have found out a way whereby the Attributes of Mercy and Justice might meet together, and Righteousness and Truth kiss each other : the Persons then who found and wrought out this Salvation, were not the Holy Angels of God ; No, no, none but God himself could do it : *The Salvation of Israel is of the Lord* ; He is our Saviour : How often is this expressed in the *Psalms*, and in other Places of the Holy Scripture. Salvation is ascribed to the Lord, to him only ; yea to his own Arm, to the greatness of his Power : *Therefore my own Arm brought Salvation.*

Psal. 25. 5.

Isa. 63. 5.

Brethren, each Person in the Trinity hath a part in it ; the Father hath his Part, the Son hath his Part, and the Holy Ghost hath his Part also. Remember, that these three are one ; though three Persons or Substances, yet but one and the same God, one in Essence, though distinguished as to their distinct Personalities : the Person of the Father is not the Person of the Son ; the Father took not upon him Flesh and died for our Sins, but the Son ; the Son sent not the Father, but the Father sent the Son : The Father and the Son do not proceed from the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost doth proceed from them.

What part of this Salvation is attributed to God the Father.

But a little to open and insist upon the distinct Parts which each Person hath, and how concerned in the accomplishing of this great Salvation.

1. The Father is held forth in the Scripture, as the Contriver or first Author of this Salvation : *All Things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ.* All Things in and about our Salvation are of God the Father, as he is the Fountain and Spring of it : *He hath devised means, that his banished might not for ever be expelled from him. I have found a Ransom* : Where did God find it ? (saith Reverend Caryl) Certainly in his own Bosom, in his own Heart : Jesus Christ came out of the Bosom of the Father, there he was, and God found him in and with himself ; he did not find the Ransom by chance, but he found it in his own Wisdom, Love and Goodness.

2 Cor. 5. 18.

2. The Father was injured, his Glory seemed to be eclipsed by Sin, therefore must be righted, and his Honour repaired ; and he sought out the proper way to do it : I know, as if God should say, how to do the poor Sinner good ; I know how to save him, and do my own Honour, my Justice, Truth and Holiness, no wrong ; my Honour is secured, my Justice is satisfied ; and yet the Sinner whom my Heart is set upon, shall be saved.

3. The Father could only appoint the Terms and Way of our Salvation: Who but God could tell, or did know what would comport with his Truth and Justice, and with the Sanction of his Righteous Law and Infinite Holiness? And he saw it did not comport with his Truth, Justice, Holiness, and Blessed Law, to save Man meerly as an Act of Sovereign Mercy; but it did agree in his Infinite Wisdom to transfer the Punishment of the Sinner to another, namely, to his own Son, he taking our Nature on him; who from the Union of the two Natures in one Person, procured an Infinite Satisfaction, or made a Plenary Compensation for our Sins.

4. God the Father is therefore held forth as the Person who substituted his own Son as Mediator and Surety in our stead and room, to work out our Redemption, or this great and glorious Salvation; and to this end prepared him a Body: *A Body hast thou prepared me.* And the Father is said also to send his Son: How many times doth our Blessed Saviour ascribe this unto the Father, in the Gospel recorded by *John*? I am perswaded not less than forty times: *The Father that sent me, is with me. God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World. This is the Will of him that sent me.*

5. All the Blessings of our Salvation are ascribed to the free Bounty, Mercy, Love and Goodness of God the Father: *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his People, and hath raised up an Horn of Salvation, &c.* And therefore he is titled, *The Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort.* Now this being so, what an abominable thing is it for the *Socinians* to say, That the Doctrine of Satisfaction renders the Son more merciful and kind than the Father; see *Penn's Sandy Foundation Shaken*: No, this is very unjustly and unrighteously thrown upon this great Gospel-Truth. Certainly it exalts the Goodness and Mercy of God the Father, far more than their idle and absurd Notion of God's pardoning Sin in a way of meer Mercy, without a Satisfaction to his offended Justice; seeing God in a way of Mercy and Divine Goodness, is so set upon this Work of our Salvation, that though it cost him the Life of his own Son, yet it shall be done, he will not spare him: *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* The Father did not spare him as an Act of his own Love and Goodness to us; *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Certainly that Person shews greater Love and Pity to another, who to save him gives a *Million*, than he that gives

gives but a Pound. Must God by these Men be deemed to have no Mercy at all, because he seeks the Honour of his Justice equally with the Glory of his Mercy? Is he not Merciful, because he is Just as well as Gracious?

6. Brethren, it was the Father that loved us and chose us in Jesus Christ before the Foundation of the World, which is the Spring of all Spiritual Blessings, even of Redemption and Salvation it self.

7. Moreover, the Father is said to raise Jesus Christ from the Dead: Though the Son being God could raise himself, yet as Mediator, the Power to quicken whomsoever he will, is said to be given to him by the Father. Besides, it is the meer Grace and good Pleasure of God the Father, to accept of Christ and his Obedience for us, and to accept of us in Jesus Christ: Also it is the Father that *blesseth us with all Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.* Eph. 1. 3. Nay, no Man, Christ says, can come unto him, *unless it be given by the Father*; that is, Power must be given to him to come. And again he saith, *No Man can come unto me, except my Father that sent me draw him.* We ought therefore to see we do not lessen the Glory of God the Father in our Salvation, who is the Efficient, the Original and moving Cause thereof: *My Father (saith Christ) hitherto worketh, and I work.* Joh. 5. 17.

Brethren, we are not to attribute the Works of Creation and Providence to God the Father only, for he hath a great and glorious Hand in the Work of Redemption, I may say, to accomplish this Work, even the Salvation of his Elect; *he worketh hitherto,* and Christ also worketh: which brings me to consider of the next Person in the Trinity concerned herein.

Secondly, As the Father hath, as you have heard, his part in bringing in the great Salvation of the Gospel, so Jesus Christ, the Son of God, hath his part in working of it out; the Father fix'd on him, as the great Agent, actually to perfect it: he is in such a peculiar manner concerned in it, that his Name is *Saviour*, his Name shall be called *Jesus*; *Jesus* signifies a *Saviour*: certainly this must needs be a great Salvation, if we consider the Greatness, Dignity and Glory of his Person, whom God hath sent to save us. And because it is mainly from this Foot of account, that the Apostle in the Text draws his Inference, and calls Gospe-Salvation Great Salvation, I shall a little further enlarge upon this particular;

What a Part Christ hath in working out this Salvation.

Christ is a
great Savi-
our.
Phil. 2. 9. 1. Jesus Christ hath a great Name given to him, yea, a Name
above every Name; that is, he is so highly exalted, (as he is Me-
diator) that he is clothed with Power, Glory and Majesty, a-
bove all Creatures in Heaven and Earth; so that all in Heaven
above, and in Earth beneath, must bow down before him, and
adore and worship him, and be in subjection to him: *For unto us*
Hs. 9. 6. *a Child is born, a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his*
Shoulders; And his Name shall be called Wonderful, &c. This his
Name is according to his Person, he is a wonderful or an admi-
rable Person; Wonderful in his Incarnation, *God-man*; Wonder-
ful in his Birth, Wonderful in his Life, Wonderful in his Death;
and in the Effects, End and Design of his Death; he is not only
called *Wonderful*, but also *Counsellor*: Never such a Counsellor for
Wisdom and Knowledg, for he is the *Wisdom of God* it self, and
the *only Wise God*: He is called the *Mighty God*, the *Everlasting Fa-*
ther, or the Father of Eternity, and the *Prince of Peace*. Moreover,
he is called *Immanuel*, God with us, God in our Nature; and also
called the *only begotten Son of God*, and the *Prince of the Kings of the*
Earth, the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, the *only Potentate*; he
is called the *Desire of all Nations*, *Elect*, *Precious*: *And he is made so*
excellent Name than they; for unto which of the Angels said he at any
Hs. 6. 9. time, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee?* He is
called the *one Mediator*; time would fail me to speak of all his
Names. And,

2. As is his Name, such is his Nature: He is *God's Fellow*;
he is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father; *he thought it not rob-*
Phil. 2. 6. *bery to be equal with God.* O what a kind of Salvation must this
be, that such a Person is sent to work it out! One clothed with
such a Name, with such a Nature, with such Glory: He is called
a Saviour, a great One; *He shall* (that is, God shall) *send them*
Hs. 19. 20. *a Saviour, a great One, and he shall deliver them.* He, as he is God-
Man, is ordained Heir of all Things, and all Power in Heaven
and Earth is given to him; nay, he is the Upholder, the Sustai-
ner or Preserver of the World: he is not only the *Brightness of*
the Father's Glory, and express Image of his Person, but he upholdeth
Hs. 1. 3. *all things by the Word of his Power.* He is one and the same God
with the Father, the express Character of the Father's Person; so
that they that see and know him, see and know the Father
Joh. 14. 9. also. He supports, sustains, feeds, preserves, governs, throws
down and raises up, kills and makes alive whom he will; he has
the

the Keys of Hell and Death. He is the Wonder of Angels, the Consternation and Dread of Devils, and the Joy and Delight of the Saints; there is not such another Person in Heaven nor Earth, perfect God, and perfect Man, and yet but one Christ, one Person: certainly here's some great and wonderful Work to be done, when such a Person is substituted; ordained and qualified, and sent into the World to work out the actual Accomplishment thereof. Nay, God himself, who delighteth in him, put the Prophet to propound this Question concerning him; *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died Garments from Bozrah? this that is* Isa. 63. 1. *glorious in his Appàrel, travelling in the greatness of his Strength?* Christ himself (as I conceive) answers, *I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save.* O happy Mortals, that God hath sent us such a Saviour, he is mighty to save.

3. Consider also that none but he could save us, procure and work about this Salvation for us; *There was none in Heaven nor Earth* Rev. 5. 5. *able nor worthy to open the Book, and loose the Seals thereof, but the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, he hath prevailed.*

4. Jesus Christ is such an Almighty Saviour, that *he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him.* He has the Perfection of Power with him, he can save to the full, let the State of the Soul that comes to God by him be whatsoever it will or can be. Heb. 7. 25.

1. Though a Man is sunk down to the very Gates of Hell, under the pressure and sense of God's Wrath.

2. Though he hath the Guilt of Millions of Sins like Mountains of Lead lying upon him, yet Christ can save him.

3. Though Satan says there is no Hope, and the Heart of the Sinner joins in with him, and says, there is no Hope, no Pardon, no Help, no Salvation; hang thy self, drown thy self, saith Satan, thou art damn'd, there is no Mercy for thee: yet Christ can then save that poor Soul; and many such he hath saved, when but a little before all hope of Relief seemed to be gone.

4. Though the Devil should raise up all the Force and Powers of Hell and Darkness against a Person, to destroy him, yet Jesus Christ can save him; if he will work upon the Soul by stretching forth his Almighty Power, nothing can obstruct or hinder him.

5. Christ can save from the Sin, from the Guilt, the Filth and Power of it, and break into pieces all the Bonds, Chains and Fetters of the Enemy; nay, let the Sins of a Person be never so many, never so great, yet he can save to the uttermost, though they

are such Sinners as *Manasseh* and *Mary Magdalen* were; nay, such that put to death by wicked Hands the Lord of Life and Glory: 'tis as easy with him to save great Sinners, as the least, or less guilty Ones; he can save *the stout-hearted*, such who are far from

Isa. 42. 12. *Righteousness.*

6. He can save from the Curse of the Law and from the Wrath of God; he is every ways furnished, fitted and enabled to save.

7. He is a Mighty Saviour, and able to save to the uttermost, in that he can save by himself alone, by his own Power; it is not if we will begin the Work, if we will do what we can, he can and will save us; no, but he takes the whole Work of Salvation into his own Hand, he is the Author and Finisher of it, 'tis he alone.

7. Moreover, Christ is as willing to save poor lost and undone Sinners, as he is able; he had his Name given to this end, *i. e.* because of his Power, willingness and readiness to save Sinners.

Brethren, this doth not only bespeak this to be a great Salvation, but also it discovers the greatness of God's Love, even the greatest Pity, Power and Wisdom that ever was manifested.

*The H. Ghost
hath his
part in
working a-
bout our
Salvation.*
Isa. 61. 10.

Thirdly, The third Person that is concerned in this Salvation, is the Holy Ghost: The Father chuses, the Son purchases, and the Spirit applies the Blessings purchased. Salvation is called a Garment; *He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness.* The Father may be said to prepare the Matter which this Robe is made of; the Son wrought it, he made the Garment, and the Holy Spirit puts it on the Soul; the Garment of Salvation is Christ's Righteousness. Again, the Father sought out or chose the Bride, the Son espouses and marries her, but it is the Holy Ghost that inclines her Heart and stirs up, nay, that causes the Soul to like and to love this Blessed Lover, and brings it to yield and consent to accept heartily and willingly of Jesus Christ. We were sick of a fearful and incurable Disease, and the Father found out the Medicine; the Blood of Christ is that Medicine, and the Holy Spirit applies it to the Soul. We were in Debt, in Prison, and bound in Fetters and cruel Chains, and the Father procured a Friend to pay all our Debts; The Son was this our Friend, who laid down the infinite Sum; and the Holy Spirit knocks off our Irons, our Fetters and Chains, and brings us out of the Prison-house. The Father loved us, and sent his Son to merit Grace for us; the Son loved us, and died,

died, and thereby purchased that Grace to be imparted to us; and the Holy Spirit works that Grace in us. O what is the Nature of this Salvation; how Great, how Glorious! That the whole Trinity, both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are thus employed in and about it, that we might have it made sure to us for ever.

APPLICATION.

1. *Reproof.* Wo to such that esteem their own filthy Rags above this Garment of Salvation, or that seem to set light by it: Hath God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, held a Counsel before the World began, about the Salvation of our Souls; and hath each Person of the Blessed Trinity such a Part in order to the making of it to be effectual to us? And shall any dare to say there is no need of this Garment? We may work a Robe out of our own Bowels by the Operations of the Spirit, that will serve to hide our Nakedness, trouble not us with your old Divinity: We are for rational Religion. He that is Righteous, and obeys Christ, and leads a Godly Life, need not doubt of his Salvation: *For in Acts 10. every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him.* O how ready are Men to abuse the Scripture! Can any Man think that his own personal inherent Righteousness, can either justify or save him; or that the Apostle *Peter* means any such thing? God may so far accept of a Man in his Obedience, in which he acts in all Sincerity and Faithfulness to him, as to hear his Prayers, so as to reveal himself to him in Christ as he did to *Cornelius*. But was *Cornelius* a Believer, and justified before he heard of Jesus Christ, and had Faith wrought in his Soul? See how *Peter* preached Christ for Life and Salvation to this Man: Notwithstanding all his own Righteousness, *Peter* was commanded of God to tell him what he should do that he might be saved, plainly intimating he did not know the Way, or how to be saved before *Peter* preached Christ to him: *He* (saith the Lord) *shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.* * And in *verse 43.* *Peter* said, *To him* (that is, to Jesus Christ) *gave all the Prophets witness, that through his Name whatsoever believeth in him, should receive remission of Sins.* Will any say *Cornelius* had remission of Sins before he heard this Sermon, and believed in Jesus Christ? Was not *Peter* sent to him (and to those other *Gentiles* with him) that they might be converted? O take heed you stumble not at this Stone, lest it fall on you and grind you to Powder.

Verse 6.
* God calls the *Gentiles*, or whom he pleases among them, as well as the *Jews*; which *Peter* might not understand before now.

2. Dare

2. Dare any of you think that this Salvation is but a small Matter, and that you need not trouble your selves about it? O tremble you who never had one serious Thought about it to this Day: You have other things to mind, are full of Business; but, O Sirs, what is of such Moment as this Salvation? Yet nevertheless some will not spare time to hear it, or to attend upon the Word of this Salvation: Others will not part with the Love of this World, to have a Part in it; they value their earthly Riches, Pleasures and Honours, above it; nay, too many esteem their filthy Lusts more than an Interest in this great Salvation. But what contempt do such Persons cast upon the great God, who hath manifested such Depths of Divine Wisdom, Grace and Goodness in bringing of it in, and working of it out for our precious Souls: Did they know what God is, Christ is, Salvation is, certainly they would change their Opinion, and not a little blame themselves for their great Folly. Brethren, a true and spiritual Knowledge of the Great Salvation of the Gospel, makes all the Things of the World seem little, nay nothing in comparison thereof: All things that Carnal Men have their Hearts set upon, are poor, thin and beggarly Things, when compared to Grace here, and Glory hereafter. No sooner had *Paul* a true sight of this Great Salvation, but

Gal. 1. 16. immediately he *consulted not with Flesh and Blood*. When the sweetness of Christ and Salvation is tasted, and a Soul knows how good and satisfying it is, every thing that hath a Tincture of Flesh and Blood, all carnal Interests, and fleshly Counsels expire. A full sight of this Salvation seems to make Life uneasy, and Death desirable: *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation*. Nothing in this World could be worth a Thought of his Heart, since his Eyes had seen God's Salvation. Why what did he see? It was Jesus Christ the Author of Salvation, in whom he knew was Salvation, and in no other: He that lives so long as to see Christ by an Eye of Faith to be his Saviour, and his Salvation, will be willing to leave this World, be willing to die, because he then shall die in peace. None can die happily that have not a sight of this Great Salvation; nor can any have a true sight of this Salvation, but they only who have by Faith a true sight of the Blessed Saviour. *Paul*, when he came to the Knowledge of Christ, and of Salvation by Christ, esteems every thing in the World to be no better than *Dung*, and longs to be dissolv'd, and to be in Christ's Arms, and taste how good Salvation is in the full possession of it in Heaven.

3. This reproves such who delay seeking after the Knowledge of this Salvation: If it be so great, it must and ought first of all be regarded: *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness.* May be ere long you will wish you had sought after Christ and Salvation by him, before all things, when you come to lie upon a sick Bed. O Sirs, you will need it at last, and may be seek it when too late. Were a poor condemned Criminal sensible of a Way how to be saved from Death, or that a Pardon might be had, would he delay the Time, or would he not make it all his Business with his uttermost Care to seek for a Pardon, lest the Day of his Execution should come before he hath got it? And if so, he knows die he must: Alas Sirs, what is it to be delivered from Natural Death, to our being delivered from Eternal Death! The Time when you must die may be near; and if you have not an Interest in this Salvation when you die Naturally, your Souls must die Eternally. Pray observe the Argument I am upon to excite and stir up your Souls to a Holy Diligence, in attending on the Means of this Salvation; it is the same the Apostle uses, it is called Great Salvation, considering the Dignity of Christ's Person, who laid down his own Life to purchase it for us; and also was the first great Minister and Preacher of it, *which at first began to be spoken by the Lord*: It was preached by the Lord of Life and Glory, the great Mediator, Head of all Principalities and Powers; and it is again by one of his poor Servants this Day offered unto you, in the Name of my Great Master, therefore refuse it at your Peril: If you receive it, imbrace it, you shall be happy; but if you refuse it, you will be miserable, and at last die in your Sins.

Mar. 6. 33.

4. Here is Comfort and Encouragement for the worst of Sinners. Are you such who are and have been great Sinners? Well, let it be so, yet be not cast down into utter Despair, for here is a great Saviour; you have heard of his mighty Power and Ability to save; and he saith, *All that the Father hath given to me, shall come unto me.* Ay but you perhaps may say, you know not who they be that the Father hath given to Christ. Well, what of that? Pray mind his next Words, *And he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Joh. 6. 37. *Whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life.* Joh. 3. 16. Receive this Saviour, believe in him, and you shall be saved whosoever you are: It is not the greatness of your Sins that can hinder or obstruct him from saving your Souls; though your Sins be as red as Scarlet, or as red as Crimson, he will wash them all away, and make you as white as Wool, as white as Snow.

5. Also here is good News for poor Sin-sick Sinners, to wounded and lost Sinners, I mean, such who feel themselves sick, see and feel themselves wounded; who find they are lost and undone in themselves. O Souls, you are the Persons the Word of this Salvation is sent to; *The Whole need not a Physician, but such that are sick. I am not come to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* Such indeed who are conceited of their own Righteousness, or swelled with a good Opinion of their own good Works, good Deeds, and good Duties, will not come to Christ, such think they need no such Physician as Christ is: But you that see you have no Righteousness of your own, but that all your Righteousness is as *Dung*, O look to Christ, come to Christ, hear what he says to such that are lost, that are under the burden of their Sins, and wounded ones; *Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Mat. 9. 12,
13.

Mat. 11.
28.

6. But here is sad News to such who slight this Salvation, and refuse Jesus Christ, great will their Condemnation be: The Men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this Generation, and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas is here. The greatness of this Saviour who preaches the Gospel to you, and is come to save you, will aggravate your Condemnation. What was Jonas to Jesus Christ? Also our Saviour saith, *The Queen of the South shall rise up in Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost Parts of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here.* Solomon was a mighty King, and for Wisdom exceeded all that went before him. But alas, what was Solomon to Jesus Christ, who is the Wisdom of God it self, and the express Image of the Father's Person, and the Brightness of his Glory? O know you, Sinners, this Day, that Jesus Christ, this glorious King, and Prince of the Kings of the Earth, this mighty Saviour is come to your Doors: *Behold, I stand at the Door and knock.*: Will you not open the Door, nor cry to him to help you to open to him, to enable you to believe in him? What do you say, shall the Son of God stand at your Doors, and you not so much as ask, *Who is there? Who is at my Door?* Shall Christ be kept out of your Hearts, and stand at your Doors, whilst Sin commands the chiefest Room, and has absolute Power over you, and rules in you? How will you be able to look this Blessed Saviour in the Face another Day? Is he come through a Sea of Blood to offer his Love to you, and to espouse you unto himself

Rev. 3. 20.

himself for ever, and will not you be persuaded to break your League with your old Lovers, who will at last stab you at the very Heart, and betray your Souls into the Hands of Divine Wrath? Nay, they have done it already: What are your Lovers but your Lusts, your Pride, your Earthly-mindedness, your sinful Pleasures, Profits and Honours? O resolve to desert them, they otherwise will damn your Souls for ever, and expose you to the Torments of Hell-Fire: And to deliver you from them, and from that Wrath which is due to you for them, (I mean, for your Sins) is Christ come, and this great Saviour is offered to you. The Lord help every one of you to consider of this, and to lay it to Heart.

7. And lastly, Here is Comfort for poor drooping Saints: This Saviour is yours, this mighty Saviour, who is able to save to the uttermost, and he will help you in all your Straits, and supply all your Wants; and he hath taken the Work into his own Hand, and hath also *begun it, and will perform it*, and finally finish it before Phil. 1. 6. that he hath done; rest therefore upon him.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

BRETHREN, the last Day I shewed you that Gospel-Salvation is Great and Glorious Salvation, considering the Greatness, Dignity and Glory of the Persons that are concerned in bringing of it in, and working of it out for us, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: But more particularly upon the Consideration of the Dignity of the Person of Christ, who is that great Saviour God hath sent, who is great in his Name, great in respect of his Person and Nature, great as to his Commission in his Call, and in respect of those great and glorious Anointings that were upon him. I shall now proceed.

Serm. III.

Seventhly, The Salvation of the Gospel is great, &c. if we consider what poor Sinners hereby are saved and delivered from: By this Salvation, those that believe are delivered from every Evil in this World, and in that which is to come.

Great Salvation in respect of what we are delivered from.

All Evil may be considered under two general Heads.

First, That which corrupteth our Nature, both Soul and Body, as to their Being.

Secondly, That which is destructive to our Nature, as to its well-being, both Soul and Body.

The first is *Sin*, the second is *Punishment*. I purpose to speak briefly to both these, that so we may the better demonstrate the Greatness of this Salvation.

First, Of the Evil of Sin which all those are and shall be for ever saved and delivered from, who embrace this Salvation. This I shall speak unto more generally, and then more particularly.

The Evil of Sin opened.

Brethren, the Evil of Sin comprehendeth many things, as it respecteth God, and is directly against him, his Holy Nature, hateful and loathsome in his sight: and in respect had to Man, which takes in our first Apostacy from God, the loss of his Holy and Blessed Image, as also his Love and Favour; and so the Pravity of all the Powers of our Souls, and Faculties thereof, as the blindness of our Minds, and Darkness of our Understandings; the Rebellion and Stubbornness of our Wills, and hardness of our Hearts; the Carnality and Vanity of our Affections; the horrid Guilt, Pollution and Filthiness that cleaves to the Soul and Conscience; together with Shame, Bondage, Nakedness, Poverty and Enmity against God, Slavery to Satan and to this World, having contracted a Likeness to the Devil, or an Impress of his Image, doing his Will, and serving our own Lufts: All these, and many other things, comprize the Evil of Sin, from which by this Salvation we are delivered.

But to speak a little more particularly; let us,

1. Consider the Evil of Sin: As it is contrary to God's most Holy and Pure Nature, it is that thing which his Soul is said to hate. Would not we be greatly concerned, if any should do that in our sight and presence, which they know we hate and abominate?

2. Sin is a Dishonour to God, and it is called a Despising of God; *Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* Certainly Sin must needs have a great Evil in it, if it be a despising of God: if a Man be despised, he thinks himself

himself greatly wronged; loss of Honour is no small loss.

3. Sin is a crossing of God's Will, acting directly contrary thereunto; nay, and it is a doing the Will of the Devil: How are you troubled if your Servants cross your Will in that which is just and right, and wherein your Interest and Honour lies, and is nearly concerned. Sin is a crossing of the Will of God; not only when the Sinner doth not what God commands to be done, which is a Sin of Omission, but also in doing that which he hath positively forbid, which is a Sin of Commission.

4. Sin doth cast contempt upon God, as when Men sin presumptuously with a high Hand, as if it were in defiance of Heaven, as if they bid God do his worst, intimating that they will have their Way, their Wills, their cursed Lusts, or sinful Pleasures and Profit, let what will come of it.

5. Sin is a renouncing of God's just Authority and Government over us; it is *a breaking his Bonds, and casting his Cords from* Psal. 2. 3.
us. What is the Voice of Sin? God shall not reign over us, we will not be under his Government, but will live as we list, our Tongues are our own; and who is Lord over us? Nay, and as Sin doth cast off God, and disown him, contemn him, rebel against him, will not have him reign, but strive to pull him out of his Throne: So by Sin the Sinner sets up the Devil in God's Place, puts him into God's Throne. The Heart is the Throne of God, but there the Sinner will not allow God to rule, God to be, but gives way to Sin, and will sin; and in so doing he exalts Satan, and puts him into the Government, and subjects to him. O what is the Evil of Sin?

6. Sin in the Nature of it, is a manifestation of the Sinner's hatred of God: God declares against Sinners in his Word, as such that hate him; the lesser Love is accounted a Hatred in the Scripture. But alas, Sinners seem to have no Love to God at all, they proclaim War against him, even wish there was no God to controul them, to judg them, to punish them, so that they might sin the more freely, and with the more impudence, if it be possible for them so to do: *The Fool saith in his Heart, there is no God.* He would have no God, he would be glad if there was no God; such is his hatred of God. Hence it is said, *Visiting the Iniquity of the* Exod. 20.
Fathers on the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them 5.
that hate me. And again it is said, *Shouldst thou love them that hate* 2 Chron.
the Lord? Sin even strikes at God's very Being. Can you think a- 19. 2.
 ny Person can have more hatred to you, than to wish you had no
 Being?

Being? nay, would, if he could, destroy you; and cause you not to be, or deprive you of a Being any more for ever? This seems to be the Voice of Sin naturally in Mens Hearts; therefore it must needs be a great Evil, they would not have God to be, if they could bring it about or have their Will; for such as we despise, resist, war against, we would kill and destroy if we could: Sin would dethrone God, and thrust him out of the World, it fills the

Rom. 8. 7. Mind so full of Enmity against him.

2dly. But in the second place, Sin hath not only great Evil in it, as it is against God, but also in respect of our selves: 'Tis not only a Dishonour to God, but hurtful to us. No Evil like the Evil of Sin in this respect also, as will appear, if we consider;

1. It was by Sin we lost God's Holy Image in which we were created in our first Parents. O what a lovely Creature was Man, as he came out of his great Creator's Hand; there was no Spot, Blemish, nor Stain in him: Man was created in Righteousness and true Holiness, in that did the Image of God consist. But this Likeness to God we lost by Sin; and by yielding unto it, and by being overcome by it, we became like unto the Devil. Naturally all Men bear his Image, even the Devil's Likeness: Judas was so much like the Devil, that Christ calls him a Devil; *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?*

2. Sin poisoned our whole Nature, and corrupted all our Faculties.

1. It is compared to the Plague of the Leprosy, it spreads it self over us, from the Crown of our Heads to the Soles of our Feet; it is more filthy than the filthiest thing in the World in God's sight: And as all the Faculties of our Souls were poisoned thereby, so all the Members of our Bodies are defiled and polluted with it also. Nay, and it is such a kind of Pollution, that renders the Sinner loathsome to God: God is said to be *grieved with Sin*, nay grieved that he made Man; grieved at his Heart, because every

Gen. 6. 5, 6. *Imagination of the Thought of his Heart was evil continually.* God is said upon this to repent that he made Man; not that God properly can repent, it signifies an alienation of God's Heart and Affections from Man for his Sin and Wickedness, whereby he carries himself towards him as we do when we repent we have done a thing.

2. It was therefore hereby that we lost God's Love and Favour, and is not that a dismal and most bitter thing? Man's only Happiness lies in his Likeness to God, and in the enjoyment of his Love, and the Light of his sweet Countenance: But this the whole Race of Mankind lost by Original Sin, and instead of his Love, we were brought under his Wrath. Sin incur'd the Wrath and Anger of God: *God is angry with the Wicked every Day.* And as we by Sin became Enemies to God, so also hereby God became an Enemy to us: And if we consider what it cost God, and cost Jesus Christ to make our Peace, or to make up this Breach, sure we must say, this is a great and wonderful Salvation. Psal. 7. 11.

3. Sin is the worst of Evils, it is the Plague of Plagues, it is worse than any Affliction: Afflictions oft-times bring us nearer unto God, but Sin drives us further from him. Sin is a departing from God, a leaving and forsaking of God, a casting of God off; the more we are afflicted, the more we are made conformable to Jesus Christ. *He was afflicted, and a Man of Sorrows;* but the more we sin, the more like we are unto the Devil. Nay, and by Afflictions we are purged, and are said to partake of the Holiness of God; therefore there is much Good in Affliction: but Sin hath nothing but Evil in it, hurtful Evil, Soul-defiling, and Soul-damning Evil. Sin is the Spring and Cause of all other Evils, it is the Cause of all Sickness, and of all Sorrow and Misery, nay and 'tis the Cause of Death it self: *The Wages of Sin is Death;* Rom. 6. 23. nay, *the Sting of Death is Sin,* that which makes Death so terrible 1 Cor. 15. 56. to a wicked Man.

4. Sin hath put Mankind into Satan's Hand, who hath laid him in cruel Chains: Consider what a thing it is to be taken Captive by a grand and merciless Tyrant: Satan took all Mankind Captive, and holds them still, who are under the Power of it in Captivity; they are his Bondmen, his Slaves, *he takes them Captive at his Will.* Every vicious Habit is a strong Bond or Chain in which Satan binds his Vassals. All Men naturally are bound down under the Bond of Ignorance, Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart; such is the Nature of Sin. Christ came to set at liberty such that were Isa. 61. 1. bound. *I perceive, saith Peter, that thou art in the Gall of Bitterness,* Acts 8. 23. and in the Bond of Iniquity. And O what is the Strength of these Bonds? Who can break them but the Arm of the Omnipotent God? Moreover, these Bonds bind the Soul unto, and under the Wrath of God. O what a kind of Salvation is it, that delivers us from Sin, and out of the Power of Satan!

5. Sin hath put out the Eyes of all Mankind, and stripp'd them naked, and wounded them unto Death: All Men are born blind, the Eyes of our Understanding naturally are darkened, the State of Man by Nature is most miserable; it is set out by a *wretched Infant cast out in the open Field in its Blood, in the Day of its Nativity, having none to pity it, to wash it nor swaddle it at all.* We are all naturally most loathsome, full of filthy Scabs and running Sores, and yet such is the Ignorance and Blindness of the Sinner's Eyes, and unsensibleness of his State, that he sees it not, feels it not, but thinks all is well with him, and is ready to fly into that Man's Face, that shall tell him such is his Condition.

