

# GLORIOUS FREEDOM

by Richard Sibbes

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*Sibbes expounds 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 on the surpassing glory of the gospel compared to the law of Moses. He shows how Christ as 'that Spirit' gives life to all Scripture and ordinances, how the Spirit brings liberty from the bondage of the law, and how believers beholding Christ's glory are progressively transformed into His image.*

36 Chapters

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## 00.1. GLORIOUS FREEDOM

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GLORIOUS FREEDOM THE EXCELLENCY OF THE GOSPEL ABOVE THE LAW by Richard Sibbes Wherein the Liberty of the Sonnes of God is shewed. With the Image of their Graces here, and Glory hereafter. Which affords much Comfort and great Incouragement, to all such as Begin Timely, and Continue Constantly in the wayes of God. By R. Sibbs, D.D. Mr. of Katherin Hall, Cambridge, and Preacher Grayes-Inne, London.

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## 00.3. Introduction

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### Introduction

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.—2 Corinthians 3:17-18. THE Apostle beginneth this chapter with the commendation of his ministry, having been put upon it by their undervaluing of him; yet so as together with himself he commendeth them as his best and only testimonial and letters of commendation, ver. 2; and so maketh way for himself to fall into a more set and large commendation of the glorious gospel itself, whereof God 'hath made him so able a minister to them, ver. 6. And because the excellency of anything is best commended by comparing and setting by it something else that excels in itself, and yet is exceeded by it, therefore he carrieth along his commendation of the ministry of the gospel through the whole chapter, by comparing it with the law and the ministry of the Old Testament. This comparison is made by the apostle.

First, more briefly, in laying down some distinct properties and prerogatives of the gospel wherein it excelleth the law, ver. 6, as (1.) That this was 'the ministry of the New Testament;' that of the law of the Old.

(2.) And 'not of the letter,' as the law was; 'but of the Spirit.'

(3.) Nor of death, 'for the letter killeth'; but of life, for 'the Spirit quickeneth.' And then, by inferences drawn from these properties thus briefly summed up, the apostle more largely illustrates the transcendent glory of the gospel, and how far it exceedeth the glory of the law; although it be granted the law be glorious. As

[1.] If that which was but a ministration of the letter written and engraven in stone was glorious, verse the seventh; that is, if the literal notions and bare knowledge of the law, which (like so many dead words or characters) maketh no alteration at all, but leaveth their hearts hard and stony, like the tables on which the law was written, which remained stones still; if this was glorious, even the literal knowledge of the law: as it was, both in the Jews' own account of themselves and in the judgment of the nations amongst whom they lived: 'how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? verse the eighth; the meaning whereof is largely explained in the third verse; where the Corinthians are said to be an 'epistle written not with ink' (or dead letters), 'but with the Spirit of the living God'; which kind of writing leaveth not the heart a heart of stone, as the dead writing of the law did, but changeth it into a 'heart of flesh,' and maketh such a thorough alteration in the whole man, as the writing within, 'in the tables of their hearts,' is 'known and read of all men. So that their lives and conversations being answerable to that spiritual and gracious writing of Christ in their hearts, they are 'manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ.' And therefore such a ministry as this is, by which the Spirit of the living God is received (and not by the law, Galatians 3:2), which is a Spirit of glory, and worketh glorious things both in the hearts and lives of men, must needs be 'rather glorious.'

[2.] Another inference we have in the ninth verse; 'If the ministration of condemnation be glorious;' that is, if that word which 'concluded men under sin,' Galatians 3:22, and pronounced the sentence of death upon them, 'be glorious, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For it is more glorious to pardon than to condemn; to give life, than to destroy. It is the glory of a man to pass over an offence, Proverbs 19:11, and in God it is called the 'riches of his glory,' Romans 9:23. 'The law, which was made glorious,' in terrifying, condemning, and stopping the mouths of men, insomuch as they had not a word to say for themselves, 'hath no glory, by reason of the glory' of the gospel 'that excelleth,' even in this respect, that it bringeth such a righteousness, as by the merit whereof and satisfaction given by it, we are justified and have peace towards God, notwithstanding the utmost rigour of the law.

[3.] The apostle argueth further, ver. 11, 'If that which is done away was glorious,' as the old covenant is, which was made old by the coming of the new, Hebrews 8:8, and by it removed as a thing grown weak and shaken, Hebrews 12:27, 'much more that which remaineth,' which is the new covenant, which cannot be shaken, but shall remain, and is 'the everlasting gospel,' Revelation 14:6, 'is more glorious,' as God's last works exceed the former, and taketh away the remembrance of them in comparison. As when he createth 'new heavens and a new earth,' the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind, Isaiah 65:17.

[4.] There is another excellency of the gospel above the law, which the apostle addeth, and insisteth upon it more largely than upon all the rest, and that is, the comfortable plainness and perspicuity of the doctrine and ministry of it: verse the 12th, 'Seeing we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.' In which it excelled the ministry of Moses, which was in much difficulty and obscurity, and that in a threefold respect, laid down in the 13th, 14th, and 15th verses.

(1.) The matter of it was terrible, tending to the shame, confusion of face, and condemnation of the hearers; insomuch as they were not able to stand before him, nor stedfastly to behold his face, it was such a dazzling and amazing light that shined in his ministry.

(2.) The manner of delivery was in obscure and dark expressions, that 'the children of Israel could not see to the end of that which is abolished;' that is, they could not see the drift and scope of his ministry, by reason of the types and shadows, which was 'the veil he put upon his face.'

What is meant by Spirit?

(3.) Their minds were blinded. There was 'a veil upon their hearts,' which is evident by experience in the Jews at this day, who so cleave in their affection to Moses, and to the shadows and ceremonies of his ministry, that they reject the scope and end of it, which is Jesus Christ crucified. And they can do no other. For although the veil that was upon Moses's face he removed, as it is by the doctrine of the gospel, which sheweth us in all possible plainness what the drift and meaning of Moses was in all those types and ceremonies, yet until the gospel in the spirit and efficacy of it cometh home to their hearts, and taketh off 'the veil that is upon their hearts' also; that is, until their natural blindness and obstinacy be taken away, which cannot be, but is rather increased, by the law—'For although Moses be read, yet until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away,' 2 Corinthians 3:14—the Jews will unavoidably abide in their ignorance and bondage.

Now, in opposition to this darkness and obscurity of the law in all those respects, the apostle exalteth the gospel in this high and excellent privilege of it, that it is plain, and evident, and full of

demonstration, and that the light of it is not terrifying and amazing, but sweet and comfortable. So that we may with much liberty and boldness of spirit look constantly upon the great and glorious things set before us in it, although it be no other but the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[5.] And there is, moreover, such an efficacy and working power in this ministry of the gospel, as it will not suffer men to remain the same without alteration, as they did under Moses's ministry, though he was read daily, but it will 'change' them even 'into the image of Jesus Christ, and carry them on still in that image and likeness, from one degree of glory to another,' after a most admirable and spiritual manner of working. This special excellency and prerogative of the gospel is laid down in the two last verses of this chapter, which are the words upon which we shall more largely insist in the following discourse.

Verse 17. 'Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

'The Lord is that Spirit' that takes away the veil that is spoken of before.

He sets down what Christ is by what he doth; Christ is 'that Spirit,' because he gives the Spirit. And then a sweet effect of the Spirit of Christ, 'Where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty.' The Spirit here is not taken for the person of God, as if the Holy Ghost had said, 'The Lord is a Spirit,' and not a bodily thing, though that be a truth. And as it is not meant naturally,\* so not personally, 'Christ is that Spirit,' as if Christ were the Holy Ghost. That were a confusion of persons. Nor as restrained to the third person. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit. Neither, as some heretofore would have it, to shew that the Spirit is Jehovah, God. It is neither to shew that Christ is God, nor that the Spirit is God, nor that Christ is the Holy Ghost. But it is meant in regard of a special dispensation. 'The Lord is that Spirit;' that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of his church by marriage, office, &c., 'is that Spirit;' that is, he (1.) Hath the Spirit in himself eminently; and

(2.) Dispenseth and giveth the Spirit unto others; all receiving the Spirit from him as the common root and fountain of all spiritual gifts.

First, He was 'that Spirit,' as having the Holy Ghost in himself as man. The Holy Ghost filled the human nature and made it spiritual. The Spirit is all in all in the human nature of Christ; and whatsoever he doth, he doth, as it were, being full of the Spirit, in himself. He gives the Spirit as God, and receives it as man. So he both gives and receives. The Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son as God, but the Spirit sanctified Christ as man, as it did in the virgin's womb. The Holy Ghost sanctified that blessed mass of his body. It sanctified him, and filled him with all graces and gifts; whereupon it is said, 'He received the Spirit without measure,' John 3:34; that is, in abundance. Christ hath the Spirit in himself in a more eminent excellent manner than all others; and it must needs be so for these reasons:

(1.) From the near union between the human nature and the divine. They are one person. Therefore there is more Spirit in Christ than in all creatures put them together; than in all the angels, and all men, because the divine nature is nearer to Christ than it is to the angels or to any creature.

(2.) Christ hath the Spirit without measure, both in regard of extension and intension, as we say. He hath all graces in all degrees, even next to an infinite. All others have it in their measure and proportion.

(3.) The Spirit doth rest upon Christ invariably. In other men that have the Spirit, it ebbs and flows; it is sometimes more and sometimes less. There be spiritual desertions, not only in regard of comfort, but in regard of grace, though not totally. But the Spirit rests on Christ eternally in a full measure; and therefore you have it thus in Isaiah 11:2, 'The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might,' &c.

(4.) By reason of his place or offices in relation to the church, as head, husband, king, priest, prophet, &c. The head is made by nature the seat of the more noble faculties, as of seeing, hearing, understanding, judging, and is furnished accordingly with greater plenty of spirits for the ruling and governing the whole body. So Christ is the Head of the church, and the government of all the world is laid upon him, and all excellencies are derived from him unto all his members, as from the root life is derived\* unto all the branches. And therefore he must needs have the Spirit in greatest abundance. His fulness of the Spirit is as the fulness of the fountain; ours is but as the fulness of the cistern. He hath grace in the spring; we have it but in the conduit. His graces are primitive; ours derivative. We have nothing but what we have received. Therefore it is said, 'He hath the oil of gladness poured upon him above his fellows,' Psalms 45:7.

He hath his name from anointing, 'Christ.' † He was anointed; that is, separated and ordained to the office of mediatorship, by anointing, not properly, ‡ that is, with any material oil, but with the Spirit. This was in regard of his human nature only, but it was above his fellows; that is, above all kings and priests, for they are his fellows in regard of titles. He was above them all, for all have their anointing from him. Therefore he is the King of kings, and the Prophet of prophets, &c. Also above all his fellows. As we take his fellows for Christians, they are his fellows; 'I go to my God and your God,' &c., John 20:17. He is the 'first-born' amongst them, and in all things he hath the pre-eminence.

(5.) He is to be as the pattern, we are to follow him. We are 'predestinated to be conformed to him,' Romans 8:29, and to grow up to that fulness which is in him. And in this respect there is cause why he should have the Spirit and all the graces of it in greater abundance, that he might exceed all, even Christians of greatest growth and perfection. He is to be a pattern and example to all: to the strongest as well as to the weak. Even Paul himself, who was a leader to others, for the excellency of the grace of Christ that was in him, was yet a follower of Christ. 'Be you followers of me, as I am of Christ,' 1 Corinthians 4:16.

Quest. When did this fulness of the Spirit come upon Christ? When had he it?

Ans. 1. There was a fulness of the Spirit poured out upon Christ in the union of the human nature with the divine. Union and unction went together. There was anointing of the Spirit, together with the union of the Spirit.

Ans. 2. There was a more full manifestation of the Spirit in his baptism. When the Holy Ghost fell on him in the shape of a dove, then he received the Spirit. He was to enter into the ministry of the gospel. 'The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him,' because he had anointed him to preach good tidings unto the meek, &c., Isaiah 61:1.

Ans. 3. But the fullest degree of declaration and manifestation of the Spirit upon Christ was after his resurrection; after he had satisfied fully for our salvation. Then the stop of his glory was taken away. For to work our salvation, there was a keeping back of the glory of Christ from his human

nature, that he might be abased to suffer for us. When he had fully suffered for us, that stay of his glory, his abasement, was taken away, and then nothing appeared but all glory and Spirit in Christ. All things were put under his feet, and he was set upon his throne as a glorious king. His priestly office appeared in his death, his prophetic office before his death. But then he appeared to be King and Lord of all in the resurrection. Thus we see how Christ is that Spirit; that is, he is full of the Spirit in regard of himself.

Secondly, He is 'that Spirit' in regard of his dispensations towards his church and children. 'The Lord is that Spirit;' that is, [1.] of all truths, and [2.] of all persons, to give life and quickening to them.

(1.) First, of truths. What is the scope of the whole Scriptures but Christ? from the first promise of the blessed seed, 'The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head,' Genesis 3:15, to the end of the book. What is all the Scriptures without Christ? The law is a dead letter; yea, and so is the gospel too without Christ. He is 'that Spirit' which gives life unto all the Scriptures. Moses without Christ is but a shadow without a body, or a body without a soul. Take away Christ, what was the brazen serpent? What was the ark? What were the sacrifices? What is all? Is not Christ 'all in all' these? The kings, and priests, and prophets, they were types of Christ; all the promises they were made and fulfilled in Christ. The law ceremonial aimed at Christ; the law moral is to drive us to Christ. Christ is the Spirit of all. And the Scripture without Christ it is but a mere dead thing; it is but a shell without a kernel, as it is to the Jews at this day.

(2.) Christ is 'that Spirit,' in regard of persons, quickening them. He is a universal principle of spiritual life, infusing it into all his church and children. Christ is always with his church from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end. It was no loss to the church that Christ in his bodily presence left it, for he left them 'the Comforter,' his Spirit, by which he wrought greater works after his ascension than he did before. He is 'anointed with the oil of gladness,' and grace 'above his fellows,' Psalms 45:7, but all was for his fellows. Whatsoever he is, or hath, all is for his church and children. 'For us' he was born, 'for us' he was given. He is a King, a Priest, a Prophet for us. He died for us, he rose again for us. And he doth all he doth towards the church, as he hath the Spirit, and by the Spirit. The Father is the first in the Trinity, 'from whom' all comes; and the Son, 'by whom' all things are; but the Holy Ghost is the immediate worker of all things, next the creature. All things are applied from God the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit. What Christ wrought, and what the Father in wisdom devised, was applied by the Spirit; and so the framing of us to be fit for such a glorious condition as we have by Christ, is also by the Spirit. And this is the reason why Christ giveth the Spirit to those to whom he purposeth to give faith or love, or to work any gracious work. For where Christ saveth, he doth it not only by merit and satisfying the wrath of God for us, but also by sanctifying and effectual working in us, that he might be a perfect Saviour. Now the essential vigour and operative principle in all things, either wrought by or from the Father or the Son, is the Spirit. As in man there is his will from which he resolveth and purposeth, there is wisdom and understanding by which he proceedeth, and then there is a vigorous power in man by which he executeth and doth all. So is it in this working of God. The Father plotteth\* and determineth of what is to be done; the Son, 'who is the wisdom of the Father,' 1 Corinthians 1:24, dispenseth what the Father willeth; the Holy Spirit, the power of both, finisheth and worketh all upon us, and therefore he is called the 'power of the highest,' Luke 1:35.

Whatsoever works come from God to the creature in general, and are wrought in the world, as works of creation and providence, are immediately by the Holy Spirit nakedly considered, as the third person coming from the Father and the Son. And in those special works, wrought in his church and on his children, all things cometh from the Holy Ghost, but not simply considered as the third person, but as he is 'the Spirit of Christ;' that is, first sanctifying and filling the human nature of Christ, and then sanctifying and filling us. Christ could not give the Holy Ghost immediately to us, we being in enmity with God, and separated from him through our sins; but he must first take it to himself, who having by his death and sufferings reconciled us to his Father, and purchased the Spirit for us, may now dispense and give forth his Spirit to us.

If we had stood in Adam, we should not have received grace so as now we do; fUse 1. Christ is the Spirit of the Scriptures or we should have received it from the first Adam but as from a man. Now we receive it not from mere man, but, which is much more, from the 'second Adam,' who is God-man. Nay, Adam himself received not his grace after so glorious a manner as we do, for he received it from the Spirit nakedly considered as the third person in the Trinity, and as all other creatures received their excellencies. But we receive it from the Holy Spirit, which doth not only proceed from the Father and the Son, but cometh, as it were, through our own nature, which was marvellously united to God the Son, and made one with him, unto us, and worketh in us.

'The first Adam was a living soul, the last Adam was a quickening Spirit,' 1 Corinthians 15:45. He quickened himself when he was dead, and he quickens all his members too. First, he receives the Spirit himself, and the same Spirit that filled and sanctified his human nature, the same Spirit sanctifieth his church, which he 'loves even as himself.' As he loveth that his own human nature, which the Holy Ghost sanctified, so doth he love his own mystical body, his church, being mystically united to him, and sanctifieth it by the same Spirit.

Christ dispenseth his Spirit unto us, as head of his church, and this he doth in divers respects.

(1.) As he is God, by way of immediate influence. He poureth it out upon us as the prime and principal cause. And this he doth as God, not as man, for the manhood cannot work above itself, it cannot do the work of God, it cannot work grace or give the Spirit.

(2.) As he is man, considered as joined together with the Godhead, by way of merit and satisfaction. He procureth the Spirit to be given and poured out, which is done by the Father and the Son on all those who are beloved in the Son. So that the Spirit is given by Christ, with the Father, as Mediator, meritoriously. For he by suffering and satisfying procured the gift. Christ himself is the first gift, yea, the greatest that ever was given, the giving of Christ to die, to satisfy the wrath of God, and to obtain eternal life. Next to that main gift is the gift of the Spirit, in which is the seed of all gifts and graces; and this we have by his merit and mediatorship. Yet this we must likewise remember, that although Christ be said to give the Spirit, as he doth, yet the Holy Spirit giveth itself too. For there is such a unity in the Trinity of consent and nature, that though the Father and the Son send the Spirit, yet the Spirit comes of his own self. Though the Father and the Son give the Spirit, yet the Spirit giveth himself.

(3.) We have the Spirit from Christ not only by way of merit, but in some kind by way of example. He is the exemplary cause of all graces in us; looking to whom, we are transformed, as we shall see afterwards, 'from glory to glory.' For when we consider that Christ hath done so much for us as

to save us, and redeem us, and die for us, this begetteth a love in us to Christ, and makes us often to think of him, and desirous to imitate him, as we usually do such as we love and highly esteem of.

Spirit given in greatest measure after Christ's resurrection The dispensation of the Spirit is in most abundance after the resurrection of Christ. As he appeared in himself then to be most spiritual and glorious after he rose again; so then being as the sun in its full height and perfect beauty, casteth his beams most plentifully abroad, and that for these reasons,

[1.] Because then he having finished the work of redemption and satisfied the wrath of God fully, and given contentment to divine justice, and accomplished all by his death, there was nothing to hinder the blessed gift of the Spirit. It is said, that 'before, the Holy Ghost was not given, because Christ was not glorified,' John 7:39. The gift of the Holy Ghost especially depends upon the glorifying of Christ. When he had fulfilled the work of redemption, and was raised to glory, God being pacified gave the Holy Ghost as a gift of his favour.

[2.] Then again after his resurrection and ascension, he did give the Holy Ghost more abundantly than before to his church, because now he is in heaven, and hath the advantage of the place, being exalted on high. As that glorious creature the sun, by the advantage it hath being placed in the heavens above us, is able to shine upon the greatest part of the earth at all times; and we need not call the sun down from its place to come into our houses, or fields, or gardens. No. Where it is seated in its proper place or orb, it hath the best opportunity, in most abundance and largest extent, to send down heat and light and influence to inferior things. So Christ doth his church more good now he is in heaven, from whence he sends the Spirit, than he could do if he were below; because though his human nature be confined in heaven, his person is everywhere. And being 'ascended now far above all heavens,' he giveth gifts more liberally and plentifully, insomuch as he filleth all things, Ephesians 4:10. He enlargeth the tents of his gospel, and hath taken in a greater people to himself. We see in winter, when the sun is low and near the earth, all things are dead and cold; but when the sun in the spring cometh to overtop us, to be in a higher point above us, we see how all things put a new garment upon them. There is a new vigour and freshness in them. So there was more abundant vigour of the Spirit when Christ came in the flesh; his virtue appeared much more every way than before. But when this blessed Son of righteousness was advanced, and seated at the right hand of his Father, where his nature was perfectly enriched, and perfectly adorned with all kind of graces whatsoever in the highest glory of them, his influence of light and heat now beginning to be increased, and the efficacy and working of it to be felt everywhere, the glorious beams of the sun began to be scattered, and the light of the gospel to shine to a greater number of people. Now there was no respect of persons, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, all was one. The commission was enlarged to all, Mark 16:15, 'Go preach the gospel to every creature;' and with the word the Spirit went, and was received; and those that were 'added to the church,' even such as 'should be saved,' were many thousands, Acts 2:47.

Thus have we opened the meaning of the words, and shewed 'how Christ is that Spirit,' both in respect of the Spirit's being eminently in him, and his giving of it, and spiritual gifts by it. All the vigour and life and influence we have that is spiritual and supernatural, and above the ordinary course, is from the Spirit; and whatsoever the Spirit hath, or doth for us, is done as sent from

Christ, in whom the Spirit is in all fulness. Now we shall shew how many ways the consideration of these truths will be profitable and useful to us in the course of our lives, and for the comfort of our spirits.

## Uses

Use 1. Christ is the Spirit of the Scriptures, of all truths, of all ordinances. We may by this be able to reconcile the Scriptures, one place with another, where they seem to contradict. The law is said to be 'a dead letter,' a 'ministration of condemnation,' &c., 2 Corinthians 3:6, seq.; but in the 19th Psalm there it is said, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul,' &c., Psalms 19:7. These places are thus reconciled. The law is said to be dead, so it is without Christ, without the Spirit which quickeneth; and so is the gospel too, even 'a savour of death,' 2 Corinthians 2:15. And so are the sacraments also as well as the word, dead ordinances if Christ be not in them. The law is said to be 'perfect,' and 'to convert the soul.' So it doth, when the Spirit goeth along with it, as it did ordinarily before Christ came in the flesh, as in David's time. But after Christ was come, who was the substance of those shadows, they became 'beggarly rudiments,' as in Paul's time, Galatians 4:9. And the Spirit did not work with them, but with the gospel, 'the hearing of faith,' Galatians 3:2.