Ezek. 16.
3, 4, 5, 6.

6. Moreover Sin feeds Men poorly: How do they feed? What is their Table spread with? Are they served with the Best? They are fed, as it were with Mallows and Juniper-roots; That, saith *Caryl*, is the *Chear* Sin makes them: yea, Wickedness will be as Gravel in their Teeth, and as Poison in their Bowels. True some of them feed their Bodies deliciously every Day; they are full fed, they have liberal, large and plentiful Tables: But, alas, what have their Souls to eat? What did the Soul of the Prodigal find? Did he not feed on the Husks which the swine did eat? Their Food is and will be Gall and Wormwood; he *feedeth on Ashes*, saith the Prophet: all his Hopes will deceive him, and prove vain, like the *Spider's Web*; the Pleasures, Honours, Riches and Comforts of this Life, are the Food wicked Men live upon; they never tasted in a Spiritual manner of God, they know not how good he is, nor do they desire to eat that which is Good: but the Time is coming in which they will desire to taste of Christ's Supper, and shall not be admitted, because they refused to come to the Wedding. O what is Sin, and how miserable is the Condition of Sinners? And doth not this set forth and tend to demonstrate the greatness of this Salvation, which delivers us from so great an Evil? *He shall save his People from their Sins.* He that understands no Evil in Sin, as Man is fallen from God, hath lost God, the first Cause and chiefest Good, and last End; and being under the Power of a constant Enmity against him, and in this deplorable Condition, as I have hinted, will have (as one observes) other apprehension of these things, when at last he misses of a Part in this Great Salvation, and when the Means of it shall not be afforded any more to him for ever. And on the other Hand, he that comes to see this to be his State, and obtains an Interest in this Salvation, will say, it is a Great and Glorious Salvation.

Secondly,

Secondly, By this Salvation we are delivered from that which is destructive to our whole Souls and Bodies.

1. The Sinner by Sin is, as you heard, a Slave, a Captive, *Sinners are under God's Curse.* and under Satan's Power, bound in strong Chains, &c. And now let me add, he is for his Sin cursed by the Lord, and condemned to die by his Righteous Law; nay the Law lets fly or denounces most bitter Curses against Sin, even against every Sin, and every Sinner that takes not hold of this Salvation: *Cursed is he that continues not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them.* Gal. 3.10.

From this Curse can no Soul be delivered, but by Jesus Christ alone: Is it not a fearful Thing to be under the Curse of an offended and angry God, whose Wrath is like Fire that seizes on dry Stubble? But he that believes, or accepteth of the Salvation of the Gospel, is delivered and saved for ever from the Curse of the Law: *Christ hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* Gal. 3. 16.

2. Man by Sin is fet against himself, his own Conscience wars and fights against him; and it is also sometimes let out upon him by the Lord to such a Degree, tormenting him so dreadfully, that he is not able to bear it; hence some have destroyed themselves: What is more dreadful and amazing, than a guilty, an accusing and condemning Conscience? Poor Mr. Child found it intolerable, and many more besides him; it is that Worm that oft-times begins to gnaw here, and will (if this Salvation be not took hold of) torment the Soul for ever: for as in Hell the Fire is not quenched, so the Worm dieth not. But he that receives Jesus Christ, believes in Jesus Christ, and so gets an Interest in this Salvation, is delivered from the Guilt and the Lashes, the Accusation and Condemnation of his own Conscience; nay, his own Conscience speaks Peace to him, and yields him a continual Feast: *For our rejoicing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World, &c.* 2 Cor. 1. 12. O how is the Case altered, Conscience before was a Tormentor, but now is a Comforter; before it spoke nothing but Terror, but now it speaks nothing but Peace; before it did accuse, but now it doth excuse; before it fed us with Gravel-stones, but now it feeds us with Joy and sweet Food.

3. The State of the Sinner is very sad, and the Nature of Sin very destructive, as it exposes the Soul to future Wrath: the Wrath of God remains upon him that believes not; *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteous-* Rom. 1. 18.

ness of Men. But by this Salvation we are saved from present and from future Wrath also; this is done by Jesus Christ: *Even Jesus who delivered us from Wrath to come.* Wrath to come is far greater than any Wrath Mortal ever felt in this World: *Who knows the Power of thine Anger? even according to thy Fear, so is thy Wrath.* But not one Drop of it shall fall upon that Soul that hath a Part and Interest in this Salvation: Should God let out but a little of his Wrath upon a Soul whilst he is in the Body, wo to him, whither shall he fly? how should he be able to bear it! *O 'tis a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* O what a great and glorious Salvation is this! Suppose a Man was condemned to die for High-Treason, or for some other great Crime, nay to be burned alive, or to be staid alive, and just as the Sentence was going to be executed upon him, one should bring him the Tidings, that the King had pardoned his Offence, and therefore he should not die; would he not look upon this to be a great Salvation? But, alas, what can reach or be compared to the State of condemned Sinners? What is it to be thrown into a Fire, or to burn for half an Hour, nay, to be put into a lingering Fire, to be dying a whole Day, nay, a whole Year, or if it were possible to be dying forty or fifty Years, to lie burning in Hell to all Eternity? Every Sinner is condemned by the Law of God to be burned, to be burned alive in Hell for ever, where the Damned are always dying, but yet cannot die. If this were well and seriously considered, certainly every one must acknowledg the Gospel-Salvation to be a Great and Glorious Salvation, that delivers all that imbrace it, from so great a Death as the *second* Death, or the Wrath of God in Hell. Brethren, this Salvation doth not only free and deliver the Souls of all that believe from Wrath, from all Wrath and Misery, but the Bodies also, as I shall shew you hereafter before I have done with this Text. The Body shall be delivered from Sickness, Lameness, Blindness, Poverty, Hunger, Nakedness, nay, and from Corruption it self, even from whatsoever it is, that is either grievous or destructive here or hereafter. If a Man be but delivered from Want, or from Hunger, being almost starved to Death, and ready to tear his own Flesh to feed himself; or from Nakedness, or from tormenting Pain, suppose it be but the Extremity of the Tooth-ach, Gout, or tormenting Pain of the Stone, or from Slavery in *Turkey*, or from some grievous and cruel Imprisonment, being in Bonds and Irons, lying in a dark Dungeon among Toads and Serpents, would he not think

think

think it a Great Salvation? Or if People who feel the bitterness of War, Famine, or Pestilence, were delivered and set at Liberty, would they not account it a Great Salvation, a Great Deliverance? But what are all these Salvations to this Great Salvation I am speaking of! What is the Sickness of the Body, or Death of the Body here, to the Sickness and Death of Body and Soul for ever? What is an Imprisonment in the worst of Jails, and to lie in Chains and Irons put upon us by Men like our selves, and to bear their Wrath for a few Days, to the eternal Prison? What is a dark Dungeon here to the Blackness of Darkness for ever? What is the Wrath of Man to the Wrath of God, or Chains of Iron to everlasting Chains of Darkness? What is a little outward Want or Poverty, to the Want of God's favour and Love to Eternity, being separated from his Presence for ever, and to lie in Fire, burning and broiling, and cannot have so much as one Drop of Water to cool the Tongue; for one Drop is denied to the Damned in Hell. The rich *Glutton* when in Hell, begged that *Lazarus* might be sent to him and dip the Tip of his Finger in Water to cool his Tongue, but it was not granted. Alas, all Miseries here are nothing (as they pass away in a Moment) when compared unto Eternal Wrath and burning in Hell, which is the pourings forth of the unspeakable and righteous Vengeance of a provoked and angry God.

Luke 16.
24.

There is no Parallel, nothing to express the Nature of that destructive Evil that is in Sin; there is nothing left us to illustrate it withal: therefore to be delivered and saved for ever from the just Punishment and dismal Wrath of God, must needs be deemed Great Salvation; and the Excellency of it will at length be known to them who slight and despise it, when they come to fall and perish under the want of it. He that is delivered from lying in Prison for a thousand Pound Debt, where he must have lain till Death, having nothing to pay it, and being fallen into the Hands of Justice it self, but meeting with a Friend who paid all he owed, he cannot but cry out, O great Love and Compassion, that would be a Deliverance indeed! But it is nothing to this, we in a spiritual Sense being delivered from Hell by Jesus Christ, who payed our Debts for us, each of us owing not less than ten thousand Talents, I mean, so many Sins, and every Sin a greater Debt than ten thousand Pounds. And this brings me to the next Demonstration.

Gospel-Salvation is great, in respect of what Christ doth and must do, in order to effect it.

I Pet. I.
18, 19.

Eighthly, The Salvation of the Gospel is a Great and Glorious Salvation, if we consider the Way and Means by which this Salvation is wrought out and accomplished for us. It could not be effected, except the Son of God became Man, or without the Incarnation, Mediation, and bloody Passion of Jesus Christ. The precious Blood of Christ must be poured forth, or there was no Salvation, no Deliverance for our Souls; Gold nor Silver could not purchase it, nor the best of all earthly things: *For as much as ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from a vain Conversation received by Tradition from your Fathers, but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.* No such Price would be accepted of God, so precious is the Redemption of the Soul.

Quest. But may be some may say, Could not the Law effect it? Could not the keeping the Precepts, the Law of the Ten Commandments do it, nor the Sacrifices of the Law procure Salvation for us?

Heb. 10. 4.

Ans. No, it was impossible, the Law requires perfect Righteousness, sinless Obedience; besides we have broke it, and thereby the whole World is become guilty before God: And, could the Blood of Beasts, the Blood of Bulls and Goats take away Sin, or satisfy Divine Justice, and so make an Atonement for our Iniquities? No, no, *For it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sin.* Sin cannot be done away without an infinite Price: What Influence could the Blood of Beasts have to take away Sin? being in their own Nature corporal things, they could not deliver us from the spiritual Evil of the Soul; nor were they ordained of God to that End and Purpose, but to point out the great Sacrifice: Besides, saith the Text, *Sacrifice and Offerings for Sin thou wouldst not, but a Body hast thou prepared me.* It must be the Blood of Christ, whose Sufferings had a satisfactory and incon-

Verse 5.

ceivable Worth in them; *For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful Flesh, and for Sin condemned Sin in the Flesh:* Compare this with that Passage of the Holy Ghost, in *Heb. 1. 3. Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power; when he had by himself purged our Sins, sat down on the right Hand of the Majesty on High.* He being

Rom. 8. 3.

God as well as Man, or his Humanity being hypostatically united to his Divine Nature, offered up himself by the Eternal Spirit a Propitiatory Sacrifice unto God; by which Satisfaction and Merits

he purged, or took away the Guilt and Pollution of Sin, and delivered us from that just and deserved Wrath that was due unto it, by bearing of it himself in our Nature and stead; so that God (who was injured, and whose Holy Law was violated) might be just, or that his Justice might appear, (for he could as soon cease to be God, as cease to be just) and yet hereby he magnifies his Mercy also. What can we desire more, than to be delivered from Sin, and purged from Sin? This was the Way and no other, which the Wisdom of God found out in Christ; both those Attributes are united: so that Justice, as well as Mercy, says, Whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ, or lays hold of his Righteousness by Faith, shall be justified, and eternally saved. The Apostle adds his being sat down on the right Hand of God, to intimate he hath made our Peace, obtained Redemption for us, and brought in by his Obedience, Everlasting Righteousness, and made an end of Sin; and as a mighty Conqueror, has triumphed, and is gone to Heaven, and there appears at the Father's right Hand, to plead the Merits of his own Blessed Sacrifice, and that Atonement he hath made for us by his own Blood on the Tree. O consider what our Salvation cost him, what did he do to work about this Salvation! Why he,

1. Became Incarnate, or was made Flesh; *And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we behold his Glory as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth: Though he was equal with God (as you lately heard) yet he took on him the form of a Servant.* Joh. 1. 14.

2. He became poor. Sirs, Jesus Christ who was rich, that he might accomplish the Salvation of our Souls, became poor; May not this affect our Hearts? We must be miserable for ever, or Christ must become poor, and seem to be miserable for a Time: No Salvation for us, unless our Blessed Saviour doth abase himself and take our Nature upon him; *For verily, he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but took on him the Seed of Abraham.* All this was, Brethren, to bring this Blessed Salvation to his chosen Ones. Heb. 2. 16.

3. He in his humane Nature must be made under the Law, and so become obnoxious or liable to the Obedience the Law required; yea, he was obliged to keep it exactly in every part thereof. *When the Fulness of time was come, God sent forth his own Son made of a Woman, made under the Law: The Apostle adds the Reason of this, to redeem them that were under the Law.* He thus became, not only bound to do what the Law required, but to suffer what the Law threatened.

threatned and denounced on us, who had broke and violated it, and this in our Nature, or in the same Nature that had sinned, in which Nature the Justice of God required a Satisfaction for the wrong Sin had done unto him: Which being impossible for sinful Man ever to do, and that we might not be exposed for ever unto that just and deserved Wrath and Punishment in Hell, which was due to us, Jesus Christ suffered for us, or in our place, that we through his spotless Obedience, and painful Death and Suffering both in his Soul and Body, might obtain a gracious Discharge from Sin, or free Justification unto Life, and a full deliverance from Wrath and Eternal Death.

4. Nay, and as he must die if he procures Salvation for us, so by that means he also was made a Curse for us; for we having broken the Law, were under the Curse of it; the Law lets fly its bitter Curses against every Transgressor thereof: *For as many as are of the Works of the Law, are under the Curse;* and therefore impossible for us to be justified and saved by it. Whosoever keepeth not the Law perfectly, is cursed; but no Man can keep the Law perfectly, therefore all Men naturally are cursed, and impossible then to be blessed, until delivered from that Curse: and this therefore Christ came to do, *him hath God sent to bless us;* which Blessing we could not have had, unless Christ puts himself in our place, and bears the Curse away from us: *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, by being made a Curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.* He that was hanged on a Tree under the Law, was hanged for transgressing of it, and was cursed of God; and when it is said, Christ was made a Curse for us, it signifies his bearing that Wrath and Indignation of God, which was due to us for our Sin: and this he must do if ever we are justified and eternally saved from that Eternal Wrath and Vengeance Sin had brought upon every Soul of us.

5. As our Lord Jesus, if he procure Salvation for us, must die, and become a Curse for us, so he must also raise up himself from the Dead, or be discharged of the Bonds of Death; he must destroy Death, and be freed out of Prison: He therefore *rose again from the Dead for our Justification.* His Discharge was virtually a Discharge for us, or for all he died for; our Lord Jesus must subdue all our Enemies, and bring not Death only, but the Devil also, and all the Powers of Darkness under his Feet, or there could be no Salvation for our poor Souls: *Forasmuch then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood; he also himself likewise took part of the same,*

same, 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. Christ and Believers are of one and the same Nature; they are as it were but one Man, or are so united as to be considered as one Mystical Body. This was held forth in his Incarnation, in his assuming our Nature: He took not only an Humane Soul, but our Humane Flesh into Union with his Divine Nature, that both our Souls and Bodies might be brought into Union with him, and that our Bodies might also be raised from Death to a State of Life and Glory at the last Day, and be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body; *Who hath abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel.* Had not Christ conquered Death, and the Devil who had the Power of Death, we had been lost for ever: He hath not only taken away Sin, the Sting of Death, but he hath and will be the Death of Death; *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed, is Death.* The Body as well as the Soul is brought into Union with Christ; he is the Head of the whole Believer, the Body as well as the Soul: *Shall I then take the Members of Christ, and make them the Members of an Harlot?* Both Body and Spirit are the Lord's, our Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

Brethren, what a Conquest hath Christ made! how hath he subdued all our Enemies, that so he might work out a full and perfect Victory for us in every respect: *For this Corruptible must put on Incorruption, and this Mortal must put on Immortality.* So when this Corruptible shall have put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall have put on Immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in Victory.* O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?

6. And lastly, And as Christ must conquer the Devil, the World, Sin, Death and the Grave, for us, and in our Nature; so he must by his mighty Power destroy the Devil, and Sin's great Power in us, and vanquish that natural Enmity that is in our Hearts against God and his Ways, and thereby restore the Image of God in us which we had lost.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

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Serm. IV.

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Salvation
great in re-
spect of the
Subjects of
it.

Mar. 16.
26.

Ninthly, **G**OSPEL-Salvation is great, if we consider the Subject thereof, or what is delivered and saved for ever, namely, the *Souls and Bodies* of his People.

First, The Soul: that is it Jesus Christ came to save, which is very precious, as I shall shew you in a deduction of several Particulars. Certainly the Salvation of the Soul must needs be a great Salvation: What is it to save our Estates, our Liberties, our Healths, the Members of our Bodies, our Eyes, Arms, Legs, or our natural Lives, to the saving of our precious and immortal Souls? The Soul is more worth than all the World: *What shall it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?*

1st. To demonstrate the great Worth, Excellency and Preciousness of the Soul, consider that it was first formed in the Image of God, in *Righeousness and true Holiness*. Our Souls had a glorious Impression of God's Image stamp'd upon them in the first Creation, which we lost by Sin and Transgression: But this Blessed Image is restored again, as you have heard, by the Grace of God in this Salvation.

1. Pray, Brethren, remember that the Soul of Man is *capable* of a Divine Impression, of God's glorious Image; it is made, I mean, of such a Nature, that it is capable of this great Blessing, therefore to be deemed a very precious thing; God will not stamp his Image upon low and base Metal, if I may so speak with reverence.

Zech. 12.
1.

2. There are three things I find which the great God glories in, as being peculiar to himself, or his own glorious Prerogative alone; *The Burden of the Word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth out the Heavens, and layeth the Foundations of the Earth, and formeth the Spirit of Man within him.* The first is his stretching out of the Heavens; O what a great and glorious Work was that! The second is his laying the Foundation of the Earth, the hanging it upon nothing; what a wonderful thing is that, considering its great Weight and wonderful Body! The third is, his forming of our Souls: Certainly the Spirit or Soul

of Man is a glorious thing, that God should account the Creation of it amongst those chiefest Parts of his admirable Handy-work. Why is not the forming the Blessed Angels, who are glorious Spirits, rather mentioned? it is worthy of serious Contemplation: Our Bodies are fearfully and wonderfully made, they are no small part of God's Wisdom and curious Workmanship, if the Nature and Order of every Part was considered, as some *Artists* who study Man's Humane Body will shew you: But what is the Formation and Excellency of our Bodies to our Souls?

3. The Soul is capable of Divine Union with Jesus Christ, through a Communication of the Holy Spirit, and by Faith of the Operation of God, and thereby the whole Man partakes of the like Union also; therefore it is a very precious thing, it is principally the Soul that Jesus Christ doth espouse, it seems to be a proper or fit Match for the Son of God: *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.*

4. And 'tis not only capable of Union, but also of Divine Spiritual Communion, both with the Father and the Son: *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that you might have fellowship with us; and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* That Communion we have in our Spirits with the Father and the Son, is by the Holy Ghost, by which we come to have, through his gracious Influences, a Communication of that which is truly and spiritually Good, according to our Needs, and to delight, strengthen and rejoice our Hearts: our Souls being changed into the Life and Likeness of Christ, and *walking in the Light of the Spirit, we have Fellowship one with another;* that is, Christ with us, and we with Christ: for till the Soul is regenerated, it cannot have Fellowship with the Holy God, for Light cannot have Fellowship with Darkness; it is not *earthly* or *sensual*, but a Divine, Heavenly and Spiritual Communion. O what a precious thing is the Soul of Man! there's no other Creature that is capable of these most excellent Privileges save Man; Mankind only of all that dwell on the Earth: Nor could we have had this Honour and Dignity conferred on us, (we should not, I mean, been capable Subjects of it) had it not been upon the Account of the excellent Nature of our Souls.

5. Our Souls are also capable, it appears from hence, of Divine Inspiration: God in a gracious manner inspires our Spirits with glorious Light and Knowledg; there is a Light of Acceptation, and a Light of Inspiration: Like as Astronomers tell us,

that the Moon is of such a Nature that she is capable, by the glorious shining and reflection of the Son, to receive Light; and so she shines and gives Light to us in the Night: Thus the Moon is a Light of Acceptation, but it is the Sun that gives Light to her. So a Candle is made meet to receive Light, but shines not, gives not Light until it is lighted: And thus also our Spirits are made

Job 32. 8. meet to receive Divine Light from God; *The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*: but it never shines with any supernatural Light, until the Lord pleases to light it. *There is a Spirit in Man, and the Inspiration of the Lord giveth him Understanding*: In Man, that is in every Man, every Man hath a rational Soul in him fit to receive Divine Light and Inspiration, if God please to inspire him therewith; he hath not that saving Knowledg and Light naturally, no not till he doth partake of the Inspiration of the Almighty: Though Man be endowed with natural Light, Knowledg and Reason, and may understand in some measure the Parts of Natural Religion, yet that Light is but Darknes compared to the supernatural Light of Grace, or the saving Knowledg of God in Christ. All true and spiritual Knowledg and Understanding, is from the special Inspiration of the Almighty: *For what Man knoweth the things of Man, save the Spirit of a Man that is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God.* But though it be thus, that Man's Spirit, without the Teachings and Inspiration of God's Spirit, cannot understand nor know the things of God, that is, the Mysteries of the Gospel, or have the saving Knowledg of Christ, yet there is a Spirit, a Soul in him that is capable to receive this Light and Revelation of God, when he pleases to enlighten him therein: therefore I say, the Soul of Man is a very precious thing, and so tends to greaten the Salvation of the Gospel, by which it is saved from Hell and Wrath.

The Soul is capable of Divine Contemplation. 6. The Soul is capable of Divine Contemplation, it can muse, meditate and contemplate upon God the highest and chiefest Being; no other Creatures on Earth are capable to do this, because they have no rational Souls: What have some Men found out of the Mysteries of Nature, by means of the Excellency of the Soul? Nay, and also what Knowledg have they attained of the God of Nature? as might be demonstrated should I speak of *Natural and Moral Philosophy*, &c. though it is true, and I deny it not, but that the knowledg of these things is acquired in a great measure, yet nevertheless all in the first place, next unto God, must be attributed to the Excellency of the Soul: *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*

made; marvellous are thy Works: and that my Soul knoweth right well. Pf. 139. 14.
 David ascribes that wonderful Knowledge which he had of the Works of Creation, to his Soul: No doubt he was well skilled in Philosophy, and was a Man greatly given to Contemplation: My Substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret; and Ver. 15.
 riously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth. How curiously and exquisitely hast thou (as if he should say) composed my Bones, Muscles, Sinews, Veins and Arteries, in my Mother's Womb, and all the Parts and Members of my Body: And my Soul contemplates all these things, my Soul knows that thou art a wonderful working God. O what a precious thing is the Soul of Man! what pity is it that it should be lost and damned for ever, (and how doth this tend to demonstrate the Glory and Greatness of this Salvation!) for it was under Wrath and the Curse of God by Sin. Sirs, the Nature of the Soul is such, that it leads a Man out to behold and magnify God in the Works of Creation and Providence, tho it wants supernatural Light and Knowledge: But O when it comes to be divinely inspired, what does it discover through the help of the same Spirit of God in Christ, and of the Work of Redemption? For all Knowledge to this Knowledge, is but of little worth: Paul therefore determined to know nothing but Christ and I Cor. 2. 1, 2.
 him crucified; nay, and accounted all natural Knowledge, Gifts, Wisdom and Improvements, or whatsoever he once esteemed of, to be but Dung in comparison of the Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord.

7. The Soul is precious doth yet further appear, because without an enjoyment of God, or a part and interest in him, it can never be happy, nothing short of God himself can fill its Desires. Nothing but God himself can satisfy the Soul.
 This some of the *Heathens*, by the dim Light of Nature, came to understand; it is restless until it comes to find God, Rest, Peace and Satisfaction in God, who is the best of Beings, and our chief Good. The Soul is much like unto *Noah's Dove* which he sent out of the Ark, that found no rest for the Sole of her Foot, until she returned unto him in the Ark: Therefore miserable will all those be that for ever shall one Day be separated from God, should they meet with no worse Torment than that. A Man accounts it no small Misery to be deprived of that which he esteems to be his only Happiness, though he knows he can enjoy it but a short time: Suppose it be his Riches, his Houses, his Lands, or his Gold and Silver, or his Pleasures, or his Honours, or his dear Relations, in whom his very Life seems to bound up; he is upon the loss of that

which he esteems so highly of as a dead Man. Now sure if the Soul is of such an excellent Nature, that no created Good can fill its Desires, nothing in this World, nothing but God himself, it must needs be a very precious thing: But so it is; for as *Rachel* said once to *Jacob* her Husband, *Give me Children, or I die*: So this is the Voice of the Soul of Man, Give me God, give me Christ, or I die. Nay, to be deprived of God, is the Death of the Soul; and it was that which brought Death on the Soul of Man originally; by Sin we were deprived of God, and that was the Death of the Soul: God is the spiritual Life of the Soul, as in a moral sense the Soul is the natural Life of the Body; for as the Body is dead without the Soul naturally, so the Soul is dead without God spiritually. Therefore the Salvation of the Soul must needs be a great and glorious Salvation, that which brings God again to the Soul, that which restores God, a lost God to the Soul, that gives Life to a poor dead Soul and makes it live again, and so be happy again, yea and that for ever more.

God's Thoughts greatly let out about the Soul of Man.

8. The Soul is precious, and a most excellent thing it appears, because God's Thoughts are so set out upon it. What care hath he taken of the Soul of Man! How early did he concern himself for the redemption of it! and what a way did he seek out and contrive to restore it to a state of Peace, Joy and Happiness again, when he foresaw it brought under Death, Sin and Misery: it seems to be the *Darling of Heaven*; as it was formed (as it were) by the Breath of God, so nothing he thinks too good to impart for its Ransom to redeem it, nor nothing too precious to feed it, heal it, or comfort it: He gives the Bread of Heaven, the very Flesh and Blood of his own Son to feed it, the Righteousness of his own Son to clothe it, the Graces of his own Spirit to deck and adorn it; nay, and his own Spirit is sent to lead, to guide, protect and govern it. Certainly these things clearly shew and demonstrate its great Worth, or that it is a most excellent thing in God's sight.

9. The Soul is precious, if we consider what God gave for its Redemption. *David* saith, *That the Redemption of the Soul is precious, and ceases for ever*; hard to be obtained, though not impossible; nothing but the Blood, the precious Blood of Christ Jesus could redeem it. Some take Soul there for our Life, but certainly *David* intends the Redemption of the Soul from Sin and Wrath. Silver and Gold could not do this, no it must not be redeemed, it could not be redeemed by corruptible things, not by a thousand
Rams.

Gal. 49.8. Nothing but Christ's Blood could redeem the Soul.

Rams, nor ten thousand Rivers of Oil, nor by our First-born; the Fruit of the Body could not make an Atonement for the Sin of the Soul: No, no, it must be the Father's First-born, it must be Jesus Christ, the Blood of the Son of God, or nothing; if Christ die not for the Soul, it must perish for ever. But rather than the Soul should be lost and undone for ever, God will not spare his own Son, but deliver him up for us all.

Mich.6.7.

Rom.8.32.

10. The Soul is very precious doth appear, because from the unwearied Attempts, and restless Endeavours of the Devil to destroy it, all Satan's grand Rage and Malice is let out against the Soul of Man; had it not been for our Souls, he would have concerned himself no more to have work'd out our Ruin, than the Ruin of irrational Creatures: But he foresaw the precious Nature of the Soul of Man, what excellent Faculties it was endow'd withal, and what a glorious Image of God was stamp'd upon it, and therefore he rages and foams out his hellish Spite and Malice against us, and all to destroy our Souls; and this Rage and Fury he continues still against our Souls. O what Ways, diverse and cunning Stratagems doth he use, that so he may spoil the Happiness, or destroy the Comfort of our Souls: For as it is God's great Concern to save our Souls, so it is Satan's great Business to damn and destroy our Souls for ever; and as God contrives Ways and Means to make our Souls happy for ever, so the Devil contrives Ways and Means to make our Souls miserable for ever. The Soul is (as I may say) that sweet Morfel Satan hungers after, and fain would tear in pieces and devour if possible; it is not so much to destroy our Bodies by natural Death, as our Souls and Bodies by eternal Death. O how great is that Salvation, that is the Salvation of our precious Souls! God's Care, Cost and Labour to preserve our Souls, to save our Souls, shews that it is of great Worth. And it is this that makes Man to differ so much from brutish Creatures and to excel all the Works of God in this nether Creation: Had it not been for our Souls, would God have been any more concerned for us, than for the Beasts that perish? And was not the Soul, I say, a very excellent and precious thing, Satan would not make it his greatest Work and Business to destroy it, as he hath always done, and still continues to do.

The Rage of Satan to destroy the Soul, shews it is a precious thing.

11. The Soul is very precious doth yet further appear, because if a Man could gain all the World, all the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of the World, with the loss of his Soul, his Loss would be more than his Gain, yea, infinitely more; there's nothing that

Could a Man gain all the World with the loss of his Soul, his Loss would be great.

can

can make a Recompence for the loss of the Soul, as our Saviour clearly shews, *Mat.* 16. 26. All the World is nothing in Value when compared with the Soul ; therefore it is precious.

*The Soul is
immortal.*

12. The Soul is immortal, its Nature is Life, it is no corporal Thing, earthly thing, it is not composed of the four Elements as our Bodies are ; it cannot die, nor be annihilated ; it will either partake of Eternal Love, Joy and Blessedness, or else of Eternal Wrath, Pain and Misery : 'Tis strange to me that any Man should once suppose the Soul to be mortal.

(1.) Sirs, how do such degrade and cast Contempt upon themselves ? These Men seek to rob Mankind of their greatest Glory, and render Man in Honour little above the Beasts that perish ; and also they darken and strangely eclipse the Infinite Love and Grace of God in the Redemption and Restoration of Man.

(2.) And if the Soul be mortal and perishes with the Body, then had we not been redeemed at all, we had been no more miserable than the Beasts are ; we should but have lost our Beings and have been no more, we should have known no more Pain nor Sorrow after Death.

(3.) Besides, if the Soul was mortal, then the same Food that feeds the Body, feeds, or might feed the Soul ; and the same Balsam that will heal the Sores of the Body, would heal the Sores and Wounds of the Soul. I see no reason why I should not from their foolish Notion affirm this : Therefore when the Soul is sick, they should send to a Physician to apply his Medicines, as in case of bodily Sickness, and not send for a Minister of Christ to apply a spiritual Cordial. What signifies a Spiritual Medicine to a Corporal Thing ? Will preaching the Word feed and relieve a Man that is ready to perish with external Hunger ?

Moreover, (4.) If the Soul be mortal, then that Sword that kills the Body, also kills the Soul, Man may as well kill one as the other : But how contrary is this to that which our Saviour saith to his Disciples, *And fear not them which kill the Body and are not able to kill the Soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.* 'Tis not a Sword, a Spear, nor a Furnace of boiling Oil that can kill the Soul ; Man that way cannot hurt the Soul, 'tis Sin that destroys that. Note this well, if Man cannot kill the Soul, it is immortal ; but Man cannot kill the Soul, therefore it is immortal. Is there any Creature or Thing that is Mortal, which Man cannot kill, or deprive it of Life ? Certainly these Men are strangely milled.

*Mar. 10.
28.*

(5.) Besides,

(5.) Besides, did not our Saviour say to the Penitent Thief on the Cross, *I say to thee, this Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise?* Luk. 23. Was the Body of Christ, and the Body of that gracious Person that Day together in Paradise? Their base abuse of this Text, in reading it falsely, by misplacing the Stops, will not relieve them; *I say to thee this Day*; I make thee a Promise this Day, that thou shalt sometime or another be with me in Paradise: thus they to favour their grand Error misplace the common Point in reading; which should we allow of, what abominable Abuse might be put upon the Scripture in other places, even quite to destroy the true Sense, nay and make the Scripture speak untruly?

(6.) Moreover, doth not *Paul* say, *For me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.* How could Death be Gain to him, if his Soul was mortal, and slept with his Body in the Grave? Is Communion with Christ on Earth worth nothing? Is it Gain to lose that? They know he would no sooner rise from the Dead if he died presently, than if he lived twenty or thirty Years longer in the Body: How then could Death be Gain to him? Certainly it would be great Loss to him, for he would lose all those Years of sweet Joy and Comfort in Communion with Christ, if he died presently, which he might have should he live twenty or thirty Years longer in this World.

(7.) To this let me add what *Paul* affirms in another place; *For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* He doth not say, when this earthly House is raised up again, but when it is dissolved, that is, when the Body lies in its dusty Crumbs, the Soul hath a House in Heaven: *Therefore* (saith he) *we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.* Verse 6. Pray what is that which is absent from the Lord whilst it is at home in the Body, is it not the Soul? And what is that which is present with the Lord, when it is absent from the Body? Doth not this Place as fully prove the Immortality of the Soul, as if the Apostle should in plain words say, at Death the Soul (which dwells now in our Body) goes to Heaven, to dwell in Heaven, it goes to Christ, Heaven is its Home? As soon as *Lazarus* died, his Soul was carried into Heaven, signified by *Abraham's* Bosom; and as soon as the rich Man died, his Soul was in Hell: though it is a Parable, yet it clearly teaches us thus much, (though Parables do not always go on all four, as we use to say).

(8.) To

Phil. 1. 23. (8.) To which let me add what *Paul* further says, *For I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Our Souls at Death depart, and they go to Christ: What is Joy and Peace in Christ, to Joy, Peace and Consolation with Christ? In the Resurrection-Day Christ comes to us, we shall meet him in the Air, but at Death we go to him; the

Eccles. 12. Spirits of all Men go upward, *to God that gave them,* to be sent to the
7. Place appointed for them, either to Heaven, or to the Prison of Hell, or Place of Darknes; in which Prison the *Spirits of those Men are now who were once disobedient* (and sinned against God) *in the Days of Noah.*

1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.

(9.) In the last place, to prove the Soul to be immortal, consider well what *Paul* saith; *I knew a Man in Christ above fourteen Years ago, (whether in the Body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third Heaven—How he was in Paradise, and heard unspeakable Words, which it is not lawful for a Man to utter.* In the third Heaven, or in Paradise for certain he was; but whether caught up Body and Soul together, or in the Soul only out of the Body, he could not tell. From whence I argue, that *Paul* knew that the Soul was capable of being separated from the Body, and in that separated state capable of the Divine Ravishments of Heaven, or of the Vision of God, if he had not been of this Judgment, since he was in the third Heaven, he might be sure he was taken up in the Body. Besides, do we not read of *the Spirits of just Men* that are already made perfect?

2 Cor. 12. 2, 4.

Heb. 12. 23.

Object. *But is it not said that David is not yet ascended into Heaven?*
Answ. I answer, *Peter* there only refers to the Body of *David*, that is not ascended, for his *Sepulchre is with us to this Day*, saith he; and therefore he argues *David* means *Jesus Christ*, whose Soul was not left in Hell, that is, his Body was not left in the Grave, for the Body is often in the Scripture called by the Name of the Soul. But when we read of the Soul as distinguished from the Body, and as that which Man cannot kill, it intends the superiour Part of Man, or that which in our common acceptation is called the *Soul*, or Spirit of Man; in which the Image of God was chiefly created, and which is fed with Spiritual Food, and capable of sweet Communion with *Jesus Christ*, as you have heard. Now then if the Soul be immortal, and goes to Hell or Heaven at Death, I mean, to Joy or Sorrow, or to a Prison of Pain and Darknes, or to a Palace of Joy and Pleasure; O what a great Salvation is Gospel-Salvation! How soon doth eternal Misery or Torment seize

Acts 2. 29.

seize upon the Ungodly ; even no sooner do they die but their Souls are in Hell, and no sooner do Believers die but their Souls are in Paradise : and had not Christ came and wrought out our Salvation, our Souls must have lain under Wrath and Misery for ever in an eternal separation from God and all true Joy and Happiness.

O what a fearful and an amazing Loss is the loss of the Soul ! Sirs, pray remember, this Salvation is the Salvation of your precious Souls ; thy Soul, O Sinner, is dearly concerned in it : Our Soul is our All, what have we more ? A Man is never utterly undone till his Soul is utterly lost : if the Soul is saved, all is saved ; but if the Soul is lost, for ever lost, all is lost. But,

2^{dly}. The loss or losing of the Soul, is the loss of the Body too ; that must have perished for ever with the Body of Beasts, whilst our Souls must have lain in Torments, had not Christ came to redeem us. Moreover, The Salvation of the Soul is the Salvation of the Body ; Christ came to save both the Soul and Body too : And hence the Apostle saith, *Even we our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body ; that is, for the farther Effects of our Adoption. Now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not appear what we shall be ; that is, it doth not appear what we shall be when our Bodies shall be raised. He shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body.* This Salvation saves not our Souls only from Wrath, but our Bodies also, they shall rise to Life and Immortality ; the Bodies of the Wicked as well as their Souls shall be cast into Hell, but the Bodies and the Souls of the Godly shall be glorified in Heaven for ever. O what a grievous thing it is to think of the loss of the Body, to have the Soul taken away from the Body ! But how sweet is it to think of that Day, when those two old Friends shall meet together again, and when both shall be delivered from all Evil, from all Deformity and Pollution, and be glorified, and also shall never part more, or be separated from each other to the Days of Eternity.

APPLICATION.

1. Reproof to such who despise their own precious Souls : What Fools are they, who to save their *Huts*, lose their *Heads* ; or who to save their *Goods* in a fearful Fire, lose their dear *Child* in the *Cradle* ? As I once told you of a Woman that did thus, her House was on Fire, and she bestirred her self to get out her best

G g g

Goods ;

Goods; and at last when she could go in no more, she rejoiced that she had saved her Goods; but said one to her, Woman, where is your Child? *O my Child, my Child*; then she cried her Child, when it was too late, for that was burned to Death in the Cradle. Just thus some, to get and save their Goods, to get the World, lose their Souls. We read of some, who to save their Lives or their Bodies from being burned to Ashes for Christ, denied Christ; they could not burn for him: What faith our Saviour? *He that seeks to save his Life, shall lose it.* What Fools are they then who think that way to save their Bodies; for as they lose their Souls, so they lose their Bodies also: And it is not worse to have the Body to lie in Hell-Fire for ever, than to be burned in Martyrdom, and be consumed to Ashes in Corporal Fire?

2. Consider, that all such who neglect this great Salvation, slight
 Job 27. 8. and neglect their own precious and immortal Souls: *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul?* He makes a bad Market that puts off his Soul at any Price; *What shall a Man give in exchange of his Soul?* Jesus Christ, who knew the great worth of it, laid down a Price of infinite Value to redeem and purchase it. *Witches* they say sell their Souls to the Devil out of Malice, to be revenged on some that have offended them: What a dismal thing is that, how fearful is their State? But pray, Brethren, what do they lose who sell their Souls to the Devil, as it were, for the sake of their brutish Lusts, or out of love to Sin? Thus the *Whoremongers* and *unclean Persons* sell their Souls, and *Drunkards* who will have their merry Bouts, their Cups and Pots, and filthy Companions, and may be their Whores too, let what will become of their immortal Souls: others will have their *Pride* and haughty Hearts, *gay Clothes*, and their *detestable Dresses*, though their Souls are clothed with Rags, and a *crawling Worm* gnaws on them, and to Hell must be thrown at last, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.* Moreover, the carnal *Worldling* will be rich, he will lay up Gold and Silver, he will gain the World though he lose thereby his own Soul. But remember, Sinners, Christ died for the Soul, this Salvation is the Salvation of the Soul; and does any wretched Sinner despise his Soul, or is it think you not worth his Pains to part with his Cups, with his sinful Companions, with his or her Pride, unlawful Gain, or the love of this World, to save it for ever?

3. How does this tend to reprove such who do expose their precious Souls to eternal Wrath, for the unjust Gain of *Sin-pence* or

a *Shilling*? Are there not too many such in the World, who will cheat, lie and defraud their Neighbours for a small matter of profit? O how dear will they one Day pay for that Gain!

4. How does this reprove likewise such Parents that think they can never do enough for to enrich their Children, or get them great Portions, and care not what they eat, drink, wear, or how richly their Bodies are deck'd and adorned, but take no care of their immortal Souls, but rather indulge them in their Sins and vain and wicked Practices, and set also Soul-damning Examples continually before their Eyes?

5. We may also infer from hence, what a mighty Charge, an amazing Charge Parents have committed to them; as also the Ministers of the Gospel, who are to take care and watch over the Souls of such who are committed to them, as such that must one Day give an Account of them.

6. Moreover, woe be to such who deceive and blindly lead the Souls of Men to destruction, that are so exceeding precious: *If the Blind lead the Blind, they will both fall into the Ditch.*

7. Shall I exhort you, Sinners, to look to Christ for the Salvation of your Souls.

1. He bids you look to him; *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye Ends of the Earth.*

2. Consider, that there is no other way to save your Souls, there is but one Saviour, and one way of Salvation: *There is no other Name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved.* He that receives Christ, believes in Christ, shall be saved; and *he that believes not shall be damned.* Acts 4. 12. Mark 16. 16.

3. If Life be more worth than all the World, certainly the Soul is more worth than ten thousand Worlds. O do not part with it on any Terms; for it cost Christ dear, the Price of his own Blood; his Heart-Blood was let out to save our Souls. Alas, there are some nevertheless that are like the false Prophets of old, who *sold the Souls of the People for a handful of Barley, and for a piece of Bread.* Ezek. 13. 19.

4. How near may some of you be to Death; and if you have not got an Interest in Christ before then, what will become of your precious Souls?

5. Will you consider what Means of Grace God is pleased to afford you for the good of your Souls, and know it is by the preaching of the Gospel that God commonly saves the Souls of Men, I mean, that it is the Means he uses for the begetting of Faith: Shall

the Word have some good Effect upon your Souls this Day ?

6. Consider, all your Prayers, Tears, Alms-deeds, all Reformation of Life, Services, Duties and inherent Holiness, cannot save your Souls; no, none but Christ, nothing but the Merits of Christ, it is his Blood alone that made your Peace, and must wash away all the Guilt and Filth of your Sins. Your Souls, your precious Souls, O Sinners, are wounded, polluted, naked; what will you do? Nothing but Christ's Blood I tell you can heal them; nothing but his Flesh, his Blood, can feed them; and nothing but his Righteousness can clothe them; and nothing but the Graces of Christ's Spirit can enrich, can deck and adorn your Souls; and without Faith you cannot obtain any of those Blessings.

O what shall I say to you, if going down upon my Knees could move you to lay to Heart what a sad State you are in, who have not received by Faith this Salvation, and incline you now to believe, I would readily do it; but alas, it is God's Gift: O look up to him, do what you can, pray and attend on the Word: What do you say, do you believe that this is a Great Salvation? Will you esteem it, and look after it above all things in the World? It is, Sirs, that one thing needful; *chuse with Mary that good Part that shall never be taken from you.* Shall there be Joy in Heaven this Day? how can you slight such a precious Soul, and such a precious Saviour, who spilt his Blood to save the worst of Sinners? Will you tread his Blood under your Feet? If so, what will you do at the Day of Death, and in the Day of Judgment? Should your Souls be lost, there is no repairing that Loss, no redemption of the Soul out of Hell, no other Price, no other Saviour, no other way; if this be slighted, you must perish.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

 **I** AM upon the Proof and Demonstration of the greatness of the Salvation of the Gospel. I closed with the ninth Reason of the Point the last time.

Serm. V.

Tembly,

Tenthly, Gospel-Salvation is a great and glorious Salvation, if we consider what such who have interest in it are raised up unto, or do and shall partake of; I mean, what great Blessings and wonderful Privileges they are invested with by it.

Gospel-Salvation great considering what we are raised unto by it.

First, *Pardon of Sin*: This Blessing have all they that receive it.

1. Consider the Blood of Christ is the way of Gospel-Remission, no Remission of Sin *without the shedding of Blood*; there is remission of Sin, but no Blood could procure this Remission but the Blood of Christ: he paid our Debts, *in whom we have redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins*. It was by his offering himself an Expiatory Sacrifice to God; there's no Salvation without Pardon of Sin, and no Pardon of Sin without a Compensation be made by Jesus Christ to the Law and Justice of God.

Heb. 9. 22.

Col. 1. 14.

Pardon of Sin contained in Gospel-Salvation.

2. Consider who are pardoned, even all that believe, though they were never such great Rebels against God; such were Traitors and Enemies once, who are now forgiven. Here is a Pardon for the vilest Sinner, that sees his horrid Evil and Rebellion, and takes hold of Jesus Christ, or looks up to him by Faith.

3. Consider the Nature of this Pardon and Gospel-Remission: Such are pardoned for ever; *I will remember their Sins no more*, they are blotted out for ever. God promises to all penitent and believing Sinners, to throw their Sins into the Depth of the Sea.

4. Consider the Terms of Pardon, it is a free Forgiveness, we having nothing to pay: God of his meer Grace and Goodness doth forgive us through the Atonement of Christ's Blood freely; *Even I am he that bloteth out thy Transgression for my own sake, and will not remember thy Sins*: This is spoke to a People that had wearied the Lord with their Iniquities. O what a glorious Salvation is this, that here is Remission and free Pardon for rebellious Sinners, such that deserve nothing but Wrath and Hell!

5. It is a Pardon of all Sins, great and small, Sins of Omission, and Sins of Commission, Sins of all sorts and sizes.

6. 'Tis God that blotteth out our Sins; he that can forgive, he whose right it is to pardon, he against whom we have sinned; and he who when he gives a Pardon, none can supersede it nor revoke it, let them do what they can.

Secondly, *Reconciliation* with God is another Blessing of this Salvation: God doth not only forgive us, but he takes us into his Bosom, he is fully reconciled to us in Jesus Christ; he cries, *Fury is not in me*. Isa. 27. 4.

me. Again he says, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*
 Rom. 5. 10. *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his*
 Rom. 8. *Son: And none can make God our Enemy again for ever, if we*
 39. 40. *are Believers; none can separate us from his Love in Jesus Christ*
our Lord, as sometime ago I shewed you, no not Sin nor Satan.

Union with God a Blessing of Gospel-Salvation. Thirdly, By this Salvation we come to have Union with God, and to be made one Spirit with Jesus Christ: and how great and glorious is this sacred Union! but having formerly spoken to it, I shall not say more to it now. Moreover, we are not only brought into a State of Union, but are also admitted to have Communion with the Father, and the Son. Brethren, it is one thing for a *Traitor* to be pardoned, and another thing for him to be admitted into the King's Presence, and to become one of his great Favourites:
 1 Joh. 1. 3. *Truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

Fourthly, By this Salvation also we are justified: Justification is a high Privilege; *By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.* Let me shew you what it is to be justified, that so this Salvation may appear the more great and glorious to you.

The Nature of Justification opened. 1. To be justified, is more than to be pardoned. A Man may be forgiven, and yet not have the Guilt removed from him, nor be declared Righteous and Innocent. To be justified, is to be pronounced Just and Righteous in God's Sight, through the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ, or to be actually acquitted upon Trial, or discharged from the Guilt and Punishment of Sins; not that we are not Sinners in our selves, but as Christ was made *Sin for us who knew no Sin* (in himself) *so we are made the Righteousness of God in him*, who knew no Righteousness in our selves. As our Sin was imputed unto Christ, so his Righteousness is imputed unto us: God in Justification deals not with us in a way of Mercy only, (as he doth in Pardon of Sin) but in a way of Justice and Righteousness also; we paid all that was due to vindictive Wrath and Justice in Jesus Christ, (I mean, Jesus Christ for us as our Surety hath done it).

2. Justification is so great a Blessing, that the Justice of God hath nothing to lay to the Believer's Charge, for Justice as well as Mercy does acquit him.

3. Nor hath the Law any thing to lay to the Charge of them that God justifies, Christ in our stead having answered all the Demands

Demands thereof, and born the Penalty it denounces upon the Transgressors of it: *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* Gal. 3. 13.

4. And as the Law can lay nothing to our Charge if God justifies us, so can none else: *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn us?* None can implead such, or put in an Accusation that shall be heard at God's Bar; if it is God that doth acquit us, that justifies us, what signifies any Charge that can be brought in against us? What though for want of clear Light our Hearts should condemn us, or wicked Men, or Satan; our Hearts may charge us unjustly and ignorantly, for want of Light, and wicked Men and Devils maliciously.

5. Moreover, none can condemn such that God justifieth, because it is Christ that died: Hath not his Death Worth and Merit enough in it? *It is Christ that died*, he who was God as well as Man; our Debt is long ago paid; and when we believe, we receive an actual Discharge. The Apostle challenges all the Enemies of our Souls, to come in and see what they can do to condemn a justified Person; Come World, come Devil, come Law, come Sin, come Conscience, what can you lay to the Charge of those that Christ died for, and God hath actually acquitted? Bring forth your Plea, your Charge of Eternal Condemnation; Hath not Christ born the Punishment due to these for all their Sins they have, do, or may commit? Is not his Satisfaction more than enough? Hath he not purchased and merited superabundant Grace? Come saith a poor Believer, I will stand Trial with you now, though I have but one single Plea, *It is Jesus Christ that died for me*, and in my room: I appeal to the Great God and Judge of Heaven and Earth, whether my Plea is not good, and according to Law, and allowable. Sirs, by this Plea all are silenced and impleaded at once.

6. All that are justified, are compleat in Jesus Christ, they are without Spot before the Throne of God: *And ye are compleat in him, which is the Head of Principalities and Powers.* Christ's Compleatness and Perfection, in respect of his Suretyship-Righteousness, being accounted to us, we are compleat touching our Justification; we want nothing, our Garment is without Hem, and there is no Spot nor Stain in it: *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no Spot in thee. Behold, thou art fair, my Love, behold thou art fair. Thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thy Renown went forth.* Cant. 4. 7.

Ezek. 16. *forth among the Heathen for thy Beauty: for it was perfect, through
13, 14. my Comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord.*

Quest. *Whether is Justification all at once, or a continued Act in God?*

Ans. 1. I do not believe it is a divided Act; as 'tis God's Act, so it is one Act only: but whether it be one entire Act, or as one transient Act, as if all were dashed out with a Pen at once, or a continued Act, I shall not determine; but this I will say, He that God accepteth and justifieth in Christ, none of his Sins shall ever be charged upon him, as to that vindictive Wrath and Vengeance that is due to them: for as there is an Imputation of Righteousness unto us, so it follows that there is a Non-Imputation of Sin.

2. Justification admits of no Degrees, tho' it should be thought to be a continued Act in God; and though in our sight and feeling we may not thus apprehend it through want of Faith, and by reason of Satan's Temptations, yet as to the Act it self, we are never less nor more justified, because the Matter of our Justification, viz. the Righteousness of Christ, is not less or more, but always the same, and it cannot be lost, as I have proved in this Treatise. As Christ, Brethren, was justified at his Resurrection from all Sin that was laid upon him, or which met in him on the Cross, so all Believers are cleansed and justified from all Guilt, and that for ever; and this Christ pleads in Heaven for them as often as they sin: *By one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Heb. 10.
14.

Psa. 143. 2.

Object. *Why doth David say, Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant O Lord; for in thy sight shall no Flesh living be justified?*

Ans. That is in himself, no Man can be justified by his own Righteousness in God's sight; all must say with Bildad, *How can Man be justified with God,* because he hath sinned, and daily doth Sin? Who dare appear at God's Bar in his own Duties, in his own sincere Obedience, or in his inherent Holiness? No, every one must fly to God in Christ, and plead his Justification and Discharge through him alone: No Man hath any thing to recommend him to God in point of Justification in his sight, nor doth he need any other Righteousness to discharge him or to acquit him before God; yet we as in our selves must say with Job, *If I justify my self, my own Mouth shall condemn me.*

Job 9. 20.

7. Such is the blessed State of those who by the Father are justified through this Salvation, that to them the Apostle affirms there is no Condemnation: *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*

Rom. 8. 1.

(1.) He

(1.) He doth not say there is nothing in them, which in its own Nature doth not deserve Condemnation.

(2.) Nor doth he say, a true Believer shall never condemn himself, pass a Sentence unjustly against himself; for that he may do.

(3.) Neither doth he say, Satan shall never condemn him: but let whoever will condemn such, God will not, Christ will not, and Sin cannot, the Law cannot; no more can the Devil, nor a Believer's own Heart, I mean, so as to bring him under Eternal Condemnation.

8. And lastly, All such that are justified, shall be glorified; see Rom. 8. 30. O glorious Salvation, that brings in this blessed Privilege! how happy are all justified Persons!

Fifthly. *Adoption* appertains to this Salvation: Every Believer is raised also to this great Privilege, and hath this Prerogative, he is made a Son of God, a Child of God. *Adoption* is to take such to be Children, that naturally were not, as a special Act of Grace and Favour: So we who were the Children of Wrath by Nature, are made or adopted to be the Children of God by Grace through Jesus Christ. And Christ in working out this Salvation, procured this glorious Blessing: *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* To be Kings Gal. 4. 5. Children is no small Dignity, yea, the Children of the King of Heaven and Earth: *What manner of Love is this that the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God? Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, &c.* God is not ashamed to be called our God, nay, our Father. I Joh. 3. 1.

1. Brethren, this is an honourable Title: What were we once, how low, base and ignoble, before Grace?

2. This Privilege it appears cost Christ dear.

3. *And because we are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

Gal. 4. 6.

4. *And if we be Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.*

5. Then, Beloved, we also as Children shall be cared for, as Children be fed, as Children be clothed, as Children also be chastened; God in all Afflictions deals with us as his Children.

Heb. 12. 5.

6. And if Children, we shall be always Children, for we are not only the Children of God by Adoption, but we are also begotten and born of God, and so partake of his Divine Nature, which we cannot lose.

6, 7, 8.

Sixthly, By the Grace and Means of this Salvation, we are espoused to Jesus Christ. O what an Honour and Dignity is this, Believers are the Bride, the Lamb's Wife! And how is, and shall the Spouse of Christ be clothed? Even in *Gold of Ophir*: *She shall be brought to the King in Raiment of Needie-work*. She is all glorious within, and she shall be all glorious outwardly in Body too e're long, as well as she is so now in her Soul and inward Parts. Jesus Christ puts Chains about the Necks of all that are his, or that he espouses, I mean, those precious Graces of his Spirit which he hath purchased for them; *For they shall be an Ornament of Grace unto thy Head, and Chains about thy Neck*. The Father called for the best Robe to be put upon his Son, as soon as he returned home, and a *Ring on his Finger*. The inward Beauty of the Spouse does even ravish the very Heart of Christ: *Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse; thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with the Chain of thy Neck*. With one of thine Eyes: some understand by one of her Eyes, the Eye of Faith; no doubt that is a precious Grace in Christ's sight. Every Believer partakes of Grace, and all Spiritual Gifts; every Grace is a glorious Ornament, and of great Price in the sight of God. This Salvation makes Men and Women glorious Creatures, new Creatures, every one resembles the Son of a King; they hereby come to partake of God's Holy Nature: And as the Grace of this Salvation makes glorious Christians, so it does also make glorious Churches, *Candlesticks of pure Gold*.

Seventhly, This Salvation brings Peace with it. Peace is a precious Blessing, we receive Grace first, and then Peace: *My Peace I give unto you, my Peace I leave with you*. The Peace of God is so excellent a thing, that *it passes all Mens Understanding*. What would *Spira* or *Child* have given for true Peace and inward Serenity of Mind? O it is a great and glorious Salvation! Were these things considered, and could be fully opened, it would appear more abundantly; true Peace of Conscience is never known to the Worth of it, but to such who have known the want of it.

Eighthly, I might also speak of Sanctification, which Blessing all they also partake of that have an Interest in this Salvation: Holiness is an Heaven on Earth, it is Heaven begun here, and it fits and makes every Believer meet for that blessed Inheritance of the Saints in

in Light ; the Spirit and Graces of the Spirit are given to this end, I mean, to make us holy in Heart and Life.

Ninthly, Free access unto the Throne of Grace, is another Blessing and Privilege which all Believers receive who have a part in this Salvation. Christ hath made the Way easy for us to the Father ; it is by *a new and living Way which he hath consecrated for us* Heb. 10. 20. *through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh, or by his Death.*

Tenthly, All the Promises of God belong to Believers, and are procured for them in and by this Salvation : They are great, *exceeding great and precious* ; there is a Fulness in them : the Promises 2 Pet. 1. 4. as they are sure in Christ, Yea and Amen in Christ, so they answer every State and Condition any Believer can be in.

Eleventhly, All the Ordinances of the Gospel belong to this Salvation, and are no small Privilege ; they are as *golden Pipes* to convey Heavenly Riches, or Sacred Treasure to our Souls.

Nay, and in the last place, there is a Crown of Glory that every Believer shall be raised unto, that hath a saving Interest in this Salvation ; and not only a Crown, but a Kingdom also. Now is not this a great Salvation, which raises poor Creatures who were fallen as low as Hell, up to Heaven, and of being Slaves of Sin and Satan, to be Sons and Daughters of God ? It was a great Salvation that *Joseph* had when he was brought out of Prison, where he lay in Irons, to be the chief Ruler under the King in *Egypt* : And it was a great Advancement of *David* from following the Sheep, to sit on a Throne ; but nothing like this of Believers. What is an Earthly Throne to an Heavenly one ? He that overcometh, shall Rev. 2. 21. sit down with Christ in his Throne, and reign for ever and ever.

APPLICATION.

1. Admire this Salvation, say it is no small thing to have a part in it. I cannot particularly apply what I have insisted upon : But,

2. Bless God for Jesus Christ. You cannot say that the Salvation he hath wrought is a barren Salvation. O what is and will be the product of it !

3. Particularly, Consider what a Blessing Justification is, and take heed you are not drawn away nor corrupted about the nature thereof.

4. Be exhorted, you that are Saints, to strive to exercise Faith in respect of your Justification : Believe the Gospel-Testimony ; *He that believeth is justified from all things, &c.* You have the Word of that God that cannot lie to assure you of it. Do not judge of your Justification according to the degree of your Sanctification, as if you were no further justified than you are sanctified, or that your Sanctification is any Cause of your Justification ; nor do not think you are more justified when you are in a lively frame of Duty, than at another time when deadness and dulness takes hold of you.

Object. *I cannot believe so, as to rise to a full persuasion that I am justified, and shall be saved, though I can rely upon Christ as a poor Sinner for my Justification and Eternal Life.*

Answer. 1. Well, bless God for that Faith : for a full Assurance doth not appertain to the Essence of true Faith, but it is the highest degree of it ; and no doubt many are gone to Heaven that never attained to that degree of true Faith.

2. I knew a Godly Minister who told me in his Sickness, a little before he died, All his Hopes were gone, he could not come to Christ as a Saint, his Evidences were so clouded ; this he uttered with Tears, as I remember, and with no small grief : He presently broke forth, and said, *But, Brother, I can come to him as a poor, burdened, lost and heavy-laden Sinner, and I am sure he will not refuse me,* or to that purpose. If thou canst do so, certainly great Peace will come in ; it is from the weakness of our Faith that a strong and full Perswasion is wanting : a direct Act of Faith I am persuaded must needs bring in the greatest Joy and Comfort ; a looking for all the signs of true Grace in us, oft-times confounds a poor Christian. If there is no Sin that thou dost allow thy self in, but dost hate Sin as Sin, and lovest Holiness, and art willing to follow Christ in all things according to thy Light, and lovest all the Saints of God as such, no doubt but thy State is good and safe.

3. But remember, if thou canst not come to a satisfaction about what I speak, in respect of those Signs, yet know, if thou dost believe, *i. e.* rely upon the Merits and Righteousness of Christ, as a poor Sin-sick Sinner, all may be well.

4. Take heed you do not look for a Righteousness in your selves to recommend you to God, or to trust in for Justification : Also know that it is not for the sake of Christ's Merits, or for the sake of his Righteousness that we are justified, but that it is his Righteousness that is the Matter of our Justification alone before God,

as it is imputed unto us, and received by Faith. Christ's Merits render not our Faith and sincere Obedience to be any part of our Righteousness to Justification in God's sight; 'tis his Righteousness only which was perfect, and no other Righteousness must thou be found in, in this respect, if thou art justified and eternally saved. Though 'tis true, that Man that has true Faith, shall find the Effects of it to be such, that it will cleanse and purify his Heart and Life; and that Faith that hath not such Effects and good Fruits to accompany it, is a dead Faith, as the Apostle *James* shews.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

I Clos'd the last Day with the tenth Demonstration, to prove the Salvation of the Gospel to be Great and Glorious.

Serm. VI.

Seventhly, Gospel-Salvation is Great and Glorious, because it is a full, a compleat, and a comprehensible Salvation. That which I intend hereby is this, *viz.* There are all things contained in this Salvation which our Souls need in order to Grace, and whatsoever is necessary for us here, and eternal Glory hereafter; 'tis not a barren, or a partial Salvation, but a fruitful and compleat Salvation: it does not require us to make *Brick*, and allow us no *Straw*; it doth not command us to believe, and give us no Power; it is not like the Law that commands perfect Righteousness, and condemns all that have it not, but gives no Strength to perform it. Some there be who seem to preach a strange Gospel, they tell you what Christ hath done, *viz.* that he hath died, &c. and done his part in this Salvation, and left Sinners to do their part; the Debt is paid, you may go out of Prison if you *will*, this they do tell you: But, *alas, alas!* the poor Sinner bound, he is in Chains, under the Power of Sin and Satan; nay, he is dead, and what can he do? Is his Power greater than the Power of Satan? Can he translate himself out of the Power of Darkness, into the Kingdom of God's Son? Can he, by any Power God hath given him, quicken himself, or raise himself from the Dead? No, no, this is impossible.

Gospel-Salvation great because 'tis a full and compleat Salvation.

Ccl. l. 13.

But.

But now, say I, Gospel-Salvation is a full and compleat Salvation, what is needful and absolutely necessary to be done for the Sinner, in order to his having a saving Interest in it: Jesus Christ will accomplish, nay, and he will do it himself, he will not admit you to have a Share or a Part in the Salvation of your own Souls: for as he knows Sinners are not able to do that which must be done for them, and in them, if they are interestted into the Blessings of this Salvation; so he will have and must have all the Glory and Honour of this Salvation himself, from the first to the last; Christ hath no Partner, no Competitor in this great Work, I mean, in and about the Salvation of our Souls.

1. Sinners, are you dead, *dead in Sins and Trespasses*? Christ is come to quicken you; *I am come that you might have Life*: There is in this Salvation Life for dead Sinners; Christ hath a certain Water to give, that whosoever drinketh of it, though he be dead, yet he shall live; that Water is his Spirit, 'tis by that, by infusing of his Spirit into the dead Soul, that the Soul comes to be quickned: the Spirit of Christ is his quickning Voice; *The Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live*. Christ is our Life, not only as he purchased Life for us, but as he by his Spirit infuses it in us. The Spirit is that Vital Principle in us; *You hath he quickned, that were dead in Trespasses and Sins*. And he puts forth his Almighty Power to do this, as the Apostle had declared to the Saints at *Ephesus*, just in the Verses before in the first Chapter, shewing to them that the same Power is put forth in raising us from a Death in Sin, (or in working Faith in our Souls) that was wrought in Christ when he was raised from the Dead; and therefore it is said *to be the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty Power*, as before. Can any Man do this, can he raise himself? Dead *Lazarus* might quicken and raise himself as soon out of the Grave, as a dead Sinner can quicken himself, or believe of himself: no, Faith is God's Gift, and it is the vital Principle of our Souls. I wonder what some Men mean, when they say, Sinners must come up to the Rule of the Promise, before they lay hold of the Promise. Can they quicken themselves? True, if they can, the Promise runs, *Christ will give them Life*. Get Life, create Life in your Souls, and lay hold of the Promise: strange Notion! I am sure Life must be first in the Soul, before the Soul can do any thing that is truly and spiritually Good; before Life is infused, there is no motion towards God, let the Motives be what they will.