Use 2. And we may understand likewise from hence what the reason is that an ordinance at one time differeth so much from itself at another time in respect of the life and comfort of it, as we often find even in our own experience; as also why the same ordinance (be it word, or sacrament, &c.) at the same time is profitable to one, and another hath no benefit at all from it. This is from the presence or absence of Christ, who is 'that Spirit.' What is the reason that wine, or aqua vitæ, doth more refresh and strengthen than common water? It is of the same substance, of the same colour that other water is. But there is more spirit in it. All things work answerable to the spirits that is in them. So what is the reason that the reading or hearing of the same thing affecteth one, and not another at all? The substance of the thing is the same, but the Spirit is not the same. The Spirit goeth with the one, and not with the other. We grant that our negligence in preparation and attention, our pride and earthly-mindedness, our want of faith to mingle with the word: these, or the like, may be causes why we are many times sent empty away; yet this still must be observed as a most evident truth, that all the efficacy and fruit of any ordinance dependeth upon Christ's being present in it, who is 'that Spirit' that quickeneth. The most powerful means that ever was ordained for our good will be dead and heartless if he be not there by his Spirit to put life into it. It may seem strange what John saith, chap. 6 ver. 63, 'The flesh profiteth nothing.' 'The flesh of Christ,' our nature which Christ took, and in which so much was wrought for us, which is the greatest ordinance of all, yet this flesh 'profiteth not,' nor will there be any benefit of it, if it be not applied to us spiritually. For it is not the flesh simply considered, but as by it and with it we receive the Spirit of Christ, which Spirit quickeneth and maketh the flesh of Christ 'meat indeed.' As it is with the flesh of Christ, so with all other ordinances. The Scriptures profit nothing, preaching profiteth nothing, the sacraments will profit nothing; there is none of these will be 'meat indeed,' unless the Spirit of Christ quicken them.

Therefore we ought to join with all the ordinances of God, a desire that Christ would join his Spirit, and make them effectual. We ought to come to the ordinances in a dependence upon Christ for a blessing upon them, and for his presence in them, who is the life and scope of all; and then we should not find such dulness and deadness in them. It is the sin of this age, this formality. It is the

sin of those that have any thing in them. Set desperate drunkards and roarers and such wretches aside, as plainly discover themselves to be acted by the spirit of the devil. Take them that conform themselves in any fashion to religion, the killing sin that they lie under is this same dead formality. They will hear a sermon now and then, look on a book, and it may be pray morning and evening, but never look up to the living and quickening Spirit Jesus Christ. So that all they do is dead and loathsome, like salt that hath no savour. What is the best liquor if it hath lost its life and spirit, but flat and unsavoury: and blood when the spirits are out of it, what is it but loathsome gore! So are all their performances, even like sacrifices that had no fire in them. The Lord loathed such sacrifices as he did Cain's; and so he doth all our flat and lifeless services, yea and our persons too, being as Jude saith, 'fleshly, and not having the Spirit,' ver. 19.

Use 3. What need is there that we should sanctify all we take in hand by prayer! When we go to hear a sermon, when we take up the Bible to read a chapter alone by ourselves, or in our families, we should lift up our eyes and hearts and voices to heaven; we should say to Christ, Lord, join thy Spirit, be present with us; without thee thy word is dead, our hearts are dead, and will harden under the means, and darken in the light, and we shall fall under the heavy condemnation of these secure and formal times, if thou leavest us.

Use 4. Christ is said to be that Spirit, to send the Spirit as God, and to receive it as man, in fulness, and that for our sakes. It is a point of much comfort, that there is such abundance of Spirit in our nature in Christ, and for the behalf of the church, that we have a fulness to receive of. It was a comfort to Joseph's brethren, and that family, that Joseph was full of honour, and rules the second in the kingdom. Therefore they should want nothing that was good in Egypt. Is it not a comfort for Christians to know that Christ is the Spirit, that he hath the Spirit to give, the Spirit of wisdom in all straits, the Spirit of truth to keep us from all errors, the Spirit of strength for all services, the Spirit of comfort for all afflictions? He that is their Lord hath abundance of Spirit in him, and for them. Therefore, when we want any grace, or gift of the Spirit, we should go to Christ; for God doth all by Christ. Christ doth all by the Spirit. Desire Christ that he would vouchsafe his Spirit to rule us, counsel us, comfort us, and strengthen us. Therefore in our emptiness, as indeed we are empty creatures of ourselves, let us go to Christ for the Spirit. He hath received that fulness for us; desire him that out of his fulness he would vouchsafe to give unto us.

## 01. Why Christians are so dark-spirited

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### Why Christians are so dark-spirited

It is the reason why Christians are so dead and so dull and so dark in their spirits; they do not first consider themselves, and then go to Christ. We should all, in all exigents\* whatsoever, make use of this our great high treasurer, the great high steward of heaven and earth, of this our Joseph, the second person in heaven. He is at the right hand of God, and all to fill his church with his Spirit. Our comfort is now that our strength and comfort lies hid in Christ, that is near to us as man, and near to God as God. He is between the Father and us; he is near the Father as being of the same nature with him; he is near us as being of the same nature with us. So being a mediator in office, and being so fit for a mediator in nature, what a comfort is this.

Indeed, there is no coming to God, no intercourse between God and us immediately, but between God-man and God and us, who is the mediator between God and us. He comes between. In Christ we go to God, in our flesh, in our nature; and in Christ, and from Christ, and by Christ, we have all grace and comfort. From Christ we have all as God, together with the Holy Ghost and the Father; and we have all in Christ as a head and husband; and we have all through Christ as mediator by his merit. Therefore we should go to Christ every way.

Use 5. Let us labour to be in Christ that we may get the Spirit. It is of great necessity that we should have it. Above all things next to redemption by Christ, labour for the Spirit of Christ.

Christ is our Saviour, not only by merit and satisfaction, but by efficacy and grace, that is, as he hath purchased us for his people by his blood; so he will subdue our corruptions, and rule us by his Spirit.

For, first, 'He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his,' Romans 8:13. Those that have not the efficacy of the Spirit in them to rule them, shall not have benefit by his death to reconcile them, for these go alway together, Christ as a king to rule, and as a priest to die. 'He came by blood and by water,' 1 John 5:6, to satisfy and to sanctify.

Secondly, There is a necessity of the Spirit, that we be new creatures. It was the Spirit's brooding upon the chaos that brought forth all, Genesis 1:2; so the Spirit must sit upon our souls before any change will be made. Now there is a necessity that we be changed, and that we be new, or else we can never be inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth. We must have the Spirit of God. Therefore, Zechariah 4:6, as in the material temple 'it is not by might, or by power, but by the Spirit,' so in raising up spiritual temples it is not by strength of wit or parts, but by the Spirit. Therefore the Spirit is necessary for us, even as our being in grace is necessary. The holy apostles, we know, till the Spirit came more abundantly upon them, what dark creatures they were! But when the Holy Ghost was come upon them, how full of life and light and courage they were! that the more they suffered, the more they might suffer! So it will be with Christians: the more spiritual they grow, the more lightsome and courageous; the more strong, the more lively and vigorous to all duties. The Holy Ghost is the substantial vigour of all creatures whatsoever. All the

spiritual vigour of every thing comes from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit from Christ. For nothing can work above itself. Nature cannot work above nature. That which elevates nature above itself, and sets a spiritual stamp, and puts divine qualities upon it, is the Spirit of God. That divine quality is called spirit. There is the flesh and the spirit. All in us is flesh by nature, and whatsoever is spiritual and divine cometh from the Spirit, and therefore it is called spirit. You see therefore a necessity of the working of the Spirit, even as there is a necessity to be new creatures, and to be spiritual. If we will be spiritual, we must have it from him that is first spiritual, the Spirit himself; that is the principal\* and fountain of all that is spiritual.

Thirdly, We are called oftentimes to do and suffer such things as are above nature; and therefore we must have a spirit above nature. When we feel sin, to believe the forgiveness of sins; when we see death, to believe life everlasting; and when we are in extremity, to believe God present with us to deliver us, to believe contraries in contraries, is a strange almighty work of faith, by the work of the Spirit. It is above the work of nature to die, to end our days with comfort, and to resign up our souls, for nature sees nothing but darkness and desolation in the grave and destruction. Nothing can make a man comfortable in death, but that which raiseth him above nature, the Spirit of God.

## 02. The Spirit the soul of the soul

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The Spirit the soul of the soul

Now these things, and many such like, we must do and suffer, if we be Christians; and therefore we must have the Spirit to enable us to do all. The Spirit is to the soul as the soul is to the body. What is the body without the soul? A carcase, a loathsome dead thing. What is the soul without the Spirit? A chaos of darkness and confusion.

Well, how shall we know whether we have the Spirit of Christ or no?

(1.) We may know it partly by that I said before. The Spirit is a vigorous working thing, and therefore all three persons take upon them the name of Spirit, but the Holy Ghost especially, because he is the spiritual vigour. The Spirit is an operative thing. The spirits are the quintessence and extraction of things, that is nothing but operation. God that is nothing but a pure act is said to be a spirit. Those that have the Spirit of God are full of act and vigour. The spirits of dull creatures are active when they are extracted. Shall the spirits of bodies be vigorous, and shall not the Holy Ghost be vigorous, that is a substantial vigour? Therefore, if a man have the Spirit of God in him, it will work in him; it is very operative.

Therefore it is compared to fire in divers respects, for,

First, Fire it is of a working nature. It is the instrument of nature. If we had not fire, what could we work? All fabrics and all things are done by fire, especially metals; they are framed and made malleable by fire. So the Holy Ghost, it is a working thing and softeneth the heart, and makes us malleable; it makes us fit for the impression of all good.

Secondly, Fire, again, though bodies be dark, it makes them lightsome like itself. Iron is a dark body, but if the fire penetrate it, it makes it lightsome. We are dark creatures of ourselves: if we have the Spirit it makes us light.

Thirdly Again, fire it makes cheerful, and ascends upwards. If a man have the Spirit of God, his conversation will be upward, his conversation will be heavenly, he minds the things of God, he doth not grovel here below; so in divers such respects the Holy Ghost is compared to fire, and hath such effects in us. In some sort we find our understandings enlightened, and ourselves quickened, and carried up to the above nature, in holy and heavenly actions; and then it is a good sign that we have the Spirit of Christ. A part will follow the whole. As we see a part of the earth it falls to the centre, because all the earth is heavy, all the whole earth falls down to the centre, and therefore every little clod will do it; so Christ our head, that hath abundance of the Spirit, is in heaven, and if we have the Spirit we will follow him, and mind the things where Christ is.

(2.) Where the Spirit of Christ is likewise, it convinceth, as it is John 16:8, seq.; that is, it brings a clear evident conviction with it, that the truth of God is the truth of God. It is no doubtful thing. Therefore when a man staggers in the truth, in this and that course, whether he should do this or that, it is a sign he hath not the Spirit, or that he hath it in a very little measure, because the Spirit

is a convincing thing, as light it convinceth a man. He doth not doubt of that that he seeth at noon-day. So that that a man seeth by the Spirit, he is convinced of. When a man doubts and wavers, whether he should take a good course or a bad, and wavers, it is a sign he is carnal, and hath not the Spirit of God; for if he had not the Spirit\* it would convince him, and set him down, You must take this course if you will be saved. That is said to convince, that saith more for a thing than anything can say against it. Now when a man hath the Spirit of God, he can say more for God and for good things and good ways, than all the devils in hell by discouragement can say against them. Therefore, when a man cannot say anything for God, and for good causes to purpose, he hath not the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God would so convince him, that he should answer all cavils and objections. The argument is wondrous large. I give you but a taste, to know whether the Spirit of Christ be in you or no.

### 03. Directions how to get the Spirit

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#### Directions how to get the Spirit

(3.) In a word, if Christ be that Spirit, and have infused the Spirit into us, it will make us like him; it will transform us into his likeness, it will make us holy and humble and obedient as he was, even to the death. These things might be largely followed, but we have occasion to speak of these in other portions of Scripture. Therefore, that ye may get the Spirit of God, take these directions.

[1.] We must go to Christ, study Christ. If we will have the Spirit, study the gospel of Christ. What is the reason that before Christ there was so little Spirit in comparison? There was but a little measure of the knowledge of Christ. The more Christ is discovered, the more is the Spirit given; and according to the manifestation of Christ what he hath done for us, and what he hath, the more the riches of Christ is unfolded in the church, the more the Spirit goes along with them. The more the free grace and love of God in Christ alone is made known to the church, the more Spirit there is; and again back again, the more Spirit the more knowledge of Christ; for there is a reciprocal going of these two, the knowledge of Christ and the Spirit. What is the reason, that in popery the schoolmen that were witty to distinguish, that there was little Spirit in them? They savoured not the gospel. They were wondrous quick in distinctions, but they savoured not the matters of grace, and of Christ. It was not fully discovered to them, but they attributed it to satisfaction, and to merits, and to the pope, the head of the church, &c. They divided Christ, they knew him not; and dividing Christ, they wanted the Spirit of Christ; and wanting that Spirit, they taught not Christ as they should. They were dark times, as themselves confessed, especially about nine hundred and a thousand years after Christ, because Christ was veiled then in a world of idle ceremonies—to darken the gospel and the victory of Christ—that the pope made, who was the vicar of Satan. These were the doctors of the church then, and Christ was hid and wrapped in a company of idle traditions and ceremonies of men; and that was the reason that things were obscure.

[2.] Now when Christ, and all good things by Christ, and by Christ only, are discovered, the veil is taken off. Now of late for these hundred years, in the time of reformation, there hath been more spirit and more lightness and comfort. Christians have lived and died more comfortably. Why? Because Christ hath been more known. And as it is with the church, so it is with particular Christians, the more they study Christ, and the fulness that is in Christ, and all comfort in him alone to be had—'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' 1 Corinthians 1:30—the more men grow up in the knowledge of Christ, the more they grow spiritually; and the more spiritually they grow, the more they grow in the knowledge of Christ. Therefore, if we would have the Spirit, let us come near to Christ, and labour to know him more, who is the fountain of all that is spiritual.

[3.] Then again, if we would be spiritual, let us take heed we trust not too much to dead things, without Christ; to have a kind of popery in the work done; to think that reading, and hearing, and receiving the sacrament, and that the government of the church will do it, as if it were as man would have it. Put case there were all these, which are excellent good things; but what are all

these without the Spirit of Christ! A man may be dead with all these. Though he hear never so much, and receive the sacrament never so often, if a man go not to Christ the quickening Spirit in this manner: Lord, these, and my soul too, are dead things without thy Spirit, therefore quicken me. Join Christ with all our performances, without which all is nothing, and then he will be spiritual to us.

[4.] And when we go to Christ for the Spirit, as we must beg it if we will have it,—God will give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him, Luke 11:13,—remember that we use the means carefully; reading, and hearing, and holy communion of saints, because though these without the Spirit can do nothing, yet the Spirit is not given but by these. These are the golden conduits of the Spirit of Christ. No man is ever spiritual but they are readers, and hearers, and conferrers of good things, and attenders upon the means of salvation, because God will work by his own tools and instruments. Therefore it is said, Revelation 1:9, that John was 'full of the Spirit upon the Lord's day.' Let a Christian sanctify the Sabbath as he should do, he will be in the Spirit on the Lord's day more than on other days. Why? Because then he is reading, and hearing, and conferring, and in some spiritual course; and the more a man on the Lord's day. is in a spiritual course, the more he is in the Spirit: 'John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.' So much for these words, 'The Lord is that Spirit.'

'And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

We see here what the Spirit works where it is. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' I will name the instance that I gave before, that I may the better go on. We say the sun is heat and influence; not that it is so, for they be accidents, but the sun appears to us for our comfort in heat and influence, therefore we call it by that name. We say of a man, he is all spirit. So Christ is all Spirit. The sun is all light, and where the light and heat of the sun is there is fruitfulness. So Christ is all Spirit, and where the Spirit of Christ is there is spiritual liberty.

It were expense of time to no purpose to tell you of the divers kinds of liberty. In a word, liberty is that that all desire, but our miscarriage is in the means of it, the way to attain to it. Here we see whence to have it, from the Spirit of Christ. Liberty is a sweet thing, especially liberty from the greatest enemies of all. If outward liberty be such a sweet thing—liberty from tyranny and base servitude, it is a thing that man's nature delights in; and the contrary, man as a man abhors; and he hath not the nature of a man that doth not abhor it,—what shall we think then of the liberty of the Spirit from the great enemies that daunt the greatest monarchs in the world? Liberty from the anger of the great God; and liberty from Satan, God's executioner; liberty from the terror of conscience, from the fear of death, and hell, and judgment; what shall we think of liberty in these respects? Therefore we speak of great matters here below when we speak of liberty.

Now liberty is either Christian or evangelical.

You may think this a nice difference, but there is some reality in it.

(1.) Christian liberty is that that belongs to all, even to those before Christ. Though they have not the term of Christians, yet they were members of Christ. Christ was head of the church 'yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,' Hebrews 13:8.

## 04. Spiritual liberty and bondage

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### Spiritual liberty and bondage

(2.) Evangelical liberty is that that is more appropriated to the times of the gospel since the coming of Christ. Now the liberty that belongs to Christians as Christians, is perpetual from those grand enemies, the greatest enemies of all, spiritual and inward liberty. In evangelical liberty, besides that, there is another outward liberty, from the ceremonial and moral law and such like; and a liberty from the restraint of the law. The Jews were under many restraints, that under the gospel in this time we are not. I speak therefore of liberty as it runs through all ages of the church, not of evangelical merely since the time of Christ. Where the Spirit is, both these liberties are now since the coming of Christ. Now in that the Holy Ghost saith here, 'Where the Spirit of Christ is there is liberty,' it supposeth that we are in bondage before we have the Spirit of Christ. That is a supposed ground and truth, and indeed so it is. For out of Christ we are slaves, the best of us all are slaves. In Christ the meanest of all is a free man, and a king. Out of Christ there is nothing but thralldom. We are under the kingdom of the devil. When he calls us we come. We are in thralldom under the wrath of God, under the fear of death and damnation, and all those spiritual enemies that I need not mention. They are well enough known to you by often repetition. There is no man but he is a slave till he be in Christ; and the more free a man thinks himself to be, and labours to be, the more slave he is. For take a man that labours to have his liberty, to do what he list,\* he thinks it the happiest condition in the world; and others think it the best condition to have liberty not to be tyrannised over by others. It is the disposition of man's nature without grace. They account it a happiness to have their wills over all other, but the more liberty in this, the more slavery. Why? The more liberty that a man hath to do lawlessly what he will, contrary to justice and equity, the more he sins. The more he sins the more he is enthralled to sin. The more he is enthralled to sin the more he is in bondage to the devil, and becomes the enemy of God. Therefore if a man would pick out the wretchedest man in the world, I would pick out the greatest man in the world if he be naught,† that hath most under him; he hath most liberty, and seeks most liberty, and accounts it his happiness that he may have his liberty. This is the greatest thralldom, and it will prove, when he dies and comes to answer for it, the greatest thralldom of all. Therefore the point needs not much proof, that if we be not in Christ we are slaves, as Augustine saith in his book De Civitate Dei, 'He is a slave though he domineer and rule.' A man till he be in Christ is a slave; not of one man or of one lord over him, but he hath so many lords as he hath so many lusts. There are but two kingdoms that the Scripture speaks of, that is, the kingdom of Satan and darkness, and the kingdom of Christ; all therefore that are not in the kingdom of Christ, in that blessed liberty, they must needs be shoaled‡ under the other kingdom of Satan. This is a ground. Therefore I speak shortly of it, as an incentive and provocation to stir us up, to get into Christ, to get the Spirit of Christ, that we may have this spiritual liberty, or else we are all slaves, notwithstanding all our civil liberties, whatsoever they be. Now, 'where the Spirit of Christ is there is liberty,' there is freedom from that bondage that we are in by nature, and which is strengthened by a wicked course of life. For though we be all slaves by nature, born slaves, yet notwithstanding by a wicked course of life,

we put ourselves into bonds and tangle ourselves; so many sins and so many repetitions of sin, so many cords; the longer a man lives the greater slave he is. Now when the Spirit of Christ comes, it frees us from all; both from the natural and from the customary§ slavery.

## 05. How the Spirit worketh liberty

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### How the Spirit worketh liberty

Now this liberty is wrought by Christ and applied by the Spirit. What Christ works he makes it ours by his Spirit, which takes all from Christ. As Christ doth all by the Spirit, so the Spirit takes all from Christ. All the comfort it hath is from reasons taken from Christ, from grounds from Christ, and doctrines from Christ, but yet both have their efficacy—Christ as the meritorious cause, and the Spirit as the applying cause. The Spirit discovers the state of bondage we are in by nature, and it discovers withal a more excellent condition; and as it discovers, so likewise the Spirit of God brings us to this state, by working faith in that that Christ hath done for us. Christ hath freed us by his death from the curse of the law, from the wrath of God, from death and damnation, and the like. Now whatsoever Christ hath done the Spirit works faith, to make this our own by uniting us to Christ. When Christ and we are one, his sufferings are ours, and his victory is ours, all is ours. Then the Spirit persuading us of the love of God, and Christ redeeming us from that cursed slavery we were in, that Spirit, it works love in us, and other graces whereby the dominion of sin is broken more and more, and we are set at liberty by the Spirit.

Now the Spirit doth not work liberty properly originally, but Christ is the grand redeemer. But Christ redeemeth two ways.

## 06. All whom Christ redeems he frees

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All whom Christ redeems he frees

First, He redeems us by paying the price, and so he only\* redeemeth, for he paid the price to divine justice. We are in bondage to the wrath of God under his justice; and so there must be satisfaction to justice before we can be free.