2. Sinners are blind, spiritually blind, and it is Jesus Christ must give them sight; nay, and he in the Work of this Salvation, is appointed to open blind Eyes: he is given to be a Light unto the Gentiles, and so to be God's Salvation to the ends of the Earth. Spiritual Life and Spiritual Light is in this Salvation, and both are created in the Soul; nay, when Christ gives us Life, he gives us Light also.

Object. But it is said, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ will give thee Light.* Eph. 5.14

Ans. (1.) I answer, That which God commands us to do in one place, he says he will do for us in another place.

(2.) It doth not imply that the Creature can of himself rise from the Dead, but shews that he must be raised and quickned before he can receive Light from Christ.

(3.) It shews a necessity of Faith, or that we must believe, and therefore ought to attend upon the Means of Faith, and look up to God to obtain it: *Faith cometh by hearing*, that is the way he takes to work it in our Souls.

3. Sinners, have you hard and rocky Hearts, Hearts of Stone, even as hard as the nether Millstone? Why now God bids you, he commands you to make you a new Heart. But can you do that? if Christ never gives you Salvation until you create in your selves a new Heart, and break your stony Hearts into pieces, you will never have Salvation at all, but must perish for ever; and this Salvation will be in vain to you, and to all Mortals were it so: But pray observe the Promise, this Salvation is so full, that it hath a new Heart in it; *A new Heart also I will give you, and a new Spirit I will put within you, and I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and will give you an Heart of Flesh:* A new Heart, a holy, a tender and broken Heart, this God will give: It is not naturally in us, but it is of God's free Grace given to us: Hence David cried, *Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* Thou didst, as if he should say, give me a new Heart, but I have apostatized from thee, and polluted my Soul; O create again a clean Heart in me, or renew thy Work. Not that he had lost his new Heart, but he would have God recover him from his Fall, and put him into a holy and spiritual Frame, which none but he that hath an almighty creating Power can do. And if we cannot quicken our selves from a State of spiritual Deadness, how should poor Sinners raise themselves from a State of spiritual Death? Sinner, here is Comfort for thee whose Heart is hard, and thou feelest it hard, and that makes thee go mourning all the Day: behold,

hold, in the Salvation of the Gospel, a new Heart, a Heart of Flesh is promised; it is not you that can make your Heart new: No, no, it is Jesus Christ that must do it, 'tis his Work; *We are Eph. 2. 10. his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good Works.*

4. Is there in the Hearts of Sinners naturally Enmity against God? Christ in this Salvation takes it away: *The carnal Mind is Rom. 8. 7. Enmity against God, it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* See in what a Pickle the Mind and Will of Man naturally is in: What can a Sinner not do, if the Doctrine of some Men were true? they can repent, believe, be regenerated, and what not? But what says *Paul*, their Mind, their Will is not subject to the Law of God, nor to the Gospel, nor Rule of the Promise neither, *neither indeed can be.* Where they put a *can*, *Paul* puts a *cannot*. So in another place he saith, *But the natural Man receiveth 1 Cor. 2. not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; 14. neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Here is a *cannot* again; 'tis impossible till the Spirit of God removes that Enmity and Darkness, and bows and bends the Will to the Will of God, which shall be done when the Salvation of the Gospel comes with Power to the Soul of a poor Sinner. 'Tis Christ that must slay this Enmity, as well as he did that which was between *Jews* and *Gentiles*: He is a Mediator, not only to reconcile God Pf. 110. 3. to us, but us also to God; *My People shall be willing in the Day of my Power.*

5. Sinners, are you polluted, defiled with Sin, and filthy in God's sight? How will you get rid of this abominable Filth, which renders you loathsome in God's sight? Can you wash away your Pollution, will Snow-water do it? No, no, *For though thou wash thee with Nitre, and take thee much Sope, yet thine Iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord.* Sin is not easily washed away, the Guilt of it, nor the Filth of it: This *Job* well knew, therefore saith, *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and my Hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and my own Clothes shall abhor me.* 'Tis not Snow-water, nor much Sope, no nor a Sea of brinish Tears that can wash away the Defilement and Guilt of Sin that cleaves to the Soul. But, Sinner, in this Salvation there is a way found out to cleanse thy filthy Soul, nay, a *Fountain* opened for Zech. 13. 1. *Sin* and for *Uncleanness*. God, 'tis true, says, *Wash thine Heart Jer. 4. 14. from Wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.* So far I deny not, as Man is able, he ought to abstain from Sin, and cleanse himself: But Joh. 13. says Christ, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me:* 'Tis he,

it is his Blood that cleanses us from all Sin. This Salvation, Bre-
 thren, is a full and compleat Salvation, it brings every thing with
 it we need. Rather than the Stain, the Pollution and Guilt of Sin
 should abide upon us, Christ will pour forth his own Blood to
 wash it away; *He hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his
 own Blood.* He gave himself for his Church to this End, *That he
 might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of Water by the Word,
 that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or
 Wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be Holy and without
 Blemish.*

6. Sinners, are you bound in strong Chains, and in the Prison-
 house? Are you in the Bonds of Iniquity? How will you do to
 come out, for you are kept by the strong Man armed: if you can
 conquer this strong and cruel Enemy, you may get out; but are you
 a Match for Satan? No certainly, none can deliver himself, none can
 get out of Satan's Hands, it must be done by one mightier than he.
 Well, in this Salvation there is Liberty, Christ is clothed with
 Power, as you lately heard; he is *anointed to preach the Gospel to
 the Poor*: he is sent to heal the Broken-hearted, to deliver the Cap-
 tives, and to set at liberty them that were bound. Jesus Christ is
 stronger than the strong Man armed; *He hath taken captive Capti-
 vity himself.* O what a blessed, what a great and glorious Salva-
 tion is this!

7. Are you poor, and naked, and have nothing to cover your
 Nakedness but filthy Rags? Well, be it so, yet this Salvation
 brings to you a rich and glorious Robe, *viz.* Christ's Righteousness,
 nay change of Raiment; Salvation it self is called a Garment,
 and it is by this Salvation also you have the Robe of Sanctification
 and Grace wherewith you are clothed: Humility is called a
 Garment; *I counsel thee to buy of me white Raiment, that thou mayst
 be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakedness appear not.*

8. Are you poor hungry Souls, and have no Bread, nothing to
 eat, but are forc'd to feed on Husks, as the poor Prodigal did?
 Soul, to thy joy, in this Salvation is Bread of Life for thee; *Eat you
 that which is good, and let your Soul delight it self in Fatness.* The
 Gospel, Sirs, provides a Feast of fat things. Have you not read of
 the Marriage-Supper, *All things are now ready?* O what a Banquet
 doth this Salvation make for hungry Sinners, and such who hunger
 and thirst after Righteousness shall be filled.

9. Are you Thirsty, and have no Water to drink; are all Wells
 empty, and all Springs dry? Yet know, O Sinner, here is the

John 7. 37, 38. Well of Salvation brim full; *If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink.*

10. Are you guilty, Sinners, and condemned to die by a Holy and just Law? The Gospel-Salvation has a full Discharge for you, Christ hath died in your stead, and here is a Pardon, a free Pardon obtained upon his Satisfaction.

Act. 5. 31. 11. Or Sinner, dost thou want a broken Heart, dost thou want a penitent Heart? in this Salvation Christ has purchased Grace to melt and soften thy Heart; *Him hath God exalted at his right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Israel, and Remission of Sins.*

Heb. 12. 2. 12. Dost thou want Faith, or more Faith? It is to be had in this Salvation; *To you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe, &c. To Believe, Grace to believe is given to poor Sinners; Christ is the Author and Finisher of our Faith.*

13. Do you want Peace? the Gospel is the Gospel of Peace, Christ is the Prince of Peace; and as he had made Peace for us, so he hath promised to all that lay hold on this Salvation to give them Peace, yea great Peace, not such Peace that the World gives.

Isa. 41. 10. 14. Do you want Strength? it is in this Salvation also; *In the Lord (that is in Christ) shall one say, have I Righteousness and Strength. Nay, you shall be strengthened according to his glorious Power; Christ is our Strength: as he is God's Arm of Power, so he is our Arm also; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteousness.*

John 14. 18. 15. Or do you want Comfort? this Salvation hath all Joy and spiritual Comfort in it: God is called the God of all Comfort and Consolation; but he is so only to us in Jesus Christ. Christ hath procured and sent the Comforter himself to us, and to abide with us for ever; *I will not leave you comfortless I will come unto you.*

16. Do you want Weapons and Armour to engage your Enemies? this Salvation provides these also, see Eph. 6. 10, 11, 12, 13. Christ's Souldiers are armed compleatly, yea, they have Armour of Proof put upon them.

John 16. 13. 17. Do you want a Guide? this Salvation provides you an infallible and faithful Guide also. (1.) To guide us, we have God's Word, which is that sure Word of Prophecy, which if you follow, you shall never go astray. (2.) To guide us we have also the Holy Spirit, and Spirit of Truth; *when he is come, he will guide you into all Truth.*

18. Or do you want a *Shepherd* to feed you, a *King* to rule you, a *Priest* to sacrifice and make an Atonement for you, a *Prophet* to teach you? this Salvation provides all these for you: Christ is your *Shepherd*, your *Priest*, your *King*, your *Prophet*, and excels all that ever bore those Names.

19. Do you want an *Husband*, would you change your Condition: What say you, Sinners, particularly you young People, do you desire a good Match, to be well disposed of in Marriage? O then receive this Salvation, here is a Prince, nay the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, that desires your Love; will you accept of this Offer? behold, he is now come and knocks at your Doors. O open to him, say not nay; For this Match being once made between Jesus Christ and your Souls, this Salvation and all that is contained in it, is yours for ever.

20. Would you be Rich, Great, Honourable, truly Rich and Honourable? here it is, receive this Salvation, and all these things (as you heard the last Day) are yours; none so Great, so Rich, nor so Honourable as Believers: *The Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour*, the Saints are the excellent in all the Earth. Prov. 12.
12.
Psal. 16. 3.

21. Do you want Health, and would you be freed of all your Diseases and Sickness for ever? Health is in this Salvation, Soul-health, and that is the best Health; Christ hath born our Sicknesses to cure and heal our Souls.

22. Do you want a great Portion? this is more than all the other, this Salvation is so comprehensible, that God himself is contained in it: This Salvation gives us Interest in God, God hereby gives himself to every Believer to be his Portion, Christ hath purchased this Portion for us, he restores to us a lost God; by this Salvation we come to enjoy God again. *God in the
Salvation
of the Go-
spel, is the
Portion of
Believers.*

(1.) God is a Portion that will supply all thy Wants.

(2.) A Portion that will content and fully satisfy every Soul that has an Interest in him.

(3.) A Portion that can never be spent nor wasted.

(4.) A Portion for thy Soul, and a Portion that will last as long as thy Soul shall last, and that is for ever. Sirs, many have great worldly Portions, but they are sometimes soon spent, and they become poor and miserable. Some also have great earthly Portions, bodily Portions, but have no Portion for their poor Souls: O get God to be your Portion, *i.e.* believe in Christ, receive by Faith this Salvation, and God is thy Portion, Christ is thy Portion.

(5.) God is a present Portion, and also a future Portion; you may feed on this Portion: and the more you live on this Portion, the more you have.

(6.) God is an infinite Portion, an inconceivable Portion; whatsoever is in God so far as it is communicable, or God seeth good to impart of himself to us, so much of God we shall have: what God is, and what God has, is a Believer's.

(7.) Sinner, a Portion thou must have, and God too to be thy Portion, or thou must perish for ever. The loss of God at first was the undoing of all Mankind, that was our ruin; nor can that Loss be ever repaired until we have God again: an eternal loss of God will be the Torment and Misery of the Damned.

(8.) The Reason why the Father sent Jesus Christ to work out this Salvation was, that we might have God to be our God: Brethren, God saith to every one of you that are Believers, as he said
 Gen. 15. 1. to Abraham, *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding*
 Psal. 73. *great Reward.* Such may say with David, *My Flesh and Heart fail-*
 26. *eth; but God is the strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.*
 Lam. 3. 24. *And with the Church in the Lamentations, The Lord is my Portion,*
saith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him.

(9.) Brethren, God in this Salvation breaks up (as I may say) the Fountain of the great Depths of his Divine Grace, Love and Goodness: The Passage was stop'd by our Sin, till Christ opened it by shedding his Blood; there was no other way whereby God might let-out of himself in his Eternal Goodness to us, but this Way only, to the Glory of all his Divine Attributes.

(10.) Hereby we have not only God to be our God, our Portion, but he is so restored to all that believe, that they shall never lose him again for ever.

(11.) Did we want a Surety, not only to pay our Debts, but also to secure us in a State of Grace, and to preserve all our Riches for us; this Salvation provides such a glorious Surety for us: Alas, we are like poor Orphans under Age whilst in this World, and are not able nor fit to be intrusted with what is our own, I mean, to have it in our own Hands; therefore we and all our Riches are put into the Hand of Christ, to keep and improve our Riches for us, and to give of it forth to us as he in his Wisdom sees best for us. They that slight this Salvation, slight this Portion, this God, and all true Happiness in him: in this Salvation, this Portion is offered to you Sinners, God is willing to be your God, your Friend, your Father and Portion for ever. Here is God in this
 Salvation,

Salvation, Christ in this Salvation, the Holy Spirit in this Salvation; God, and all the Fulness of God; Christ, and all the Riches of Christ; the Holy Spirit, and all the Graces and Blessings of the Spirit: the *Pearl of great Price* is thine, if thou hast a Part and Interest in this Salvation. Here is the Spirit to quicken thee, to renew thee, to sanctify thee, to strengthen thee, to comfort thee; here is Grace to deck and adorn thee, rich Robes to cover thee, the Promises to cheer thee, feed and support thee, the Ordinances to feast thee, and Angels to guard, protect and preserve thee. O what a full, compleat and comprehensible Salvation, Brethren, is the Salvation of the Gospel!

23. And lastly, here is Heaven in this Salvation, Heaven, and all the Glory of it; here is a Kingdom in this Salvation, a Kingdom of Glory, of Light, of Joy and Pleasure; here is a Crown that fadeth not away, in this Salvation, a Crown and Kingdom for every Christian; therefore this Salvation is great and glorious.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

BRETHREN, the last time I shewed you that Gospel-Salvation is a great and glorious Salvation, because it is a full, a perfect and compleat Salvation; it is not a piece or part of our Salvation that Christ worked, and doth work out for us, but it is the whole of it in every part thereof. Serm. VII.

Twelfthly, 'Tis a Great Salvation, in respect of the first and principal Minister, Preacher, and Publisher of it; this is one of the Apostle's Arguments and Demonstrations in our Text, not only the Saviour that God sent, and the Author and Finisher of this Salvation, but the Revealer, the Minister or Preacher of it: *God who in times past spake unto the Fathers by the Prophets, they were his Ministers, Hath in these last Days spoken to us by his Son, that is, his Son personally, as he was manifest in the Flesh.*

1. His

1. His own Son, his only Son, his only begotten Son; he hath no other Son begotten by an eternal Generation but Christ alone.

2. The Father's Heir, *The Heir of all things, by whom also he made the World, who is the express Image of the Father's Person, and the Brightness of his Glory.*

3. He that hath the absolute Lordship and Dominion over all Creatures in Heaven and Earth.

4. Nay, and God the Father also speaks himself in him, in such a sort and manner as he never before spoke in any Instrument; *He hath spoken unto us*; that is, the Father in and by the Son, who is in personal Union with himself. O what a kind of Salvation is this, what a Gospel is this, that is thus revealed, made known, and published unto us! What Mortal can think to escape that neglects so great Salvation? What were the Holy Angels who delivered the Law, or what were the Prophets to this glorious Person, I mean, the Son of God? *But at last of all he sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son*; sure they will attend upon his Word; Can they forbear honouring and reverencing such a Person? Now I will try them: as if God should say, they may know the Matter is of great Moment, and I am in good Earnest, and look for Fruit from them. Sirs, Jesus Christ, by Calling or Office, when he was upon the Earth, was a Minister, a Preacher: O what great Condescension was this in him, who is the true and eternal God! and what an honourable Employment is this! What a high and sublime Office is the Office of a Gospel-Minister! With what

Mat. 21.
37.

Mat. 20.
28.

Heb. 7. 1,
2.

Verse 6.

Trembling and Fear ought it to be undertaken! *I come not to be ministered to, but to minister*; that is, to preach the Gospel, to communicate heavenly Treasure to the Souls of Men and Women. The Priests under the Law were God's Ministers. Jesus Christ is God's High Priest, and therefore his chief Minister; we must receive the Law at his Mouth, at this Priest's Mouth: *We have such an High Priest who is set down on the right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens; a Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle, &c.* or the true Church, the Church of the First-Born, which the Jewish Church was but a Shadow, a Type of: *But now he hath obtained a more excellent Ministry, he excels all Ministers; all true Ministers are but his Substitutes, and must one Day be accountable to him; he is the Great Shepherd, and chief Bishop of our Souls.* This is he that speaketh from Heaven, who came from Heaven himself, and received his Doctrine from the Father, as Mediator, and as the great Minister of Righteousness: O how shall they escape

escape that refuse such a Preacher, *one that speaketh from Heaven*; Heb. 12. nay, him that is God over all, blessed for evermore. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power.* Who shall not then attend upon the Word of this King, this great and mighty Lord? Sinners, with what Awe and holy Trembling should you attend on the Word of this Salvation, *that began first to be spoken by the Lord?* Christ may be said to speak in and by the Prophets, nay, to speak to Adam: But this speaking doubtless refers to his personal speaking when he was on Earth. There may be said to be a threefold beginning of the Gospel-Ministration.

1. In Predictions, by Promises, and by Types.

2. In the immediate Preparation of it, and so it begun in the Ministry of *John the Baptist.*

3. In the open, clear, and actual Ministration of it; and thus it begun to be first spoken by our Lord himself, (upon his Baptism, for then he entered upon his Ministry) and it was carried on afterwards by his Apostles, and other Ministers that he appointed; and by his Church he daily still does appoint, and in an ordinary manner authorize Men to preach it. But O how great is this Salvation, that God should please to send his own Son to preach and publish this Salvation! Brethren, should a King lay aside his Crown, and throw off his Princely Robes, and come into the Pulpit and preach the Gospel, would not all wonder at it, and flock to hear him? *David was a King, and yet a Preacher; Solomon was a King, a mighty King, and yet a Preacher: but what poor and ignoble, low-born Kings, nay, base-born Kings, were they to this King, who is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords?* Certainly this is Matter of highest Concernment, or of greatest Moment of all things in the World, and before all things to be regarded. Did Christ in Person speak from Heaven to Men on Earth, and make known to them this Salvation? Moreover, he speaks still, he it is that speaks to you now, Day by Day, by us his poor Ministers, who may be you are ready to slight and despise in your Hearts; yet know Christ's faithful Ministers personate him, they are his Ambassadors, they represent the very Person of Christ: *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* 2 Cor. 5: 20. *He that heareth you, saith Christ, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Luke 10: 16. do Sinners think what they do when they sleep under the Word, disregard, slight and despise the Word of this Salvation in the Mouths

Mouths of Christ's Ministers, Christ's Ambassadors. See what Christ himself saith, *And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your Words*——*shake off the Dust of your Feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Day of Judgment, than for that City.* All this is because it is Christ's Word, and Christ that speaks to you by his Servants; the same Contempt that is shewed to the Ambassadors of an earthly King, is shewed to him; and he treats them as if it were done unto himself. Moreover, the Esteem and Honour that is shewed to an Ambassador in receiving his Word, or in hearkening with awe and respect to what he says in his Master's Name, is shewn to the King. Ministers are not to be esteemed or had in Honour for their own sakes, but for Christ's sake: But if you love Christ, honour Christ, you will love and respect his faithful Servants, and hearken to what they speak unto you in his Name and by his Authority.

Gospel-Salvation great considering its wonderful Confirmation. *Thirteenthly,* The Salvation of the Gospel is great and glorious, if we consider the wonderful Confirmation and Ratification of it in the Days of the Gospel in the Primitive Time; *Which first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will.* The Apostle brings this in also as a farther Demonstration of the Greatness of the Salvation of the Gospel, namely, the consideration of the miraculous confirmation thereof.

God is said to bear witness to the Gospel, and to the Salvation thereof; there was never such Witness born to any Truth, as is to the Truth of the Gospel. For,

1. All the Prophets bore witness to it.
2. *John the Baptist* was sent to bear witness to it.

3. The Apostles were also Witnesses chosen of God to this end; nay, and we have the Witness of God himself; *And the Father himself that hath sent me, hath born witness of me.* The Father bore witness at our Saviour's Baptism, and at the Transfiguration, by a Voice from Heaven.

4. We have the Witness and Confirmation of the wonderful Miracles that our Lord wrought: *But I have a greater Witness than that of John; for the Works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same do bear witness to me that the Father hath sent me.* That which was a Witness of Christ's being the true *Messiah*, was a Witness of the Salvation he hath wrought.

1. He raised the Dead, opened the Eyes of the Blind, even of him that was born blind; he cast out Devils, he caused the *Lame* to walk, the Dumb to speak; he cleansed the Lepers, and healed all manner of Diseases and Sickneses among the People, and all to confirm the Truth of this Salvation; no Man ever did such Works.

2. Moreover, the Holy Ghost was given in a miraculous manner unto the Apostles and others, they were filled, yea baptized with it, they spake many strange Languages; and all this was,

(1.) To confirm and fully to prove, that Christ was the Son of God, and Saviour of the World.

(2.) To confirm the Truth of his Doctrine, and every Precept, Ordinance, and Promise thereof.

(3.) To assure all that believe of the certainty of their Eternal Salvation, and that they should never perish. And also,

(4.) To assure all that believe not, that repent not, but live in Ways of Sin and Wickedness, that they shall all be damned: It confirms particularly that word, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*; and that word, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; and that, *But he that believeth not, the Wrath of God abideth on him*; and this in my Text, touching the Impossibility there is for any Man to escape that neglects this so great Salvation, and whatsoever else is contained in the New-Testament.

3. It was also ratified and confirmed by the Blood of Christ, by his Death, and by his glorious Resurrection, and by the *rending the Vail of the Temple*, and by that great Darknes that was at the time when our Lord gave up the Ghost, over all the Earth; and by the rising of many of the dead Bodies of the Saints after his Resurrection. Look to it, Sirs, this Salvation must needs be very great that was thus confirmed.

Mat. 27.
51, 52.

Fourteenthly, The Gospel-Salvation is great, if we consider with what amazement the Holy Angels behold it, they are said to look into it: *1 Pet. 1. 10, 11, 12. Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven: which*

The Salvation of the Gospel great in that the Angels behold it with admiration.

things the Angels desire to look into. They look into it with the greatest diligence, do, as it were, bow down to pry into it; they stand, as it were, astonished to see the Son of God in Flesh, or having taken Man's Nature upon him; he that is their mighty Lord and Sovereign, to abase himself to such a degree, and to die the shameful Death of the Cross, to work out Salvation for such vile and rebellious Creatures as Mankind are: 'Tis said, *He was seen of Angels.* The Angels knew of Christ's coming, no doubt, long before he was manifest in the Flesh. The Angel told *Daniel* of the *seventy Weeks*, and of the cutting off of the *Messiah*; and the Angels also brought the first News of his Incarnation and Nativity: but nevertheless with what Wonderment was he seen of the Angels! The natural Knowledge of the Angels which we understand not, no doubt is great; but they have also an experimental Knowledge, they learn of the Church *the manifold Wisdom of God.* They were likewise Witnesses of our Saviour's Resurrection, and ministred to him in his *bloody Agony*: Lo the Salvation of our Souls doth not a little affect the Holy Angels; they see God's Love is more to Mankind, than it was to those Creatures of their own Nature that fell, I mean, the Evil Angels. O, my Brethren, shall the Angels look into this Salvation, whom it concerned not as it doth us, (they did not need a Saviour to redeem them) and shall not we look into it, pry into it, and be affected therewithal? Shall all in Heaven contemplate it, and not we? Is it so great, so glorious, and shall we not mind it above all things?

Gospel-Salvation great and glorious, because it is a free Salvation. Fifteenthly, It is great Salvation, because it is a free Salvation, it is all of Grace; *You may have it, Sinners, without Money, and without Price,* Isa. 55. 1. True, some things you must part with, whoever you are, that will have a part in this Salvation: But what is that? Nothing of any Worth, nothing that will do you any good: You must part with your Sins, with your filthy Lusts, with the Love of this World. Christ came to *save his People from their Sins*; not in their Sins, no, no. They that will not part with their Iniquities, with their carnal and sinful Pleasures, Profits and Honours, are never like to have any Part or Lot in this Matter: Nay, and they must part with all their own Righteousness too, I mean, in point of Trust and Dependance, and must see that they have nothing which can recommend them to God, nothing that can justify them in the sight of God; unless a Man denies himself in all these Respects, he cannot be Christ's Disciple. But notwithstanding

standing this, yet the Salvation of the Gospel is free; the worst of Sinners have an Offer of it, they whose Sins are as *red as Scarlet*, or as *red as Crimson*; here is *Wine and Milk without Money*, or any thing the Creature hath to purchase it, or to give for it: it is not to be had for the sake of any thing done by us, or can be done by us, or wrought in us. Sinners, the *Water of Life is freely* tendred to every one that thirsteth, nay to every one that *will*, that has a Will inclined to accept it; if it could not be had unless we first cleansed our selves from our Sins, or made us a new Heart, it would not be free or alone of Grace, nor to be had on easy Terms, nay not at all: But you have heard that a new Heart is one part of this Salvation, 'tis contained in it; and those that would be washed, must come to the Fountain of Salvation, they must come to Christ, believe in Christ, or by Faith apply his Blood to wash and cleanse their polluted Souls.

Brethren, if there was a Salvation for rich Men only, what would become of the Poor? But this Salvation is offered unto the Poor as well as unto the Rich; nay, and they chiefly indeed do receive it, as our Saviour testifies. And if it was a Salvation for Righteous Men only, what would become of ungodly Sinners? But remember, this Salvation is only for Sinners, I mean, such that see their Sin, and know the want of a Saviour; *Christ came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance*.

Sixteenthly, In the last place, Gospel-Salvation is a great Salvation, because it is an eternal Salvation: *And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. As Christ brought in an Everlasting Righteousness, so he wrought out an Everlasting Salvation: *Israel shall be saved in the Lord*, Isa. 45. 17: with an Everlasting Salvation; once saved, and for ever saved: For as the Damnation of all that refuse or neglect this Salvation shall be Eternal, so the Salvation of all that receive it shall be also Eternal: *The Earth shall wax old like a Garment, and they that dwell therein shall die; but my Salvation shall be for ever, and my Righteousness shall not be abolished*, Isa. 51. 6.

Thus I have done with the Demonstration of the first Doctrine, which I shall improve in applying the next Proposition.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

Sermon
VIII.

Doct. II. **T**HE great Salvation of the Gospel may be neglected. This is implied in my Text.

How shall we that preached it escape if we neglect it? Or how shall you that hear it preached escape if you neglect it?

First, I shall shew you what is intended by neglecting this Salvation.

Secondly, Shew you who they are that may be said to neglect it.

Thirdly, Shew you from whence it is that some do neglect it.

Fourthly, Shew you what a great Sin it is to neglect the Salvation of the Gospel.

First, To neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, is to neglect the Means of it, the Way which God hath appointed in order to our obtaining an Interest in it.

2. It imports a slighting of it, to omit seeking after the Knowledge of it, or to take no pains in order to the obtaining the Grace and saving Blessings thereof.

3. Or to seek Salvation some other ways. But,

Who may be
said to neglect
this
Salvation.

Secondly, Who may be said to neglect it?

Answ. 1. Such who do not think upon this Salvation, they do neglect it: Some do not regard it at all, it is not in their Minds; they do not trouble their Thoughts about it, though it be so great. That which a Person thinks not of, let it be Matter of never so great Moment, be sure he doth neglect. Have you, saith a Man to his Friend, done that Business I desired of you? No truly, saith he, I never thought of it; this discovers he hath neglected it: So it is here in respect of this great Salvation.

2. Such neglect the Gospel Salvation, who do not study it, pry into it, and labour to find out the great Mysteries that lie hid in it. As he that is put out an *Apprentice*, to learn some curious Art or Trade, that never studies the Matter, or pries not into the Mysteries thereof, neglects his Trade: So they who do not study the

the Gospel, and the Mysteries of Christ crucified, do neglect the great Salvation thereof. Paul determined to know nothing amongst the Learned *Corinthians*, but Jesus Christ and him crucified; this shews he did not neglect the Salvation of his own and other Mens Souls. *Without controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness*: 'Tis not easy to understand the Gospel, it is so great a Mystery; if it were only a Law, with Promises annexed to those who lived up in Obedience to the Precepts of it, and Threats to such who were disobedient to its Precepts, it would not be a Mystery; nor would the *Learned Greeks* have counted the preaching of such a Gospel to be Foolishness; for such a Gospel comports with Man's Carnal Reason and with Natural Religion: But to preach Salvation by a Man that was *hanged on a Tree*, or by a crucified Saviour, that is a Mystery. And hence it was contemned by the *Greeks*, they could not understand how they could be justified by another's Righteousness, or that Christ could satisfy for their Sins; or how our Sins could be made his, that his Righteousness should be made ours; this is a Mystery, and this Mystery some People do not, will not study, and so neglect this Salvation.

I Cor. 2. 1.

I Tim. 3. 16.

3. Such neglect it, that will not hear the Gospel preached, but either lie at Home, or walk in the Fields, or content themselves to hear Morality or good Manners only preached, which is all the Salvation too many preach in some Places: they think they need not trouble themselves about any other Matters of Religion, but only *to do to others as they would be done unto*; or to live sober Lives, and to do justly: This is good, and it is in a right manner held forth in the Gospel, and preach'd by such that preach this Salvation: But if this were all, in vain was it that God sent his Son into the World; nay, if Morality could save Mens Souls, or any Righteousness of the Creature, or inherent Holiness, Christ is dead in vain. These Men know not what the Gospel is; and those who preach no other Gospel than Morality, do but go about to make the People good Heathens; for what is this, but the Religion of the Heathen Philosophers?

4. Such also neglect this Salvation, who though they come to hear Christ preach'd, yet only come out of Formality, Custom or Curiosity, or to divert themselves; having little else to do, they will go and hear what such or such a Man will say, it is not to be instructed in the Mysteries of Salvation: nay, may be some of them may come with a Design to catch up things to improve to the Reproach of the Minister. Now be sure these Persons

are

are such who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel.

5. Such likewise who are careless Hearers, who hear as if the things preached did not concern them, or that sleep under the Word, these also neglect this Salvation. I have heard of one that would go to the Place of Worship, because she could sleep sooner and better there than at Home; and no wonder, since the Devil rocks the Cradle, (as I may say) or hath such Influence upon them, and makes them comply with his Temptations: and you shall have help, no doubt, as some who have hanged themselves; it has been observed to be strange how they could do it after such a manner: alas, Satan helped them, he knows how to tie the Rope, and to choak them too, when they enter upon this Work. Perhaps some shall have their Thoughts in a wanton manner, run out after this or the other Object they have before their Eyes, when with Holy Diligence they should attend upon the Word of this Salvation to the profit of their Souls; or else have their Hearts and Thoughts run out upon their worldly Affairs; some on their Riches, Trades, and how to order their Business the Week following, and others upon their Poverty. All these I must set down as Neglecters of this Great Salvation.

6. Such who slight or neglect the Convictions of their own Consciences, or that strive to stifle their Convictions, whilst under the Word, or when gone from hearing it, like as *Felix* did when he sent *Paul* away; the Fire the Word had kindled in his Conscience, being too hot for him to bear.