Then, secondly, We are in bondage to Satan, as God's executioner and jailor. Now from him we are freed by strong hand. So Christ freeth us by his Holy Spirit, working such graces in us as makes us see the loathsomeness of that bondage; working likewise grace in us to be in love with a better condition, that the Spirit discovers to us. So that the Spirit brings us out by discovery and by power. All that Christ freeth by virtue of redemption, paying the price for, all those he frees likewise by his Spirit, discovering to them their bondage, and the blessed condition whereunto they are to be brought to a state of freedom, which freedom he perfects by little and little, till he bring them to a glorious freedom in heaven. And the reason of this,—that where Christ doth free by way of redemption, to die and satisfy God's justice for any, to those he gives his Spirit, by which Spirit they are set at liberty—the reasons are manifold. To name one or two.

[1.] Christ doth save all that he doth save answerable to the nature of the party saved. He saves them as reasonable persons, for he saves us that he may make us friends. He saves us as men, and redeems us as men. He doth not only pay a price for us as we buy a thing that is dead, but likewise he frees us, so as we may understand to what, and by whom we are freed, and what condition we are freed from. Therefore there must be a Spirit joined with the work of Christ, to inform us thoroughly, being creatures fit to be informed.

[2.] And God intending to come into covenant with us, that we may be friends with him, which is our glory and happiness, he acquaints us as friends with all the favours and blessings that he hath done for us. He acquaints us what misery he brings us out of, and what happiness he brings us unto, and what is our duty. This is the work of the Spirit, to shew us what he hath done for us, that we may be friends.

[3.] And then it is a ground to love God. God saveth us by a way of love in the covenant of grace. His desire is that we may love him again, and maintain love. Now how can this be, without the Spirit of God discover what God in Christ hath done for us? Therefore there must be the Spirit to shew to the eye of the soul, and to tell us, this Christ hath done for us.

[4.] Then again there must be a fitting for heaven, for that glory that God intends us in election. Now this fitting must be altogether by the Spirit. The same Spirit that sanctified Christ in the womb, the same Spirit that anointed Christ, anoints all those that are Christ's, that they may be fit for so glorious a head. So there must be the Spirit as well as Christ in the work of redemption and liberty.

Now this Spirit of God doth set us at liberty, in all the course and whole carriage of salvation, from the beginning to the end.

He sets us at liberty at the first in calling us.

He sets us at liberty when we are justified.

## 07. No benefit by Christ without union

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No benefit by Christ without union He sets us at liberty when he sanctifieth us. And he sets us then at liberty fully in glorification.

First of all, the Spirit of God is a Spirit of liberty, when we are first called powerfully and effectually. For living in the church sets us not at liberty, unless the Spirit stir us up to answer a divine call. 'For many are called but few are chosen,' Matthew 20:16. In the church there is Hagar and Ishmael as well as Isaac. There are hypocrites as well as sound Christians. There is outward baptism as well as inward. There is outward circumcision of the flesh as well as inward of the spirit. A man may have all these outward privileges, and yet notwithstanding be a slave in the bosom of the church; for Ishmael was a bond-slave though he were in the house of Abraham. Therefore the first beginning of spiritual liberty is, (1.) When the Spirit of God in the ordinances, in the means of salvation, stirs up the heart to answer God's call as it were. When we are exhorted to believe and repent, the Spirit gives power to echo to God, 'Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief,' Mark 9:24. Lord, I repent, and desire to repent more and more. When the Spirit of God in the ordinance saith, 'Seek my face, Thy face, Lord, will I seek,' Psalms 27:8. Be thou mine, Lord, and I will be thine. This spiritual echo and answer of the soul comes from the Spirit of God in calling, and it is the first degree of liberty.

(2.) Now this answer of the soul, by the power of the Spirit, overpowering our corruptions, is together with the obedience of the inward man to go out. For man answereth the call, not only by the speech of the heart, Lord, I do it; but he doth it indeed. Therefore when by the power of the Spirit we come out of the world and out of our corruptions, and walk more freely in the ways of God, then we are set at spiritual liberty. Now the Spirit doth all this. For if it were not the Spirit that persuaded the soul, when the minister speaks, alas! all ministerial persuasions are to no purpose. If the Spirit do not stir up the soul to answer, all speech is to no purpose from men. But this the Spirit doth. In the first place he openeth the eyes with spiritual eye-salve to see our natural bondage; he openeth our eyes to see, I must come out of this condition if I will be saved, of necessity, or else I am miserable for ever. And it is enough for the soul of a miserable man if he be convinced to see his misery and bondage, what he is by nature; for let us be convinced of that once, and all the rest of the links of the golden chain of salvation will follow. Let a man be convinced that he is as the Scripture saith he is, and as hereafter he shall find to his cost, you shall not need to bid him come out of his conversation and condition, and worldly course that he is in. All this will follow where there is conviction of spirit. Therefore the first work of the Spirit in spiritual liberty is to convince us of sin and misery; and then to work, as I said, an answer of the soul, and an obedience of the whole man. This I will not be long in, being a clear point.

Second, 'Where the Spirit is, there is liberty.' Again, in matter of justification there is a liberty and freedom of conscience from sin and the curse of sin, and all the danger that follows upon sin, by the Spirit.

Obj. But you will say, the liberty of justification is wrought by Christ; we are justified by the obedience of Christ; and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.

Ans. It is true Christ is our righteousness. But what is that to us except we have something to put it on? Except we be united to Christ, what good have we by Christ if Christ be not ours? If there be not a spiritual marriage, what benefit have we by him if we have not him to pay our debt? For his riches to be ours, and our debt to be his, there must be a union first. Now this union is wrought by the Spirit. It is begun in effectual calling. From this union there comes to be a change; his righteousness is mine, as if I had obeyed and done it by myself; and my debts and sins are his. This is by the Spirit, because the union between Christ and me is by the Spirit. For whatsoever Christ hath done, it is nothing to me till there be a union. And then freedom is by the Spirit likewise, because the Spirit of God works faith in me, not only to unite and knit me to Christ, but faith to persuade me that Christ is mine, and that all his is mine, and that my debts are his. This supernatural hand of faith the Spirit works to lay hold upon Christ, and then to persuade me. For the Spirit is a lightsome thing, and together with the graces it tells me the graces it works. As reason, besides reason, it tells me that I use reason when I do. It hath a reflex act. So the Spirit of Christ it hath a reflex act upon itself; for, being above reason, it doth not only lay hold upon Christ, it doth not only do the work, but it tells me that I do so when I do. Therefore it not only tells me that Christ is mine when I believe, but it assures me that I do believe. It carries a light of its own. I know the light by the light, and reason by reason, and faith by faith, together with the reflex act joining with it. So that the reflex act joining with it, the Spirit is the cause of liberty in justification in that respect, as it is a means of union, whereupon there is a passage of all that is Christ's to be mine, and mine to be Christ's. And likewise it assures me that I do believe, when I do believe without error. For the Spirit is given me to know the things that I have by Christ, not only to know the privileges by Christ, but the graces of Christ.

And, beloved, unless the Spirit should do it, it would never be done; for the soul of man is so full of terrors and fears and jealousies, that except the Spirit of God witness to my spirit, that God is reconciled in Christ, and that Christ's righteousness is mine, I could never be persuaded of it. For the soul it always thinks God is holiness itself, and I am a mass of sin. What reason have I to think that God will be so favourable to such a wretch, to such a lump of sin as I am, were it not that God the Son hath satisfied God the Father? God hath satisfied God; and the Spirit certifies my conscience. So the Spirit, that searcheth the deep things of God, that knows what love is in the breast of God, and therefore he searcheth the heart, he searcheth the heart of God, and he searcheth my spirit. Except the Spirit should tell me that God the Son hath satisfied (and God the Father will accept of the satisfaction of God the Son), I should never believe it. Therefore God must stablish the heart in a gracious liberty of justification, as well as that God the Son hath wrought it.

It is no wonder that men of great parts without grace are full of terrors and despair; for the more parts and wit a man hath without the Spirit of God, the more he disputes against himself, and entangles himself with desperate thoughts. But when the Spirit is brought to speak peace to the soul in Christ, and makes the soul to cast itself on him for salvation, then God's Spirit is above the conscience. Though conscience be above all things else, yet God is above conscience, and can still the conscience; and the Spirit tells us that God the Father is reconciled by the death of God the Son. And when God witnesseth what God hath wrought, then conscience is at peace. Thus we

see how the Spirit sets us at liberty in the great matter of justification.

## 08. Sanctification springs from justification

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### Sanctification springs from justification

Third, So likewise in the matter of holy life, in the whole course of a holy life, 'where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty,' and freedom from the slavery of sin. For there the understanding is freed from the bondage of ignorance, and there the will is freed from the bondage of rebellion; there the affections likewise, and the whole inward and outward man is freed. But this liberty of holiness, inherent liberty, it doth spring from the liberty that we have by justification, by the righteousness of Christ, whereby we are perfectly righteous, and freed from all the title that Satan hath in us. We are freed from the curse of God, from the law, and enabled in a course of sanctification to go on from grace to grace. The Spirit of Christ comes after justification. For whom God gives forgiveness unto, he gives his Spirit to sanctify them. The same Spirit that assures me of the pardon of my sin, sanctifies my nature. Where the Spirit is of sanctification, it breaks the ruling power of sin. Before then the whole life is nothing but a continual sinning and offending of God; but now there is a gracious liberty of disposition, a largeness of heart which follows the liberty of condition. When a man is free in state and law from wrath, and from the sentence of damnation, then he hath a free and voluntary disposition wrought to serve God freely, without fear or constraint. When a man is under the bondage of the law, when he is under the fear, of death, being armed with a sting, whatsoever he doth he doth it with a slavish mind. Where the Spirit of God is, there is the spirit of adoption, the spirit of sons, which is a free spirit. The son doth not duties to his father out of constraint and fear, but out of nature. The Spirit alters our nature and disposition. It makes us sons, and then we do all freely. God doth enlarge the hearts of his children. They can deny themselves in a good work. They are 'zealous of good works.' It is the end of their redemption; as it is Titus 2:14, 'We are redeemed to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' For then we have a base esteem of all things that hinder us from freeness in God's service, as worldliness, &c. What doth a Christian when he seeth his gracious liberty in Christ? The love of the world and worldly things, he is ready to part with all for the service of God. He is so free-hearted that he can part with life itself. Paul saith of himself, 'My life is not dear to me, so I may finish my course with joy,' Acts 20:24. As we see in the martyrs and others how free they were, even of their very blood.

What shall we think of those therefore, that if we get anything of them, it must be as a sparkle out of the flint. Duties come from Christians as water out of a spring. They are natural, and not forced to issue, so far forth as they are spiritual.

I confess that there is remainders of bondage where the Spirit sets at liberty; for there is a double principle in us, while we live in this world, of nature and grace. Therefore there will be a conflict in every holy duty. The flesh will draw back when the Spirit would be liberal. The flesh will say, Oh but I may want! When the Spirit would be most courageous, the flesh will say, But there is danger in it. So that there is nothing that we can do but it must be gotten out of the fire. We must resist. Yet notwithstanding here is liberty to do good, because here is a principle that resists the backwardness of the flesh. In a wicked man there is nothing but flesh, and therefore there is no

resistance. And we must understand the nature of this spiritual liberty in sanctification. It is not a liberty freeing us altogether from conflict, and deadness, and dulness, and the like; but it is a liberty enabling us to combat, not freeing us from combat. It is a liberty to fight the battles of the Lord against our own corruptions, not freeing us from it. That is the liberty of glory in heaven, when there shall be no enemy within or without.

Therefore let not Christians be discouraged with the backwardness and untowardness of the flesh, to good duties. If we have a principle in us to fight against it, to enable us to fight against our corruptions, and to get good duties out of it in spite of it, it is an argument of a new nature. God will perfect his own beginnings, and subdue the flesh more and more, by the power of his Spirit. We see our blessed Saviour, what a sweet excuse he makes for his disciples when they were dead-hearted and drowsy, when they should have comforted him in the garden: Oh, saith he, 'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,' Matthew 26:41.

Indeed, there is a double hindrance in God's people when they are about holy duties, sometimes from their very mould and nature, considered not as corrupted; the very mould without the consideration. And then consider it as it is made more heavy and dull by the flesh, and corruptions in them, as there be invincible infirmities and weaknesses in nature. Sometimes deadness, after labour and expense of spirits, creeps in invincibly, that a man cannot overcome those necessities of nature. So that 'the spirit may be willing, and the flesh weak;' the flesh without any great corruption. God looks upon our necessities; as the father saith, Free me from my necessities (a). As we see, Christ made an excuse for them. It was not so much corruption, though that were an ingredient in it, as nature in itself. Christ saw a great deal of gold in the ere, therefore we see how he excuseth them. Therefore when we are dull, let us strive. Christ is ready to make excuse for us, if our hearts be right: 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' I speak this for the comfort of the best sort of Christians, that think they are not set at liberty by the Spirit, because they find some heaviness and dulness in good duties. As I said, there is sin in us while we live here, but it reigns not. After a man hath the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Christ maintains a perpetual combat and conflict against sin. It could subdue sin all at once if God saw it good; but God will humble us while we live here, and exercise us with spiritual conflicts. Therefore God sees it sufficient to bring us to heaven, to set up a combat in us, that we are able by the help of the Spirit to fight God's battles against the flesh. So that the dominion of sin may be broken in us, and excellently, saith Paul, Romans 8:2, 'The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed me from the law of sin and of death.' The law of the Spirit of life, that is, the commanding power of the Spirit of Christ, that commands as a law in the hearts of God's people, it frees us from the law, that is, from the commanding power of sin and death. So that the dominion and tyranny of sin is broken by the Spirit of Christ, and so we are set at a gracious liberty. In some respects we are under grace, therefore sin shall not have dominion over us, as the apostle speaks.

## 09. Christians rule their lusts

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### Christians rule their lusts

Again, by the Spirit of Christ in sanctification we are made kings, to rule over our own lusts in some measure; not kings to be freed altogether from them, but kings to strive against them. It is a liberty to fight, and in fighting to overcome at last. When the Israelites had a promise that God would give their enemies into their hands, the meaning was not that he would give them without fighting a blow, but I will give them into your hands. You shall fight; and be of good comfort, in fighting you shall overcome. So this liberty of sanctification, it is not a liberty that we should have no combat with our corruptions, but a gracious liberty to keep them under, till by subduing them by little and little, we get a perfect victory. What greater encouragement can a man have to fight against his enemy, than when he is sure of the victory before he fights, of final victory! You see then how the Spirit brings a liberty into the soul. It brings us out of that cursed kingdom of Satan and sin. It brings us out of the curse of God and the law in justification; and it brings us from the dominion and tyranny of sin, by a spirit of sanctification. But this is not all that is in liberty; for the Spirit doth not only free us from all that is ill, from sin, but from that that follows it. There is some ill that follows, as fear and terrors of conscience, &c. They follow sin and death and wrath, and such like, the subjection to these. Now, where the Spirit of God is, it frees from the ill consequents, from the tail that follows sin. Where the Spirit is, it frees us from fear; for the same Spirit that tells us in justification that God is appeased, the same Spirit frees us from the fear of damnation and death and judgment; from the terrors of an evil conscience. Being 'sprinkled with the blood of Christ,' 1 Peter 1:2, we are freed from fear. And it frees not only from the fear of ill things, but it shews immunity and freedom to good. Liberty implies here two things: a freedom from ill, from a cursed condition, and likewise a liberty to a better; a liberty from ill, and to good. We must take it in the just latitude, because the benefits of Christ are complete, not only privative but positive; not only to free us from ill, but to confer all good to us, as much as our nature is capable of. As much as these souls of ours are capable of, they shall be made free and glorious and happy in heaven, God will leave no part of the soul unfilled, no corner of the soul empty. By little and little he doeth it, as we shall see in the next verse. When we are called out of Satan's kingdom we are not only called out of that cursed state, but we are made free of a better kingdom; we are made the members of Christ; we are enfranchised. And so in justification we are not only freed from damnation, from the justice and wrath of God, but likewise we can implead\* our righteousness whereby we have title to heaven, which is a blessed privilege and prerogative. We are not only free from the curse of the law, but likewise we have other gracious prerogatives and privileges. We are not only freed from the dominion of sin, but we are likewise set at liberty by the Spirit to do that that is good. We have a voluntary free spirit to serve God with as great cheerfulness as we served our lusts before; and as we are freed from the rigour and curse of the law, so we have prerogatives to good answerable. We are now by the Spirit set at liberty to delight in the law, to make the law our counsellor, to make the word of God our counsellor. That that terrified and affrighted us before, now it is our direction. Even as he that was a severe schoolmaster to one in his under years, after, when he comes to

years, becomes a wise tutor to guide and direct him; so the law that terrified and whipped us when we were in bondage, till we be in Christ,—it scares us to Christ,—that law after comes to be a tutor, to tell us this we shall do, to counsel us, and say this is the best way; and we come to delight in those truths, when they are discovered to us in the inward man. And the more we know, the more we would know, because we would please God every day better. So that besides freedom from that that is ill, and the consequents of ill, there is a blessed immunity and prerogative and privilege. That is meant here by liberty. For God's works are complete. We must know when he delivers from ill he advanceth to good. His works are full works always. He doth not things by halves. Therefore we have through Christ, and by the Spirit, not only freedom from that that is ill, but advancement to all that is comfortable and graciously good. And one thing give me leave to touch, which though it be more subtle, yet it is useful, that the text puts me to speak of. 'Where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty' of the inward man, liberty of judgment, and liberty of will. Where the Spirit of God is not, there is no liberty, no free will. A little to touch upon that. That which we call free will, it is either taken for a natural power and endowment that God hath put upon the soul, and so the will is alway free in earth and in hell. The devil's will is free so, free to evil. There is the natural freedom; for freedom it is a dowry upon the will, invested upon the will, that God never takes from it. To do it freely, that is, upon reason that it sees, be it good or evil, so I mean not freedom; but I take freedom for ability and strength to that that is good. For any liberty and ability to that that is good is only from the Spirit; and the defence of Luther's and others (b), that wrote of this freedom, is sound and good, that the will of man is slavish altogether, without the Spirit of God. 'Where the Spirit is there is liberty:' liberty as it is taken for power and ability to do good. In a word, there is alway a liberty of the subject, of the person; a liberty of the understanding, but not of the object, to this or to that thing. A liberty to supernatural objects comes from supernatural principles. Nothing moves above its own sphere; nothing is acted above its own activity, that God hath put into it. Now a natural man can do nothing but naturally; for nothing can work above itself, by its own strength, no more than a beast can work according to the principles of a man. Therefore the soul of man hath no liberty at all to that which is spiritually good, without a supernatural principle, that raiseth it above itself, and puts it into the rank of supernatural things.

First, The Spirit of God puts a new life into the soul of a man; and then when he hath done that, it preserves that life against all opposition; and together with preserving that life, it applies that inward life and power it hath put into it to particular works. For when we have a new life, yet we cannot do particular actions without the exciting power of the Spirit of God. The Spirit stirs up to every particular thing, when the soul would be quiet of itself. The moving comes from the Spirit of God. As every particular moving in the body comes from the soul, so the Spirit it puts a new life, it applies that life, it applies the soul to every action. Where the Spirit of God therefore is not, there is no liberty to any supernatural action; but 'where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty.' It follows both negatively and affirmatively. There is a liberty of will to that that is good. So then this riseth from hence, again, that where the Spirit of God is efficacious and effectual in his working, there it robs not the soul of liberty, but perfects that liberty.

You have some divines, too many indeed, that hold that the Holy Ghost only works by way of persuasion upon the soul, and by way of moving, as it were, without; but he doth not enter into the soul, nor alter and change the soul; he doth not work upon the soul as an inward worker, but only as an outward entreater and persuader and allurer, propounding objects, and with objects

persuasions and allurements. This is too shallow a conceit for so deep a business as this; for the Spirit works more deeply than so. It puts a new life into the soul; it takes away the stony heart and gives a fleshly heart, Ezekiel 40:19. Those phrases of Scripture are too weighty to fasten such a shallow sense upon them, only as to entreat them to be converted, as a man would entreat a stone to be warm, and to come out of its place. He might entreat long enough. But the Spirit with that speech, it puts a new life and power, and then acts and stirs that power to all that is good.

Obj. Oh, say they, which is their main objection, here is a prejudice to the liberty of the will! This is to overthrow the nature of man!

Ans. Oh, by no means! This is no prejudice to the liberty of the will; for the Spirit of God is so wise an agent that he works upon the soul, preserving the principles of a man. It alters the judgment by presenting greater reasons, and further light than it saw before; and then it alters the will, that we will contrary to that we did before, by presenting to the will greater reasons to be good than ever it had to be ill before. Then the soul chooseth freely of its own will any thing, when it doth it upon discovery of light and reason, with advisement and reason. Then the soul doth things freely, when it doth them upon the designment of reason, when judgment tells me this is good. Now when the Spirit changeth the soul, it presents such strong reasons to come out of that cursed estate I am in, and to come to the blessed estate in Christ, that the will presently follows that that the understanding presents as the chief good of all. Here the freedom is preserved, because the will is so stirred by the Holy Ghost, as that it stirs itself, being stirred by the Holy Ghost; and upon this ground it sees a better good. So that grace takes not away liberty. No; it stablisheth liberty. Though we hold that in effectual grace the Spirit of God works upon the soul throughly, yet notwithstanding we preserve liberty, because we say that the soul works of its own principles, notwithstanding grace; because the Spirit of God acts and leads the soul according to the nature of the soul. The Spirit of God preserves things in the manner of doing of things. It is the manner of doing of the reasonable creature, to do things freely. Therefore the Spirit working upon the soul, it preserves that modus, though it work effectually upon the soul; and the more effectually it works upon the soul, the more\* the soul is; because it seeth reason to do good. Therefore the more we give to the Spirit in the question of grace and nature, the more we stablish liberty, and prejudice it not. Where these three or four rules are observed, there liberty is preserved, though there be a mighty working of the Holy Spirit; as,

## 10. Four rules concerning the freedom of the Spirit

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### Four rules concerning the freedom of the Spirit

First, Where the will chooseth and makes choice, and inclines to a thing with the advisement of reason. Always that must be, or else it is not a human action. Now when the Spirit of God sets the will at liberty, a man doth that he doth with full advisement of reason; for though God work upon the will, it is with enlightening of the understanding at the same time; and all grace in the will comes through the understanding, as all heat upon inferior things it comes with light. So that though heat cherish the earth, it comes with light. So all the work upon the soul is by the heat of the Spirit. But it comes from the light of the understanding. So the freedom of the soul is preserved, because it is with light.

Second; Again, where freedom is, there is a power to apprehend other things, as well as that it doth; to reason on both sides, I may do this or that. For that power to reason on both sides is proper to the soul always. Now grace takes not away that power to reason on both sides; for when a man is set at liberty from the base slavery of ill to do good, he can reason with himself, I might have done this and that if I would be damned. So that the judgment is not bound to one thing only, but the judgment tells him he might have done otherwise if he would; but he sees he must do this if he will not be damned.

Third; Again, where there is liberty and freedom, there is an enlargement to understand more things than one, or else there were no freedom; and though the soul be determined to choose one thing, and not many, yet of itself it hath power to choose many things. To make this clear a little: some creatures are confined to one thing, out of the narrowness of the parts they have; some are confined to one thing, out of the largeness of parts. These seem contrary, but thus I will give this instance to make it clear. The creature that is unreasonable\* is always confined to one manner of working, because they want understanding to work in a diverse manner. Birds make their nests and bees make their hives always after one manner, because of their narrowness, that they have not choice.

Now when the Spirit sets a man at liberty to holy things, he is confined to good; especiall[y] this is in heaven. This is out of largeness of understanding, apprehending many goods and many ills; and that good that he conceives to be the best good, out of a large understanding he is determined to that one. So that, though the Spirit of God take away as it were that present liberty that a man cannot do ill,—it will not suffer him to be so bad as he was,—yet it leaves him in a state of good, to do a multitude of good things. And then, though it confine him to a state of happiness, that he cannot will the contrary, yet here is no liberty taken away, because it is done out of strength of knowledge, not out of narrowness; because there is no more things for him to judge, but out of largeness, telling him this is the best of all, and carries all the soul after it. The glory of heaven robs not a man of his power.

What is the reason they are determined eternally to that that is good? Is it for want of understanding that the angels choose not ill? No! They know what ill is by speculation, but there is a strength of understanding to know that that is good; and the understanding, where it hath full light, it carries the will to choose. Therefore 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Notwithstanding all objections to the contrary, the Spirit takes not away, nay, it strengtheneth, the liberty of the soul. It is an idle objection and a great stay of many that are willing to be deceived, Oh if grace confine a man, determine him, as the word is, sway him one way perpetually, that he holds on to the end, and leaves him not at liberty to his will, this confining and swaying one way it is an abridging him of his liberty, &c. No. For it comes not from weakness of understanding, but from strength of understanding; and it is perfect liberty to do well. Therefore, on the contrary, it is so far from abridging the liberty of the soul that it cannot do ill, or that it cannot but persevere to do good, that it is the strength of liberty. For I would know whether the first Adam's liberty were greater, or the liberty in heaven, the second Adam's liberty? Our liberty in grace or that in glory? The liberty of the first man was, that he might not sin if he would; the liberty of Christ was, that he could not sin at all. Which think you was the chief? He that could not, or he that might not sin if he would? Was there not a more gracious and blessed liberty in Christ than in Adam, when he might not sin if he would? Is this a worse liberty then when a man cannot sin? So when the Spirit of God bears that sway over the soul, and takes away that potentiality and possibility to sin, that a man cannot sin, because he will not, his will is so carried by the strength of judgment, this is the greatest good. I will not move out of this circle. If I go out of this I shall be unhappy. And this is the greatest liberty of all.

What do we pray in the Lord's prayer but for this liberty? 'Thy will be done,' Matthew 6:10. That is, take me out of my own will more and more; conform my will to thine in all things. The more I do so, the more liberty I have. The strength of that petition is, that we may have perfect liberty in serving God. The greatest and sweetest liberty is, when we have no liberty to sin at all; when we cannot sin. It is greater chastity not to have power to resist, to be impregnable in continence and sobriety. When there is such a measure of these graces as they are not to be overcome, it is greater strength than when they may be prevailed over. So men mistake to think this the greatest liberty to have power to good or evil. That is the imperfection of the creature. Man was at the first created free to either good or evil of himself, that he might fall of himself. This was not strength, but a thing that followed the creature that came out of nothing, and that was subject to fall to his own principles again. But to have the soul established that it shall not have freedom to ill, it is so established in good. It hath the understanding so enlightened, and the will so confirmed and strengthened, that it is without danger of temptation. That is properly glorious liberty, and that is the better endowment of both, so that we see it clearly that grace takes not away liberty, but establisheth it.

Now besides this inward spiritual liberty that we have by the Spirit, there is an outward preserving liberty that must be a little touched, and that is twofold.

## 11. Liberty of the gospel

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Liberty of the gospel

(1.) A liberty of preaching the gospel; and (2.) A liberty of discipline, as we call it; of government that is in the church of God; and should be at least in all places, because we are men, and must have such helps. Now these are liberties that the Spirit bestows upon the church wheresoever there is an inward spiritual liberty. Men are brought into the church by the liberty of the gospel, and preserved by government. There must be a subjection to pastors; there must be teaching and some discipline, or else all will be in a confusion. Now this inward liberty is wrought by the liberty of the gospel.

Quest. What is the liberty of the gospel?

Ans. When there is a blessed liberty in the church to have true liberty opened, the charter of our liberty.

Quest. What is the charter of our liberty?

Ans. The word of God. When the charter and patent of our liberty is laid open, in laying it open we come to have interest in those liberties. Therefore the liberty of the temple, the liberty of the church, of the word and sacraments, and some order in the church with it, it brings in spiritual liberty and preserves it. It is as it were the bonds and sinews of the church. Now where the Spirit of God is with the gospel, there is this liberty of the gospel; there are the doors of the temple and sanctuary set open, as, blessed be God, this kingdom hath had. With the spiritual liberty, there is an outward liberty of the tabernacle of God and the house of God, that we can all meet to hear the word of God and to receive the sacraments; that we can all meet to call upon God in spirit and in truth; and these outward liberties, beloved, are blessed liberties. For where God gives these outward liberties, he intends to bestow and to convey spiritual liberty. How shall we come to spiritual liberty without unfolding the charter, the word of God? Therefore Christ hath established a ministry, apostles, and doctors,\* and pastors, to edify the church to the end of the world; and therefore we see where there is no outward liberty of unfolding the word, where there is no outward liberty of the ministry, there wants this inward liberty. For God by the preaching of the gospel sets us at liberty.

Again, when Christ preached the gospel first, it was the year of jubilee. Now, in the year of jubilee, all servants were set at liberty, and those that had not sold† their inheritances might recover them again if they would. This jubilee was a type of the spiritual liberty that the gospel sets us at. Those that have served sin and Satan before, if they will regard the gracious promises of the gospel, they may of slaves of sin and Satan become the free men of Jesus Christ. But in those times some would be servants still, and would not be set at liberty. Their ears were bored for perpetual slaves;‡ and it is pity but their ears should be bored for everlasting slaves, that now, in the glorious jubilee of the gospel, resolve still to be slaves. When a proclamation of liberty was made to come out of Babylon all that would, many would stick there still. So many are in love with Egypt and

Babylon and slavery. It is pity but they should be slaves. But those that have more noble spirits, as they desire liberty, so they should desire spiritual liberty especially. And here you see how to come by it. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;' and where the ordinance of God is; that is, the ministry of the Spirit, there is the Spirit. Where these outward liberties are, it is a sign that God hath an intendment to set men at spiritual liberty.

Those, therefore, that are enemies of the dispensation of the gospel in the ministry, they are enemies to spiritual liberty; and it is an argument that a man is in bondage to Satan when he is an enemy any way of the unfolding of the word of God. For it is an argument that he is licentious, that he will not be called to spiritual liberty, but live according to the flesh; when he will not hear of the liberty of the Spirit, as you have some kind of men that account it a bondage, 'Let us break their bands, and cast away their cords,' Psalms 2:3. Why should we be tied with the word and with these holy things? It is better that we have no preaching, no order at all, but live every man as he would. Though they speak not so in words, yet their lives and profane carriage shew that they regard not outward liberties; and that argueth that they are in spiritual bondage, and that they have no interest in spiritual liberty, because they are enemies of that whereby spiritual liberty is preserved.

Therefore the gospel is set out by that phrase, 'The kingdom of God.' Not only the kingdom of God set up in our hearts, the kingdom of the Spirit, but likewise where the gospel is preached, there is the kingdom of God. Why? Because with the dispensation of divine truth Christ comes to rule in the heart; by the outward kingdom comes the spiritual kingdom. They come under one name.

Therefore those that would have the spiritual kingdom of God, by grace and peace to rule in their hearts till they reign for ever in heaven, they must come by this door, by the ministry, by the outward ordinance. The ordinance brings them to grace; and grace to glory. And it is a good and sweet sign of a man spiritually set at liberty, brought out of the kingdom of Satan, and freed from the guilt of sin, and from the dominion of sin, which is broken in sanctification, when we can meekly and cheerfully submit to the ordinance of God, with a desire to have his spiritual thraldom discovered, and to have spiritual duties unfolded, and the riches of Christ laid open. When he hears these things with a taste and relish, and a love, it is a sign God loves his soul, and that he hath interest in spiritual liberty, because he can improve the charter of his soul so well. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' And besides this liberty in this world, there is a liberty of glory, called 'the liberty of the sons of God,' Romans 8:21. The liberty of our bodies from corruption, the glorious liberty in heaven, when we shall be perfectly free. For, alas! in this world we are free to fight, not free from fight; and we are free, not from misery, but free from thraldom to misery. But then we shall be free from the encounter and encumbrance. 'All tears shall be wiped from our eyes,' Revelation 7:17. We shall be free from all hurt of body, in sickness and the like, and free from all the remainders of sin in our souls: that is perfect liberty, perfect redemption, and perfect adoption, both of body and soul. And that we have by the Spirit too; for where the Spirit of God is, there is that too in this world in the beginning of it. For, beloved, what is peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost? Is it not the beginnings of heaven? Is it not a grape of the heavenly Canaan? Is it not the Spirit that we have here an earnest of that inheritance? An earnest penny; and an earnest is a piece of the bargain. It is never taken away, but is made up with the bargain. Therefore, when by the Spirit we have the beginnings of grace and comfort, we have the beginnings of that glorious liberty; and it assures us of that glorious liberty as sure as we have the

earnest. For God never repents of his bargain that he makes with his children. Grace in some sort is glory, as we see in the next verse; because grace is the beginning of glory. It frees the soul from terror and subjection to sin, from the thralldom of sin. So the life of glory is begun in grace. We have the life of glory begun by the Spirit, this glorious life.

## 12. Uses

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### Uses

Use 1. If we have all these blessed liberties in this world and in that to come by the Spirit, then we should labour to have the Spirit of Christ, or else we have no liberty at all; and labour every day more and more to get this spiritual liberty in our consciences, to have our consciences assured by the Spirit that our sins are forgiven, and to feel in our consciences a power to bring under sin that hath tyrannized over us before. Let us every day more and more labour to find this spiritual liberty, and prize daily more the ordinances of God, sanctified to set us at liberty. Attend upon spiritual means, that God hath sanctified, wherein he will convey the Spirit. There were certain times wherein the angel came to stir the waters of the pool, John 5:3. So the Spirit of God stirs the waters of the word and ordinances, and makes them effectual. Attend upon the ordinances of God, the communion of saints, &c., and the Spirit of God will slide into our souls in the use of holy means. There is no man but he finds experience of it. He finds himself raised above himself in the use of holy means. The more we know the gospel, the more we have of the Spirit; and the more Spirit we have, the more liberty we enjoy. If we prize and value outward liberty, as indeed we do, and we are naturally moved to do it, how should we prize the charter of our spiritual liberty, the word of God, and the promises of salvation (whereby we come to know all our liberty, where we have all the promises opened to us; the promise of forgiveness of sins, of necessary grace; the promise of comfort in all conditions whatsoever). Therefore let us every day labour to grow farther and farther both in the knowledge and in the taste and feeling of this spiritual liberty.

## 13. Signs of Spiritual Liberty

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### Signs of Spiritual Liberty

Use 2. Oh beloved, what a blessed condition it is to have this spiritual liberty! Do but see the blessed use and comfort of it in all conditions. For if a man hath the Spirit of God to set him at spiritual liberty, in all temptations, either to sin, he hath the Spirit of God to free him from temptation; or, if temptation catch hold on him for sin, he hath the Spirit of God to fly to, the blood of Christ, to shew that if he confess his sins and lay hold on Christ, he hath pardon of sin; and the blood of Christ 'speaks better things than the blood of Abel.' It speaks mercy and peace. If he by faith sprinkle it upon his soul, if he know the liberty of justification, and make use of it: what a blessed liberty is this when we have sinned! In restraint of the outward man. If ever God restrain us to humble us, what a blessed thing is this, that the spirit is at liberty! and that is the best part of a man. A man may have a free conscience and mind, in a restrained condition; and a man may be restrained in a free state. In the guilt of sin, bound over to the wrath of God, and bound over to another evil day, a man in the greatest thralldom may have liberty. What a blessed condition is this! So in sickness, to consider that there is a glorious liberty of the sons of God, and a redemption of body, as well as of soul, that this base body of mine shall be like Christ's glorious body; that there is a resurrection to glory—the resurrection will make amends for all these sicknesses and ills of body—what a comfort is it to think of the resurrection to glory! And so when death comes, to know that by the blood of Christ there is a liberty to enter into heaven; that Christ by his blood hath opened a passage to heaven. And so in all necessities, to think I have a liberty to the throne of grace; I am free of heaven; I am free of the company of saints in earth and in heaven too; I am free to have communion with God; I have a freedom in all the promises;—what a sweet thing is this, in all wants and necessities, to use a spiritual liberty, to have the ear of God, as a favourite in heaven! Not only to be free from the wrath of God, but to have his favour, to have his care in all our necessities: what a blessed liberty is this, that a man may go with boldness to the throne of grace by the Spirit of Christ!

Beloved, it is invaluable. There is not the least branch of this spiritual liberty but it is worth a thousand worlds. How should we value it, and bless God for giving Christ to work this blessed liberty; and for giving his Spirit to apply it to us more and more, and to set us more and more at spiritual liberty. For both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all join in this spiritual liberty. The Father gives the Son, and he gives the Spirit; and all to set us free. It is a comfortable and blessed condition.

Use 3. But how shall we know whether we be set at liberty or no? Because all will pretend a liberty from the law and from the curse of God, and his wrath in justification? And though it be the foundation of all, I will not speak of that, but of that that always accompanies it, a liberty of holiness, a liberty to serve God, a liberty from bondage to lusts, and to Satan. Therefore,

(1.) Wheresoever the Spirit of God is, there is a liberty of holiness, to free us from the dominion of any one sin. We are freed 'to serve him in holiness all the days of our lives,' Luke 1:75. Where the

Spirit therefore is, it will free a man from thralldom to sin, even to any one sin. For the Spirit discovers to the soul the odiousness of the bondage. For a man to be a slave to Satan, who is his enemy, a cruel enemy, what an odious thing is this! Now whosoever is enthralled to any lust, is in thralldom to Satan by that lust. Therefore where this liberty is, there cannot be slavery to any one lust. Satan therefore cares not how many sins one leaves, if he live in any one sin; for he hath them in one sin, and can pull them in by one sin. As children when they have a bird, they can give it leave to fly, so it be in a string to pull it back again; so Satan hath men in a string, if they live in any one sin. The Spirit of Christ is not there, but Satan's spirit, and he can pull them in when he will. The beast that runs away with a cord about him, he is caught by the cord again; so when we leave many sins, and yet notwithstanding carry his cords about us, he can pull us in when he lists. Such are prisoners at liberty more than others, but notwithstanding they are slaves to Satan by that, and where Satan keeps possession by one sin, and rules there, there is no liberty. For the spirit of sanctification where it is, is a counter-poison to the corruption of nature, and it is opposite to it, in all the powers of the soul. It suffers no corruption to get head.

(2.) Again, where this liberty from the Spirit is, there is not only a freedom from all gross sins, but likewise a blessed freedom to all duties, an enlargement of heart to duties. God's people are a voluntary people. Those that are under grace, they are 'anointed by the Spirit,' Psalms 89:20, and that spiritual anointment makes them nimble. Christian is nothing but anointed.\* Now he that is truly anointed by the Spirit, is nimble, and quick, and active in that that is good in some degree and proportion. One use of anointing is to make the members nimble, and agile, and strong; so the Spirit of God is a spirit of cheerfulness and strength where it is. Therefore those that find some cheerfulness and strength to perform holy services, to hear the word, to pray to God, and to perform holy duties, it is a sign that this comes from the Spirit of God. The Spirit sets them at this liberty, because otherwise spiritual duties are as opposite to flesh and blood as fire and water. When we are drawn therefore to duties, as a bear to a stake, as we say, with foreign motives, for fear, or out of custom, with extrinsecal motives, and not from a new nature, this is not from the Spirit. This performance is not from the true liberty of the Spirit. For the liberty of the Spirit is, when actions come off naturally without force of fear or hope, or any extrinsecal motive. A child needs not extrinsecal motives to please his father. When he knows he is the child of a loving father, it is natural. So there is a new nature in those that have the Spirit of God to stir them up to duty, though God's motives may help as the sweet encouragements and rewards. But the principal is to do things naturally, not for fear, or for giving content to this or that man.

Artificial things move from a principle without them, therefore they are artificial. Clocks and such things have weights that stir all the wheels they go by, and that move them; so it is with an artificial Christian that composeth himself to a course of religion. He moves with weights without him; he hath not an inward principle of the Spirit to make things natural to him, and to excite and make him do things naturally and sweetly. 'Where the Spirit of God is, there is freedom;' that is, a kind of natural freedom, not forced, not moved by any foreign extrinsecal motive.

(3.) Again, where the freedom of spirit is, there is a kind of courage against all opposition whatsoever, joined with a kind of light and strength of faith, breaking through all oppositions. A consideration of the excellent state I am in; of the vileness of the state we are moved to by opposition;—when the Spirit discovers these things with a kind of conviction, what is all opposition to a spiritual man? It adds but courage and strength to him to resist. The more opposition, the

more courage he hath. In Acts 4:23, seq., when they had the Spirit of God, they opposed opposition; and the more they were opposed, the more they grew. They were cast in prison, and rejoiced; and the more they were imprisoned, the more courageous they were still. There is no setting against this wind, nor no quenching of this fire, by any human power, where it is true; for the Spirit of God, where it sets a man at liberty indeed, it gathers strength by opposition. See how the Spirit triumphed in the martyrs over all opposition, fire, and imprisonment, and all. The Spirit in them set them at liberty from such base fears, that it prevails in them over all. The Spirit of God, where it is, is a victorious Spirit. It frees the soul from base fears of any creature. 'If God be on our side, who shall be against us?' Romans 8:33-34. It is said of St Stephen, that they could not withstand the Spirit by which he spake, Acts 6:10; and Christ promiseth a Spirit that all the enemies shall not be able to withstand: so those that are God's children, in the time of opposition, when they understand themselves and that to which they stand, God gives them a Spirit against which all their enemies cannot stand. The Spirit of Christ in Stephen put such a glory upon him, that he looked as if he had been an angel, Acts 6:15; so the Spirit of liberty, where it is, it is with boldness, and strength, and courage against opposition. Those, therefore, that are awed with every petty thing for standing in a good cause, they have not the Spirit of Christ; for where that is, it frees men from these base fears, especially if the cause be God's.

(4.) Again, where the Spirit of liberty is, it gives boldness with God himself, and thus it is known especially where it is: 'where the Spirit is, there is liberty.' What to do? Even to go to God himself, that otherwise is a 'consuming fire,' Hebrews 12:29. For the Spirit of Christ goes through the mediation of Christ to God. Christ, by his Spirit, leads us to God. He that hath not the Spirit of God cannot go to God with a spirit of boldness. Therefore, when a man is in affliction, in the time of temptation or great affliction, especially when there is opposition, he may best judge what he is in truth. When a man is in temptation, or opposition from the world, within or without, and can go boldly to God, and pour out his soul to God freely and boldly as to a father, this comes from the Spirit of liberty. Where the Spirit of Christ is not, though the parts be never so strong, or never so great, it will never do thus. Take another man, in the time of extremity, he sinks; but take a child of God in extremity, yet he hath a spirit to go to God, and to cry, Abba, Father; to go in a familiar manner to God. Saul was a mighty man. When he was in anguish, he could not go to God. Cain could not go to God. Judas, a man of great knowledge, he could not go to God. His heart was naught;\* he had not the Spirit of Christ, but the spirit of the devil; and the spirit of bondage bound him over for his treason to hell and destruction; because he had not the Spirit to go to God, but accounted him his enemy; he had betrayed Christ. If he had said as much to God as he did to the scribes and Pharisees, he might have had mercy in the force of the thing. I speak not of the decree of God, but in the nature of the thing itself. If he had said so much to Christ and to God, he might have found mercy. So let a man be never so great a sinner, if he can go to God, and spread his soul, and lay open his sins with any remorse; if he can come, and open his soul in confession and in petition, and beg mercy of God in Christ, to shine as a Father upon his soul—this Spirit of liberty to go to God, it argues that the Spirit of Christ is there, because there is liberty to go to God. In Romans 8:26, speaking there of comfort in afflictions, this is one among the rest, 'that the children of God have the Spirit of God, to stir up sighs and groans.' Now, where the Spirit of God stirs up sighs and groans, God understands the meaning of his own Spirit. There is the spirit of liberty, and there is; the spirit of sons; for a spirit of liberty is the spirit of a son. A man may know that he is the son of God, and a member of Christ; and that he hath the spirit of liberty in him, if he can, in

affliction and trouble, sigh and groan to God in the name and mediation of Christ; for the Spirit stirs up groans and sighs: they come from the Spirit. That familiar boldness whereby we cry 'Abba, Father,' it comes from sons. They only can cry so. This comes from the Spirit. If we be sons, then we have the Spirit, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. So, if we can go to God with a sweet familiarity,—Father, have mercy upon me, forgive me; look in the bowels of pity upon me,—this sweet boldness and familiarity, it comes from the spirit of liberty, and shews that we are sons, and not bastards. Your strong, rebellious, sturdy-hearted persons, who think to work out [of] their misery, out of the strength of parts and friends, &c., they die in despair. Their sorrows are too good for them. But when a broken soul goes to God in Christ with boldness, this opening of the soul to God, it is a sign of liberty, and of the liberty of sons, for this liberty here is the liberty of sons, of a spouse, of kings, of members of Christ: the sweetest liberty that can be imagined. It is the liberty that those sweet relations breed of a wife to the husband, and of loving subjects to their prince, and of children to their father. Here is a sweet liberty; and 'where the Spirit of God is, there is all this sweet liberty.'