7. Such who comply not with the Call of the Word, and Offers of this great Salvation, but resist and quench the Motions of the Spirit, out of love to their Lusts, and so reject the Word, like them of old; *Lo they reject the Word of the Lord, and what Wisdom is in them?* These seem to say in their Hearts, *As for the Word spoken Jer. 8. 9. in the Name of the Lord, we will not do it: But we will certainly do Jer. 44. 16. whatsoever goeth out of our Mouths, &c.* These also with a witness neglect this great Salvation.

8. Such who regard not the Time, the Day and proper Season
 2 Cor. 6. 1, of this Salvation, do neglect it: *Behold, now is the accepted Time;*
 2. *behold, now is the Day of Salvation.* But this is not their Time, they delay the great Matters of their Souls, God's Time is not their
 Isa. 55. 5, 6. Time: *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near,* saith the Prophet. But they will not do this, they think it is too soon, they resolve to take more of the sweet of Sin, and feed on the Vanities of the World a little longer. God calls
 now,

now, whilst it is to Day, *To Day if you will hear his Voice*; but they will not regard it: *Because I have called, (saith the Lord) and you refused, I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded.* — Prov. 1. 24, 25. *But ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would have none of my Reproof;—I also will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh.*

9. Such who prefer their sinful and earthly Pleasures, Profits and Honours, above this Salvation, do also neglect it: 'Tis said of some of the *Pharisees*, that *they believed on him, but did not profess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue; for they loved the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God.* John 12. 42, 43. I once told you of a Man who living a loose and ungodly Life, and was by that means in danger of losing his Eye-sight, infomuch that his Physician told him, He must leave that excess of Prophaneness, or he would be blind; *Ah*, said he, *is it so? Then farewell my sweet Eye-sight.* or to that Effect. Just thus do many poor Sinners, they will not part with their Sins, their sinful Ways, and sinful Companions; for when they hear what they must do if ever they are saved, namely, believe in Jesus Christ, repent and turn from all their sinful Course, they say in their Hearts, Farewel then *Great Salvation*; if these things must be done, they will have none of it. I remember I heard in our Countrey, when I was young, of a *prophane Person*, that said in plain words, *That he would have his Lusts, his Pleasures, his merry Bouts, or to that purpose, for it was all the Heaven he look'd for.* O how just will it be in God to sentence such to eternal Flames!

10. Such neglect this Salvation, *who say in their Hearts to God, Job 21. Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways:* They like 24. not, approve not of God, nor of the Ways of God, therefore desire him to depart; they would not have God come so near them, as to disturb their Thoughts, nor disquiet their Spirits about their eternal State, therefore they strive to divert themselves. *The Wicked (saith the Psalmist) through the Pride of his Countenance will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts:* he will not trouble himself with God, and the things of God, and so neglects this Salvation. Psal. 10. 43.

11. Moreover, all such who believe not, give not credit to the Revelation of the Gospel, they do not believe the Report of it; *Lord, saith the Prophet, Who hath believed our Report? Though the Report of the Gospel is given out upon the highest Evidence imaginable, yet, Brethren, there is an humane Faith that a Man may attain* Isa. 53. 1.

attain to and exercise without Divine and Supernatural Grace, which Men do not exert; which if they did, it would (were it improved) deter them, and put a stop to many of their abominable Practices: but as some in other cases say, I will not believe such or such a thing, though it is confirmed sufficiently; so it is here, Men will not believe, they will not give Credit to the Report of the Gospel, it is not agreeable to their carnal Reason: What! believe there is no Salvation but by the Righteousness of another? How can this be? Can his Righteousness justify me, be made mine? I believe that if I do live an Honest Life, and do good to my Neighbours, I shall be saved. Says another, I can't believe that all shall be damned unless they are born again, and experience such a Change as some Ministers talk of; for if it be so, Lord have Mercy upon us, what will become of the greatest part of the World? Says a third sort, God is above the Devil, and I cannot believe he will ever suffer Satan to get away the greatest Number of Mankind. Ay says a fourth sort, we can't believe that Sin is so great an Evil, or so great a Matter, or that God will be so severe as to cast us into Hell for it: What's Drunkenness? 'Tis for our Health to be drunk now and then: and what is simple Fornication? Tush, will God think you ever cast us into Hell for such small things as these, or throw us into a Furnace of Fire? It cannot consist with his Mercy and infinite Goodness. Now, Brethren, as all these Persons neglect this Salvation, so they make God a Liar:

Acts 4. 12. God hath said, *There is no other Name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved*; no other way but through Christ's Blood, by his Merits and Righteousness: but they say there is. He also

Psal. 9. 17. hath said, *That the Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God*; even whole Nations if they do so: and that

1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. no Drunkard, Fornicator, Proud Person, Unbeliever or Covetous Man or Woman, &c. shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; but

Rev. 21. 8. contrariwise, *shall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*: but they will not believe it. And God says,

John 3. 3, 5. *Except a Man be born again, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; but they will not believe it. O what is the Condition of these Men, Unbelief is the damning Sin in this respect, as well as it is in respect that it leads Men out to refuse and contemn the Remedy God hath appointed, I mean, the Application of the Blood of Jesus Christ. These perish as the Man did, who was told of his Danger, but would not believe it till it fell upon him to his Ruin.

12. Such neglect this great Salvation, who delay the looking after it until old Age, or till Sickness, or Death comes upon them; How many are there of this sort? They mind not their Souls, nor Soul-concernments, but think it is time enough, when they have spent their best Days in the Service of the World, nay, in the Devil's Service, to look after Religion, or an Interest in Jesus Christ: these, I say, also are neglecters of this Salvation.

13. All such who make not Religion, or the Salvation of their precious Souls their chief Business, or Matter of the highest Importance in the World, these must be set down as neglecters of Gospel-Salvation. *Brethren, this is that one Thing needful*, namely, to provide for the Soul in reference to Eternity. This was that *good part* Mary chose, that should not be taken from her; she took more care about the good of her Soul, in attending on Christ's Word, than on any thing else whatsoever. This should be our general Calling, to which Work we ought to give up our selves continually, in improving all Seasons and Opportunities, and in the discharge of all spiritual Duties. O how busy are some Men, and how wise; nay to get this World, no Time, no Care, no Opportunity shall be omitted. But they have no regard of this great Concernment, it is not weighed, nor thought upon by them: yet what can be of like Importance; and what Fools are they, whose chiefest Care is to live well for one Day, and regard not what will become of them afterwards? Alas, what do the greatest part of Mankind more than provide for one Day! Nay, should the whole Time of our natural Lives be seventy Years, it is not as one Hour to Eternity. Now that the Salvation of our Souls is matter of the highest Moment, will appear many ways. And first by giving you a summary Account of what I have said.

1. Must not that be of highest Moment, or ought not the Matters of that Salvation be our chiefest Business, when all Salvations compared to it are nothing, or not worth regard?

2. Must not that be Business of the highest Concernment for us to look after, which God so early, even in Eternity, thought of and contrived the Way of bringing it in, or for the effecting of, in his infinite Wisdom?

3. Must not that be minded before all things, that God in Eternity (as I may so say) held a Council about the actual accomplishment of?

4. Ought not we to look upon that Salvation as matter of the highest Concernment, which God designed for such great and glorious

A summary Account of the precedent Arguments to prove Salvation great.

glorious Ends: As (1.) To manifest his own Glory; (2.) The utter ruin of Satan's Kingdom; And (3.) to make us everlastingly happy in the enjoyment of himself?

5. Ought not that Salvation to be our greatest Business, that raises us up to such a Blessed State, who were fallen so low, and delivered us from eternal Wrath, just as the Hand of Justice was up and ready to strike the fatal Blow?

6. That which was so seasonable, and when all hopes of Relief and Help was gone?

7. Must not we needs think that Salvation of the highest Moment, that the Son of God himself came to work out for us, which he and none but he could accomplish; nay, both the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, the whole Trinity join together, and take each of them a part to effect and perfect for our Souls?

8. Must not that needs be our only Business to look after, that Christ shed his most precious Blood to procure?

9. Ought we not to prefer that Salvation before all things, that delivers us from the greatest Evil, the Plague of all Plagues?

10. Must not that Salvation be of the greatest Moment, and preferred above all things in the World, that is the Salvation of our precious and immortal Souls, nay, of Soul and Body too, from everlasting Burning and Damnation in Hell?

11. Ought we not to make that Salvation our chiefest Work, whilst in this World, that raises us up so high, and makes us so great, honourable and happy for ever, as you have heard?

12. Must not that Salvation needs be our great and chiefest Business to mind and seek after, that is so full, so comprehensive, perfect and compleat?

13. Must not that Salvation be of highest Moment, that the Son of God in his own Person, came from Heaven to preach and make known to Men on Earth?

14. Is not that Salvation of the greatest Concernment for us to give up our selves to look after, and to be chiefly affected with, which the Holy Angels desire to pry into, and stand astonished at the thoughts of, it is so great and sublime?

15. Is not that Salvation business of the greatest Moment of all, that is so great, so sweet, so rich, so admirable, and so free and easy to be obtained? 'Tis but looking to Christ, to come to Christ, to rest on Christ; 'tis but to take and eat, 'tis but to drink when we are thirsty, 'tis without Money and without Price.

16. And lastly, Ought not that Salvation to be our chiefest Concernment, that is an eternal and everlasting Salvation; *i. e.* that such that obtain it, shall have a Crown of Glory for ever, or be everlastingly saved; and they that neglect it, shall be everlastingly damned?

Now, Brethren, he that makes this Salvation the least of his Business, does neglect it, yea, utterly neglect it, let him think what he will. And all that make not Religion their chiefest Business, who prefer not the Honour of God, and their own Salvation, before all things, will at one time or another, expose God's Name to Reproach, and their own Souls at last to eternal Wrath and Misery. Brethren, doth not he neglect his Trade, his Family, &c. that makes it the least of his worldly Concernments?

Lastly, They neglect this Salvation, that do not look up to God, to give them the Knowledge of their State, the true sense of Sin, and to reveal Christ to them, and work Faith in them.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

THE last time I entred upon the second Doctrine, *viz. That the Salvation of the Gospel may be neglected.*

Sermon
IX.

I shewed you who they are that may be said to neglect this great Salvation, that was the second general Head I propounded to do. I shall now proceed,

Thirdly, In the third place I shall shew you from whence it is, or comes to pass, some Persons, nay, so many People in the World do neglect the Salvation of their own precious Souls.

1. Some are ignorant of the Way of Salvation, and from hence neglect this Gospel-Salvation: Thus it was with the Jews; *For they being ignorant of God's Righteousness, went about to establish their own Righteousness, Rom. 10. 3.* Suppose a Man that is sick were resolved to make use of such or such a Medicine to cure him of his Disease, which he is told the Nature of, and that it is an infallible Potion; yet if he knows not how to apply it, he understands not

that : why now from thence he utterly neglects to make use of it at all, but seeks some other way of Cure. Even so it is here, many hear of Christ, and Salvation by him, but understand not how to apply his Blood, how to fly to his Merits and Righteousness, and therefore seek to be saved some other way, and so neglect the Salvation by Jesus-Christ. Or suppose that a Man who is going a long Journey, yet he knows not the Way, but thinks he is right, and so rides on boldly, but goes the quite contrary Way, now he neglects the right Way through Ignorance : even so it is with many blind and deceived Mortals, they think they have the right and proper Medicine, or are in the right Way to Heaven ; and they go confidently on, take their own Courses, **apply their own Antidote**, when alas it is a Counterfeit.

1st. May be think that is Christ and the true Saviour, which is nothing but the Dictates of natural Conscience. Some suppose the Light of Nature, or a sober and moral Life, will bring them to Heaven, and eternally save their Souls.

2^{dly}. Others conclude, their being Protestants, and born of Christian Parents, and owning the Christian Religion, is sufficient, and that they need not trouble themselves any further about their Salvation.

3^{dly}. Mankind generally see not, know not that they are born in Sin, and by Nature are Children of Wrath ; they know not that they are under the Curse of the Law, and under the Sentence of Eternal Death, being Enemies to God, and having Enmity in their Carnal Mind against God, and great Mountains of Guilt lying upon them : I say, thus it is with them, but they know it not. It is with them as it was with the Church of the *Laodiceans* ; *Because*
 Rev. 3: 17: *thou sayest I am Rich, and increased in Goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* See what a sad State this professing People were in, and yet ignorant of it ; thought they were perfect, as that Man must needs suppose that thinks he wants nothing ; they no more knew their great Danger, than did the old World of the Flood, and *Sodom* of those Flames which suddenly consumed them all.

4^{thly}. Some conclude they believe, and have true Grace ; they make a profession of the Gospel, and have been baptized, having great Gifts and Parts ; and yet for all this never were effectually changed, never obtained the Faith of God's Elect, but through Ignorance they are persuaded all is well with them, and so they
 come

come not to look out to Christ, but do neglect the Means of Conversion, by being perswaded they are converted already. Now this Ignorance may be occasioned several ways.

(1.) Chiefly it arises from that natural Darkeness that is in them, and which naturally cleaves to all Mankind; Sin has put out the Eyes of our Understanding. But,

*From
whence Ignorance and
Blindness of
Men proceeds.
Hos. 4:6.*

(2.) It may also arise partly from the Ignorance of those blind Guides, whose Teachings and Doctrine they may (I mean, some of them) sit under; *My People are destroyed for lack of Knowledge*: and the Cause was, those that taught them caused them to err. *If the Blind lead the Blind, they will both fall into the Ditch.* O take heed under what Ministry you venture your Souls: The Pharisees and Scribes were learned Men, and some of them great Preachers, but wholly ignorant of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and of Salvation by Jesus Christ: Many, like the false Teachers of old, *Cry, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace.*

(3.) Moreover, this Ignorance arises partly from Satan, he hath too great an Influence on the Hearts and dark Minds of Men; *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Eyes of those that believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Satan hath a mighty Power over sinful Men, by his cunning Devices, to keep them in Ignorance, and to hinder them from studying, knowing, and believing the Gospel, and by this Means they neglect this Salvation: Such are blinded by Satan that believe not; he may perswade them that a general Faith, or a common Faith, is *true Faith*, and sufficient, and so he cheats them with a Counterfeit instead of saving Faith: or Satan blinds Mens Eyes by moving them to seek Salvation in some other way, than by Christ alone, and by believing in him, resting, relying and depending on him; like an evil Person who puts a poor Traveller out of his way, or directs him the direct contrary way, that so he may be robbed and murdered by him, and by other Thieves that may way-lay him.

2. Some neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, from that inordinate Love they have to the things of this World: Thus the *young Man* that came running to Christ neglected it, he had his Heart set upon his great Possessions, that he went away from our Saviour sorrowful, and refused the Salvation of his own Soul; he could not part with the World for a Part in Christ and Eternal Life. So they that were invited to the Marriage-Supper, out of an inordinate

ordinate Love to the things of the World, refused to come: *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a Marriage for his Son, and sent forth his Servants to call them that were bidden; and they would not come. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandise.* This Marriage-Supper is this great Salvation; but the things of the World are more valued by most People, than the Salvation of their Souls: *Luke saith, And he sent forth his Servants at Supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.* Many Persons refuse to feed on Christ, they believe not, will not eat of this Supper, will not feed on a crucified Christ, or eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood by Faith, through Love to their carnal Pleasures, Honours, and worldly Profits. *And they all began with one consent to make excuse: The first said unto him, I have bought a Piece of Ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five Yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. Another said, I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come.* Lawful things may be abused, and the Heart so set upon them, that they drown Men in Perdition and Destruction: Mens Hearts naturally are earthly and sensual; and as they know not, so they desire not the Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, they are satisfied with that Portion they have, this World is for them; they care not, regard not the things of another Life.

3. Some neglect this Salvation, out of Love to unlawful things: They will feed on forbidden Fruit, I mean, on their filthy Lusts; they will *swear, steal, whore, be drunk, grind the Face of the Poor, deal unjustly, give way to Pride, &c.* and from hence neglect the Salvation of their Souls. I was lately told of a gracious Woman living near this City, whose Daughter wore a very high Head-dress, or that shameful Mode now in fashion, which so grieved the Mother, that she gave her a rich Ring, upon condition she would leave off that Dress, or Top-knots: Her Daughter took the Ring, and conformed for a while to her Mother's just Desire; but it was not long before she gave her the Ring again, and repented of her Reformation, and got on her old Dresses again. Alas, some will not leave off and forsake their Lusts for Chains of Gold; they will live in their Sins, persist on in their ungodly Courses; let what will come, they matter not who they grieve: they prefer their cursed Lusts and Pleasures above this Salvation, though it be so great, as you have heard.

4. More-

4. Moreover, some neglect Salvation, because there is a Cross joined to the Crown; they must take Christ's Yoke upon them, and be exposed to Reproach for his sake, and this they cannot endure, the Yoke is uneasy to the Flesh, the Flesh cannot bear it. No, it is only easy to such whose Hearts are renewed, who have got a new Nature. The Cross makes many lose the Crown; but, Brethren, had Jesus Christ refused the Cross, where had we been?

5. Some Persons neglect Salvation, through the treachery and deceitfulness of their own Hearts: 'Tis slighted out of an Opinion or Perswasion, that all is well with them; *They believe in Christ, hope in God's Mercy*: Christ, say they, died for Sinners. And thus the Devil, and their own deceived Hearts, cause them to neglect seeking out after the saving Knowledge of Christ and Salvation by him on Gospel-Terms; for Sin predominates in them, reigns in them, notwithstanding all their Hopes and Confidence. What signifies such Faith that does not purify the Heart and Life, or such Hope? Alas, it will be but like the *Spider's Web*, vain Thoughts rest in those, and destroy them; vain in their Rise, vain as to the Ground they build their Hopes upon; a vain Bottom, vain as to the Motive: and vain as to the Fruit or Product thereof; they think they have hold of Salvation, yet are dropping into Hell.

6. Some neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, partly out of servile and slavish Fear, and partly out of pretended Modesty; they dare not be so bold to take hold of Christ, or venture their Souls on Christ, because they are so vile, filthy, and abominable, unless they had something to bring, something to present to Christ, to render them acceptable or welcome to him; they will not come, they pretend they dare not come, they can't think so great Salvation should be bestow'd freely on such as they are: if they could be rid of their Sins, or wash themselves from their Sins, then they would come; or could they get themselves some new Clothes, make themselves a new Heart, or get some inherent Righteousness of their own, then they would come. Sad Case! but it is no wonder some are carried away with this Delusion, considering what a kind of Doctrine is preached in these perilous Times. But, Sinner, know thou must come to Christ to be washed, come as one that sees what need thou hast to be put into the Fountain, which is set open for Sin and Uncleanness; and come as one naked, that Christ may clothe thee. Christ calls Sinners to him; may be you will say, What is it to come to Christ? Why, to believe in him, to lay hold by Faith upon him: And if thou dost thus, though thou

thou art never so great a Sinner, thou shalt be saved.

Mat. 7.
13, 14.

7. Others neglect Gospel-Salvation out of *Idleness* and cursed Sloth: 'Tis a hard thing to enter in at the strait Gate, Self-denial is of absolute necessity. O but this is too difficult for this sort, they can't *pray, read, meditate*; they don't love to hear Sermons, they do not care to put themselves upon Spiritual Duties, as to seek the Kingdom of Heaven, nay, and to take it *by Violence*; they can take pains to damn their own Souls, but cannot, will not take that pains they are enabled to do to save their Souls. Sirs, Men will not be condemned for not doing that which they had not Power to do, but for neglecting that which they might have done; their Destruction is of themselves, though their Salvation is wholly of God, and of the free Grace of God in Jesus Christ: Have not Men Power to leave all gross Acts of Wickedness, and to attend upon the Means of Salvation? They who say we put the Creature to do nothing, falsely charge us; we press Men to leave their wicked Practices upon a right foot of Account, and to wait upon God in his Blessed Ordinances, which he has appointed for the begetting of Faith. True, we say a Man can't change his own Heart, yet he may leave the gross Acts of Sin; 'tis one thing to have the Life reformed, and another to have the Heart renewed: 'Tis the changing the vicious Habits, or the Work of Regeneration, which we say must be done by God's Almighty Power; Grace must be infused into the Soul, which works *physically*.

Luk. 18.9.

8. Moreover, it is through Pride in some that they neglect this great Salvation; they have such a good Opinion of their own Righteousness, they cannot see they have any need of the Righteousness of Christ: they are such that our Saviour speaks of; *And he spoke a Parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were Righteous, and despised others.* These are so conceited of themselves, that through pride of what they have got of their own, they regard not an imputed Righteousness to justify them; Man naturally affecteth to stand by a Righteousness of his own. *Adam* was a rich Man, a noble Man, he had enough of his own to live upon; and his Sons retain a proud Spirit, like some Sons of a decayed Gentleman: their Father was a Knight, a Lord, and they are great in their own Conceit, (though their Cloak perhaps is nothing but Patches) they scorn to beg, or to dig, no they will sooner steal, and stand on the High-way. Proud Man doth thus in a spiritual Sense, he will not beg, he will not go to Christ's Door for Bread, he will rather steal and rob Christ of his Honour
in

in their Salvation, by seeking it some other Way, even in an unlawful Way ; this is no better than a spiritual robbing Jesus Christ of having the whole Glory and Honour of the Salvation of the Soul : and yet they do not enrich themselves hereby neither, it is but only in conceit ; they fancy themselves rich, and trust in their own Righteousness, as if it were choice Treasure, when it is nothing but filthy Rags which they pride themselves in and boast of.

11. It is through Unbelief this Salvation is neglected, Men believe not : The grand Neglect centers here, this is the killing Evil, the Sin of all Sins, the Plague of all Plagues.

I consider Unbelief in general, not only as it is a non-reception of Christ, not believing in Christ, not accepting of Christ, but as it is a denying to give Credit to the Revelation of God, and of what he declares in his Word. *Unbelief the greatest Sin.*

1. They do not believe Salvation ought to be the main Business of their Lives, which they should regard and seek after above all things, it being *the one thing needful*, yea, more than Meat, Drink, Clothes, Wives, Children, Health, Credit, Riches, Honours, Pleasures, or Life it self.

2. They do not believe that Sin is the greatest Evil, nor that God is Man's supreme and chiefest Good, wherein his only Happiness lies.

3. They do not believe that such is the Holiness, Justice, Wrath and Severity of God, that he will throw Sinners into Hell, although he positively declares in his Word that he will do it, except they believe, repent, and forsake their abominable Ways ; yet they doubt not of their Salvation, though they are perhaps Swearers, Drunkards, unclean Persons, proud Persons, covetous or perverse Wretches.

4. They will not believe what the woful End of all Unbelievers and Unregenerate Persons will be.

5. They will not believe that they are in a spiritual Sense brought to utter Beggary, being Sons of a Beggar that spent all he had.

6. They will not believe, though it is told them again and again, that they are blind, miserable, wretched and naked, and for Rebellion condemned to die, nay, to be burned for ever : Unbelief was the Cause of Man's Fall at first, he would not believe God who told him, *In the Day he eat of the forbidden Fruit, he should surely die* ; No, he rather adhered to the Devil, and gave

credit to the Father of Lies. This also was the grand Cause of the Israëlites falling in the Wilderness; *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his Rest, but to them that believed not? So we see they could not enter in, because of Unbelief.* Let us therefore fear, saith the Apostle. Brethren, there is a notional and practical Unbelief: Some believe there is a God, but they deny him by their Works; and deny Christ the only Saviour, by cleaving to and trusting in other things for Salvation: They perhaps think that their good Deeds, their Prayers, their just Dealings, and sober and moral Lives, will save them. Some are like a poor ignorant Wretch that I heard of, who being lately sick, and a Christian Neighbour being sent for to come to him, he asked him some Questions about his Soul, who replied, that he had been a Sinner; but if God spared him, he hop'd to make God amends for all. Some sin, and commit horrid Evils in the Day, and then pray at Night, and confess their Sins; and may be drop a few Tears, and that they think cures all, and makes them as sound again as a Fish, and so go on the next Day in their old trade of sinning as briskly as before. Some have a humane Faith, an historical Faith, and from thence do many things, though they do not live up to that Faith neither, nor improve what Knowledg and Light they have received to that degree they ought, and so shall be condemned, like as was the Man that improved not his one Talent. I call it a humane Faith, because it is the Act of the Creature, by virtue of his natural Powers and Capacity: the Spring and Motive of their Faith is Humane, therefore their Faith cannot be Divine.

I shall sum up the whole of this Head, and come to the Application.

1. It appears that the Salvation of the Gospel is neglected by many; through Ignorance and natural Blindness their Understandings are darkned: *And Light shines in the Darkness, but the Darkness comprehendeth it not. Men love Darkness rather than Light, Error rather than Truth. If another come in his own Name, him you will receive.*

2. There is a Perverseness and Rebellion in the Will, and hardness in the Heart: *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life. The carnal Mind is Enmity against God; it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*

3. Men are ignorant and unsensible of their States and Conditions: *Are we blind also? We are Abraham's Seed,* was the Plea of old. *We are Christians,* the Off-spring of Christian People, and good

good Protestants, is the Plea now. They are,

4. Ignorant of God's Holiness and Justice, and so trust in his Mercy, not regarding of his Law and Justice. They are ignorant and unsensible of that Insufficiency there is in themselves, or in any thing they can do to save their own Souls.

5. 'Tis through the Ignorance of some of their Teachers, who preach not the Gospel truly to them.

6. 'Tis through an inordinate Love to the things of this World, their Affections are corrupted and set upon the Creature, upon their Riches, Honours and Pleasures.

7. 'Tis through that Love many have to their Sins, and sinful Practices, and sinful Companions.

8. 'Tis through the deceitfulness and treachery of their own evil Hearts.

9. Through *slavish Fear*, or pretended Modesty, they dare not be so bold to venture themselves on Christ, being such great Sinners, and having nothing to present unto him for acceptance.

10. It is from Idleness and spiritual Sloth.

11. From Unbelief, not giving Credit to the Revelation of God's Word in many respects, but think to be saved some other ways than by Jesus Christ alone, or not by him, and nothing else; and conclude something is to be joined to Christ's Merits and Righteousness, or they cannot be justified nor saved: and thus this Salvation is neglected; it is upon these, or such-like Considerations as these are.

APPLICATION.

1. Tremble you that slight or neglect the great Salvation of the Gospel: Will you say that Jesus Christ cannot save you, or is not willing to save you? Certainly those who give way to such Thoughts and Temptations, are sharply to be reprov'd.

2. Your Sins and Unbelief is the Cause of your Misery, and if you perish, it will be the Cause of your Damnation for ever.

3. And to you that are Believers let me speak one Word; Have a care of Unbelief, beware of unbelieving and desponding Thoughts: Why do you hang down your Heads?

Object. *O the deadness of my Heart!* This I know is the Voice and Complaint of your Souls.

Answer. How came you to know that you are dead? Certainly this is a sign that there is Life in you. Did ever any Person that

was naturally dead, say he was dead, cold, or unfeeling? that is impossible, 'tis only such who are alive that thus complain.

Object. *O the abundance of Sin that is in me, that afflicts and distresses my Soul!*

Answer. Say you so, is Sin your Sickness, is Sin your Sorrow? Is Sin that which afflicts, wounds and grieves your Spirit? Then rejoice, this is a good sign. Would you live and sin not? Do you see a loveliness in Holiness? this is, no doubt, an Evidence of the Goodness of your Condition, provided you hate it, and allow not of Sin in you.

Object. *But, alas, how little do I mind, and am affected with this great Salvation!*

Answer. Canst thou be contented without it, or give over minding it, and trouble thy self no more about it? Nay, art thou willing to part with that Interest thou hast in Christ, and in this Salvation? I am perswaded you will say No, not for ten thousand Worlds.

4. Moreover, from hence we may see the Madness and Folly of the generality of Men who live under the preaching of the Gospel, and yet neglect, Day by Day, the Means of this so great Salvation; they regard not their chief and main Business: What Blindness is naturally in Mankind!

But because I shall have occasion to open more particularly the great Evil of neglecting the Salvation of the Gospel the next time, I shall say no more to it now.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

Sermon
X.

I AM upon the Prosecution of the second Proposition I raised from this Text, viz.

Doct. 2. *That the Means of the great Salvation of the Gospel may be neglected.* This is implied in the Words.

1. I shewed you the last Day, what the neglecting of Gospel-Salvation doth import.

2. I also shewed you who they are that may be said to neglect it.

3. And likewise from whence it cometh to pass that so many Persons neglect their own Salvation.

I shall now proceed to the last thing proposed to be spoken unto in the Prosecution of this Proposition. Which is,

Fourthly, To shew you the great Sin and Evil of such who do neglect the Means of the Salvation of the Gospel.

First, I shall shew you the Greatness of this Sin, in respect of God, or shew what a Dishonour it is to him.

Secondly, Demonstrate the Greatness of the Evil thereof, in respect of the Sinner himself that doth neglect it.

Thirdly, Considering by whose Influences and Instigations they do it.

Fourthly, Considering the Vanity of those things for the sake of which this Salvation is neglected.

First, Such that neglect this Salvation, do cast great Contempt upon God.

1. They cast Contempt upon the Wisdom of God that found it out, and on that glorious Counsel that was held in Eternity about it. What is it but a breathing forth of the highest Disdain on the Wisdom of God? What is the Voice of some Sinners Hearts? We shall be saved tho we go on in our own Ways, God is good, merciful, &c. This is, as it were, an undervaluing of the glorious and no less gracious Contrivance of Infinite Wisdom, to seek to be saved some other Way, or to neglect this Way. Suppose a Prince should hold a Council in order to make a Company of Rebels happy for ever; not only to pardon them, but to make them Rich, Noble and Honourable; and he should send them the Offers of this rich Bounty and Goodness, and they should contemn it, slight it, and wholly neglect the free acceptance thereof, would not this cast a Slight and Reproach upon that Prince? And would not all Men say, sure they were mad? Brethren, all ungodly Men who neglect this Salvation, consult with the Devil, take Counsel of the Devil, and of their own wicked Hearts, to frustrate, if it were possible, the Counsel of God. He hath ordained the Preaching of the Gospel as the Way to work Faith in them, and so to give them an Interest in Salvation; but they slight and neglect attending;

The great Evil in neglecting Salvation.

attending upon the Word, nay, believe it not, but conspire against
Psal. 2. 2, 3. God, and set themselves against the Lord, and against his Christ, saying, Let us break their Bonds asunder, and cast their Cords from us. Let us cast away the Offers and Promises of this God, and of this Christ, about Salvation and an Eternal Kingdom, and those Threatnings of Wrath and Hell, whereby they would one while allure us to forsake our Sins and beloved Lusts, and at another time frighten us into Faith and Obedience, and to submit our Necks to his Yoke. Come, let us slight all those Arguments he uses to win us over to him, yea, spurn at them, and disregard all the Hopes and Fears these Cords would put us into, could they get us under their Power. What are all these things but Fancies, vain Dreams? Tush, our State is good enough, we can repent hereafter: What is the Gospel but to *do as we would be done unto*? Let us not trouble our Heads with any other Notions of Religion. And thus they slight and cast contempt upon the infinite Wisdom of God, who found out and contrived this way of Salvation, and by which
Eph. 3. 10. his manifold Wisdom is revealed.

2. They also who neglect and slight the Salvation of the Gospel, do cast Contempt upon the highest Goodness, Love and Mercy that was ever shewed to Man: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not*
John 3. 16. *perish, but have Everlasting Life.* Love, to the wonderment of Men and Angels! Shall such a Marriage be offered by the great King, such a Banquet be prepared that cost so much, and shall any make light of it, and despise Infinite Goodness for the sake of their own filthy Lusts, and think they may be saved some other Way? They thereby render the Holy God cruel to his own Son, in his giving him up to die, and to become a Sacrifice for Sin.

Brethren, if Salvation be neglected, it is either out of Presumption or Despair.

(1.) Now such that presumptuously neglect it, seem to magnify God's Mercy in their own Conceit, being wholly ignorant of his Justice and Holiness, and so slight the constituted Method of his declared Goodness in Jesus Christ; and so whilst they seem to magnify God's Mercy, they impair, nay condemn his Sovereignty, by chusing and prescribing other Ways of God's communicating of himself to his Creatures, than what he in his Eternal Counsel fixed upon, and found out.

(2.) If it be neglected through Despair, they cast Contempt upon Christ's Blood, as if there was not a Sufficiency in it to cleanse and save them from their Sins; and not only so, but also render God not to be believed, who hath said, *There is Life in his Son, and whosoever believes in him shall not perish.* Therefore Despair makes God a Liar, as it is a high degree of Unbelief: Moreover, it renders God to be cruel to his Creatures; for though they fall down at his Feet, and humble themselves, yet the Voice of Despair is, God is only an angry Judg, and cloth'd with nothing but Wrath and Fury. Nay, and it casteth a disparagement upon the Power and Sufficiency of God to save when he appears in his full united Strength, for so he does manifest himself in Jesus Christ. And hereby such seem to intimate, as if a multitude of Sins could throw God's Mercy into the Depths of the Sea, instead of Mercy's casting our Sins therein, notwithstanding Justice hath received a full Satisfaction for them by the Hands of our Blessed Saviour and Surety.

3. From hence it appears that they who neglect this Salvation through Unbelief, do cast also Contempt upon God's Power to save, rendering him unable to do it by his right Hand, even by Jesus Christ: Man is very apt to question God's Power, like them of old; *Can God spread a Table in the Wilderness?* All Distrusts arise from Fears and Jealousy, either of the Strength, or else of the Faithfulness and Justice of the Object address'd unto in a Time of Distress; that either the Person is weak and unable to help, or else dishonest and unjust; and though he hath promised to save, to help, yet he will not. Even so it is here, all they that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, from Unbelief and desponding Thoughts, either seem to strip God and Jesus Christ of his Power to save, or else of his Truth and Faithfulness, who hath said, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye Ends of the Earth.* And again, *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* A convicted Sinner, before he comes to Christ (nay and sometimes afterwards too when under Temptation) is apt to say, Can God pardon my Sins? Can God remit my Sins that are so great? Pray take notice of two Texts of Scripture, the one respects such Sinners that are not awakened, and so seem to presume; the other refers to convinced and awakened Sinners who seem to despair, and yet go on in their Sins.

(1.) Isa. 57. 10. *Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy Way; yet sayest thou not, There is no Hope?* Thou goest on in thy unjust and sinful

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sinful Ways, till thou hast even wearied thy self, as if the Lord should say, and yet thinkest thy State good, wilt not say there is no Hope; but contrariwise thou hast Hope, and dost conclude all is well: these are bold presumptuous Sinners.

Compare this Text with that in *Jer. 2. 25.* *But thou sayest, There is no Hope; No, for I have loved Strangers, and after them I will go.* We are very vile, our Consciences reprove us, convince us of our abominable Evils, but there is no Hope, God will not pardon us, nor take us into his Favour; therefore we will go on in our own Ways, and take our swing: These were ashamed of their doings, as the next Verse shews, and yet not so ashamed as to leave their Sins and Doings, and to return to the Lord, but doubted of his pardoning Grace. We see, say some, there's no ground of Hope, there is no help for such as we, our Hearts are so hard, Corruptions are so strong in us, there is no Salvation for us; we will therefore take our Course, cleave to our Sins and Lovers, and to our old Companions; we will even follow our Trades, and pursue the World, and satisfy our Lusts with Pleasures. Despair sometimes makes Persons desperate; others of this sort grow melancholy, and ready, through Satan's Temptations, to lay violent Hands on themselves, when it prevails far upon them. Now these I say do cast great Reproach upon the Power of God, and his pardoning Grace in Jesus Christ.

4. Such who believe not, but neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, cast contempt and dishonour on the Truth of God, they do not give credit to what God says in his Word about Salvation by Jesus Christ, and of that necessity there is of Faith in him, and Union with him, and of being born again, if ever they are saved. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins.* But the Jews would not believe this. Hence it is said, *He that believeth not, maketh God a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son:* As such do, who do not believe the Testimony of any Person, though never so true. And is it not a horrid Evil to render God a Liar? He saith, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; and except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* But this is not believed by many Persons, they hope to be saved, though not regenerated.

5. Such who believe not, but neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, yet think to be saved, go about to cross and contradict the settled Will and Purpose of God; it is in effect to shew a dislike of God's way of Salvation: The Jews are said not to submit themselves

themselves to the Righteousness of God: they magnified their Wills Rom. 10.3 above the Will of God, liked not of that way of Salvation that he in his Eternal Counsel fixed upon; they will be saved by their own Righteousness; that which God accounts but as filthy Rags, they esteem as a choice Robe. Suppose, *Brethren*, there was some other Way to be saved than by Christ, yet is it not meet that the Creature comply with the Will of his Creator? Shall he rebel against his Sovereign? Were there two ways to such or such a City, one by Sea, and the other by Land, and a Prince commands his Servant to go by Sea, and not by Land, shall he attempt to go by Land, and so cross his Master's Will, and violate his express Command? But it is not so here, there is but one Way of Salvation; *There is no other Name given under Heaven*: therefore such must Acts 4. 12. needs be more inexcusable, who neglect this Way, and their Condition dangerous; for let them think what they will, damned they will be at last, whoever they are that neglect this Salvation. But more of that hereafter.

2^{dly}. Those that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, do slight and cast Contempt on Jesus Christ; they seem to undervalue all that he has done: certainly that was not worth his coming from Heaven to Earth to effect, that you do not think worth your while to go a Mile or two to attend upon the Means of, nor worth setting your Thoughts seriously upon. Was our Salvation so great, that he parted with his Life to procure it, and is it not worth your parting with your Sins to have an Interest in it? What is the Voice of the Hearts and Ways of such Sinners? Do not they reproach the Son of God after this manner, Why wast thou so unwise to shed thy Blood to purchase Salvation for us? We do not value it above the Pleasures of the World, we esteem our carnal Delights and earthly Profits more than that Salvation which thou hast wrought.

2. Nay they slight the Person of Christ, who says, *Behold me, behold me*, look unto me; Can you see me stand knocking at the Door of your Hearts, and refuse to let me in? Should one cry out *Pity me, pity me, you will break my Heart*, if you do this thing; suppose it be a dear Father or Mother that thus speaks to a *Child* that takes evil Courses, and the Child regards not the Cry nor Tears of its Parent; would not all say, that such a *Child* contemn'd his *Father*? Thus, Sinners, you will be found contemners and slights of Jesus Christ one Day, if you neglect this so great Salvation;

he stands ready to imbrace you in his Arms, to espouse your Souls, but you slight and despise him and his precious Love in your Hearts.

3. Nay such who neglect this Great Salvation, *slight the Voice of Christ's Blood*. Sirs, the Blood of Christ cries, his Death has a Voice in it: Hath Christ's Blood been shed to redeem you, to cleanse you from Sin, to save and sanctify your Souls, and will you not hear the loud Cry thereof? Nay, doth not Christ himself cry to you after this manner, Wilt thou continue in thy Sin, and neglect the Salvation I have purchased? What greater Ingratitude, what worse Indignity canst thou cast upon me, and upon that Sacrifice which I have offered up to make thy Peace, and reconcile thee unto God? After this manner Christ seems to speak.

Mat. 22.
37-

4. To neglect this Salvation, is to cross or contradict the grand Design of God in sending his Son into the World; was it not to exalt Jesus Christ, to magnify him? *Last of all he sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son*. God requires and commands all to honour his Son, believe in his Son, receive and imbrace his Son, subject to his Authority; to this End he sent him into the World: But how do such seek to cross the Design of God herein, who prefer their earthly Profits and Pleasures, nay their sinful Ways and wicked Practices, above Jesus Christ and that Salvation he hath purchased? O how great is the Sin of such who neglect this Salvation!

John 15.
13.
Rom. 5. 10.

5. Hereby also they abuse the matchless Love, the unspeakable Love and Favour of Jesus Christ; they do not only slight his Person, condemn his Blood, and cross the Design of the Father, but they also abuse and disdain his precious Love, which caused him to take upon him the Form of a Servant, and to yield himself up to the cursed Death of the Cross. *Greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friend*: But Jesus Christ laid down his Life for his Enemies; *Whilst we were yet Enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the Death of his Son*. And shall Sinners, after the manifestation of such Love, slight him, and the Salvation wrought by him at such a dear Rate? Nay, shall Christ's repeated

Mat. 65. 2.

Calls, Wooings, and Intreaties, be not regarded, *who spreadeth forth his Hands all the Day long*? Shall any be so ungrateful, so blind, so rebellious, as to let Christ stand all Night at the Door of their Hearts, *even till his Head is wet with Dew, and his Locks with the Drops of the Night*? This shews the great Evil and Wickedness of those who neglect this great Salvation: Doth not this tend to expose

Cant. 5. 5.

pose the Son of God to shame, to be thus slighted, as if not worth the least regard? Should a Prince come a thousand Miles to court, or offer his Love to a low, a contemptible and base-born Damsel, and she should nevertheless slight him, and give him no entertainment, would not this be deemed an abominable Abuse of his Love, as well as great Contempt cast upon his Person? Sinners are ready to say, there is *no comeliness* in him *that we should desire him*: but Ira. 53. 2, 3. alas, 'tis because they do not know him; they are blind and see him not, 'tis the carnal Eye that can see no Beauty in Christ; were the Eyes of their Understandings opened, they would be of another Opinion concerning him.

6. The Evil in neglecting of this is so great, that it is (as it were) a piercing of Christ again; nay, and when a poor Sinner is convinced of this great Iniquity, he cries out, What have I done? Have I not grieved, nay, wounded afresh my dear Saviour, by not believing in him, and not receiving the great Salvation offered by him? Though I never saw the Person of Christ, yet I have offered Violence to him in resisting his Authority, despising his Love, and slighting his Salvation. As a Man is guilty of Treason, by abusing the Statue or Image of a King, so are Men guilty of the Blood of Christ, and of trampling upon it, when they count it as a Trifle, or unprofitable to their Salvation, seeking Life and Salvation some other ways, or are wholly regardless about it; it is as a Stab at his very Heart, a tearing out (as it were) his Bowels: he suffered willingly all those great Torments which were inflicted upon him, to remove from us a necessity of Suffering; had he not stept in to bear our Sins, we had been lost for ever. O why then is not he embraced by Faith that works by Love! It implies a Sinner has no Love to him, no not so much as to his Sins and Folly; it is a denying the Excellences of Christ, the Preciousness of Christ: for as Faith accounts all things but Dung in comparison of Christ, so (as one observes) Unbelief counts Christ but *Dung*, Union and Charnock. Communion with him but *Dung*, in comparison of this World and the Pleasures of Sin.

7. Those that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, thinking to be saved some other way, do seem to reflect upon, if not despise the Wisdom of Jesus Christ: Do they not charge him with Folly and Inconsiderateness, in undertaking such a Task, such a Work, on such hard Terms, when it might be had some other way? What, suffer such Pain, Sweat, great Drops of Blood, and be nailed to the Cross to procure Salvation for us, which might be

obtained by a sober Life, or by doing to all as they would be done unto, or by following the Dictates of the Light of natural Conscience, or by our own Inherent Holiness? What did Jesus Christ aim at by shedding of his Blood, but the appeasing of God's Wrath, and the bringing in of an Everlasting Righteousness, and to purchase Grace to sanctify Mens Souls, and to open the Gates of Heaven, which Divine Justice had shut and barr'd up against us? Now certainly those who neglect this Salvation, do either fancy these Blessings are not worth regard or looking after, or else they may be procured by some other Way, and on easier Terms, than by Faith in the Blood of Christ: And is not this to charge our Lord Jesus with Folly; and with the *Greeks of old*, to account the *Preaching of the Cross Foolishness?*

8. They render, it is evident, the shedding of Christ's Blood to be in vain, who neglect the Means of this Salvation, and so thereby slight the Blessings which he hath purchased: it must be an undervaluing of the price of Redemption; for that which a Person regards not, though procured at never so dear a rate, he declares was in vain purchased: this is, with a Witness, therefore, *lightly to esteem of the Rock of their Salvation*: it is to stop their Ears to the Cry of Christ's Blood. His Blood (as you heard) cries to Sinners to apply it to their perishing Souls, and to leave their sinful Ways; but they regard it not, though it seems afresh to stream forth from his Heart in the Virtue of it, and flows through the Pipes of the Gospel in the Offers of it. Did not they who refused to come to the Marriage-Supper, declare, that the King had in vain prepared all those costly Dainties, for let who will come and eat thereof, they will not? And thus many render the bloody Sacrifice to be offered up in vain, by neglecting the Salvation offered in the Gospel.

9. Such also who believe not, but reject and turn their Backs upon the Gospel-Salvation, put Jesus Christ to Grief again: It is said, *He was grievèd because of the hardness of their Hearts*. So God said, he was *grieved forty Years* with those who believed not in the Wilderness. O how many Years have some of you grieved both the Father and the Son, (to speak after the manner of Men) and is not this a great Evil? Will you grieve and weary out the Heart of God, and the Heart of Jesus Christ?

10. It also gives occasion to Satan, to vaunt, boast and triumph over the Son of God: See, says he, how little these Men and Women, for whom thou gavest thy self to die the Death of the Cross, do

do mind the Salvation thou hast purchased for them; they like and approve of my Ways and Motions, my Offers, better than any thing thou hast procured for them, and dost offer to them. May not Satan insult after this manner over the Lord of Life and Glory, whilst Sinners close in with his Temptations, and cleave to their Lusts, earthly Profits and Pleasures, and neglect the great Salvation of the Gospel?

3dly. Such who neglect this so great Salvation, offer Violence to the Holy Ghost.

1. They do resist the Holy Spirit, whom God hath sent as his great Messenger, to influence, enlighten and convince their Hearts and Consciences about the Worth and Weightiness of this Concern: *He will reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.* *Of Sin, because they believe not on me.* *Because they neglect attending upon the Means of this Salvation, believe not the Necessity there is of this Saviour, nor of Faith in him, and seek it not above all things: Is it a small Matter to resist the Holy Ghost? O lay it to Heart.* John 16. 8, 9.

2. They grieve the Holy Spirit also, yea, and hereby tire him out so, that he at last withdraws his Influences from the Sinner, and will strive with him no more, like as he did by the World; and if so, the ruin of the Soul will be unavoidable: for without the Holy Spirit no Man can repent, believe, or be renewed, be regenerated, and so come to have Interest in this so great Salvation.

3. Such quench the Spirit who neglect this Salvation, and do not believe; it is to cast Water on that Divine Spark which the Holy Ghost strives to kindle in the Soul of a poor Sinner, or to blow out the Candle of the Lord, (so far as the Sinner is able to do it) whereby Spiritual Light and Knowledge comes to be let into the Heart.

4. Nay, to neglect this Salvation in the Means of it, is as much as may be to hinder the Work and Office of the Holy Spirit in and about this Salvation. The Holy Spirit hath more immediately to do with Sinners; his special Work is to enlighten, to convince of Sin, to work Faith in the Soul, and to renew and sanctify the polluted Heart; and all that neglect this Salvation, or that slight those Convictions they have of the Evil of Sin, or Sense of their woful Condition, do seek to obstruct the King's great Officer and Messenger in the discharge of his Office. Look to it, Sinners, for
if

if it be deemed a dangerous thing to resist a *Constable* in the exercise of his Office, because he is the King's Servant, what Danger do you expose your selves to, that oppose, withstand, and strive to hinder the Spirit in the discharge of his great Work and Office? It is to contemn the King's Ambassador; the Holy Spirit is sent to treat with Sinners in Christ's Name, it is hereby Christ himself speaks to them from Heaven: and they that adhere to the Motions of the Spirit, do adhere to Jesus Christ; and they that oppose or resist his Motions, do oppose and resist Christ also. The Holy Spirit is the great Gospel-Blessing promised, to infuse Grace in the Soul: all Grace is from the Spirit; Sinners cannot believe without the Holy Spirit, nor love God: *The Love of God is shed abroad in the Hearts of Believers by the Holy Ghost.* There is no Regeneration without the Spirit: Those that are born again are born of the Spirit; no Union with Christ without the Spirit, no broken Heart, no Cries, no Tears that will prevail with God without the help of the Spirit: Such that will not adhere to his Motions and Influences, say in their Hearts, that they will not be *changed*, will not *believe* nor *repent*, nor have Christ to be their Prince and Saviour. The Spirit awakens the Conscience, and stirs up Fears in the Soul, and sets before the Sinner's Eyes, his great Evil, Guilt and horrid Pollution; therefore if they refuse the Wooings, Intreaties and Influences of the Spirit, they must perish for ever.

Rom. 5. 5.

John 3. 5.

APPLICATION.

1. O let us lament and mourn over all that neglect this so great Salvation: All Unbelievers and Neglecters of the Means of Salvation, are horribly guilty before the Lord; 'tis hereby all their Sins are bound upon their Consciences, and cleave to them, and are charged upon them, not only Original, but all actual Sin whatsoever.

2. O infinite Love and Patience! May we not stand amazed, and wonder at the long-suffering and forbearance of God? O *House of David*, (saith the Prophet) *is it a small thing for you to weary Men, but will you weary my God also?* What greater Wickedness and Ingratitude can there be than this? Will you contemn and resist your Saviour and the Holy Ghost? How long shall God wait upon you? Will he always wait to be gracious? O know that his Mercy will at last be turned into Fury.

Isa. 7. 13.

3. Unworthy are such to live, to be fed, to be clothed, to be protected and preserved, that thus despise God's Mercy and sovereign Goodness: Would a Man feed, clothe, and bestow great Favours on such that despise, slight and contemn him?

4. What do you think of your selves, Sinners? to you I speak that neglect this so great Salvation. O this is your Sin, you refuse the only Remedy God hath found out to heal and save your Souls, therefore your Damnation will be just and deserved with a witness: You love Darkness rather than Light; you contemn the highest Good, the best of Beings, and the highest Expressions of his Love and Favour; that God that made you, that Christ that spilt his Blood to redeem the worst of Sinners, those Bowels that pitied you, you refuse, and resist that Spirit that would renew you, sanctify you, and make you meet for Heaven, and all this out of love to your base Lusts, your cruel Enemies that seek to destroy and murder your precious Souls. Abhor your selves: Alas, Men do not see what Monsters of Wickedness they are, whilst they neglect this so great Salvation. You sin, I say, against the Remedy, the costly Remedy, the only Remedy, against the Remedy that Infinite Wisdom hath found out, and Infinite Goodness hath vouchsafed: Yet if you return to God, there is Mercy for you; say, O Lord, now we see our Sin: O that you could but say so in truth, and fall down at the feet of God, and say, Thou hast overcome us with thy Love.

5. Lastly, Here is Comfort for Believers who have received this so great Salvation. O bless God for Faith, cherish the Motions of the Holy Spirit that hath broken your Bonds; you prefer Christ, and the Salvation by Christ, before all things: live worthy of a Part and Interest in this Salvation; you have Salvation, and shall not lose it. O walk so that you may never lose the Joy of it; for that you may do, God may hide his Face, Christ may withdraw himself: if he hath done it, enquire when you had him, and consider what you have done that he hides his Face from you; let the Cause, if it be Sin, be bewailed, and let the loss of him be more grievous to you, than the loss of Comfort from him, and be willing to do any thing to enjoy Christ again.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

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Sermon
XI.
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I AM upon the second Proposition that is implied in the Text,
viz.
Doct. 2. *That the Means of the great Salvation of the Gospel
may be neglected.*

The last Time I shewed the great Evil that attended the neglect of Gospel-Salvation, in respect of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Secondly, The second thing proposed was to shew you, what a great Evil this is in respect of the Sinner himself that doth neglect it. But before I proceed to speak to this, let me premise one thing, namely, That we ought first to be sensible of that Evil which is in this and in all Sin, as it is against God; for if our Convictions arise not from hence, our Trouble is not right, it flows not from a true Spring or right Principles: It is not sufficient to see our Sin and Evil, as it is against our selves, as it hurts and wounds our own Souls, but chiefly as it is against that God that made us, and sent his Son to redeem us; or as Sin is loathsome and abominable in his sight, tending to eclipse his Glory, nay, to dethrone him, and frustrate his gracious Design in our Redemption, and bring his Honour under contempt. This, I say, should first of all and chiefly be lamented: Such sin against the Remedy, and highest Goodness, that neglect this Salvation, and the gracious Operations of the Holy Spirit, and so rather adhere to Satan than to God. Suppose a Child under the Rod of his tender Father should cry out, *O the Smart*, but signify nothing of Sorrow or Grief in offending his Father, would not that rather aggravate his Guilt, or could it tend to please his Father, and to cease laying on of more Stripes? But to come to shew you what a great Evil it is to neglect this Salvation in respect of the Sinner himself.

1. This Sin, this Unbelief, this Neglect, is the Cause why all Sin remains upon the Conscience of the Sinner. True, God hath transmitted the Guilt of our Sins to Christ, so that he hath satisfied for them; but the Sinner will not receive this Atonement, but refuses it, and so his Sin, his Guilt and Pollution remains upon him,

him, Faith being appointed as the Way of the Application of the Remedy.

2. Nay, Sin doth not only remain on such that neglect this Salvation, and refuse Christ, but this Refusal keeps Sin in its full Strength, and binds all Sins fast to the Soul: Sin reigns in them and condemns them; and so doth the Law also, which is the Strength of Sin, because they receive not Jesus Christ, *who is the End of the Law*, as to its condemning Power, *to every one that believeth*, but not to them that reject Christ and believe not.

3. Faith unites to a Holy God, and to a Spotless Saviour, whereby we come to have a Righteousness which discharges us from all Sin, and Wrath due to it; and such are made Holy: But Unbelief continues the Soul in its old State, as being united to the old Adam, condemned Adam; all Men are in the *first or second Adam*, in the *dead or living Adam*: And as is the *dead Adam*, so are they that are in him; they are dead, and by the Law condemned, therefore not justified: And as is the *living*, so are they that are made alive; they live and are acquitted, and can die spiritually no more.

4. This Sin, this Neglect is against a Man's own Life and Happiness: Life is offered to him, but he rejects it, he will not have Life; he has no love to himself, seeks not the preservation of himself. Mankind naturally have a special care to preserve themselves, but these chuse Death rather than Life, Sicknes rather than Health, Slavery rather than Liberty, Cursing rather than Blessing.

5. Hereby they deprive themselves of all the saving Benefits of Christ's Death, for no adult Person hath or can have any Interest in the Merits of Christ without Faith: *He that believeth not, the Wrath of God remains upon him. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* Here is in this Salvation, Pardon, Peace, Christ and Everlasting Life; but the Sinner contemns all: *My People will have none of me*, saith the Lord. And this is the Voice of all that neglect this Salvation, they will not have God, will not have Christ, will not have Life, such is their Ignorance, and the Enmity that is in their Hearts against God; These account themselves *unworthy of Everlasting Life*; and the Death of Christ will be in vain as to them.

6. Hereby also they shew they have no Love nor Pity for their Immortal Souls: If they loved their Souls, would they not seek the Salvation of them? Nay, they are cruel to their own Souls: Would not that Man be cruel to his poor Child, that saw it fall

into the Fire, and would not endeavour to pluck it out; or see it in the Water almost drowned, crying out for help, but would not strive to save it, nor call for help? O merciful Mortals! What pity on your precious Souls that are so dear and near to you? Will you not cry to God, to Jesus Christ, to pull your Souls out of the Fire, or rescue them out of the Teeth of the devouring Lion? Can there be greater Folly, Madness or Cruelty than this? O think upon it, you Sinners, that neglect this Salvation.

Prov. 8.
18.
John 12.
26.

7. Moreover, their Folly appears further who neglect this Salvation, in that they refuse a Crown, a Kingdom, and to be Heirs, Heirs of God: They may be rich, eternally rich, yea, great and honourable for ever, but utterly refuse it. *Riches and Honour are nith me, (saith Christ) yea durable Riches and Righteousness. If any Man (saith our Saviour) serve me, him will my Father honour.*

8. Such that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, it doth yet further appear, are very cruel to themselves, and therefore guilty of the greatest Folly imaginable. (Had the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, when they were stung with *fiery Serpents*, refused to have looked up to the brazen Serpent that was lifted up upon the Pole, when they were in tormenting Pain and Anguish, would it not have shewed great Cruelty to themselves, as well as Madness?) Sinners are wounded, mortally wounded, they are stung with a worse Serpent than those *fiery Serpents*: And to look unto Christ by Faith, is the only Cure and Remedy, or the only way to be healed: and as there is no other way, so this is a certain and infallible Cure. But Sinners who neglect this Salvation, refuse to apply this sovereign Balsam to their wounded Souls.

9. Is it not an evil and hurtful thing for a Man to yield himself up to the Counsel and Conduct of a sworn, cruel, and mortal Enemy, who seeks his Blood, and will rip up his Bowels, and tear out his very Heart? But thus they do that neglect this Salvation, they hereby follow the Advice and Counsel of the Devil, who will devour them as a hunger-starv'd Lion; nay, it is just as if a Man should throw his dear Child into the Lion's Den to be torn in pieces. Suppose a Man in Slavery in *Turkey*, should be told that his Ransom was paid, and he hath the greatest demonstrations given of it imaginable yet he will not believe it, but says, I will continue here a Slave, and wear these Chains, and be under Bondage to this cruel Tyrant, though I am told that he will murder me at last; would not all say, he deserved not to be pitied, especially should he behold that he is redeemed by the Blood of his own gracious Sovereign?

10. Is it not an evil thing, and the greatest madness, at the Instigation of a bloody and cruel Enemy, for a Man to suffer him to thrust a Sword into his own Bowels; or when wounded at his Inticements, to refuse to apply such a Plaister that would certainly cure his Wounds and save his Life? but thus do all they who neglect this Salvation. Or suppose a Man was almost starved to Death, and Bread is set before him, nay all choice Varieties, and he is bid to eat; but being perswaded by an Enemy (that hates him, and longs to see him dead) not to eat, but to feed with his Swine on Husks and Grains, would it not be folly with a witness, should he do so? But thus do all those Persons that neglect this Salvation, they refuse to eat of the Bread of Life, or to feed on that costly Supper God hath graciously provided for them in the Gospel, and at the Devil's Inticements feed, as the poor Prodigal did, on Husks which the Swine do eat.

11. Such who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, do greatly en and aggravate their Sin and Guilt, as our Saviour speaks concerning the Jews; *If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloak for their Sin*: that is, they had not been guilty of Sin to such a degree, their Sin had not been with such Aggravations. Therefore those that have the Salvation of the Gospel offered to them, and they neglect it, or refuse to receive it, shall have the *greater Condemnation*; it shall indeed be more tolerable for *Sodom and Gomorrah*, nay with *Pagans and Infidels*, than with them in the Day of Judgment. John 15. 22.

12. Moreover, since the way of God's glorifying of all his Blessed Attributes is despised and utterly rejected, by those who neglect this Salvation, all the Attributes will rise up and plead against such Sinners to condemn them.

1. *Divine Wisdom* may plead against them, and call for Judgment with the greatest severity to be executed upon them, because that way of Salvation which Infinite Wisdom contrived and determined in the Eternal Council, is rejected, slighted and contemned. All the Divine Attributes plead against such who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel.

2. *The Veracity, or Truth of God*, may plead against all Sinners that neglect this Salvation, because the Sacred Precepts of the Gospel are not obeyed, nor the Threats feared, nor the faithful Promises thereof believed.

3. *Divine Power* may rise up and plead against such Sinners, because that Almighty Arm which is stretched forth in working out this Salvation, is not took hold of to save them, and therefore it shall be stretched out to destroy them: *Who shall be punished with*

2 Theff. 1. Everlasting Destruction from the Presence of God, and from the Glory
 9. of his Power. That will be the Time when God will make the
 Power of his Wrath and Anger known : *Who* (saith the Psalmist)
 Psal. 90. *knows the Power of thine Anger ? as is thy Fear, so is thy Wrath.*
 11.

4. *Divine Justice* may rise up against all those who neglect this Salvation, and exact the p^riment of all the Debts the Sinner owes and stands charged with, because the Satisfaction made by Jesus Christ, our blessed Surety, is contemned, utterly neglected, or not accepted of, they not believing ; Faith being the only way appointed for Interest therein, and for the Benefit thereof.

5. Moreover, *Divine Mercy* and *Goodness* will come forth and plead against the Sinner, and be turned into Fury, since such Infinite Grace and Favour, and Sovereign Bowels, are not regarded, but utterly slighted and neglected : And wo be to those that Mercy it self appears against, and calls for execution of Wrath upon.

6. And the Law also will rise up and condemn all those that neglect this Salvation, because the only way by which its Glory shines forth, and by which its Breach is repaired, and its Honour is raised, is slighted : the Law will break forth with its bitter Curfes, and throw the Souls of such into Hell in fury, who neglect this Salvation.

7. Nay, Jesus Christ himself will also rise up and condemn all neglecters of this Salvation, because all his Infinite Love and Grace which he hath shewed, and Pain and Anguish which he hath endured to work it out, is slighted and trod under-foot ; he will change his Lamb-like Nature, and appear like a Lion, to tear all such into pieces. In a word, it puts a Sword, as it were, into the Hands of all the Attributes of God, and a Sword into the Hand of the Law of God, nay into the Hand of Jesus Christ, to cut down and utterly to destroy their Souls ; which Divine Wrath will speedily execute with Vengeance, if they proceed on in their evil way, and do not embrace this so great Salvation.

8 This is not a Sin against the killing Letter, but against the healing Spirit ; and it is a casting Dirt upon all God's blessed Attributes, as they display their highest Glory, or are dressed in their richest Robes, or appear in their most sublime Perfections. Suppose a Traitor should cast Dirt upon a Prince, or spit in his Face when he is but in his common Dress, would not that be deemed an abominable thing ? but much more odious, should he do it as he sits on his Throne, when his Crown is on his Head, and hath all
 his

his Royal Robes upon him, and his Scepter in his Hand, and all his Nobles about the Throne. God in this Salvation appears in his high and sublime Glory, as displaying his highest Beauty, Splendor, and Honour of all the Perfections of his unwordable and inconceivable Being, even the Depths of Infinite Wisdom, Justice, Power, Holiness and Goodness: Therefore wo to those Sinners who slight and neglect this Salvation.

Thirdly, The third thing that I proposed to speak unto, was to shew you the greatness of their Sin who neglect this Salvation, with respect had to him by whose Influences, and at whose Instigations they neglect it, and that is the *Devil*. Satan stirs up Men to slight and neglect this so great Salvation: Is it not sad that Men should adhere to the grand Enemy of their Souls? *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Eyes of those that believe not.*

*Satan's
Work it is
to hinder
Mens Sal-
vation.*

Satan acts out of Malice to Mankind, in seeking Ways and Means to blind their Eyes: He hath many Devices whereby he strives to do this, which I shall not now insist upon; he shews them the Glory of this World, thereby to allure them into his hungry Jaws, to devour them and destroy their Souls for ever: He has many Nets spread, and Multitudes are caught by him, either one way or another.

1. Some he deprives of this Salvation, through love of sinful Profits or worldly Gain: This way he destroyed the young Man mentioned in the Gospel that came running to Christ; and also *Demas* who forsook the Gospel, and fell away for love to the sinful Profit of this evil World. And how many daily, by Earthly-mindedness, and abominable Covetousness, lose this Salvation, through the Craftiness of the Devil; and the Evil of their own Hearts.

2. Some by sinful Honours: O how many love worldly Grandure, and a Name among Men, above the Salvation of their Souls! These are like those Jews who are said to *believe on Christ, Joh. 12. but did not confess him, for fear of being put out of the Synagogue; for they loved the praise of Men, more than the praise of God.*

3. Others by earthly Pleasures and sinful Delights, he catches in his Net and makes a Prey of.

4. Also Multitudes he destroys, by cursed Errors and damnable Heresies: That way he deceives them, and robs them of this Salvation, concluding, that those Principles they have sucked in, are the

the undoubted Truths of Jesus Christ, and do not doubt of the Goodness of their Condition.