## 14. Three degrees in the way to heaven

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Three degrees in the way to heaven There are three degrees that a man is in, that is in the way to heaven.

[1.] The state of nature, when he cares neither for heaven nor hell in a manner, so he may have sensual nature pleased, and go on without fear or wit,\* without grace, nay, without the principles of nature, so he may satisfy himself in a course of sin. That is the worst state, the state of nature.

[2.] But God, if he belong to him, will not suffer him to be in this sottish and brutish condition long, but brings him under the law; that is, he sets his own corrupt nature before him, he shews him the course of his life, and then he is afraid of God: 'Depart from me, I am a sinner;' as Adam he ran from God when he had sinned, that was sweet to him before; so a brute man, when he is awakened with conscience of sin, considering that there is but a step between him and hell, and considering what a God he hath to deal with, and that after death there is eternal damnation,—when the Spirit of God hath convinced him of this, then he is in a state of fear, and when he is in this state, he is unfit to have liberty to run to God. He useth all his power to shift from God all he can, and hates God, and wisheth there were no God, and trembles at the very thought of God, and of death, &c.

[3.] Oh, but if a man belong to God, God will not leave him in this condition (and though this be better than the first, it is better that a man were out of his wits almost, than to be senseless as a block); there is another condition spoken of here, that is, of liberty; when God by his Spirit discovers to him in Christ forgiveness of sins, the gracious face of God ready to receive him, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden,' Matthew 11:28, saith Christ; and 'where sin hath abounded, grace more abounds,' Romans 5:20; when a man hears this still sweet voice of the gospel, he begins then to take comfort to himself, then he goes to God freely. Now all in this state of freedom, take them at the worst, they have boldness to go to God. David in his extremity, he runs to God. David trusted in the Lord his God. When he was at his wits' end, what doth Saul in his extremity? He runs to his sword's point, Judges 9:54, seq. Take a man under nature, or under the law, in extremity, the greater wit he hath, the more he entangleth himself. His wit serves to entangle him, to weave a web of his own despair. But take a gracious man, that is acquainted with God in Christ, in such a man there is a liberty to go to God at the lowest; for he hath the Spirit of Christ in him. What did the Spirit in Christ himself direct him to do at the lowest? 'O my God, my God,' Mark 15:34. In the deepest desertion, yet 'my God.' There was a liberty to go to God. So take a Christian that hath the same Spirit in him, as indeed he hath, 'My God' still. He owns God and knows him in all extremity.

Many are discovered hence to have no Spirit of God in them. In trouble whither go they? To their purse, to their friends, to anything. They labour to overcome their troubles one way or other, by physic and the like, but never to go with boldness and comfort, and a kind of familiarity to God. They have no familiarity with God. Therefore they have not a Spirit of liberty.

[4.] Again, where this Spirit of liberty is, as there is a freedom to go to God, so in regard of the creature and the things here below, there is a freedom from popular, vulgar conceits, from the errors of the times and the slavish courses of the times.

There are always two sorts of wicked persons in the world.

(1.) The one who accounts it their heaven and happiness, to domineer over others; to bring them into subjection, and to rule over their consciences if they can, and sell all to please them, conscience and all.

(2.) Another sort again, so they may gain, they will sell their liberty, their reason and all: if it be but for a poor thing, so they may get anything that they value in the world, to make them beasts, as if they had no reasonable understanding souls, much less grace. Between those two, some domineering and others beastly serving, a few that go upon terms of Christianity, are of sound judgment. Now where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty, that is, a freedom not to enthrall our judgments to any man, much less conscience. The judgment of man enlightened by reason is above any creature; for reason is a beam of God, and all the persons in the world ought not to think to have power over a man, to say anything against his knowledge.\* It is to say against God, if it be but in civil matters, be it what it will Judgment is the spark of God. Nature is but God's candle. It is a light of the same light that grace is of, but inferior. For a man to speak against his conscience to please men, where is liberty! For a man to enthrall his conscience to please another man! No man that hath the spirit of a man will be so pharisaical, to say as another man saith, and to judge as another man judgeth, and to do all as another man doth, without seeing some reason himself; going upon the principles of a man himself. It is true of a man as a man, unless he will unman himself. It is much more true of a Christian man. He will not for base fears and engagements enthrall his conscience, and sell heaven and happiness and his comfort for this and that; and those that do it, though they talk of liberty, they are slaves; though they domineer in the world, the curse of Cain\* is upon them, they are slaves of slaves.

Therefore, where the Spirit of Christ is, there is an independent liberty. A man is independent upon any other man, further than he sees it agrees with the rules of religion; and he is dependent only upon God, and upon divine principles and grounds. The apostle saith, 'The spiritual man judgeth all things, and is judged of none,' 1 Corinthians 2:15. So far as a man is 'led with the Spirit,' Romans 8:14, he discerns things in the light of the Spirit. He judgeth all things to be as they are, in the light of the Spirit, and is judged of none. His meaning is not, that none will usurp judgment of him, for that they will do. The emptiest men are most rash and censorious; but he is judged of none aright. It is a fool's bolt. But the spiritual man indeed passeth a right verdict upon persons and things, as far as he is spiritual. And that is the reason that carnal men especially hate spiritual men above all things. They hate men that have a natural conscience, that judge according to the light of reason, for that is above any creature. When a man will not say white is black, that good is evil, to please any man in the world, a man that hath a natural conscience will not do this. And this is very distasteful. Where men idolise themselves they love not such, but such as are slaves to them. But much more, when a man is spiritual, he judgeth all things and censureth them and their courses; for he is above all, and seeth all beneath him. Therefore the greatest men in the world are holy men. They are above all other men, and without usurpation, they pass a censure upon the course and state of other men, though they be never so great. Howsoever the image of God is

upon them, in regard of their authority and the like, yet in their dispositions they are base, and slaves to their corruptions and to Satan. They are not out of the base rank of nature. Now a man that is a child of God, he is taken into a better condition, and hath a spiritual liberty in him. 'He judgeth all things and is judged of none.' They may call him this and that; it is but malice, and a spice of the sin against the Holy Ghost; but their hearts tell them he is otherwise. He shall judge them ere long, for 'the saints shall judge the world.'† Therefore Christians should know, and take notice of their excellency. 'Where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty' to judge all things as far as they come within their reach and calling, to judge aright of all things. Therefore we should know how to maintain the credit of a Christian, that is, to maintain a liberty independent upon all but God; and other things with reservation, as far as they agree with conscience and religion. Thus we see how we may judge of this liberty. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

He doth not say licentiousness to shake off all government; for by too much licentiousness all liberty is lost; but 'where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty.' For a true Christian is the greatest servant and the greatest freeman in the world; for he hath a spirit that will yield to none. In things spiritual he reserves a liberty for his judgment, yet for outward conformity of life and conversation he is a servant to all, to do them good. Love makes him a servant. Christ was the greatest servant that ever was. He was both the servant of God and our servant. And there is none so free. The greater portion of the Spirit, the more inward and spiritual freedom; and the more freedom, the more disposition to serve one another in love, and to do all things that a man should do outwardly, all things that are lawful. We must take heed of that, mistake not this spiritual liberty. It stands with conformity to all good laws and all good orders, and there is a great mistake of carnal men for want of this. They think it liberty to do as men list.\* It is true, if a man have a strong and a holy understanding, to be a good leader to it, but it is the greatest bondage in the world, to have most freedom in ill. As I said before, those that are most free in ill are most slaves of all; for their corruptions will not suffer them to hear good things, to be where good things are spoken, to accompany with those that are good, their corruptions hath them in so narrow a custody. Some kind of men, their corruptions are so malignant and binding, that they will not suffer them to be in any opportunity wherein their corruptions may be restrained at all, but they hate the very sight of persons that may restrain them, and all laws that might restrain them. Now this is the greatest slavery in the world, for a man to have no acquaintance with that that is contrary to his corrupt disposition.

Well, 'new lords new laws,' as soon as ever a man is in Christ and hath Christ's Spirit, he hath another law in his soul to rule him contrary to that that there was before. Before he was ruled by the law of his lusts, that carried him whither he would; but now in Christ he hath a new Lord and a new law, and that rules him according to the regiment† of the Spirit, 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ hath freed me from the law of sin and of death, Romans 8:2.

Use 4. Again, seeing where the Spirit of God is, there is this sweet and glorious liberty, let us take heed by all means that we do not grieve the Spirit. When we find the Holy Ghost in the use of any good means to touch upon our souls, Oh give him entrance and way to come into his own chamber, as it were to provide a room for himself; as Cyprian saith, Consecra habitaculum, &c., enter into thy bedchamber; consecrate a habitation for thyself (c). So let us give him way to come into our souls when he knocks by his motions. We that live in the church, there is none of us all but our hearts tell us that we have often resisted the Holy Ghost. We might have been saved if we had

not been rebellious and opposite. Grieve not the Spirit by any means.

## 15. How the Spirit is grieved

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How the Spirit is grieved Quest. How is the Spirit grieved?

Ans. Especially these two or three ways.

(1.) The Spirit being a Spirit of holiness, is grieved with unclean courses, with unclean motions and words and actions. He is called the Holy Spirit, and he stirs up in the soul holy motions like himself. He breathes into us holy motions, and he breathes out of us good and holy and savoury words, and stirs us up to holy actions. Now when we give liberty to our mouths to speak rottenly, to swear—I am ashamed almost to name that word—when we give liberty to such filthiness, is not this a grieving of the Spirit, if we have the Spirit at all? If we have not a care to grieve ourselves, do we not grieve all about us? Therefore take heed of all filthy unholy words, thoughts, or carriages. It grieves the Spirit.

(2.) Then the Spirit is a Spirit of love, take heed of canker and malice. We grieve the Spirit of God by cherishing canker and malice one against another. It drives away the sweet spirit of love. Therefore make conscience of grieving the Spirit. He will not rest in a malicious heart who is the Spirit of love.

(3.) Again, the Spirit of Christ, wheresoever it is, it is joined with a spirit of humility. 'God gives grace to the humble,' James 4:6. It empties the soul that it may fill it. It empties it of what is in it, of windy vanity, and fills it with itself. Therefore those that are filled with vain, high, proud conceits, they grieve and keep out the good Spirit of God; for we should empty our souls that the Spirit of God may have a large dwelling there, or else we grieve the Spirit.

(4.) In a word, any sin against conscience grieves the Spirit of God, and hinders spiritual liberty, because 'where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty.' Would we preserve liberty, we must preserve the Spirit. If we sin against conscience, we hinder liberty every way. We hinder our liberty to good duties. When a man sins against conscience he is dead to good actions. Conscience tells him, Why do you go about it, you have done this and that? He is shackled in his performances; he cannot go so naturally to prayer and to hearing. Conscience lays a clog upon him.

[1.] He is shackled, in prayer especially; he hath not liberty to the throne of grace. How dares he look to heaven, when he hath grieved the Spirit of God, and broken the peace of his conscience? What communion hath he with God? So it hinders peace with God. A man cannot look Christ in the face. As a man, when he hath wronged another man, he is ashamed to look on him, so the soul when it hath run into sins against conscience, it is ashamed to look on Christ, and to go to God again. Therefore any sin against conscience grieves the Spirit, and hinders all sweet liberty that was before. It takes away the degree of it.

[2.] It hinders boldness with men, for what makes a man courageous in his dealings with men? A clear conscience. Let it be the stoutest man in the world, let him maintain any lust against conscience, it will make him so far a slave; for when it comes to the crossing of that lust once, then

you shall see he will even betray all his former stoutness and strength. If a man be covetous and ambitious, he may be stout for a time, but when he comes to be crossed it will take away all liberty that a man hath, to cherish any sin. In a word, to preserve this liberty, let us go to Christ, from whom we have this liberty; complain to him. When we find any corruption stirring, go to the Lord in the words of St Austin, and say, 'Now, Lord, free me from my necessities.\* I cannot serve thee as I should do, nor as I would do. I am enthralled to sin, but I would do better. I cannot do so well as I would; free me from my necessities. Complain of our corruptions to God. As the woman in the law, when she complained if she were assaulted, she saved her life by complaining, Deuteronomy 22:25-27, so let us complain to Christ if we find violence offered to us by our corruptions. I cannot by my own strength set myself at liberty from this corruption. Lord, give me thy Spirit to do it. Set me more and more at liberty from my former bondage, and from this that hath enthralled me. So complain to Christ, and desire him to do his office. Lord, thy office is 'to dissolve the works of the devil,' 1 John 3:8. And go to the Spirit. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to free us, to be a Spirit of liberty. Now desire Christ and the Holy Ghost to do their office of setting us at spiritual liberty. And this we must do in the use of means and avoiding of occasions, and then it will be efficacious to preserve that spiritual liberty as will tell our consciences that we are no hypocrites; and that will end in a glorious liberty in the life to come. And let this be a comfort to all poor struggling and striving Christians that are not yet set at perfect liberty from their lusts and corruptions; that it is the office of the Spirit of Christ as the King of the church; it is his office by his Spirit to purge the church perfectly, to make it a glorious spouse. At last he will do his own office. And besides this liberty of grace joined with conflict in this world, there is another liberty of glory, when I shall be freed from all oppositions without, and from all conflict and corruption within. It is called 'the liberty of the sons of God,' Romans 8:21, and those that look not more and more for the gracious liberty to be free from passions and corruptions here, they must not look for the glorious liberty in heaven. But those that live a conflicting life, and pray to Christ more and more for the Spirit of liberty to set up a liberty in us, these may look for the liberty of the Son of God, that will be ere long, when we shall be out of reach, and free from corruption; when the Spirit of God shall be all in all. Now our lusts will not suffer the Spirit to be all in all, but in heaven he shall; there shall be nothing to rise against him. This that hath been spoken shall suffice for that 17th verse, 'The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit, of the Lord is there is liberty.' I proceed to the next verse, which I purpose to dwell more on.

Verse 18. 'But we all, as in a glass, with open face behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.' As the sun riseth by degrees till he come to shine in glory, so it was with the Sun of righteousness. He discovered himself in the church by little and little. The latter times now are more glorious than the former; and because comparisons give lustre, the blessed apostle, to set forth the excellency of the administration of the covenant of grace under the gospel, he compares it with the administration of the same covenant in the time of the law; and in the comparison prefers that administration under the gospel as more excellent. Now besides other differences in the chapter, he insists upon three especially.

## 16. Three differences between the Law and the Gospel

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Three differences between the Law and the Gospel They differ in generality, evidence, efficacy.

(1.) First, in regard of the generality, 'We all now with open face,' &c. Moses only beheld the glory of the Lord in the mount, but 'we all,' not all men, but all sound Christians that have their eyes opened; all sorts of believers, behold this glory. In spiritual things there is no envy. Every one may be partaker in solidum, entirely of all. Envy is in the things of this life, where the more one hath the less another hath. It is a matter of glory and excellency the more are partakers of spiritual things. The Jews rejoiced that the Gentiles should be called, and we now rejoice in hope, and should rejoice marvellously if we could see it effected, that the Jews should be taken in again; the more the better; 'we all.'

(2.) And then for evidence. 'We behold with open face,' that is, with freedom and boldness, which was not in the time of the law. For they were afraid to look upon Moses when he came down from the mount, his countenance was so majestic and terrible. But 'we all with open face,' freely, boldly, and cheerfully, look upon the glory of God in the gospel. The light of the gospel is an alluring comforting light; the light of the law was dazzling and terrifying.

'As in a glass.' They beheld God in a glass, but it was not so clear a glass. They beheld him as it were in the water, we behold him in crystal. We see God in the glass of the word and sacraments, but they in a world of ceremonies. Christ was to them swaddled and wrapped up in a great many types.

(3.) And then for the power and efficacy, the gospel is beyond the law. The law had not power to convert, to change into its own likeness; but now the gospel, which is the ministry of the Spirit, it hath a transforming changing power, into the likeness of Christ whom it preacheth. 'We are changed from glory to glory.' It is a gradual change, not all at once, but from glory to glory, from one degree of grace to another; for grace is here called glory. We are changed from the state of grace till we\* come to heaven, the state of glory. And then the cause of all. It is 'by the Spirit of the Lord.' The Spirit runs through all. It is 'by the Spirit of the Lord' that we behold. It is the Spirit of the Lord that takes away the veil. It is by the Spirit that we are changed from glory to glory.

## 17. Four excellencies in the covenant of grace

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Four excellencies in the covenant of grace

Thus you see how many ways the administration of the covenant of grace now is more excellent than the administration of the covenant of grace was then. In a word it hath four excellencies especially, as,

First, Liberty and freedom from the bondage of ceremonies and of the law. In a great part they had little gospel and a great deal of law mingled with it. We have much gospel and little law. We have more freedom and liberty.

Second, And thereupon we have more clearness. We see Christ more clearly. 'With open face we behold the glory of the Lord.'

Third. And thirdly, there is more intension of grace. The Spirit works more strongly now, even to a change. The ministry of the gospel hath the Spirit with it, whereby we are changed from the heart-root inwardly and thoroughly.

Fourth, And lastly, in the extension. It is more large. 'We all,' Gentiles as well as Jews, 'behold,' &c.

Hence, let us seriously and fruitfully consider in what excellent times the Lord hath cast us, that we may answer it with thankfulness and obedience. God hath reserved us to these glorious times, better than ever our forefathers saw.†

There are three main parts of the text: Our communion and fellowship with God in Christ. 'We all now in a glass behold the glory of the Lord.' And then, Our conformity thereupon. By beholding we are changed into the same image. The third is the cause of both; the cause why we 'behold the glory of God,' and why by beholding 'we are changed from glory to glory;' it is 'the Spirit of God.' This text hath many themes of glory. All is glorious in it. There is the glorious mercy of God in Christ, who is the Lord of glory, the gospel in which we see the grace of God and of Christ; 'The glorious gospel,' 1 Timothy 1:11, the change by which we are changed, a glorious change 'from glory to glory,' and by a glorious power, by 'the Spirit of the Lord,' all here is glorious. Therefore blessed be God, and blessed be Christ, and blessed be the Spirit, and blessed be the gospel, and we blessed that live in these blessed and glorious times! But to come to the words.

'But we all as in a glass,' &c. The happiness of man consists especially in two things: In communion with God, in conformity to God. The means how to attain them both are laid down in this verse.

I shall speak of them in order. First, of our communion with the chief good; and then of the conformity wrought upon that communion. And in the communion, first of God's discovering of himself by his Spirit. And then of our apprehension of him by beholding.

'We all with open face behold the glory of the Lord,' &c. In the glass of the gospel we see Christ, and in Christ the glory of God shining, especially of his mercy. The point then here is, that,

## 18. The grace and free mercy of God his glory

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The grace and free mercy of God his glory

Doct. The grace and free mercy of God is his glory. Now in our fallen estate the glory of God is especially his mercy shining in Jesus Christ.

What is glory?

Glory implieth these things.

[1.] First, Excellency. Nothing is glorious but that that is excellent.

[2.] Secondly, Evidence and manifestation; for nothing is glorious, though it be excellent, if it appear not so. Therefore light is said to be glorious, because the rays of it appear and run into the eyes of all as it were. And therefore we call things that are glorious by the name of light, *illustrissimus* and *clarissimus*, terms taken from light, (d) because where glory is there must be manifestation. Thus light, it is a creature of God that manifests itself and other things.

[3.] Thirdly, Victoriousness. In glory there is such a degree of excellency as is victorious, and convincing that it is so indeed; conquering the contrary that opposeth it. Light causeth darkness to vanish presently. When the sun which is a glorious creature appears, where are the stars? And where are meaner men in the appearance of a glorious prince? They are hid. The meaner things are shadowed by glory.

[4.] Again, usually glory hath with it the suffrage and approbation of others, or else it hath not its right end; that is, Why doth God create such glory in nature as light, and such like, but that men may behold the light? and why are kings and great men glorious at certain times, but that there be beholders? If there were no beholders there would be no glory.

Now to apply this to the point in hand. 'The glory of the Lord;' that is, his attributes, especially that of grace, mercy, and love in Christ. That especially is his excellency. And there is an evidence and manifestation of it. It appears to us in Christ, 'The grace of God had appeared,' Titus 2:11. Christ is called grace. He is the grace of God invested and clothed with man's nature. When Christ appeared, the grace and mercy and love of God appeared.

Then again it is victorious, shining to victory over all that is contrary. For, alas! beloved, what would become of us if there were not grace above sin, and mercy above misery, and power in Christ Jesus above all the power in Satan and death! And then they have a testimony of all that belong to God; for they have their eyes opened to behold this glory, and by beholding are transformed from glory to glory, as we shall see after. So that whatsoever may be said of glory may be said of this glory, whence all other glory indeed is derived.

'The glory of the Lord.' By the glory of the Lord then is meant especially the glory of his mercy and love in Jesus Christ. The several attributes of God shine upon several occasions: They have as it were several theatres whereon to discover their glory. In creation there was power most of all. In

governing the world, wise providence. In hell, justice in punishing sinners. But now to man in a lapsed estate, what attribute shines most, and is most glorious? Oh it is mercy and free grace. If grace and mercy were hid, our state being as it is since the fall, what were all other attributes but matter of terror? To think of the wisdom, and power, and justice of God would add aggravations. He is the more wise and powerful to take revenge on us, &c. Grace is the glorious attribute whereby God doth as it were set himself to triumph over the greatest ill that can be, over sin. That that is worse than the devil himself cannot prevail over his grace. There is a greater height and depth and breadth; there are greater dimensions in love and mercy in Christ than there is in our sins and miseries; and all this is gloriously discovered in the gospel. Do you wonder then why the grace of God hath found such enemies as it hath done alway, especially in popery, where they mingle their works with grace? For the opposite heart of man being in a frame of enmity to God, sets itself most against that that God will be glorified in. Therefore we should labour to vindicate nothing so much as grace. We have a dangerous encroaching sect risen up, enemies to the grace of God, that palliate and cover their plot cunningly and closely, but they set nature against grace. Let us vindicate that upon all occasions; for we live by grace, and we must die by grace, and stand at the day of judgment by grace; not in our own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ, being found in him. But because it is a sweet point, and may serve us all in stead, to consider that God will honour himself gloriously in this sweet attribute, let us see a little how the glory of God shines in Christ more than otherwise; parallel it with other things a little.