Fourthly, And lastly, Consider the Vanity of all those things, for the sake of which Men neglect this so great Salvation. What is Sin, the Pleasures of Sin, or all the Riches and Glory of this World, when compared to the Salvation wrought by Jesus Christ? Sin is the Soul's Sickness, the Scabs and Sores, the Plague and Poison of the Soul; 'tis the Spawn of the old Serpent, and yet Sinners lick it up, and esteem it above all that Good that is in God and in Jesus Christ, and value it more than the Crown of Glory in Heaven. Sin is the Leprosy and Plague of the Soul; 'tis compared to the rottenness and stinking Putrefaction of a filthy Sepulchre, nay, to the superfluity of Naughtiness. O that Men should neglect so great Salvation, and expose themselves to eternal Flames and Wrath in Hell, for love to that which the Holy Ghost thus paints out, and discovers the detestable Nature of!

Jam. 1. 21.

Reader,
these things
were largely
opened
when these
Sermons
were preached.

Besides, how soon are Men deprived of all those things which their deceived Hearts are set upon; they are not sure of enjoying them one Day, no not for one Hour! O how soon will all the seeming Sweet of Sin, and of this World, be turned into Bitter, and all earthly Joy into Sorrow, all their Pleasures into eternal Pain and Misery! And O how will they cry out against themselves for slighting the Salvation of their Souls, for the sake of, and love to these things, when it will be too late!

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

Sermon
XII.

I Closed the last Day with the second Point of Doctrine, namely, *That the great Salvation of the Gospel may be neglected.* I shall now proceed to the third and last Proposition.

Doct 3. *There is no possibility for such, or any one Soul of them, to escape, that neglect the great Salvation of the Gospel.*

First,

First, I shall shew you what it is they cannot escape.

Secondly, Why they cannot escape.

Thirdly, When or at what time they shall not escape.

Fourthly, Shew why the Gospel hath such fearful Comminations and Threatnings contained in it.

First, They shall not escape the Curse of the Law, (which all ungodly and unbelieving Sinners lie under); for no Man is, nor can be delivered from the Curse thereof, but only those who believe in Jesus Christ, and embrace the Salvation of the Gospel; For Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness, to every one that Rom. 10. 4. believeth: to them that believe, and to every one of them, but not to those that believe not. Christ hath born the Curse of the Law, he by his actual Obedience fulfilled the Righteousness thereof; and by bearing the Penalty of it (which our Sins incurr'd) by his Death, he hath delivered all that believe from the Curse thereof: but the Curse of it remains on all them who receive not Jesus Christ, it hath its full blow and stroke on all Gospel-neglecters, because it is by him and no other ways we can be delivered from the Curse thereof.

2. Therefore it follows in the second place, that they cannot be delivered from the Guilt and Punishment of their Sins, their Sins lie upon them, they are charged upon all that neglect or refuse the Salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ: It is the Decree of the Eternal God, that all such that believe not shall bear their own Sins, because they reject Jesus Christ who hath born the Punishment that was due to Sin. Some conceit that they need not this Salvation, need not the Righteousness of Christ, or Faith in Christ, and this through Ignorance, concluding their State is good. *Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no Sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your Sin remaineth.* Joh. 9. 41. They thought their own Righteousness was sufficient, and were ignorant of God's Righteousness, and hence the Guilt of their Sin remaineth upon them.

3. All those that neglect this so great Salvation, shall not escape the Wrath of God: This follows as the natural Consequence of the former; Divine Wrath pursues them, and every Soul of them that believe not, but refuse the Grace of God offered by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, like as the avenger of Blood pursued the Man-slayer under the Law: The Cities of Refuge were a type of Christ; 'tis to him all guilty Sinner must fly if they escape the Wrath and Vengeance of God: Divine Justice is only satisfied in Christ;

Christ; and Sinners for not accepting and receiving by Faith that Atonement, and pleading that Satisfaction he hath made, Wrath follows them even at their Heels, and will strike them down: *He*
 Joh. 3. 36. *that believeth not, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* Wrath is upon all naturally, we are all by Nature the Children of Wrath, but it remains no longer upon them that believe, but it abideth on such that believe not.

4. They shall not escape the *Damnation of Hell*, or everlasting Burning: Our Saviour (speaking to the Scribes and Pharisees) faith, *How can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* Yet they were a People that appeared outwardly righteous to Men, and boasted that *they were not Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or such as Publicans were.* But alas, no Righteousness will carry a Man to Heaven, but a perfect, compleat, sinless Righteousness. Paul was not an Hypocrite, as some of the Pharisees were, before he believed; yet his Righteousness, tho according to the Letter of the Law, was such, that few attained unto; *As touching the Righteousness which is of the Law, saith he, I was blameless:* yet he esteemed it but Dung in comparison of God's Righteousness, and renounced it all in point of Justification, that he might be found in Christ. And as it is Christ's Righteousness that is our Title for Heaven, so it is his Death, his bearing the Punishment of Sin, that delivers us from eternal Damnation in Hell. Hell is a fearful Place, it is made deep and large; *The Fire is not quenched, and the Worm dieth not:* and that Place is prepared for all Unbelievers, for all who continue in their Sins, and under the Power of Unbelief, and neglect this so great Salvation, the Damnation of which they cannot escape.

Mat. 23. 23.
 Luke 18. 11.
 Phil. 3. 8, 9.
 Mark 9.

The Causes and Reasons why they cannot escape that neglect Gospel-Salvation. Secondly, *I shall shew you the Reasons why such cannot, shall not escape God's eternal Wrath, that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel.*

1. It is because this is the way, yea, the only way which Infinite Wisdom hath found out for the Salvation of our Souls: If there is but one way to cure a Mortal Disease that may seize upon a Person, then if he neglect that one Remedy, he must die. Sirs, as there is but one way to escape starving, and that is, to eat; so there is but one way to escape perishing, and that is by believing, or by feeding on Jesus Christ, or by eating of his Flesh, and drinking of his Blood. There are many ways to be damned, but there is but one way to be saved. *Verily verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life*
 in

John 6. 53.

in you. If you neglect this way of Salvation, there is no other way whereby you can be saved; *Neither is there Salvation in any other,* Acts 4.12. *for there is no other Name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved.*

2. Such that neglect this Salvation, cannot, shall not escape the Wrath of God, because it is just and equal that all such Persons who slight and neglect this Salvation, should be destroyed, and that for ever. (1.) By reason they neglect an Offer of Pardon and Peace, contrived by the Infinite Wisdom of God, and it is the highest Demonstration of admirable Mercy and Goodness; therefore there cannot be a higher Indignity and Contempt cast upon God's Sovereign Grace and Favour. Many of those Sinners that neglect this Salvation, are so vile and ungrateful, as not to enquire what this Grace means, nor on what Terms this Salvation may be had: And is not this in plainness to tell the Holy God, that they scorn his Love and Goodness, and despise the Offers of Peace and Reconciliation by Jesus Christ, and fear not what he can do unto them; and so no less than a trampling the Blood of Christ under their Feet? Let Men deal thus with their provoked Rulers, or with an earthly Prince, when guilty of High-Treason, and see how unpitied they will die, yea, be drawn, hang'd and quartered. What, guilty of the worst of Treason, and have an Offer of Pardon, and slight or neglect the suing of it out? How equal and just a thing would it be that such should die? So it will be here, Brethren, God will not be mocked: Sinners shall one Day see what it is to neglect the Salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ, I mean, the Way and Means of the Application thereof; they will be forced to subscribe to the Righteousness, Justice and Equity of their own Damnation, in loving and cleaving to their Lusts, and counting their earthly Riches, Pleasures and Honours, better than Jesus Christ, and a part in this Salvation. Remember it is the Sinner's own Salvation that he neglecteth, it is his own Good, his own Cure, his own Relief, his own Happiness: Can any perish more justly and deservedly, than such who refuse to be saved, who choose Death rather than Life, and Darkness rather than Light?

3. They cannot, shall not escape, because it is Salvation in such a way, a way that cost so dear, even the Blood of the Son of God: Should the King yield up his own Son as a Sacrifice to answer the Law for a cursed Traitor, and yet he should despise and slight his Goodness, how would that aggravate his Guilt? O with what a

Price is this Salvation procured, by what a Sacrifice ! What Tears did Christ shed ! O what drops of Blood did he sweat ! and what Wrath did he bear ! What a Curse did he undergo, to save us from Hell and Death ! How can any think to escape that neglect the Means of this Salvation ?

Mich. 6.

4. Because it is Salvation on such easy Terms as to us ; had God offered Sinners Salvation on hard and difficult Terms, their Sin might not seem to be attended with such Aggravations. Had God required a *thousand Rams*, or *ten thousand Rivers of Oil* of every one that would be saved ; or to sacrifice their Sons and Daughters, or *their First-born*, the *Fruit of their Bodies for the Sin of their Souls*, this would seem hard : but none of this God requires of us, it shall not be, must not be our Son, our Child, our First-born, but his Son, the *holy Child Jesus*, his *First-born*, that must die or be a Sacrifice for our Sins : it must be my Son, as if God should say ; and all that I require of you, is to apply his Blood, and to sacrifice your Sins in love to me.

5. That which the Apostle builds the Righteousness of God's proceeding against such that neglect this Salvation upon, and shews the unavoidableness of their perishing from, is the greatness of the Salvation it self. Shall God's Justice be eclipsed, shall his Honour be marr'd, his Goodness be despised, his Law be violated, his Holiness stained ? it would be thus, should such be saved who neglect and slight this Salvation : Therefore all such cannot escape his Wrath.

Heb. 2. 2, 3.

6. The Apostle further argues the impossibility of their escaping who neglect this great Salvation, from that impossibility there was of their escaping who refused to hear *Moses* : For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Reward ; How shall we escape ? &c. It was a just Reward they received for their Sins and Disobedience : And if so, how shall these escape ? God will render a *just Retribution*, a righteous and proportionable Punishment, it will be far worse, or much greater ; howbeit, it is against greater Light, greater Grace, and despising a Person of far greater Honour and Dignity : He that despised *Moses Law*, died without Mercy, under two or three Witnesses. Of how much sorer Punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under-foot the Blood of the Son of God ? &c. Sirs, to love Sin, to love this World, or any Person or Thing above Jesus Christ, is in effect to tread the Son of God under your Feet, 'tis such an undervaluing and vilifying of him. God doth,

Heb. 10.
23, 29.

as it were, propound the Case to us, he would have Sinners themselves to be Judges how just their Condemnation will be if they neglect this Salvation; and also the Nature and Quality, or Degree of it; *Of how much sorer Punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy? &c.* God at the last Day will so justly and righteously proceed against wicked Men, that their Reward shall be judged reasonable in their own Judgment, and by their own Consciences.

7. They shall not escape, because Mercy and Grace is sinned against, principally, by all that neglect this Salvation: Mercy will, as you have heard, plead against them. And if Mercy be their Enemy, if Goodness it self rise up against them, where will they find a Friend to appear for them?

8. They shall not escape, because God hath absolutely and unavoidably decreed the Destruction and eternal Damnation of all those that believe not, but neglect this Salvation: His Decree, his Counsel and Purpose shall stand; *He that believeth not, shall be damned.* Mark 16: 16.

9. It is because the Sinner is not able to deliver himself out of God's Hand: If he escape, it must be from one of these two Considerations.

1. That either God must change his Purpose, his absolute Decree and Counsel.

2. Or else the Sinner must get out of God's Hand, and so deliver himself.

Now it is impossible God's Mind should change, or his absolute Decree be made void; his Decree shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure: God will be true, and not make himself a Liar to save the guilty Sinner. And that it is impossible for the Sinner to get out of God's Hands, is evident, because God is *Omnipotency it self*: whither can he fly from his Presence? *Who can stand before (or escape) his Indignation?* Nah. I. 3. Therefore there is no way for such to escape God's Wrath, who neglect this Salvation.

APPLICATION.

1. O bless God for this Salvation, and value it according to the Nature, Worth, and Greatness of it.

2. Bewail all ungodly Persons, who are found slights and neglecters of it, and mourn over them. O how sad is their Condition! May be you have some in your Families that are Neglecters of it, may be a Wife, a Husband, or Children, that do not regard

it, but are ungodly, and neglect the Means of Grace; how should what you have heard move you to pity them, to weep over them, to pray for them, and strive with them.

3. Examine your selves, whether you have not, or do not neglect this Salvation? Do you make it your chief Business to get an Interest in Christ? Do you prefer the Means of Salvation above all things in the World? What time do you take to seek God, to pray to him, to hear his Word? And with what Zeal, Love, Faith and Diligence do you do all these things? Do you not defer Soul-Concernments to another time? O see to it, and examine your selves; Do you not rest upon something or another short of Christ? Doth the Power of Grace appear in your Hearts and Lives?

4. This may teach Believers to bear up under all Trials and Fears: Let what will come, they are safe who have an Interest in this great Salvation; other Salvations are nothing to this, and if we should not be saved from the Wrath of Man, but must lose our Liberty, and be exposed to Death and Dangers here in this World, yet it will go well with us if this Salvation is ours. Let what Judgments can come upon the Land, thou hast got a sure Sanctuary, God is thy Help and thy Salvation. Brethren, there are many sad Effects that do attend those that neglect, continually neglect this Salvation, whilst they are in this World, as Manifestations of God's Displeasure, As,

1. God withdraws the Influences of his Spirit from them, after they have for a long time resisted it, in the common Motions thereof, even to such a Degree, that it shall strive with them no more: thus God dealt with the old World.

2. God gives such up at last to blindness of Mind, so that they *in seeing, see not; and in hearing, hear not, neither do they understand.* And in them is fulfilled the Prophecy of Esaias, *By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.* The Word of God, if neglected, and not received, that it may become a Saviour of Life unto Life, will become a Saviour of Death unto Death, it either softens or hardens Mens Hearts.

3. God gives them up to their own Hearts Lusts, as God by the Psalmist says, *My People would not hearken to my Voice: and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own Hearts Lusts; and they walked in their own Counsels.*

4. Nay sometimes God takes away the Gospel from them, as he did from the Jews that rejected Christ, refused the chief corner-
Stone:

Stone : Therefore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken Mat. 21.
from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof. 43.

What can be a worse Judgment ? this betel that People, and it hath not been restored to them ever since. When God removes the Gospel, it may be long before he lets a People have it again, nay perhaps never.

5. Moreover, for neglecting the great Salvation, God sometimes brings upon a People or Nation fearful temporal Judgments, and puts them, it may be, into the Hands of cruel Enemies : For thus he dealt with the unbelieving Jews, he brought the Romans in upon them, that burned their City and Temple ; so that it is said, *Wrath came upon them to the uttermost.*

1 Thess. 2.
16.

6. God sometimes will not save Persons with Temporal Salvation, because they neglect Spiritual Salvation, so that they may read their Sin (if the Lord opens their Eyes) in their Punishment. But it is not God's usual way under this Dispensation, to inflict Temporal Punishment on such that neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, but he reserves his Wrath to another World ; and therefore let none think, though they escape his Judgments here, that they shall escape his Judgments and Wrath hereafter ; that they shall not be able to do, as you heard. But no more at this Time.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation ?

I AM upon the third and last Point of Doctrine, which I observed from our Text, viz. *That there is no possibility for such, or any one Soul of them, to escape, that neglect the great Salvation of the Gospel.*

*Sermon
XIII.*

The last Day I shewed you,

First, *What those things are which they shall not escape.*

Secondly, *Why they cannot, shall not escape, who are guilty of this Neglect.*

Thirdly, I am now to shew you, *When or at what Times they that neglect Gospel-Salvation shall not escape.*

The Time
when Sin-
ners shall
not escape.

1. In the Day of common Calamities, and desolating Judgments that will come upon the Earth; there is, Beloved, a dismal Hour spoken of in God's Word, that is not yet come, yet no doubt it is very near, in which but a few shall escape: I am afraid many good Men, who have been remiss and negligent in and about the great Concerns of Christ, and of their own Souls, shall not escape; I mean, they may fall in that Hour by Temporal Judgments. God in the last Days will pour out the Fierceness of his Wrath; *For my Determination is to gather the Nations, that I may assemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them mine Indignation, even all my fierce Anger; for all the Earth shall be devoured with the Fire of my Jealousy:* compared with *Nahum* 1. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. It will be with the Ungodly then, as it befel the People of Old, according to the Prophecy of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring Evil upon them which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.* Our Saviour alludes to that Time of which I speak, *Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.* O who shall stand when God appears in the latter-Day-Judgments which are now just at the Door? There are a few which he hath set his Mark upon, that shall be hid; and they are such that *sigh and mourn for all the Abominations that are committed in the Land. They of them that escape, shall escape, and they shall be on the Mountains like Doves of the Valley, every one mourning for his own Iniquities.* O what an amazing Hour will that be, when the seven Vials of God's Wrath shall be poured out upon the Kingdom of the Beast! the Earthquake is near, look for it, and the *Midnight Cry* not far off. Be sure there is such a distressing Hour approaching upon the World, that those that have, and shall still neglect this Salvation, when it comes shall not escape.

2. They that neglect this Salvation, shall not escape in the Day of Conscience; I mean, escape the Torments of an enraged, accusing and condemned Conscience: and sometimes the Conscience is awakened, and is let out upon the Sinner here in this World, before the Soul is separated from the Body. How many through the Guilt of their horrid Sins have been this way tormented: *Some Mens Sins are open before-hand, going before to Judgment; and some Men follow after.* Some Mens Sins are discovered by themselves, through that great Guilt that lies upon them; or others discover them, or God himself brings their Sins to light; and by this means

Zeph. 3. 8.

Jer. 11.
41.

Luke 21.
36.

Ezek. 9. 4.

1 Tim. 5.

24.

means they sometimes pass Judgment upon themselves, and may be a severe Judgment; or Men pass Judgment upon them; or perhaps more directly to the Purport of the Holy Ghost in the Text, the Church passeth Judgment, or a righteous and just Church-Censure upon them for their great Sins. But what a severe Judgment in the day of Conscience did poor *Spira* and *Child* pass upon themselves for their Iniquities? However those cannot escape who trifle in the matters of Religion, or neglect the great Salvation in such a time; when God lets Conscience out upon them, their Sorrow and Misery is very great: and if it be so bitter a thing to fall into our own Hands, I mean to fall into the Hands of our own Conscience, what a fearful thing is it to fall into the Hands of the living God? God giveth to some Men the Name he gave to *Pashur*, even *Magor-Missabib*, that is, *Fear and Terror on all sides*; he makes them a Terror to themselves, and to all their Friends, so that they are all affrighted, reflecting on their sad and miserable Condition, partly by Terror within, and partly by Judgments without.

Jer. 20.
3, 4th

3. Those that neglect this Salvation shall not escape *at the Hour of Death*; may be some of them may go on quietly in their Sins, and not fall under the Accusations and Terror of their guilty Consciences: Conscience may be asleep, or *scared with a hot Iron*; but at Death, I mean as soon as the Soul departs, they will be with a witness awakened, and then they shall see they cannot escape; nay, all hope and possibility of escaping is then gone for ever. True, many as soon as struck with Death roar out and find no escaping; others may be God then in his Infinite Mercy may shew the way of an escape; but when dead, if ungodly, if they have neglected this Salvation, *they lift up their Eyes in Hell with the rich Glutton, being in Torment*. Remember if Death comes upon you before you have got an Interest in Christ, or a part in this Salvation, you cannot then and at that time escape.

Luke 16.
23rd

4. They shall not escape in the Day of Judgment, in the Day when Christ shall come. *For when they shall cry, Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape*: Tho Sinners escape here in this World, yet they shall not escape in that day, they shall not be able to deliver themselves out of God's Hands; nor shall any be able to deliver them. *The Wicked shall be brought forth to the Day of Wrath*; they shall not come willingly to Christ's Bar, but they shall be brought forth, dragged as it were to hear their Sentence, which will be, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the*

1 Thess. 5.
3rd

Job 21.30.

Mat. 25.

Devil. 41.

1 Pet. 4. 18. Devil and his Angels. If the Righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear! they will not be able to stand in the Judgment: O what Dread and Horror will then seize upon them! they that give the greatest Diligence, take the greatest Care about the Salvation of their Souls, are saved with much difficulty: 'tis a narrow Way and a strait Gate that leads to Life: Through much Tribulation and Temptations we enter into the Kingdom of God; and if this be so, what will become of them in the great Day that have wholly neglected this great Salvation? If the Righteous be scarcely saved, the Wicked shall certainly perish and be damned.

Quest. What is the Nature of that Wrath which none of them that neglect this Salvation shall escape?

What the Nature of that Wrath is the Wicked shall not escape.

Ans. I answer, it is great Wrath, Wrath proportioned according to the Greatness of their Sin: as the Salvation slighted is great Salvation, so the Wrath that such shall bear will be great Wrath.

1. It is incensed Wrath, therefore great Wrath, such Wrath that hath been long a kindling in the Heart of God for the Abuse of his Mercy and Infinite Goodness.

2. It is intolerable Wrath, therefore great Wrath; the Torment of the Heathen that never heard of this Salvation shall be more tolerable, more easy to bear, than the Wrath which is poured out in Hell upon such that neglect the Salvation wrought by Jesus Christ: Nay, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for them.

Pla. 80. 11. 3. It is infinite Wrath. Who knows the Power of thine Anger? even according to thy Fear so is thy Wrath: it bears full Proportion to the Fear of it; nay, who is able to arrive to the full Sense, Fear and Apprehension of God's Infinite Wrath? it is inconceivable Wrath: as God's Love and Goodness is inconceivable, infinite, incomprehensible, which all that love him shall partake of to Eternity; so on the other hand, his Wrath and vindictive Vengeance is unexpressible, nay inconceivable, which will be let out upon the Ungodly. Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. Mark it, from the Glory of his Power, from the Greatness of God's Power, exalted Power; O it appears to be amazing Wrath, were this considered well and laid to Heart!

4. It will be unmixt Wrath, or Wrath without Mixture: the Wrath of God that is let out here in this World is full of Mixture; nay, that which hath been let out upon the Spirits and Consciences

of Men hath had some mixture in it, some Ease mixt with Anguish, some mitigation of Pain and Horror, some Mercy mixt with Mi-
 fery; but in Hell the Wrath of God is unmixed Wrath, it is all
 pure Wrath, nothing but Wrath. *The same shall drink of the Wine* Rev. 14.
of God's Wrath, which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his 10.
Indignation, and he shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, &c.

5. *It is fierce Wrath;* it is called the fierce Wrath of the Lord,
 a Metaphor taken from a fierce and amazing devouring Fire. Sin-
 ners are commanded to seek the Lord *before the Decree bring forth,* Zeph. 2:
before the Day pass as the Chaff, before the fierce Anger of the Lord come 1, 2.
upon them. The Heat of Anger, enraged Anger and Fury: *Behold,* Isa. 13. 9:
the Day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with Wrath and fierce Anger.

6. *It is irresistible Wrath,* no withstanding it, no making Head
 against it; Wrath breaks forth against the Sinner like a Giant or
 mighty Army, that none can resist nor stand before: *Who can stand* Nah. 1. 6.
before his Indignation? and who can abide the fierceness of his Anger &
his Fury is poured out like Fire, &c.

7. *It is just and deserved Wrath,* Wrath that is due to such who
 slight and neglect so great Salvation; it is the Wages of Sin, of
 such Sin, it is their just Due and Desert, as Wages are due to
 a Servant. Every one says, With-hold not from the Hireling his
 Wages. A Servant when he hath done his Work must be paid his
 Wages, it is right and just that he should have it; so it is Right
 and Justice in God thus to reward all those who abuse his Mercy,
 and neglect his Salvation, so great Salvation. God will propor-
 tionate every Man's Reward according to the nature and degree of
 his Sin.

8. It is heavy Wrath, *David* complained of the Heaviness of his
 Sin: *Alas!* it was no doubt, as Mr. *Caryl* notes, from the Appre-
 hension of the Anger and Wrath of God: *Mine Iniquities are gone* Psal. 38. 4:
over my Head as a heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me. I have
 offended thee, I fear thy Displeasure, my Sin deserves thy Wrath;
 but tho there are Mountains of Iniquity upon unconverted Sinners,
 they feel no Weight, they make light of it, they sport at it: but when
 Wrath comes once to be laid upon them, they will feel how heavy
 that is; who can bear this Burden, or stand under this Weight?
 When Wrath was laid upon our Blessed Saviour, how heavy did
 he find it? it made him sweat great drops of Blood, it almost
 crushed him down unto the Earth: one Sin is heavy, and if God
 lay the Weight, I mean the Guilt of it, upon the Soul, it will
 crush it down to Hell. O then what a Weight will that be which

will lie upon Sinners, when the Burden or Weight of all their Sins are laid upon them! and none to take that Weight off of them for ever, how low will it sink them!

2 Theff. I. 9. Rev. 14. 10, 11. 9. *It is eternal Wrath, everlasting Wrath, Wrath that will never cease; They shall be punished with everlasting Destruction. He shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone in the presence of his holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.* O what a woful Condition will all those be in, that God lets out such Wrath upon! How lamentable is and will be their State, who neglect this so great Salvation! Can you think of these things you that slight the Offers of God's Grace in Jesus Christ, and not tremble!

APPLICATION.

1. O what a Mercy have they obtained that are delivered from such Wrath, such heavy Wrath! As no Man is able to bear the Wrath of God, so no Man is able to get away from it when it hath took hold of him; he cannot escape from that which he cannot endure. Alas! the Devils themselves shall be tormented with all Unbelievers, and they cannot escape with all their Powers of Darknes; and indeed this will add to the Torment of the Wicked, I mean to be yoked in Hell-Torments with such Companions, to be forced to abide for ever with Devils, who perhaps will add then to their Misery, and aggravate their Sorrow, by upbraiding them with their Folly in believing him who was the Father of Lies, and to contemn so great Salvation for the sake of very Vanity, for the love to Sin, or love to the transitory Pleasures and Riches of this evil World.

2. We may also from hence see cause to admire the Love of Jesus Christ, who bore the Wrath of God for us: Certainly had not he had the Power of the Deity to uphold him, he could not have born that Wrath that was so heavy upon him. O love and honour this blessed Saviour, who hath saved you that believe from such Wrath! His Blood hath quenched this flaming Fire, so that you shall never feel what the Wrath of God is. Brethren, remember we could not be delivered from the Wrath of God, unless Jesus Christ did bear it in our stead, *even Jesus who delivered us from Wrath to come: our Jonas was thrown into the Sea of Wrath to save us from sinking down to the bottom of eternal Wrath.*

3. And may not this stir you up that are ungodly Persons to *flee from Wrath to come?* Why do you stand making a Pause as it were?

O haste to Jesus Christ, come to him, for that is the way, and the only way, as you have heard, to be delivered from Wrath. You know not how near you are to fall under the Wrath of God, and then it will be too late: God gives you space to repent, and to take hold of his Salvation; you will, Sinners, have no Excuse, no Plea in the great Day if you neglect the Day of your Visitation, and slight the Offers of God's Infinite Grace and Favour! Can you bear the Wrath of God? Are you willing to try how heavy it is? We read of an eternal Weight of Glory, that will be a good Weight, not a burdensome Weight, not an oppressing Weight; it is called a Weight of Glory because of the Greatness of it, the Excellency of it: But know, as there is a blessed Weight, or a Weight of Blessedness, so there is a Weight of Misery, or a miserable Weight; yea, it is such a Weight as will crush the strongest Giant like a *Moth*, and break the Bones of the Mighty.

2 Cor. 4.
ult.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

Fourthly, **T**HE last thing I proposed to do, was, *To shew you why the Gospel is attended with dreadful Threatnings as well as gracious Promises: And this I shall, God assisting, speak unto at this time.*

~
Sermon
XIV.
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1. It may be in regard of him whose Word it is; *Where the Word of a King is (saith Solomon) there is Power. Shall not the Majesty of God the great Law-giver be feared? If I am a Master, where is my Fear?* Brethren, awful Threatnings become the Quality and Dignity of Christ's Person. True, in the Days of his Humiliation, as touching those Personal Injuries and Wrongs done unto him, *he suffered, and threatened not*; yet nevertheless for the Contempt of his Grace, Salvation, and infinite Goodness in the Gospel, it is otherwise, he doth now pronounce dreadful Threats: *Bring out those mine Enemies that would not have me to reign over them, and slay them before me.*

Eccl. 8. 4.

Mal. 1. 6.

1 Pet. 2.
23.

Luke 19.
27.

2. Too great Lenity and Mercy we see among Men, causes Contempt of the Person of a Prince, it makes impudent Rebels ready

to insult over him. And now, Brethren, because it seems not to please the Wisdom of God, or not to be good in his sight, who is the great Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, commonly to inflict Temporal Punishment on Gospel-Slighters and Gospel-Neglecters, but to reserve their Punishment to another World; shall not he therefore tell them what they must expect to meet with and undergo hereafter, if they rebel against him, contemn his Goodness, Clemency and Mercy? Is it meet that the Holy God should strike before he threatens, or not shoot off his *Warning-Piece* before he lets fly his *Murdering-Piece*? Can that stand consistent with his Infinite Goodness and Wisdom? Shall he come secretly on his Enemies before he tells them of their danger? Shall he condemn that in his Creatures which he allows in himself? *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* It is God's good Pleasure, as well as it is the Property of his merciful Nature, to discover the future Misery of Rebellious Sinners to them before he brings that Misery and Ruin upon them.

Amos 4.
12.

3. Shall the Laws of the Servant be clothed with fearful Combinations and Threatnings against the Transgressors thereof; and shall the Law of the great Sovereign (or Gospel of) Jesus Christ himself, have none at all? that might seem strange indeed, especially considering those that disobey or believe not the Gospel, shall meet with far greater Punishment. *If the Word spoken by Angels were steadfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward; How shall we escape? &c.* This being so, there is reason that the Gospel should be accompanied with awful Threats.

4. Because of the greatness of the Sins of such who do refuse, reject, or neglect the Grace and Mercy of God offered by Jesus Christ: Certainly the Abuse of the greatest Goodness calls for the severest Denunciation of Divine Wrath and Vengeance, Man himself being Judg: *Of how much sorer Punishment suppose you shall he be thought worthy?* Do you judg, to whom I appeal, what sore, what bitter, what grievous and unexpressible Wrath and Judgments they deserve, who contemn Jesus Christ, or prove Apostates, Revolters, and Backsliders from the Gospel, and slight his precious Blood, tread under foot the Son of God? Sure such deserve worse Punishment than those who sinned against *Moses's Law*. Now the greatness of their Sin, who slight and neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, I have already opened. *O call to mind what you have heard.*

heard ; and you that are secure Sinners, tremble ! What Wisdom do such despise, what Goodness do they disregard, what infinite Love and Patience do they abuse that neglect this Salvation ? Shall the Sinner cast Dirt in the Face of God, and not be told of it ? Shall he slight an Interest in Christ, and not know it will be his ruin in another World ?

5. Threatnings are contained in the Gospel, to shew that God is Just as well as Gracious. Nay, Brethren, the Justice of God never appeared to that degree to the Sons of Men, by *Moses's* Law, or any other way, as it doth in the Gospel, in that Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God is not spared, when he stands as our Surety in our Law-place to bear our Iniquities : *God spared not his own Son, &c.* He did not spare him, as an Act of Love and Mercy, but substituted and appointed him to be a Sacrifice for us ; and he did not spare him, as an Act of his Justice, when he was so substituted, but he put him to Grief, and made his Soul an Offering for Sin, *the Just for the Unjust* : He was made Sin for us, *i. e.* a Sacrifice for our Sin : *It pleased the Lord to bruise him.* This shews that God is just with a witness : there was no other way found out to put away Sin, to pacify Divine Wrath ; and shall the Sinner slight and trample upon the Mercy and Justice of God, and not be told he shall not escape Divine Vengeance ? O, Sinner, think of it, if God spared not his own Son, who had Sin upon him only by Imputation, our Sins laid upon him, and none of his own ; Canst thou think to escape his dreadful Wrath, who for not accepting of this Atonement, this Salvation, hast all they Sins charged upon thy own Head, and must bear that vindictive Wrath that was due to thee for them ? You that think God is only a God of Mercy, and Christ only a Lamb, will find your selves at last greatly deceived, for you will find that God is a just, a severe and Sin-revengeful Majesty ; and especially he will appear so, when he pleads with Sinners for the abuse of his Mercy ; and they will find Jesus Christ like a Lion, who will at length tear in pieces his Enemies : *I have trodden the Wine-press alone, and of the People there was none with me ; I will tread them in mine Anger, and trample them in my Fury, and their Blood shall be sprinkled upon my Garments, and I will stain all my Raiment.* O remember, that the great Day of the Lamb's Wrath will come ; he is a King, and has a Sword as well as a Scepter, a Rod as well as a Crown ; he is Just as well as Good, and therefore it is that the Gospel is clothed with such Threatnings of Wrath and Divine Vengeance. All the Perfections of the Deity appear, and

and shall appear in our Lord Jesus Christ, he being the express Image of the Father's Person.

2dly. The Gospel hath its Threats as well as its Promises, I might shew you, in regard of Sinners.

1. To awe their rebellious Hearts, that their abominable Sins, Pride and Arrogancy might be curb'd, and they not so boldly and impudently go on in their Disobedience and Contempt of Jesus Christ. Christ to this End, as Dr. Owen observes, hath his Arrows which he lets fly upon his Enemies; some may stick in their Hearts, and they fall down dead before him, he this way may kill them to give them Life.

2. That all ungodly Sinners may be left without Excuse, and Jesus Christ be justified in his righteous Proceedings against them at the last Day. He tells them before-hand what they must expect and look for; If they repent not, they shall all likewise perish; if they believe not, they shall be damned; if they are not born again, they shall not see the Kingdom of God; if they continue in any course of Sin, as Adultery, Fornication, Drunkenness, Theft, Pride, Covetousness, Lying, &c. they shall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone: And if they neglect this so great Salvation, they shall not escape Divine Wrath.

3dly and lastly, The Threatnings that are in the Gospel, may be of great use to Believers, even as a Whip or Lash to quicken them when grown slothful and negligent in their Duties, or fall into a sleepy and secure State; and to shew them that the Gospel tolerates no looseness, allows of no Sin, but that the whole Design of it is, to promote Holiness, *God will be sanctified by all that draw near to him.* They may serve also to prevent the Power and Prevalency of indwelling Sin, or tend to nip off the Buds as they put forth, or kill those Weeds that might otherwise grow the more in their Hearts; and also to stir them up to stand upon their Watch, and make a stout Resistance of all Enemies; for that God tells us, we must either kill or be killed: *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* Christ's Souldiers are sure of the Victory, but not without fighting; if they turn their Backs, they are gone; though to their great Joy and Comfort, if they are true Believers, they know they are not of that sort that draw back unto Perdition. Also by these Threats, the Saints may be the better enabled to suffer Persecution, and endure any Trials here for Christ's

Luke 13.

3, 5.

Mark 16.

16.

John 3.

3, 5.

1 Cor. 6.

10, 11.

Rev. 21. 8.

Levit. 10.

2, 3.

Rom. 8. 13.

Christ's sake ; they hereby knowing how much easier it is to bear and undergo the Wrath of Man, than it is to endure the Wrath of God.

Quest. *On whom is the Wrath of God denounced, or what kind of Sinners shall undergo it ?*

Ans. 1. I answer, All prophane and ungodly Sinners, of what sort soever, as *Adulterers, Fornicators, covetous Persons, malicious Persons, Whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiseful and proud Persons, Covenant-breakers, Implacable, Unmerciful, Thieves, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, Murderers, Witches, Sorcerers, and all Liars.* These and all other prophane Persons whatsoever, who live and die in any of these, or other Sins, having neglected this Salvation, shall not escape the Wrath of God ; *For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men.* The Wages of every Sin, yea the very Lusts of the Heart, is Eternal Death ; Sin is their Sicknes, and the neglecting the Salvation of the Gospel, is their refusing that Remedy and only Cure of their Sicknes which God doth afford.

2. All civilized Persons, such who depend upon Principles of Morality, or living a sober Life, and never look after Faith in Jesus Christ and Regeneration : I say unto you, *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Yet Paul when a Pharisee, saith, *That as touching the Righteousness which is of the Law, I was blameless.* *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* These as much neglect this great Salvation, as scandalous and prophane Sinners, and therefore shall not escape God's Wrath.

3. All Idolaters, Persecutors, and heretical Persons, such who are corrupted with damnable Heresy, who deny the Person of Christ, or our Lord Jesus the only Saviour, or Salvation and Righteousness by him ; these also are neglecters of this Salvation, and living and dying in these Sins, cannot escape the Wrath of God.

4. All Unbelievers, or such who are without saving Faith in Jesus Christ : *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* — *He that believeth not, shall not see Life ; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* No Unbeliever can escape the Wrath of God.

5. All Hypocrites, or such who make a Profession of the Gospel, without the saving Grace of God in their Hearts. Of these there are two sorts.

(1.) Such

What kind of Sinners Wrath shall fall upon.
Rom. 2.
25, 30.
1 Cor. 6.
9, 10.
Gal. 5. 19,
20, 21.
Rev. 21. 8.
Rom. 1. 18.

Mat. 5. 20.
Phil 3. 8, 9.
Joh. 3. 3.

Mark 16.
16.
Joh. 3. 36.

(1.) Such who are self-condemned Hypocrites, who know they are not what they profess themselves to be, but have carnal and sinister Ends and Aims in their professing the Gospel, Religion being but a Cloak to cover their Deceit and Hypocrisy.

(2.) Such as the *foolish Virgins* were, whose Hearts deceive them, thinking their State was good; 1. But never passed through the Pangs of the new Birth, but trusted to a Form of Godliness without the Power of it. This sort it seems, 2. are very blind and ignorant, in that they thought to receive Advantage by the Graces or good Works of wise and gracious Christians; *Give us of your Oil, for our Lamps are gone out*: 3. They never sought for Grace any way, until it was too late, even not till the Bridegroom was come. 4. It appears that this sort also were very confident of the Goodness of their Condition; (that is a bad sign) for they rose up to meet the Bridegroom. Gracious Christians are attended with Godly Jealousies of their own Hearts: yet these Mens outward Conversation might be clean to outward appearance, in that they were not known to the Wise to be foolish Ones. 5. Their Folly appears in that they please themselves with a Name of being Christians, Saints, and Church-Members, without the Nature, Faith and Holiness of such, prizing a Lamp of Profession above the Grace of God, or a Form of Religion more than the Power of it; valuing the Approbation of Men more than the Approbation and Acceptation of God; esteeming the empty Cabinet, or pleasing themselves with the Shell of Religion without the Kernel of it; and in their thinking it was time enough to sow, when others were just going to reap, and by laying Claim to Heaven, without any Title to it. None of these, living and dying under this Deceit, Ignorance and Hypocrisy, can escape the Wrath of God.

6. All such cannot escape, who utterly apostatize or backslide from God and the Truths of the Gospel; who after they have made a Profession of Religion, *turn with the Sow to her wallowing in the Mire, and with the Dog lick up their old Vomit again*; I mean, cleave again to their former evil and ungodly Ways and Practices, and become utter Enemies to God and his People.

7. Lastly, All Atheists, or such who deny the Being of God, or the Eternal Godhead and Deity of the Majesty of Heaven, and ridicule and contemn all supernatural Knowledg or Revelation of God; these shall receive and undergo the Wrath of God, from which they cannot escape.

Mat. 25.8.

2 Pet. 2.
20, 21, 22.

APPLICATION.

This may serve to awaken all secure Sinners who have false Notions of God's Mercy. What will you do if you persist still in your evil Ways? I am afraid here may be some of one sort or another of them which I have named, that shall not escape the Wrath of God. O that we could but hear that Cry which we read of, *Acts 2. 36. What shall we do?* Were Sinners pricked in their Hearts, they would break forth into Tears in the sight and sense of the Evil of Sin. Hath Sin put the Lord of Life and Glory to death? Was the Wrath of God due to us let out upon him, that we might never feel the weight thereof? O how should this fill our Hearts with Revenge and Indignation against Sin! Certainly the Sufferings of Christ for our Sins, shew forth the Evil of it, beyond all the Torments the Damned endure in Hell: and if God did not spare him, who as our Surety stood in our Place and Room, what will become of thee, O Sinner, that goest on presumptuously in thy evil Way, and dost not regard or lay to Heart the great Salvation of the Gospel? Shall not the Love of God overcome thee? then fear his Wrath, which is so dreadful, and will be let out in Fury.

Quest. *What is the Reason Men do no more fear and dread the Wrath of God?*

Ans. 1. It is because they do not know the direful Nature thereof: *We knowing the Terror of the Lord*, saith the Apostle, *per-* ^{2 Cor. 5.}
swade Men. The faithful Servants of God know it, but Sinners ^{11.}
know it not, therefore fear it no more.

2. It is because God doth not execute the Sentence against their evil Works presently: This is the Reason, *Solomon* tells us why; *Ecclef. 8.*
The Hearts of the Children of Men are fully set in them to do wickedly. ^{11.}

3. Sinners are blinded by the Devil, and think God takes no notice of their Ways and evil Doings, and so go on boldly; may be think no Eye seeth them: And because God is so gracious, patient, and slow to Anger, and long before he strikes, they think the Blow will never come at all. O it is sad that the Goodness, Mercy, and Long-suffering of God, which should lead Men to Re- ^{Rom. 2.}
pentance, should tend to harden them in their evil Ways: but ^{3, 4}
though they now despise his Goodness and Forbearance, &c. yet they shall not escape the Judgment of God.

Quest. *What should Sinners do to escape the Wrath of God?*

Ans. 1. Sinner, if thou wouldst escape God's Wrath, find out the Original Cause thereof; ponder well thy State by Nature, and the Pollution of thy Heart, from whence all actual Sins flow.

2. Find out the immediate Cause of his Displeasure and Wrath that is ready to break forth against thee, and cry out, What have I done? O see, what Guilt lies upon you, and the Nature of it.

3. Labour to know what it is that hath appeased God's Wrath: nothing but a Sacrifice, an Atonement could do it; thy Tears, thy Prayers, thy Repentance could not do it: the Storm was great, and our beloved *Jonas* was thrown into the Sea of God's Wrath to allay it, and to cause a Calm.

4. Get a thorow Sense of the great Evil of Sin.

5. And then loath your selves. Nothing but Grace poured forth from the Lord can do this. O when once you can mourn for your Iniquities, as a Man mourns for his First-born, by beholding him whom you have pierced, there will be hope.

6. Pray and cry mightily to the Lord, cease not Day nor Night, until you find out the Plague of your own Hearts.

7. Above all things fly to Jesus Christ, look up to him, and neglect not this Salvation one Hour, but throw down your Arms, fight against God no more, nor fence against the two-edged Sword of his Mouth; but as a poor, lost, and burdened Sinner, come to him, and thou shalt find rest unto thy Soul.

Mar. II.
28.

Object. But perhaps some may object, *Is not this Doctrine a Legal Doctrine?*

Ans. I say no, but I shall answer this Objection the next time, and so close with this Text.

H E B. II. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

I Shewed you the last Time, wherefore the Gospel is clothed with such fearful Threatnings against Sinners that neglect the great Salvation that is offered unto them therein. Also what sort of Sinners are like for ever to fall under the Wrath of God.

Moreover,

Moreover, you may remember I mentioned an Objection which possibly some may raise, *viz.*

Object. *Is not this Doctrine a Legal Doctrine, or a legal way of preaching, to insist so much upon the Threatnings of Wrath and Divine Vengeance?*

I answered, No, it is not. I therefore now shall endeavour, God assisting, to do two things.

First, Shew you what is not a Legal Doctrine, or a Legal Way of Preaching.

Secondly, Shew you what is a Legal Doctrine, or not Evangelical Preaching.

1. To preach God a Just and Holy God, is no Legal Doctrine, though the Law, it is true, holds him forth so to be, that discovers that God is Just; but his Mercy was veiled under dark Shadows, Types and Legal Sacrifices. But now the Gospel sets forth the infinite Justice of God beyond the Law; for in a Ceremonial Way, the Blood of Beasts seemed to pacify God's Wrath. Though we deny not but the Blood of Jesus Christ, the great Sacrifice (which alone in a proper sense can satisfy for Sin) was held forth thereby. But in the Gospel, the Justice and Holiness of God so clearly shines forth in Jesus Christ, that it is with open Face manifested unto all; all may behold therein the *Just actually slain*, and made a Sacrifice for the *Unjust*. Never did God's Justice appear so fully, as it doth in the Suffering and Death of Christ for Sin. Therefore to preach the Severity and Justice of God against Sin and Sinners, can be no Legal Doctrine.

2. To preach Repentance, the Necessity of Repentance, Regeneration and Holiness, is no Legal Doctrine; but it is pure Gospel. The Law allowed of no Repentance: For *those that sinned against Moses's Law, died without Mercy, under two or three Witnesses*. Do not mistake me, I do not say that there was no Repentance for such who lived under the Dispensation of the Law; for tho' the Law, or first Covenant, allowed of no Repentance, yet the Gospel was preached to *Adam, to Abraham, to Moses, David, &c.* But pray remember, and consider it well, that Repentance came in, not through the Law, but through the Gospel, upon the account of Christ's Satisfaction; and therefore it is only a Gospel-Blessing: which being duly considered, Men have little reason to think Repentance a harsh Doctrine; no, no, it is sweet and blessed Tidings

to hear that there is Repentance vouchsafed to poor Sinners, yea, for the worst of Sinners. Besides, was not Repentance the very first Doctrine Jesus Christ preached when he entered upon his Ministry? He calls upon Men to repent, and believe the Gospel; he declares there is a Way found out for Pardon and Remission of Sin. And what can so kindly and sweetly excite, or stir up Sinners to Repentance, as the sight of the infinite Mercy and pardoning Grace of God through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ? His Mercy only melts and breaks the hard Heart of guilty Criminals.

3. To preach the Combinations and Threatnings of God's Wrath and Vengeance against all ungodly and impenitent Sinners, who slight and neglect the Salvation of the Gospel, can be no Legal Doctrine.

(1.) Because the Gospel abounds with them, yea, and more fearful Threatnings than those were under the Law; for the one were Threats of Temporal Punishment, but the other are Eternal, even the Denunciation of God's Wrath in Hell for ever.

(2.) Because of the greatness of that Mercy and Divine Grace and Goodness, which such who sin under the Gospel do abuse and tread under their Feet.

(3.) To shew the Justice, Headship and Authority of Jesus Christ, who is God as well as Man, that so all Men may stand in awe of him, and dread and fear him, because of his great Love and Goodness extended through his suffering for Sin, and enduring the heavy Wrath of God for us; and for many other Reasons which you have heard.

(4.) Because the Threatnings of the Gospel do not only render God as a just Revenger, but also as a merciful Redeemer; not only as a Judge to pass Sentence, but as a gracious Sovereign, ready to give forth Pardon to all convicted, broken and self-condemned Rebels. The Law threatens Death, but affords no Offers of Life on any Terms that can be attained to, therefore no Encouragement given by it to Sinners to humble themselves: it commands perfect Obedience, but affords no Strength to perform it; pronounces the Sentence against us, but produces no Pardon for us; it commands us to trust in God, but reveals not a Mediator, who is the immediate Object of Faith and Trust.

(5.) The Threatnings of the Gospel are a Manifestation of God's Goodness: As a Father threatens his Child from that Love and Bowels he hath to it, that so it might not feel the Lashes of his Rod and Anger. And O how are Gospel-Threatnings mixt with
alluring

alluring Motives and endearing Arguments and Perswasions, intimating how ready God is to pass by our Offences, if we submit our selves to him, and accept of the Offers of his Grace and Favour. If such preaching of Wrath therefore be Legal, I must acknowledge my great Ignorance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Besides, how long are the Threatnings of the Gospel deferred before executed? The Contemners of the Law died presently, as well as it discovered no Remedy: But so it is not here, God seems to be ready to forgive, and slow to Wrath; he waits long before he strikes, and brings Wrath and Judgment upon Offenders, as well as he directs them to a way to escape.

Secondly, I shall shew you what is a Legal Doctrine, or Legal Preaching.

1. The Doctrine or Preaching of such Persons is legal that say, that all who will be eternally saved, must arrive to a perfect and sinless Righteousness in themselves, *i. e.* keep the Law perfectly and sin not in their own Persons, or they cannot be justified. *William Penn*, speaking of that Text, *Rom. 2. 13.* *Not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified*, saith, *Pen's Sandy Foundation Shaken, p. 26.*

“ From whence, how unanswerably may I observe, that unless
 “ we become *Doers* of that Law, which Christ came not to de-
 “ stroy, but, as our Example, to fulfil, we can never be justified
 “ before God; nor let any fancy, that Christ hath so fulfilled it
 “ for them as to exclude their Obedience from being requisite to
 “ their Acceptance, but only as their Pattern. Now this is a Legal
 Doctrine with a witness, these Men would be look'd upon as true
 Preachers of the Gospel, but let all Men be aware of them. Is any
 Man able perfectly to keep the Law? if so, why doth the Apostle
 say, *What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, Rom. 8.*
God sending his Son? &c. Besides, if there had been a Law that could
 have given Life, verily, saith Paul, *Righteousness should have been by Gal. 2. 16.*
 the Law. And again, he saith, *By the Works of the Law, no Man is 21.*
 justified: and if Righteousness come by the Law, then is Christ dead in
 vain. Christ it seems, by what this Man saith, came only to fulfil
 the Law, as our Example, that we might conform to him therein,
 and so be justified by it. But he forgot that we and all Mankind
 have broke the Law, and stand charged and condemned thereby
 unto eternal Condemnation; and who shall make Atonement for
 that Breach, and deliver us from the Curse thereby incurred? No
 Doctrine can cast higher Contempt upon Christ, and invalidate his
 Sufferings.

Suffering, and Justification by Faith alone in him, than this Doctrine doth.

2. Such preach a Legal Doctrine, who preach up Obedience by us to the Law or Gospel, either as the procuring or moving Cause and Condition of our Justification and Eternal Life.

3. Such also preach a Legal Doctrine, who preach up Wrath and Divine Vengeance, to scare or frighten Men out of their Sins; and as if by the bare leaving and forsaking of Sin, Men might escape Death and Wrath. Such a Doctrine, as Reverend Dr. *Owen* notes, may fill an unregenerate Man with Horror and servile Fear; whereby, as Bond-Servants, or Slaves, by the Whip of this Doctrine, they may be forced to break off from some gross Acts of Sin, and perform some outward Duties of Religion, which otherwise they are unwilling to do: for, as it is not from Love to God, nor from Faith in Christ, so they find no Delight nor Sweetness in it; but being often remiss, and seeing cause to doubt of the Sincerity of their Obedience, they fall under Terror and slavish Fear; they only acting from an enlightned Conscience, and not from Faith, or renewing Grace. These Men neither love the Law nor Gospel, tho they are forced to keep up in some degree of Obedience to it.

4. Such preach a Legal Doctrine, that affirm Man's own Faith and inherent Righteousness for the sake of Christ's Merits, is part of our Righteousness to Justification in the sight of God; and that Christ hath procured or merited a mild Law of Grace, of Faith and sincere Obedience, in the room of the Law of perfect Obedience: Which Law of sinless Obedience Christ having given to God a full Recompence for our Breach of, he hath taken that Law away; and that so far as we faithfully live up to this new Law of Grace, we are justified in God's sight, and accepted for the sake of Christ's Merits: Not that Christ's Righteousness alone is the matter of our Justification exclusive of all our inherent Righteousness and Obedience; no, no, but rather it is our Righteousness which doth justify us. The Gospel, according to these Men, is propounded as a Law, and God as a Rector, or just Governour, commanding Obedience thereunto, as the procuring Cause of our Justification: So that our Faith and Obedience is a Cause and Condition of Life, as Unbelief and Disobedience is the Cause of Eternal Death. But having formerly detected this dangerous Error, I shall not further insist upon the Confutation of it here.

5. Such preach a Legal Doctrine, that render Man a Co-worker with Christ in the Salvation of their own Souls, by which means
there

there is room left for him to boast and glory. Such a Doctrine they preach, who magnify the *Will* of Man, or the Power of the Creature; which I hope I have, by the Assistance of God, sufficiently detected and refuted in this Treatise: All boasting being excluded by the Grace of God in the Gospel, Man being abased, and God alone exalted.

APPLICATION.

I shall now come to make the general Application of what I have said unto you from this great Text, and so conclude with all I shall say from it.

First Inform. First by way of Information; the Doctrine which hath in these Sermons been insisted on may inform us, That Gospel-Sins are the greatest Sins, and that the blind Heathens are not, cannot be so guilty and culpable before God, nor in such a dangerous Condition as those are who live under the preaching of the Gospel, and yet slight, and neglect the Salvation of it. O what will they do in the Day of Judgment, that live in *England*, in *London*, in a Land and City of so great Light, and perish through their Sin, and Contempt or Neglect of Gospel-Grace!

Secondly, This may also inform us, how strangely Mankind are blinded and deceived by the God of this World; in that small things are accounted great, and that which is of the greatest Concernment, is little, or not at all regarded, but esteemed as a *trivial* matter. O, says some, we must mind *the main Chance!* they mean the main Business in respect of their Earthly Subsistence, which is to get Bread, and to provide for the Body, for their Wives and Children. Now the Doctrine which you have heard, shews you how you are deluded, that look upon Earthly Things to be the main Business you should look after. What is of such Importance as the Salvation of your precious and immortal Souls, and to be providing for an endless Eternity?

Thirdly, I may infer from hence, That the greatest part of Mankind are Unbelievers; for all that neglect this Salvation, and look not upon this matter as their chief Business, are doubtless in a State of Unbelief: They do not credit this holy Doctrine, they believe not God's Word. If one should tell you that are going a Journey, that if you go such a Way, you will certainly be destroyed by Thieves, or wild Beasts, yet you will go on; Would it not follow clearly that you believe not what was told you? Why thus it is
here,

here, Sinners are told and assured from the Word of God, as certain as God is true, and his Word true, that if they leave not their Swearing, their Pride, their Drunkenness, their Lying, their Lusts and Uncleaness, their Worldly-mindedness, and their preferring Earth, and the things of the World above the things of God; or if they do not believe, repent, and be born again, they shall certainly perish for ever; yet they go on and live in those ways of Sin, and believe not, repent not: this is an evident sign that they do not give Credit to what is told them, and so are Unbelievers; and if they still persist in their way, they will be certainly damned.

Luk. 13.3. 1. Our Saviour saith, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; ye shall not escape eternal Wrath, be ye great Sinners, or not Sinners of the first Rank. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.*

Joh. 3.36. 2. Christ saith, *He that believeth not, the Wrath of God abideth on him:* and they that do not believe, are told there is no other way to escape this Wrath, and that this Wrath will be poured forth upon them like Fire, unless they believe in Christ, receive Christ, obtain an Interest in Jesus Christ; nay, that they are condemned already; but they believe not.

3. Moreover, such who live a sober moral Life, are told, that notwithstanding that, yet unless they are born again, unless they get Faith in Jesus Christ, and *their Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, and they obtain the Righteousness of Christ, *they cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now they will not believe this, but conclude their State is good, and that Morality is sufficient to save their Souls: which shews that these are Unbelievers also.

4. Others are told, that their good Deeds, their good Duties, their Prayers, their hearing of Sermons, or their being Baptized, and having Communion with God's People, will not do, unless they are savingly renewed and sanctified, having the true Grace of God in their Hearts, and lead a Godly, Holy and Spiritual Life, finding the powerful Operations of the Spirit changing them into the Likeness of Jesus Christ: but they believe it not, but rest upon their Duties and outward Privileges, tho they are told the Kingdom of God is not in Meat and Drink, but in Righteousness, and Truth, and Joy in the Holy Ghost; or that the Kingdom of God is not inward only, but in Power also, and that Lamps of Profession will not save them, except they have Oil in their Vessels: many of these are like the foolish Virgins, and believe it not, but rest on a bare Name of

of Christians, on a Form of Godliness, and may be fall short too as to an outward Profession of Godliness; for so do they who pray not in the Closet, nor in their Families, neither read God's Word, nor make it their Business to hear the Word preached, in Season and out of Season, but every small Matter takes them off of those Duties. Be sure, all prayerless Souls are graceless Souls; it is to be feared many of this sort make Religion but little of their Business, who neither read, pray nor meditate, nor perhaps call upon their Children and Servants so to do, but let their Children have their Carnal Lusts, their Pride, ambitious and wanton Inclinations indulged and nourished in them. O how little is the outward Part of God's Worship kept up in the Families of some Professors!

Fourthly, This may serve also for a Use of *Terror* to secure Sinners. Terror.

1. May not I cry out, *Fire, Fire?* Such a Cry hath often startled and amazed many of you that live in and about this City. Sirs, a Fire is just a breaking out, which you cannot escape, unless you look about you the sooner. When People hear the Cry of Fire in the Night, how do they cry out, *Where, Where?* Alas, this Fire seizes not on your Houses, nor Goods, no nor on your Bodies only, but on your Souls; it has already kindled even the Wrath of God, which no Sinner can escape that neglects this Salvation. God's Wrath is compared to Fire, and it has perhaps already taken hold of some of your Consciences; but if it be not kindled there, yet it is kindled in God's Anger: *For a Fire is kindled in my Anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Hell. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End.* Deut. 32.
22, 29.

2. Is the Wrath of God so terrible, and can no Unbeliever or impenitent Sinner escape it; what cause is here for them all to tremble? Suppose you should be told, that this Night you shall certainly not escape Death, neither you, nor your Wife, nor Children, but that your House shall be burned down, your Goods, Self, Wife and Children shall all be burned to Ashes, and that this Judgment you shall not escape; would it not be startling and terrifying Tidings if you should believe it? But alas, what would that be to this doleful Tidings, *viz.* that your precious Soul and Body, as well as your Wife and Children, and all belonging to you, if you and they do neglect the Means of this Salvation, and not believe in Christ, and become new Creatures, shall in a short time be in everlasting Flames, and undergo intolerable Pain and Punishment from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his

Mat. 10.
15.
Mat. 11.
22, 23.
Mar. 6. 17.

Power, which you shall not escape, for the Mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it? Nay, and it shall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* in the Day of Judgment, than for you, or for that Soul who refuses the Offers of Christ, Pardon of Sin, and Salvation through him.

Lamentat.

Fifthly, It may be for a Lamentation, to see how few understand the Nature of this Salvation, and study the Mysteries of it, or desire an Interest in it; and also to see how many make light of it, whilst others by dangerous Errors seek ways to eclipse the Glory of God's Free Grace therein. Remember those Demonstrations you have heard, to open the Greatness of the Salvation the Gospel.

Reprosf.

Sixthly, This reprehends such who are more affected with Temporal Salvation, than with the Spiritual and Eternal Salvation of the Soul; and also all such that defer looking after, and striving to get an Interest in it.

Exhortat.

Seventhly, By way of Exhortation.

1. Let me exhort you to praise God for Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of this Salvation: Christ is all, and in all, in our Salvation: God hath sent us an Almighty Saviour. O how miserable should we have been for ever, had not God sent us Jesus Christ.

2. Let me exhort you to admire the Love of Christ in coming to work out this Salvation: What hath he born and undergon to save our Souls? O love and exalt this Saviour, and eclipse none of his Glory.

3. Be exhorted to praise God for affording you the Knowledge of Gospel-Salvation. O how few are they who have heard of this joyful Tidings! But few Nations of the World have this News sounding in their Ears, viz. the Gospel preached to them, they have no declaration of it. God shews his Sovereignty herein; he reveals himself, and the Knowledge of Salvation to whom he pleases. And indeed many dark Parts of this Nation have but little of the Mysteries of the Gospel made known to them. What People in the World have greater cause to admire God's distinguishing Grace and Favour, than we that live in and about this City. *London* is exalted to Heaven in respect of the Means of Grace: O that it may never be brought down to Hell, as our Saviour threatned *Capernaum*.

4. From hence also I might exhort you to bless God for faithful Ministers, who publish the Salvation of the Gospel to you. *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings,*

Tidings,

Tidings, that publisheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of Good, Isa. 52. 7. that publisheth Salvation! Let it appear you highly value and honour your faithful Ministers, by your diligent attention on the Word and Doctrine they preach. For Motives, consider,

(1.) God has ordained Preaching as the ordinary Way and Means to work Faith; *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*: And to increase and strengthen Faith also. Rom. 10. 17.

(2.) God is graciously pleased to afford Men a Day, or a Time of *Visitation*, in which he offers Terms of Peace unto them: Take heed you do not, like *Jerusalem*, lose your Day, and neglect the Means God affords you.

(3.) You know not how short your Day may be; and if you lose your Day, you will lose your Souls also: The Harvest will end with some, and they not saved. And that you may not lose the Day of your Visitation, take a few Directions:

1. Seriously think on the sad and woful Condition which naturally you are in, being dead in Sin, and Children of Wrath; and Eph. 1. 1. if you die in that Estate, you are lost for ever.

2. Let your Thoughts now be let out on your latter End; for when the Night comes, no Man can work. This is great Wisdom, and every Man's Duty; we none of us know how soon our great Change may come: And what will you do, if you live in the neglect of the Means of Salvation even until God cuts you off?

3. Pray that the Wind of the Spirit would blow upon your Souls: *The Wind bloweth where it listeth*; it bloweth at God's Command, Joh. 3:8. when, on whom, and how he pleaseth. The Spirit is that great and only *Agent* that must work Faith in you, quicken you, and regenerate your Souls.

4. Therefore see that you do not quench the Spirit, but improve all the Convictions thereof.

5. If you would have an Interest in this great Salvation, you must have an Interest in Jesus Christ the great Saviour: If you do not receive Christ by Faith, but refuse him, sad will your Condition be; for no Christ, no Salvation.

Quest. *How may I know that I have Christ, or an Interest in him?*

Ans. 1. If thou hast Christ, thou hast Life, thou art spiritually quickned: And as thou hast Spiritual Life, so also thou hast Light; thy Eyes are opened, I mean, the Eyes of thy Understanding. *How Persons may know they have an Interest in Christ.*

2. Thou canst remember the time when thou hadst no God, no Christ, or wast without Christ; and it is much if thou art not able to tell how, when, or after what manner thou didst meet with him, whether

whether it was by the Word preached, or by reading, or by some Affliction, &c.

1 Pet. 2. 7. 3. If Christ be thine, he is very precious to thee: Canst
 Ps. 73. 25. thou say with David, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? neither is there any on Earth that I desire beside thee?* And with the Spouse, *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand?* Paul ac-
 Cant. 5. 10 counted all things as loſts, or as nothing, for the Excellency of Jesus
 Phil. 3. Christ his Lord.
 9, 10.

4. Doth Jesus Christ rule and reign in thee by his Spirit? He that hath Christ in him, may feel his ruling Power, and that he by his Spirit hath spoiled the ruling and predominating Power of Sin, every evil Habit in the Heart and Life of such being broke.

5. Moreover, if Christ is in thee, and thou by Faith art in him, then thou art a new Creature: This the Apostle positively doth assert; *Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.* Such have new Understandings, or are renewed in their Understandings, Wills and Affections: they have also new Thoughts, new Love, new Fears, new Joy, new Desires, new Companions, and new Conversations; all things with such are become new.

2 Cor. 5.
17.

Lastly, And to conclude with all I shall say from this Text, here is also Matter and Cause of Comfort and great Consolation to all Believers, to all who have a part in this Salvation. I need not shew you which way this appears, for every one that hath heard what a kind of Salvation it is, may easily infer from thence, that all that have a part in it are happy for ever; 'tis a great and glorious Salvation: Remember what you are delivered from by it, and what you are raised up unto by it, and also that it is a sure and certain Salvation; no Enemy, no Sin, no Devil can dispossess you of it if you are Believers, and have received the Earnest thereof, which is the Holy Spirit, by which also you are sealed to the Day of Redemption. Therefore it remains, that you endeavour to shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvelous Light, and hath given you a true sight of, and interest in this great Salvation wrought by Jesus Christ; To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be Glory, Honour and Praise, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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