## 19. Glory of God greatest in the gospel

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### Glory of God greatest in the gospel

(1.) The glory of God was in Adam; for Adam had the image of God upon him, and had communion and fellowship with God; but there is greater glory now shining in the gospel, in Jesus Christ, to poor sinners. For when man stood in innocency, God did good to a good man, and God was amiable and friendly to a friend. Adam was the friend of God then. Now to do good to him that is good, and to maintain sweet communion with a friend, this is good indeed, and it was a great glory of God's mercy that he would raise such a creature as man hereto. But now in Jesus Christ there is a further glory of mercy; for here God doth good to ill men, and the goodness of God is victorious and triumphant over the greatest misery and the greatest ill of man. Now in the gospel God doth good to his greatest enemies herein, as it is Romans 5:10. God set forth and commended gloriously his love, that 'when we were enemies, he gave his Son for us. Therefore here is greater glory of mercy and love shining forth to fallen man in Christ than to Adam in innocency.

(2.) The glory of God shines in the heavens. 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork,' Psalms 19:1. Every creature hath a beam of God's glory in it. The whole world is a theatre of the glory of God. But what is the glory of creation, of preservation, and governing of the world, to the glory of his mercy and compassion that shines in Christ? The glory of the creature is nothing to this; for all the creatures were made of nothing; but here the glory of mercy is such in Christ that God became a creature himself.

(3.) Nay, to go higher, to the angels themselves. It is not philangelia, but philanthropia that outshines all.\* God is not called the lover of angels. He took not upon him the nature of angels, but the nature of man; and man is the spouse of Christ, the member of Christ. Angels are not so. They are but ministering spirits for the good of them that shall be saved. Christ, as it is Ephesians 1:21, when he rose again, he was 'advanced above all principalities and powers,' therefore above the angelical nature. Now Christ and the church are all one. They make but one mystical body. The church is the queen, and Christ is the king. Therefore Christ mystical, the church, is above all angelical nature whatsoever. The angels are not the queen and spouse of Christ. So the glory of God's goodness is more to man, to sinful man, after he believes and is made one with Christ, than to any creature whatsoever. Thus God hath dignified and advanced our nature in Jesus Christ. Comparisons give lustre. Therefore this shews plainly unto us Christians that the glory of the mercy and love and kindness of God to man in Christ shines more than his glory and mercy and kindness to all the creatures in the world besides. Therefore here is a glory with an excellency. On the other side, nothing more terrible than to consider of God. Out of Christ, what is he but a 'consuming fire'? Hebrews 12:29. But to consider of his mercy, his glorious mercy in Jesus Christ, nothing is more sweet. For in Jesus Christ God hath taken upon him that sweet relation of a Father; 'The Father of mercy, and God of all comfort,' 2 Corinthians 1:3. So that the nature of God is lovely in Christ, and our nature in Christ is lovely to him. And this made the angels, who, though

they have not increase of grace by Christ, yet having increase of comfort and glory, when Christ was born, to sing from heaven 'Glory to God on high,' &c., Luke 2:14. What glory? Why, the glory of his mercy, of his love, of his grace to sinful men. Indeed, there is a glory of wisdom to reconcile justice and mercy together, and a glory of truth to fulfil the promise. But that that sets all attributes for our salvation on work was mercy and grace. Therefore that is the glory of God especially here meant. For as we say in morality, that is the greatest virtue that other virtues serve, so in divinity, that attribute which others serve is the greatest of all. In our salvation, wisdom, yea, and justice itself, serves mercy. For God by his wisdom devised a way to content justice, by sending his Son to take our nature, and in that nature to give satisfaction to justice, that there might be a harmony among the attributes. To make some use of this.

## 20. Uses

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### Uses

Use 1. Doth God manifest his glory? I will not speak at large of glory, being an endless argument, but confine it to the glory of grace and mercy in the gospel, which therefore is called the glory of the gospel. I say, doth God shew such glorious mercy in Christ? Then, I beseech you, let us justify God, and justify this course that God hath taken to glorify his mercy in Jesus Christ, by embracing Christ. It is said of the proud Pharisees, 'they despised the counsel of God,' Luke 7:30. God hath poured out mercy, bowels of mercy, in Christ crucified. Therefore, in embracing Christ, we justify the counsel of God concerning our salvation. Do but consider what a loving God we have, who would not be so far in love with his only Son as to keep him to himself, when we had need of him: a God that accounts himself most glorious in those attributes that are most for our comfort. He accounts not himself so glorious for his wisdom, for his power, or for his justice, as for his mercy and grace, for his philanthropia, his love of man. Shall not we therefore even be inflamed with a desire of gratifying him, who hath joined his glory with our salvation? that accounts himself glorious in his mercy above all other attributes? Shall the angels, that have not that benefit by Christ as we have, shall they in our behalf, out of love to us and zeal to God's glory, sing from heaven, 'Glory to God on high'? and shall we be so dead and frozen-hearted that reap the crop, as not to acknowledge this glory of God, breaking out in the gospel, the glory of his mercy and rich grace? The apostle is so full when he falls upon this theme, that he cannot speak without words of amplification and enlargement; one while he calls it 'rich grace,' Ephesians 1:7, another while he stands in admiration, 'Oh the depth of the love of God,' Romans 11:33. What deserves admiration but glorious things? The best testimony that can be given of glorious things is when we admire them. Now if we would admire, is there anything so admirable that we can say, Oh the height, and depth, as we may of the love of God in Christ? There are all the dimensions of unparalleled glory, height, and breadth, and depth. Therefore, I beseech you, let us often even stand in admiration of the love of God to us in Christ. 'So God loved the world,' John 3:16. The Scripture leads to this admiration by phrases that cannot have a podesis,\* a redition\* back again. 'So.' How? We cannot tell how. 'So' as is beyond all expression. The Scripture itself is at a stand for words. Oh base nature, that we are dazzled with anything but that we should most admire. How few of us spend our thoughts this way, to consider God's wonderful and admirable mercy and grace in Christ, when yet there is no object in the world so sweet and comfortable as this is, that the very angels pry into! They desire to pry into the mystery of our salvation by Christ. They are students therein. The cherubins, they were set upon the mercy seat, having a counterview, one upon another, implying a kind of admiration. They pry into the secrets of God's love in governing his people, and bringing them to heaven. Shall they do it, and shall not we study and admire these things, that God may have the glory? God made all for his glory, beloved; and 'the wicked for the day of wrath,' as Solomon saith, Proverbs 16:4. And hath he not new made all for his glory? Is not the new creature more for his glory than the old creature? Therefore if we will make it good that we are new creatures, let us seek to glorify God every way, not in word alone, but in heart admiring him, and in

life conversing with him. And that we may glorify God in deed, let us glory in God's love; for we must glory in this glory. Nature, beloved, is glorious of itself, and vain-glorious. But would you glory without vanity? Go out of yourselves and see what you are in Christ, in the grace and mercy and free love of God, culling us out from the rest of mankind; and there you may glory safely over sin, and death, and hell. For being justified freely from our sins, you can think of death, of the damnation of others, of hell, without fear. 'God forbid,' saith St Paul, 'that I should glory in anything, but in the cross of Christ,' Galatians 6:14; that is, in the mercy of God appointing such a means for satisfaction. 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man glory in his strength,' &c., Jeremiah 9:23. There is a danger in such glorying. It is subject to a curse. But if a man will glory, let him 'glory in the Lord.'

Use 2. Again, if God account his mercy and love in Christ, especially his glory, shall we think that God will admit of any partner with Christ in the matter of salvation? If, as the psalmist saith, 'he made us, and not we ourselves,' Psalms 100:3, shall we think that we have a hand in making ourselves again? Will God suffer his glory to be touched upon by intercessions of saints' merits, and satisfaction, and free will? Grace is not glorious if we add the least thing of our own to it. Cannot we make a hair of our head, or the grass that we trample upon, but there must be a glory and power of God in it? And can we bring ourselves to heaven? Therefore away with that 'Hail, Mary, full of grace!' 'Hail, Mary, freely beloved!' is the right interpretation; and they that attribute matter of power and grace and favour to her, as in that 'Oh beseech thy Son,' &c., they take away that wherein God and Christ will be glorified, and attribute it to his mother and other creatures (e). I do but touch this, to bring us into loathing and abomination of that religion that sets somewhat of the creature against that wherein God will be glorified above all.

Use 3. Again, let us stay ourselves, when we walk in darkness, with the consideration of the gloriousness of God's mercy in Jesus Christ, here called 'the glory of the Lord.' It is no less mercy than glorious mercy that will satisfy us, when we are in distress of conscience; and if this will not, what will? Let Satan aggravate our sins as much as may be, and join with conscience in this business; yet set this glorious mercy against all our sins, make the most of them, they are sins of a finite creature. But here is infinite mercy, triumphing and rejoicing over justice, having gotten the victory over it. Oh beloved, when the time of temptation comes, and the hour of death, and conflict with conscience, and a confluence and concurrence of all that may discourage, Satan will bestir himself; and he is a cunning rhetorician to set all the colours upon sin, especially in the time of despair; be as cunning to set all colours upon mercy, glorious mercy. If God were glorious in all other attributes, and not in mercy, what would become of us? The glory of other attributes without mercy tends to despair; glorious in wisdom to find us out; glorious in justice to deal with us in rigour. These affright, but that that sweeteneth all other attributes is his mercy.

What a comfort is this to sinful man, that in casting himself upon Christ, and upon God's mercy in Christ, he yields glory to God; that God hath joined his glory with our special good; that here is a sweet concurrence between the summum finis\* and the summum bonum of man! The last end of man of all is the glory of God; for that is as it were the point of the circle from which all came (for he made all for his glory), and in which all ends; so is the chief good. Therefore by the way it is a vain conceit for some to think, 'Oh we must not look to our own salvation so much; this is self-love.'

It is true, to sever the consideration of the glory of God's mercy and goodness in it, but see both these wrapped and knit together indissoluble, our salvation and God's glory. We hinder God's glory if we believe not his mercy in Christ to us. So at once we wrong ourselves and him, and we wrong him not in a mean attribute, but in his mercy and goodness, wherein he hath appointed to glorify himself most of all; and therefore, I beseech you, let us yield to him the glory of his mercy, and let us think that when we sin we cannot glorify him more than to have recourse to his mercy. When Satan tempts us to run from God, and discourageth us, as he will do at such times, then have but this in your thoughts, God hath set himself to be glorious in mercy, above all other attributes. And this is the first moving attribute that stirs up all the rest, and therefore God will account himself honoured if I have recourse to him. Let this thought therefore be as a city of refuge. When the avenger of blood follows thee, flee presently to this sanctuary. Think thus, Let not me deny myself comfort and God glory at once: 'Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more,' Romans 5:20. Though sins after conversion stain our profession more than sins before conversion, yet notwithstanding go to the glorious mercy of God still, to seventy times seventy times,\* there is yet mercy for these.† We beseech you be reconciled, saith St Paul to the Corinthians, when they were in the state of grace, and had their pardon before. Let us never be discouraged from going to Christ.

Oh, but I have offended often and grievously. What saith the prophet? 'My thoughts are not as your thoughts; but as high as the heavens are above the earth,' &c., Isaiah 55:8. Therefore howsoever amongst men, oft offences breed an eternal alienation, yet notwithstanding with God it is not so. But so oft as we can have spirit to go to God for mercy, and spread our sins before him, with broken and humble hearts, so often we may take out our pardon. Compare Exodus 33 with Exodus 34. Moses, in chap. 33:18, seq., had desired to see the face of God. There was some little curiosity perhaps in it. God told him that none could see him and live. To see the face of God in himself must be reserved for heaven, we are not proportioned for that sight. But in the next chapter there he shews himself to Moses; and how doth he shew himself and his glory to Moses? 'The Lord, the Lord, gracious, merciful, long-suffering,' clothed all in sweet attributes. He will be known by those names. Now, then, if we would know the name of God, and see God as he is pleased and delighted to discover himself to us, let us know him by those names that he proclaims there, shewing that the glory of the Lord in the gospel especially shines in mercy; and as I said before, it must be glorious mercy that can satisfy a distressed conscience, howsoever in the time of ease and peace we think a little mercy will serve the turn. But when conscience is once awaked, it must be glorious and infinite mercy must allay it. And therefore those that find their consciences anything wounded with any sin, stand not out any longer with God, come and yield, lay down your weapons, there is mercy ready. The Lord is glorious in his mercy in Jesus Christ. It is a victorious triumphing mercy over all sin and unworthiness whatsoever. Look upon God in the face of Jesus Christ; as you have it in 2 Corinthians 4:6, 'God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.' In the face of Christ God is lovely. Loveliness and excellency is in the face above all the parts of the body.

'The glory of God.'

We are never in such a condition as we ought to be, except grace be glory to us; and when is grace glory to a sinner? Oh, when he feels the weight and burden of his sin, and languishing

desires. Oh that I might have a drop of mercy! Then grace is glory, not only in God's esteem, but in the eye of the sinner. Indeed, we are never soundly humbled till grace in our esteem be glory; that is, till it appear excellent and victorious. I beseech you remember it. We may have use of it in the time of desertion.

## 21. Christ's mind discovered in the gospel

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Christ's mind discovered in the gospel How is this grace of God in Christ conveyed to us yet nearer? By the gospel.

'As in a glass.' The gospel is the 'good word of God,' Hebrews 6:5. It reveals the good God to us, and the good Christ. It is a sweet word. For Christ could do us no good without the word, if there were not an obligation, a covenant made between God and us, the foundation of which covenant is the satisfaction of Christ. If there were not promises built upon the covenant of grace, whereby God hath made himself a debtor, what claim could a sinful soul have to Christ and to God's mercy? But God hath bound himself in his word. Therefore the grace of God shines in Christ, and all that is in Christ is conveyed to us by the word, by the promise. The gospel then is a sweet word. You know that breeding promise of all others, Genesis 3:15, 'The seed of the woman.' That revealed\* and conveyed the mercy of God in Christ to Adam. So the continuance of that and all the sweet and gracious promises bud from that; all meet in Christ as in a centre, all are made for him and in him. He is the sum of all the promises. All the good things we have are parcels of Christ. Christ he is the Word of the Father, that discovers all from the bosom of his Father. Therefore he is named 'the Word.' The gospel is the Word from him. Christ was discovered to the apostles, and from the apostles to us, to the end of the world, by his Spirit accompanying the ordinance. So the mirror wherein we see the glorious mercy of God, is first Christ. God shines in him, and then there is another glass wherein Christ is discovered, the glass of the gospel. Thus it pleaseth God to condescend to stoop to us poor sinners, to reveal his glory, the glory of his mercy, fitly and suitable in a Saviour, God-man, God incarnate, God our brother, God our kinsman, and to do it all yet more familiarly, to discover it in a word. And then to ordain a ministry together with the word, to lay open the riches of Christ; for it is not the gospel considered nakedly, but the gospel unfolded by the ministry.

Christ is the great ordinance of God for our salvation. The gospel is the great ordinance of God, to lay open 'the unsearchable riches of Christ,' Ephesians 3:8. The casket of this jewel, the treasury of his treasure, the grace and love and mercy of God, are treasured in Christ; and Christ and all good things are treasured in the gospel. That is the rich mine; and the ministry of the gospel lays open that mine to the people. Nay, God yet goes further. He gives his Holy Spirit with the ministry. It is the ministry of the Spirit, that howsoever there are many that are not called and converted in the gospel, yet the Spirit of God is beforehand with them. There are none under the gospel but the Spirit gives them sweet motions. He knocks at their hearts, he allures and persuades them; and if they yield not, it is because of the rebellion of their hearts. There is more grace of the Spirit offered than is entertained. So that the mouths of men shall be stopped. Thus God descends, and Christ, and grace, the gospel, the ministry, the Spirit, all in way of love to us, that we may do all in a way of love to God again. It should therefore work us to do all with ingenuous hearts to him again. The gospel is the glass wherein we see this glory. Christ indeed in some sort is the glass, for we cannot see God out of Christ but he is a terrifying sight. But in the glass Christ we can see God, as we see the sun in the water. If we cannot see the sun in his glory, that is but a creature, how can

we see God himself but in some glass? Therefore we must see him in Christ, and so his sight is comfortable. And in the dispensing of the gospel, especially in the preaching and unfolding of the word, the riches of God in Christ are unfolded, and not only unfolded, but the Spirit in unfolding conveys the sense, assurance, and persuasion thereof unto us.

There is such a connection between the evangelical truth of God and Jesus Christ, that they have both one name,\* to insinuate to us that as we will be partakers of Christ, so it must be of Christ, as he is revealed in the gospel, not in conceits of our own. The word is truth, and Christ is truth. They have the same name; for were there never so much mercy and love in God, if it were concealed from us, that we had nothing to plead, that we had not some title to it by some discovery of it in his will, the word and the seal of the word, the sacraments (for the sacrament is but a visible word, they make one entire thing, the word and sacraments; the one is the evidence, the other the seal), what comfort could we take in it? Now his will is in the promise, wherein there is not only a discovery of what he doth or will do, but he hath engaged himself: 'If we believe, we shall not perish, but have life,' John 3:15; and 'Come unto me,' Matthew 11:28, and be refreshed, saith Christ. Every one that thirsts, come and be satisfied, John 7:37. And now we may claim the performance of what he hath spoken, and bind him by his own word. 'He cannot deny himself,' John 7:37. So now we see him comfortably in the glass of the word and sacraments.

These three go together, the glory of God; Christ the foundation of all grace, in the covenant of grace; and then the gospel of grace, the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of life, that discovers the gracious face of God shining in Christ. We have communion with God through Christ, with Christ through the gospel; therefore in the gospel 'we behold as in a glass the glory of God.' This is suitable to our condition while we are here below. We cannot see divine things otherwise than in a glass. That sight of God that we shall have in heaven, immediately, without the word and sacraments, that is of a higher nature; when our natures shall be perfect. But while we live here we cannot see God but in Christ, and we cannot see him but in the word and sacraments. Such is the imperfection of our sight, and such is the lustre and glory of the object, the glory of God, that we cannot perfectly see it but in a glass. God said to Moses, 'None can see me and live.' His meaning is, none can see me as I am, none can see me immediately and live. If we would see God, and the glory of God immediately without a glass, we must see it in heaven. We must die first. We must pass through death to see God face to face as he is; then, not as he is, but more familiarly than we can now. Then God will represent himself so as shall be for our happiness, though not simply as he is; for he is infinite, and how should finite comprehend infinite? We shall apprehend him, but not comprehend him (f). While we are in earth, therefore, we must be content to see him in a glass, which is the gospel, especially unfolded.

Now in this word 'glass,' in which we see the glory of God, is implied both a perfection and some imperfection.

Perfection, because it is as a clear crystal glass in regard of the glass that was before; for those under the law saw Christ in a glass of ceremonies. And, as I said before, there is difference between one's seeing his face in water and in a crystal glass. So then this implies perfection in regard of the former state.

Again, in regard of heaven, it implies imperfection, for there we shall not see in a glass. Sight in a glass is imperfect, though it be more perfect than that in water. For we know out of the principles of

learning and experience, that reflections weaken, and the more reflections, the more weak. When we see a thing by reflection, we see it weakly; and [when] we see it by a second reflection from that, we see it more weakly. When we see the sun on the wall, or any thing that is light, it is weaker than the light of the sun itself. When a man seeth his face in a glass, it is a weaker representation than to see face to face. But when we see the sun upon the wall, reflexing upon another wall, the third reflection is weaker than the first. The more reflections the more weak. So here all sight by glasses is not so powerful as that sight and knowledge which is face to face in heaven. That is the reason that St James saith, that he that seeth his face in a glass is subject to forget (1:23). What is the reason that a man cannot remember himself, when he seeth his face in a glass, so well as he can remember another man's face when he seeth it? Because he seeth himself only by reflection. Therefore it is a weaker presentation to him, and the memory and apprehension of it is weaker. When he seeth another face to face, he remembers him longer, because there is a more lively representation. It is not a reflection, but face to face. So there is imperfection in this sight that we have of God, while we are here, as in a glass. It is nothing to that when we shall see face to face, without the word and sacraments or any other medium, which sight, what it is, we shall know better when we are there. We cannot now discover it. It is a part of heaven to know what apprehensions we shall have of God there. But sure it is more excellent than that that is here. Therefore this implies imperfection.

We consist of body and soul in this world, and our souls are much confined and tied to our senses. Imagination propounds to the soul greater things than the senses. So God helps the soul by outward things that work upon the senses; sense upon the imagination, and so things pass into the soul.

God frames his manner of dealing suitable to the nature he hath created us in. Therefore he useth the word and sacraments, and such things, whereby he makes impressions upon the very soul itself. And this indeed, by the way, makes spiritual things so difficult as they are oftentimes, because we are too much enthralled to imagination and sense, and cannot abstract and raise our minds from outward sensible things to spiritual things. Therefore you have some, all the days of their life, spend their time in the bark of the Scriptures; and they are better than some others that are all for notions and outside: such things as frame to the imagination, and never come to know the spirit of the Scriptures, but rest in outward things, in languages and tongues, and such like. Whereas these things lead further, or else they come not to their perfection. The Scripture is but a glass, to see some excellencies in it. 'We see as in a glass.'

Now the use of a glass among us especially is twofold.

(1.) It is either to help weakness of sight against the excellency of the object. When there is a weak sight and an over excellent object, then a glass is used, or some polite\* and clear body, as we cannot see the sun in itself. The eye is weak and the sun is glorious. These two meeting therefore together, we help it by seeing the sun in water, as in an eclipse. If a man would judge of an eclipse he must not look on the sun, but see it in water, and there behold and discern these things; so to see the glory of God in himself, it is too glorious an object. Our eyes are too weak. How doth God help it? He helps it by a glass, by 'God manifest in the flesh,' 1 Timothy 3:16, and by the word and sacraments whereby we come to have communion with Christ. To apply this more particularly.

## 22. The sacraments glasses to see God's love in Christ

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The sacraments glasses to see God's love in Christ

Now that we are to receive the sacrament, conceive the sacraments are glasses wherein we see the glory of the love and mercy of God in Christ. For take the bread alone, as it doth not represent and figure better things, and what is it? and take the wine alone, as it doth not represent better things, and what is the wine? But an ordinary poor creature. Oh, but take them as they are glasses, as things that convey to the soul and represent things more excellent than themselves, so they are glorious ordinances. Take a glass as a glass, it is a poor thing; but take the glass as it represents a more excellent thing than itself, so they are of excellent use; so bread and wine must not be taken as naked elements, but as they represent and convey a more excellent thing than themselves, that is, Christ and all his benefits, the love and mercy and grace of God in Christ; and so they are excellent glasses. Therefore I beseech you now, when you are to receive the sacrament, let your minds be more occupied than your senses. When you take the bread, think of the body of Christ broken; and when you think of uniting the bread into one substance, think of Christ and you made one. When the wine is poured out, think of the blood of Christ poured out for sin. When you think of the refreshing by the wine, think of the refreshing of your spirits and souls by the love of God in Christ, and of the love of Christ that did not spare his blood for your soul's good. How doth Christ crucified and shedding his blood refresh the guilty soul, as wine refresheth the weak spirits. Thus consider them as glasses, where better things are presented, and let your minds be occupied as well as your senses, and then you shall be fit receivers, as 'in a glass.'

'We behold,' &c.

God when he made the world, this glorious frame of the creatures, and all their excellencies, he created light to discover itself, and all other excellencies. For light is a glorious creature. It discovers itself. It goes with a majesty and discovers all other things, good and bad whatsoever; and together with light God created sight in man, and other senses, to apprehend the excellency of the creation. What were all this goodly frame of creatures, the sun, and moon, and stars, and glory of the earth, if there were not light to discover and sight to apprehend it by? Is it not so in this outward creation of the old heavens and old earth that must be consumed with fire? And is it not much more in the new creation? There is excellent glory, marvellous glory, wondrous grace in\* Christ, &c. Must there be light, and must not there be an eye to discover this? Surely there must. Therefore it is said here, 'We behold.'

God puts a spiritual eye by his Spirit into all true believers, whereby they behold this excellent glory, this glorious grace, that God may have the glory, and we the comfort. Those are the two main ends. God intends his own glory and our salvation. There must be a 'beholding.' How should he have glory and we comfort, unless all were conveyed by spiritual sight! Well then the Spirit creates and works in us spiritual senses. With spiritual life there are spiritual senses, sight, and taste, and feeling. Sight is here put for all, 'We behold.'

There are many degrees of sight. It is good to know them. Therefore I will name some of them.

## 23. Faith compared to sight in four particulars

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### Faith compared to sight in four particulars

[1.] We see God in his creatures, for 'the heavens declare the glory of God.' They are a book in folio (g). There God is laid open in his creatures. That is a goodly sight. But what is this to the knowledge of him in his will to us, what he means to us? The creatures discover not what he means to us.

[2.] Besides therefore the sight of God in the creatures, there is a sight of God in his will, in his word and promises. There we see what he is. His grace is revealed in Christ, and what his good will to us is, and his will from us, what he will do to us, and what he will have from us again. There we see him as a spouse sees her husband in a loving letter which concerns herself. We see him as the heir sees a deed made to him with an inheritance. He sees with application. It is not a bare sight, but a sight with feeling and discovery of a favour. So the sight in the word and sacraments, it is a higher sight.

[3.] There was a sight of Christ when he was in the flesh. When he was covered with the veil of our flesh upon earth, it was a sweet sight. Abraham desired to see it, John 8:56, and Simeon, when he saw it, was willing to be dissolved and to depart, Luke 2:29. He had enough. But that outward sight is nothing without another inward sight of faith.

[4.] There is a sight therefore of faith, and other sights are to no purpose if they be without this, a sight of God shining in Christ. And this is perfected in heaven, in the sight of glory, when we see him as he is. Now there is a comfort in all these sights, to see him in his word and works. It was a glorious thing to see him in his bodily presence; and by faith to see God in Christ, to see his face in Christ. Oh it is a sweet and lovely sight to see God shining in Christ! Oh but what is all this to the sight of him after in glory! Now this beholding meant here especially, is the beholding of faith, in the ordinances, in the word and sacraments. 'We all behold,' as in the glass of the word and sacraments, by the eye of faith. Faith is expressed by beholding, by knowledge; for indeed faith is nothing but knowledge with application. Therefore faith includes knowledge. What is faith, but to know God and Christ, and the promises as mine? Christ in the sacrament as mine, as verily as the outward things are mine: Knowledge with application is faith. Therefore, when I say faith, I include knowledge, 'We behold.' The knowledge of the mind is compared to the eye of the body. Knowledge and faith is compared to seeing and beholding, for many reasons.

First, Because sight is the most glorious and noble sense. It is the highest in situation, and the quickest in apprehension, for in a moment, presently sight apprehends its object in the highest heavens. So it is with faith. It is the most noble sight of all, and it is quick as sight is; for faith is that eagle in the cloud. It breaks through all, and sees in a moment Christ in heaven: it looks backward, and sees Christ upon the cross; it looks forward, and seeth Christ to come in glory. Faith is so quick a grace, that it presents things past, things above, things to come, and all in a moment, so quick is this eagle-eye of faith.

Second, Again, it is the largest sense; for we can see almost the whole hemisphere at one view. That a little thing in the eye should apprehend so much in a moment, as it is quick in apprehension, so it is large in comprehension.

Third, Again, it is the most sure sense—sight more than hearing; therefore that divine act of knowledge is compared to seeing; believing is compared to beholding. When faith looks upon God in the glass of the word and promises, it is as certain as the object is certain. Now, how certain is the object? The mercy and love of God in Christ, who is truth itself, is most certain.

Fourth, Then it is that sense that works most upon the soul, sight; for what the body seeth, the soul is affected and moved with. The affections of desire and love rise out of sight. It works upon the affections most. Therefore the knowledge that stirs up the affections, and works upon the heart, is compared to sight. It affects us marvellously, for, answerable to our faith, we love, and joy, and delight. It alters the frame of the whole man. Therefore it is expressed here by beholding. Divine, spiritual knowledge, it works upon the heart. So we see why this beholding spirituall[y] of the understanding and soul, is compared to outward sight. It is called beholding, because it is a most noble spiritual act of the soul; and it is most certain and sure. 'Faith is the evidence of things not seen,' Hebrews 11:1; and it works upon the heart and soul.

Use. Therefore, we should labour to clear this eye of the soul, that we may behold the glory of God in the glass of the gospel.

Quest. How shall we have the eye of our souls fit to behold the glory of God?

Ans. 1. We must fix the eye of the soul; fix our meditation upon the glory of God and the excellency of Christ. A moving, rolling eye seeth nothing. Therefore we must set some time apart, to fix our meditations upon these excellent things in the gospel.

Ans. 2. Then again, we must labour to have the hindrances removed, both within and without.

(1.) Sight within is hindered by some inward suffusion. We must labour that the soul be cleansed and purged from all carnal passions and desires and base humours, that we may clearly behold this spiritual object. Unless the soul be spiritual, it can never behold spiritual things. The bodily eye cannot apprehend rational things, nor the rational eye behold not spiritual things. Therefore there must be a spiritual eye. The soul must be purged and sanctified by the Spirit. There must be some proportion between the soul and spiritual things, before the soul can behold them. Therefore, as the soul must be fixed upon this meditation, so the Spirit of God must sanctify and purge the soul.

## 24. Hindrances to our beholding Christ

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### Hindrances to our beholding Christ

(2.) Outward hindrances of sight, as dust in the eyes, and clouds, &c., they hinder sight. Satan labours to hinder the sight of the soul from beholding the glory of God shining in the gospel, with the dust of the world, as the apostle saith in the next chapter, 'The god of this world blinds the eyes of men,' 2 Corinthians 4:4, that they behold not the glory of God shining in the gospel. Therefore, if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that perish, that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded their minds, that they believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine upon them, 2 Corinthians 4:4. Therefore, take heed of too much worldly things, of fixing our souls upon the dust of the world, upon things here below. The sight of Christ, and of God in Christ, it is not gotten by looking below, by fixing the soul upon base things below. Let us look, therefore, that our souls be inwardly cleansed, and fixed upon spiritual things; and then we shall the better behold the glory of God shining in the gospel. And we should preserve this sight of faith by hearing. Hearing begets seeing in religion. Death came in by the ear at the first. Adam hearing the serpent, that he should not have heard, death came in by the ear. So life comes in by the ear. We hear, and then we see: 'As we have heard, so have we seen,' say they in the psalm, Psalms 48:8. It is true in religion, most of our sight comes by hearing, which is the sense of learning. God will have it so. Therefore we should maintain all we can this beholding of the glory of the Lord in the glass of the word; and for that end hear much.

You will ask me, What is the best glass of all to see and know Christ in?

If you ask a papist, he will shew you crucifixes, and such kind of things. Oh but to behold Christ in the glass of the word, with a spirit of faith, that is the best picture and representation that can be! It is scarce worth spending so much time, as to confute that foolery, to have any grace wrought in the heart by such abominable means as that is, as they use it. Take it at the best, it is but a bastardly help, and bastardly means breed a bastardly devotion. For will God work grace in the heart by means of man's devising? If pictures be any teachers, they are 'teachers of lies,' saith the prophet, Isaiah 9:15; and in the church of God, till pastors and teachers became idols, idols never became teachers. Then came the doctrine of idols teaching of simple people, when idols became teachers a thousand years after Christ. So that the best picture to see Christ in, is the word and sacraments; and the best eye to see him with, is the eye of faith in the word and sacraments. Keep that clear, and we need no crucifixes, no such bastardly helps of bastardly devotion, devised by proud men that would not be beholden to God for his ordinances. But a touch is almost too much for such things, that are so clear to men that have spiritual eyes. In Galatians 3:1, see what St Paul saith his judgment was: 'Oh foolish Galatians, before whom Christ hath been painted and crucified!' (h) How was he painted? Nothing but by the preaching of Christ crucified in the gospel, and the riches of Christ in the gospel; and in the sacraments laid open. Do you think there were any other crucifixes in the world then?

'With open face.' The manner of this beholding is 'with open face.' There must be a double veil taken away before we can behold the glory of God: the veil of obscurity, and the veil of slavery; the veil of ignorance and infidelity within, and the veil of the things themselves. These two veils are both taken away before we can with open face behold the glory of the Lord. The inward veil is taken away by the Spirit of God illuminating our understandings, and giving us a spirit of faith. The outward veil of the obscurity of the things is taken away by the teaching and ministry of the gospel, having that help to know the meaning of the Scriptures; so that now in these glorious times of the gospel, both the veils are taken away, that we may behold without hindrance the glory of God shining in the gospel. For now we enjoy the ministry of the Spirit. The Spirit is effectual to shine in our hearts. And then we have the gifts of men, outward gifts, whereby the veil of ignorance is taken away in regard of the things themselves, the things are unfolded.

If the things of themselves be dark; or if they be lightsome, and there be no sight within; or if there be sight, and that sight be veiled; there can be no seeing. But now to God's elect he takes away all these veils, he shines inwardly and gives outward light in the help of means; and yet notwithstanding while we live here, there is always some obscurity and darkness, for the veil of the Scriptures is not quite took\* away. There is some darkness of the Scriptures, and likewise the veil of ignorance and infidelity is not altogether taken away. There are some remainders of ignorance, of infidelity, and hardness of heart; but yet in a great measure it is taken away here, and shall by little and little [be] took away, till we come to see God face to face in heaven.

'With open face.'

Coverings had two uses in the Jewish state.

They had a use of subjection. Therefore the women had their veils in token of subjection. And they had a use likewise of obscurity, to hinder the offensive\* lustre of that that is glorious. Therefore Moses put a veil on his face when he came down from the mount. Now in Christ Jesus in the gospel, both these veils are taken away in some respects. The veil of subjection and slavery, so far as it is a slavery, is taken away. The Spirit of Christ works liberty. As I said before, now we serve God as sons, and not as servants any longer. The veil of subjection is taken away, only there is a spouse-like filial subjection; the servile subjection we are freed from. And then the veil that hid the things is taken away too. So now 'with open face we behold the glory of the Lord.' Now the things themselves, Christ and the gracious promises of grace and glory and comfort, they are clearly laid open without any veil. How comes it then that we see them not? There is a veil over our hearts. The more shame for us, that when the things are unveiled we should have a veil upon our hearts, of ignorance and unbelief. Therefore if any believe not, it is because 'the God of this world hath blinded their eyes,' 2 Corinthians 4:4. Where the means of salvation are, and Christ laid open in the means, if men do not believe, the fault is not in the things; for they are unveiled, they are discovered and laid open. The fault is in us. There is a veil over the heart. There is a cloud of ignorance and unbelief, that keeps the heart from beholding the glory of the mercy of God in Christ.

'With open face.'

## 25. We have boldness in the gospel

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We have boldness in the gospel

We see the glory of God with boldness in the gospel. We go boldly to God. Christ takes us by the hand and leads to his Father. We have boldness and access to God through Christ by the Spirit, as St Paul teacheth in divers places,† God is not terrible to us. Now in Christ, God's nature is fatherly and sweet to us. Christ in the gospel is our head. Therefore we go boldly to God in Christ; and Christ by his Spirit brings us to his Father. We may boldly lay open our souls in prayer; and all our complaints before him as to a Father. We come not as malefactors to a judge, as slaves to a lord, but as children to a father, as a wife to her spouse. 'With open face' in the gospel, we behold God, that is, with boldness we go to him. The gospel by shining upon us takes away a spirit of fear and bondage; the more we see Christ the less fear; the more love the less fear. The more we see the grace of God in Christ, it diminisheth a spirit of fear, and puts into us a spirit of love and boldness. For it presents to us in Christ, full satisfaction to divine justice, that when we offer Christ to the Father whom he hath sent and sealed for us, God cannot refuse a Saviour of his own sending and sealing, and appointing to satisfy his justice. Therefore we go boldly to the throne of grace. It is a marvellous privilege that we see God clearly in the gospel, with open face, with a spirit of boldness, the veil of ignorance being taken away. For the sight of God to a conscience that is natural, and is not convinced of the mercy of God by the Spirit, it is a terrible sight. A guilty conscience cannot see a man but it trembles. It cannot see a judge without trembling. And will not the trembling conscience, the guilty soul, flee from the face of God apace, that trembles at the sight of a man? What is so contrary as the nature of God to the nature of man out of Christ? The unholy, impure, and unclean nature of man, to the pure, holy nature of God? If Christ had not taken our nature and sanctified it in himself, and satisfied justice in it, what boldness could this unclean nature of ours have had to go to the holy God? Let us, I beseech you, be wrapped up in admiration of the singular love of God to us, especially in the days of the gospel, that now we see in a glass, in a clear glass, the love of God in Christ, and with open face boldly we may go to God.

Sometimes when the soul is bold in sin, it weakeneth boldness and faith, and makes us look upon that object that our sins hath deserved, upon a wise God. For howsoever we may behold his glorious face in Christ, yet if we behold sin against conscience, God will hide himself, Christ will hide his face, and hide the promises, and leave us to terrors of conscience; and the soul shall not apprehend his gracious face in Christ, but that correction that our sin hath deserved. God hath power over the soul, and makes the soul apprehend what object he will; and he presents to a bold soul that runs into sin what it deserves, hell for the present. There is no terrors to the terror of a Christian that is bold in sin, till God shine upon him in his grace again. Sins against conscience, especially wasting sins, weaken faith, that we cannot go so boldly to God. Therefore those that say when they sin against conscience, that all the cause of their grief is because they do not conceive the free mercy of God, they are ignorant of God's ways. God is wise, and though he pardon sin, as sin is pardoned in heaven, before it be pardoned in the conscience, they shall never be pardoned in thy conscience till God have made thy conscience smart for it; and God will let wrath into thy

conscience, and thy faith shall stagger. It is a sin for faith to stagger, it should not do so; but it will tremble and quake, till we have humbled ourselves before God.

What is the way, after we have had boldness and sweet familiarity with God, and it hath been interrupted by sin? how shall we recover ourselves?

Surely, to apprehend our sins to be pardonable in Christ, and that God is an everlasting Father, and that the covenant of grace is everlasting, and that there is mercy in Israel for this thing; and the conceit\* of mercy must work our hearts to grief and shame. That is certain; for mark in the gospel, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden,' Matthew 11:28. He calls us when we find our consciences afflicted and tormented. 'He came to save that which was lost,' Matthew 18:11. By the blessed power of the Spirit, the blood of Christ is as a fountain 'for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in,' Zechariah 13:1, and the 'blood of Christ purgeth us from sin,' 1 John 1:7; and Christ bids us for daily trespasses ask pardon, Matthew 6:12. Daily therefore conceive goodness in God still, an everlasting current of mercy; and this must work upon us grief and shame, and recover and strengthen our faith again. For God's children, after breaches, arise the stronger rather than ever they were before. But this only by the way. We see here how God's glorious grace is conveyed to us, and what is wrought in us to apprehend it, a spiritual eye to see it, in the glass of the gospel, and 'with open face we behold it,' we may go boldly to the throne of grace.

I beseech you, let not that privilege be forgotten, this privilege of the gospel. What is the glory of the times we live in, but God's face discovered in Christ? In the gospel faith is wrought in us to apprehend this, to see God's face openly, and that we may come boldly with Benjamin, our elder brother;\* come with Esau's garments, Genesis 27:23; come with Christ, and we cannot be too bold. Remember alway there must be a reverent familiarity, because he hath majesty mixed with his bowels of mercy. Both are mixed together; beams and bowels. So our carriage to him must be loving and familiar, as he is full of bowels of mercy. But then he hath majesty. A reverent familiarity is fit for a father, and for so gracious and so sweet a God. Therefore that phrase we see in the Scriptures, 'We go boldly,' and cry, 'Abba, Father,' Romans 8:15. Father is a word of reverence; that is, we go boldly to God in Christ, and open our wants as to a father, with love and reverence; as it is said here, 'with open face.' Let us not forget this privilege.

'We all.'

Here is the generality, 'We all.' Before, in Moses's time, he alone went into the mount and saw God; but now 'we all,' Jews and Gentiles, where the gospel is preached, 'we all.' Therefore, you see here the church is enlarged by the coming of Christ. And it was a comfort to St Paul, and to all good Christians, to think of the enlargement of the church by taking in the Gentiles, as it will be a comfort hereafter to think of the enlarging of the church by taking in the Jews again. The more the better in religion. Why is it a privilege for many, that 'we all?' Because in matters of grace and glory there is no envy at all. All may share without prejudice. All cannot be kings here upon earth, nor all cannot be great men, because the more one hath the less another hath. But in Christ and in religion all may be gracious. God respects every one, as if there were none but them. He respects all as one, and one, as if there were none but he. Every man in solidum, as civilians express it, entirely enjoyeth Christ, as if there were none but he. He is to all as one, and to one as if there were none but he. There is no envy, as I said, in grace and glory, where all may share alike. And

that is the reason why it is always comfortable to think of community in religion. It is joined with comfort. And indeed so it is matter of comfort to see a communion of many in one; for what is the mystical body of Christ Jesus but many members joined in one body, under one gracious and glorious head? And therefore it is a deformed sight to see fraction and disunion. It is that the devil rules in. Divide and rule. It is fit for the devil. God and Christ rule in union. The same Spirit of God that knits the members to the head by faith, knits the members one to another in love; and all grace is derived from the head to the members, as they are united to the body. If there be therefore disunion, there is no grace conveyed so far as there is disunion. There is no grace conveyed from the head; for the body grows up as compact under one head.

Therefore let us labour to cherish union, and as we hate distraction itself, so hate distraction and division; for dissipation causeth distraction.† Therefore by all means labour for union, especially now we are to take the communion, that is a seal of our communion with Christ by faith, and one with another. By love let us labour to bring our hearts to a holy communion. None gains by disunion but the devil himself. Always his policy is to make the breach greater where any is. Therefore let us labour by all means to be united. The more join together in the blessed mysteries of the gospel, the more comfort and the more glory. When all live and join together in holy things of God, and in sweet love one to another, it is the glory of that place and society and state. So much for that 'we all.'

'And are changed.'

I shewed before how man's happiness stands partly in communion with God, and partly in his conformity and likeness to God. And surely wheresoever there is communion there will be conformity. This conformity is here set down springing from communion. 'We all behold the glory of God.' Now, reconciled in Jesus Christ, what doth that beholding work? A conformity. We are 'changed into the same image, from glory to glory.' In these words we see, First, A necessity of a change; changed we must be.

Then in this change there must be a pattern of conformity. We are changed into the image of Christ, who is the prototype, the first type and idea of all perfection. We are changed into the same image. And then, how this change is wrought to the image of Christ. It is by beholding the glory of Christ in the gospel. There is a transforming power in beholding the glory of God's mercy in Christ. It is not a delighting object only, to see the mercy of God in Christ, but it is a powerful object that hath an influence upon the soul. And then the state of man after this change, it is a glorious condition, 'We are changed from glory.' And then it is a growing condition, 'We are changed from glory to glory.' Still, till we come to that pitch, where there can be no growth; when the soul shall be filled 'with the fulness of God,' as the apostle speaks, Ephesians 3:19; when the soul shall have all the powers that it hath to receive and retain, and comprehend, all the corners of it filled. So we grow from glory to glory till then. These things follow one another. To begin with the first.

There is a necessity of a change. In the state we are we must be changed, as Christ tells Nicodemus, John 3:1, seq. There must be a change; and such a change as is a new birth. It must be all new, as a bell; if there be but a crack in it, it must be new moulded and cast again. It is good for nothing else. So the soul of man, if there be but a flaw, but a crack, all is naught. It must be cast and moulded again anew. We must be set in tune again. All is out of tune. Before the soul can make any sweet harmony in the ears of God, there must be a change. There is no coming to

heaven without a change. What need I press this, it is so easy a point in religion. 'Except we be born anew we cannot enter into heaven,' John 3:3. But to clear from evidence of reason the necessity of a change in the whole man.

First, Because we are in a contrary state to grace and to God. We are dead. There must be life in us before we come to heaven. We are enemies, and if\* enemies we must be made friends. How shall we be fit for communion else with God, wherein our happiness stands, without conformity? Communion is between friends. Before those that are in an opposite condition can be friends, there must be an alteration; and this alteration it must be on God's part, or on our part. Now who must change? God that is unchangeable, or we that are corrupt and changeable? God will not change. There is no reason he should. He is goodness itself, always unchangeable. His perfection stands in an individual point. He cannot alter a whit. There is not a shadow of change in God. Therefore, when there is difference between God and us, the change must be on our part. We must be changed, as it is Romans 12:2, and other places, 'in the spirit of our minds.' We must be wholly moulded anew. Where there is a condition so opposite as the frame of our hearts is to God, he being holiness and we a mass and lump of sin, of necessity there must be a change. God intends in the gospel to bring us near himself, and Christ's end is to bring us to God, as it is 1 Peter 3:18. All the gospel is to bring us back to God from whom we fell. Now our nature, as I said, is defiled and unholy; and we cannot be friends with God till there be a likeness in disposition to God. Therefore our natures must be suitable to the sweet and holy and pure nature of God in some measure. We enter into a covenant with God, in the covenant of grace, and how can we maintain the covenant of grace, without some likeness to God and Christ? In that regard of necessity there must be a change; and this change must be on our part. As we see in an instrument, those strings that are out of tune are brought to them that are in, so it is we that must change and alter, and not God. God is always unchangeable, like himself in his love; and it is our comfort that he is so unchangeable in his mercy and holiness and justice. Therefore I say the change must be on our part.

'Flesh and blood, as it is, cannot enter into heaven,' 1 Corinthians 15:50; that is, the nature of man, as it is corrupted; we must have new judgments of things, and new desires, and new esteem, new affections, new joys, new delights, new conversation, new company. All the frame of the soul must be new. There must be a new bent of soul. It must be turned another way. The face of the soul must look clean another way. Whereas before it looked to the world-ward, and to things below, now it must look to God-ward and heaven-ward. Therefore those that are in their pure naturals, that feel no change in themselves, what shall we think of them? They are not in the state of grace, for of necessity there must be a change.

There is a double change, real and gradual.

First, A real change, from ill to good. And then, A gradual change from better to better, 'from glory to glory.' The first change is from the state of nature to grace at our first conversion, when God puts the first form and stamp upon us. And then a change in grace, 'from glory to glory,' we must be changed.

Second, Then again, we all expect glory in heaven; and how can we do that except we be fitted for it? The church is the fitting place for glory. We enter into heaven in the church here. We are hewn and squared here. If we be not holy here, we shall never enter into heaven. There must be a

change begun here if ever it be perfected in heaven. 'No unclean thing shall come there,' Revelation 21:27. As soon as ever Satan, an angel of light, sinned, he was tumbled out of heaven. It will brook\* no unclean thing; no unclean thing shall ever come there again. Therefore our nature must be altered suitable to that place and glorious condition, before we come to heaven. Except we be new born, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. There is direct Scripture for it. Beloved, this is forgot. Men trust to the grace and mercy of God, and look not after a change; and this holds many from embracing the gospel in the truth of it; rom knowing Christ as the truth is in him. They hear they must be changed, which they are unwilling to. They believe that God is merciful, and that Christ died, &c. They snatch so much of the gospel, as may serve to build them up in self-love. So far they think all is well. But when they see such grace as must teach them 'to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts,' Titus 2:12, and such grace as must change and alter them, this they cannot brook. They are content to go to heaven if they may have it in a way to hell; in maintaining their corruptions; being proud and covetous and worldly, as they are. This must not be. Of necessity there must be a change.

Third, Nay, I say more, beside the former reasons, the soul that truly desires mercy and favour, desires always power against sin. Pardon and power go together, in God's gift and in the desire of a Christian's soul. There is no Christian soul but he desires the grace of sanctification to change him, as much as the grace of pardon; for he looks upon corruption and sin as the vilest thing in the world; and upon grace and the new creature as the best thing in the world. There is no man changed but he hath those apprehensions of sanctification.

Remember this against some weak conceits likewise, that would have all the change in justification. They rent\* Christ's offices, as if he were all priest, and not a king to govern; as if he were righteousness, and not sanctification; as if he had merit to die for us and to give us his righteousness, and no efficacy to change our natures; as if in the covenant of grace God did not write his law in our hearts, but only forgave our sins. He doth both in the covenant of grace. And where God makes a combination, we must not break it. Efficacy and merit, justification and sanctification, water and blood, go together. There must be a change. But to follow the point a little further.

Fourth, There must be change, because no holy action can come from an unchanged power and faculty. Actions spring from powers and faculties. They are suitable to them. Therefore there must be a change in the powers and faculties of the soul, before there be a change in the life and conversation. These three follow in nature. The form, and living, and being of things; and powers; and action issuing from the power. So in the life of grace and sanctification there is a power and ability to believe in God, and to be holy, and to love God; and then the actions of love spring from that power. We live, and then we have a power to move. In nature, being and life and moving go together. So if we have a being in grace, we have a power to move. I beseech you, therefore, consider the necessity of a change of the inward man, of the powers and faculties of the soul. Can the eye see without a power of seeing? or the ear hear without a faculty of hearing? Can the soul perform sanctified actions without a sanctified power? It is impossible. And especially the alteration and change is in the will, which some would have untouched. They would have it free; those that would have no more given to grace than needs must. But grace works upon the will most of all. Divinity rules the will especially. For the bent of the will makes a good or a bad man; and the desires of the will carry the whole man with it. We are as the bent is of our will. We are as

the choice of our will is. If the choice, and bent, and bias be the right way, by the Spirit, it is good. If the will be not inclined and wrought to go the best way, there is no work of grace at all. Though all grace come in through the understanding enlightened, that is the first, yet it goeth into the will. It passeth through the understanding into the will, and it puts a new taste and relish upon the will and affections.

Well, you see, therefore, that the grace wrought in the gospel it is not a mere persuasion and entreaty, &c., but a powerful work of the Spirit entering into the soul and changing it, and altering and turning the bent and inclination of the will heavenward, whereas\* corruption of nature turns the soul downward to things below. When the Spirit of God entereth into the soul, it is not only by mere outward persuasion to leave it to the liberty of will, but it altereth the taste of the will. The soul is carried up, and is shut to things below. It useth the world as though it used it not. We must have great conceits of the work of grace. The Scripture hath great words of it. It is an alteration, a change, a new man, a new creature, new birth, &c. We see the necessity of a change.

Fifth. Again, another reason is this: God, where he calls and dignifies, he also qualifies. Princes cannot qualify those they raise, but God, whom he advanceth to glory, he fits and qualifies for glory; where he bestows his mercies and favours to life everlasting, he calls to great matters, and he also changeth them. If Saul were changed when he came to be a king, in regard of a new quality, shall we think that God will call any to the participation of his glorious mercy in Christ, in pardoning their sin, and accepting them to life eternal, but he will change them? No. Whosoever he calls to glory, he changeth and altereth their dispositions to be fit for so glorious a condition as a Christian is called to. There must be a change.

Proud men love not to hear of this. It is a prejudice to their former authority. What! I that was accounted a wise man, now to be a fool! I that was accounted so and so, to alter all my frame and course, and to turn the stream another way—the world will say I go mad. I say because grace altereth and changeth all: 'Old things are passed away, and all things are become new,' 2 Corinthians 5:17; those that are carnal and proud cannot endure a change, because it is some prejudice to their reputation. But it must be so if they look for salvation. Thus you see that point proved enough.

'Into the same image.' The pattern to which we are changed is the image of Christ. It is a rule, and a true rule, the first in every kind is the measure of all the rest. It is the idea, the pattern, and platform of all the rest. Now Christ is the first, for he is the 'first-born,' the 'first fruits,' the 'first beloved.' Therefore he is the pattern of all the rest, and the measure of all other. The nearer we come to Christ, the better we are; for that is the measure of a thing, the nearer it answereth to that the better. Now Christ is the best, and our nature in Christ is joined to the Godhead in one person. Therefore we are changed to the likeness of Christ, 'the second Adam;' for as before we are changed, we are corrupted and depraved according to the likeness of the first Adam after his fall; and as before his fall, if he had not fallen, we had been born according to his likeness, that is, good and righteous; so now being fallen, as soon as by faith we are planted and grafted into the second Adam we are changed into his likeness. Christ as it were is God's master-piece, that is, the excellentest work, and device, and frame of heaven that ever was, to set up such a Mediator, to reconcile justice and mercy in bringing God and man into one person. Now Christ being God's master-piece, the best and most excellent frame of all, he is fit to be the pattern of all excellency

whatsoever. Therefore he is the image, the idea, the pattern and platform of all our sanctification.

Christ the second Adam is the image into which we are changed. We are not changed to the image of the first Adam by grace, but to the image of the second Adam. There is from him a derivation of all good, opposite to all the ill we drew from the first Adam. We drew from the first Adam the displeasure of God; by the second we obtain the favour of God by his death and satisfaction. With the wrath of God we drew corruption from the first Adam, in the second we have grace. From the first Adam we have death, and all the miseries that attend death and follow it. In the second Adam we have life and all happiness, till it end in glory. In a word, whatsoever ill we have in the first Adam, it is repaired abundantly in the second, when we are changed into his image. Therefore, when you read of the image of God in the New Testament, it must be understood of the image of God in Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

Now this image consists in knowledge, in holiness and righteousness. If we compare Colossians 3 with Ephesians 4, this was perfect in Christ, who was the image of his Father, and we must be like Christ the second Adam in sanctification.

Now the grounds why we must be conformable to the image of the second Adam, and not to the first, are these:

Because the second Adam is far excelling the first Adam; and as I said, we must be conformed to the best image. As we have borne the image of the first, so we must bear the image of the second, as it is in 1 Corinthians 15:49. And then the image of God in the second Adam is more durable. For all excellencies and grace is more firmly set on Christ than ever they were upon Adam. It is set upon him with such a character and stamp as shall never be altered. When God set his image on the first Adam it was rased, and decayed, and lost, by the malice of the devil, because it was not set on so firmly, Adam being a man and a good man, yet he was a man changeable. But Christ is God-man; in one nature God hath set such a stamp of grace on the human nature, being eternally united to the Godhead, that shall never be altered. Therefore we are renewed according to the image of God as it is stamped on Christ, not as it was stamped on the first Adam. And that is the reason why the state of God's children is unalterable, why being once gracious they are so for ever. If God set the stamp of the Spirit of Christ on them, it is firm, as it is upon Christ. It never alters in Christ, nor in those that are members of Christ. The alteration is in growth from better to better. God's children sometimes a little deface that image by sin, security, and the like. But as a piece of coin that is a little defaced, yet it hath the old stamp still, and is acknowledged for good coin, so a Christian in all desertions, in the worst state, he hath the stamp still. Though it be darkened by his carelessness, yet after it receives a fresh stamp it is an everlasting stamp. When once we are God's coin we are never reprobate silver. And all is, because we are 'renewed according to the image of Christ,' and grace is firmly set in our nature in Christ so sure that all the devils in hell cannot rase it out. And he is the 'quickening Spirit,' and therefore able to transform us to his likeness better than the first Adam was. Therefore the image of God is the likeness of the second Adam, and we are changed into that.

Now the reasons why the second Adam changeth us into his own image are many:

First, Because he is a powerful head that changeth all his members, a powerful root that changeth all his branches into his own nature, a powerful husband that changeth his own spouse. I say, he

is a quickening Spirit, a public person, and the root of all believers, as the first Adam was of us all as we are natural men.

Second, Again, it is meet that brethren should be all alike; therefore, as it is in Romans 8:29, 'we are predestinate to be conform to Christ.' 'He is the first among many brethren.' The chief brethren must be all alike. Therefore we being predestinate to salvation, it was fit we should be predestinate to be conformable to our elder brother, that brethren might be of one nature and disposition. It is fit that the husband and wife should be of one disposition. Christ is the husband and we are the spouse. Therefore by grace he alters, and cleanseth, and purgeth his spouse, as it is Ephesians 5:25, seq., 'He loved his spouse, and gave himself for it; that he might purge it, and make it a glorious spouse.' It is meet the wife should be the glory of the husband, as St Paul saith, 1 Corinthians 11:7, that is, that she should reflect the excellencies of her husband. Therefore that the church might be the glory of Christ and reflect the excellencies of Christ, she is changed to be like Christ more and more daily. There is a kind of congruity that brethren should be like, and that the spouse and the husband should be alike. Therefore God hath ordained that we should be like him in a threefold degree: in suffering, in grace, and in glory. Whosoever will be like him in glory, must be like him in grace. First God's election and ordaining must have its issue; that is, the representation of the likeness of Christ in our natures.

Third, Again, the end of Christ's coming was 'to destroy the works of the devil,' 1 John 3:8, to deface all Satan's works, especially his work in us, the image of Satan in our dispositions. For every man by nature carries the image of the devil on him, till the image of Christ be stamped on, and the image of Satan rased out. For in man there is naturally an opposition to the truth, a hatred of God and of good things. Now Christ coming to dissolve the works of the devil, puts out this image, and sets his own stamp and image upon the soul. Therefore unless Christ change us to his own image he should miss of the end of his coming. These and many such reasons there are to prove that we are restored according to the image of Christ Jesus, and why Christ will change us to his own likeness. To add one more:

Fourth, The end of Christ is, that we should enter into a sweet communion with him. Therefore he will set such a stamp upon us as he may delight in us and be friends. Now if he should not change our natures, what correspondence could there be between Christ and us? Now when he hath altered and changed us, he looks on us as carrying his stamp and image.

Use 1. If this be so, that we are changed into the image of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, then I beseech you let us labour every day more and more to study Christ, that so by beholding Christ we may be transformed into his likeness. For the looking upon Christ is a transforming sight. Therefore let us look into his disposition as it is set forth in the gospel, and to his carriage, and look to his privileges, that so we may receive 'grace for grace,' grace suitable to his grace, disposition suitable to his disposition, conversation suitable to his conversation, and privilege and prerogative suitable to his prerogative, that we may be like him every way.

What was his disposition and carriage? It were too large to unfold it to you as it is in the gospel, but because we must be changed into the image of Christ, it is good to look to that picture, that we may resemble that Image as much as may be. You see in the gospel how he carried himself to his friends, enemies, the devil, himself.

You see how full of love he was. What drew him from heaven to earth, and so to his cross and to his grave, but love to mankind? You see how full of goodness he was: 'He went about doing all the good he could,' Acts 10:38. How much good doth that speech savour of that Paul speaks of him, 'It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive,' Acts 20:35. See how full of zeal he was! He whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, John 2:15. He was full of goodness. It was his meat and drink to do good, John 4:32, seq. It was as natural to him as for a fountain to stream out.

(1.) And as I said for his carriage toward his friends, to those that were good, how sweet and indulgent was he.

[1.] Where there was any beginnings of goodness, he did encourage it. He never sent any back again, but those that went back again of their own head, as the young man. Christ sent him not back. He was so full of sweetness to weak Christians, nay, he discovered himself most to the weakest. He was never more familiar with any than with the woman of Samaria, that was an adulteress, John 4:6, seq.; and Mary that had been a sinner, how sweetly did he appear to her first, John 20:1, seq. How sweet was he to sinners when they repented! how ready to forgive and pardon! See it in Peter. He never cast him in the teeth with his apostasy; he never upbraided him with it; he never so much as tells him of it, only he 'looks' upon him, and afterward, 'Lovest thou me?' &c., John 21:15.

[2.] He would not 'quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed,' Matthew 12:20, so gentle and sweet a Saviour have we. He was sweet to those that were good in the lowest degree of goodness; nay, where there was but a representation of goodness, as in the young man, he kissed and embraced him when he came and said, 'What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?' Mark 10:17. He embraced him, and made much of him. And so to the Pharisee, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God,' Mark 12:34. He laboured to pull him further. He was of a winning, gaining disposition. Those that were good he loved them, and carried himself so to all as much as might be. Shall we not labour to be of his disposition, not to set people further off, but to be of a gaining, winning nature?

[3.] See how obedient he was to his Father, 'Not my will, but thine be done,' Matthew 26:42; both in active and passive obedience, in all things he looked to his Father's will, being subordinate to him. Wheresoever there is subordination, there ought to be obedience. Now there is a subordination to God as our Father in Christ. Therefore we should labour to be obedient even to death, as Christ was. Our happiness stands in subordination. The happiness of the inferior is in subjection to the superior that may do him good. Therefore we must be obedient to God as Christ was. We see he prayed whole nights.\*

## 26. How to read the life of Christ in the gospel

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How to read the life of Christ in the gospel

(2.) For his own particular, how holy and heavenly was he.† He takes occasion of vines, of stones, of water, of sheep, and all things to be heavenly minded, to raise his soul upon all occasions. And when he rose from the dead, and conversed with his disciples, what was his talk? He discoursed all of matters of the kingdom of heaven. So his whole disposition was heavenly and holy in himself, and patient in wrongs done to him. He did not return injury for injury. You see how meek he was. I give you but a touch of every particular. You may by proportion apply the rest. He was in his own particular holy and heavenly, and full of purity and holiness and heavenliness.

(3.) What was he to his enemies? Did he call for fire from heaven when they wronged him? Was he all on a heat? When his poor disciples, being more flesh than spirit, would have fire from heaven, 'You know not what spirit you are of,' saith he, Luke 9:55. He shed tears for those that shed his blood, 'Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem,' &c., Matthew 23:37, that afterward crucified him. And upon the cross you see there to his very enemies, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do,' Luke 23:34. So then if we will be like to Christ, consider how he carried himself to God in devotion and obedience, and how in himself he was full of purity and holiness, unspotted every way; how to his friends, to all that had any goodness in them; and how to his enemies, he prayed for his very enemies.

(4.) And for the devil himself. Deal with him as Christ did, that is, have no terms with him, although he come to us in our nearest friends. He came to Christ in Peter. 'Satan avoid,' saith he, Matthew 16:23. If the devil come to us in our wives, in our children, in our friends, 'avoid Satan.' Satan comes to us sometime in our friends, to give corrupt judgment, to maintain self causes, to do this or that that may crack our conscience. Discern the devil in our best friends; for sometime they may be the trunks\* of the devil. The devil may convey his spirit through Peter. Let us imitate Christ. Discern between our friends' love and the subtilty of the devil in them, and be able to give them an avault, 'avoid Satan.' We see Christ when he encountered Satan, he fights not with Satan's weapons; and when he was to deal with his instruments, but with the word of God. He gives not reproach for reproach, nor sophistry for sophistry; but 'It is written,' Matthew 4:4, et alibi, shewing that we must encounter Satan with God's armoury, with weapons out of the book of God. And then when Satan would confess him, and make much of him, 'Oh thou art the Son of God,' he would have nothing to do with him. So those that are manifestly led with the spirit of Satan, and would press kindness on us, have nothing to do with them so far. As we say of the devil he is not always a liar, but he always cozeneth; so take those that are led by the spirit of the devil, that are Jesuited papists, they lie not in all, but there is cozening in all; for all is but snaring kindness and gifts that will hurt more. All offers from Satan, and those that are led with the spirit of Satan, we ought to suspect, as Christ we see when Satan offered him a kindness, he saw he was to be took heed of. Therefore saith he, 'away,' you and your kindness. So have nothing to do with devilish men. Those are best at ease, and prosper most that have least to do with them; those that see they are always

deceivers though they be not alway liars; those that are nearest hostility prosper best. Thus you see a taste of Christ's carriage to his friends, to his enemies, to Satan. And for hypocrites he speaks, 'Woe to them,' Matthew 23:13. He hated them above all the proud Pharisees. I might spend much time in going over particulars in the gospel, to see what expressions there are of Jesus Christ.

## 27. How to become like Christ

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### How to become like Christ

Use 2. I beseech you, make this use of it, when in the gospel you read of any expression of his love and gentleness, of his obedience and humility, in washing his disciples' feet, and 'Learn of me for I am meek,' &c., Matthew 11:29, and 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden,' Matthew 11:28, then think this is the expression of my blessed Saviour, 'the second Adam,' to whose image I must be conformed, and transformed, and changed; and therefore when you are moved and tempted to sin, from your own corruption, or from Satan, reason thus with yourselves: Would our blessed Saviour, if he were upon earth, do this? would he speak thus? would he not do thus if he were here now? would he not be ready to do this good turn? Surely he would; and I must be changed into his image and likeness. Therefore let me consider what my blessed Saviour would do in the like case. Surely our blessed Saviour would not stain and defile his body. He would not make his tongue an instrument of untruth to deceive others. He would not be covetous and injurious. Art thou a Christian or no? If thou be a Christian thou hast the anointing of Jesus Christ. That anointing that was poured on him as the head, it runs down to thee as a member, as Aaron's ointment ran down to his skirts. If thou be the skirt of Christ, the meanest Christian, thou hast the same grace if thou be a Christian. And therefore thou must express Christ, that as thou art partaker of his name, so thou must be partaker of his anointing. If thou be a Christian, why doest thou thus? Doth this suit with thy profession? Dost thou carry the image of Satan, and dost thou think to be a Christian, except it be in title and profession only? No. There is no Christian but if he be a true Christian he is changed into the likeness of Christ, into his image. Therefore it is a good thought upon all occasions, every day to think what would my blessed Saviour say if he were here? and what did he in the like case when he was upon earth? I must be 'led by the Spirit of Christ,' or else I am none of his. Therefore let us shame ourselves when we are moved by our corruptions and temptations to do anything contrary to this blessed image. And consider, the more we grow into the likeness of Christ, the more we grow in the love of God, who delights in us as he doth in his own Son: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' Matthew 3:17. Now the more like we are to Christ, the more he is pleased with us. And the more we shall grow in love one to another; for the liker pictures are to the first pattern, the liker they are one to another. So the liker we grow to Christ, the liker we are one to another, and the more like, the more love. Who keeps Christ alive in the world, but a company of Christians that carry his resemblance? As we say of a child that is like his father, this man cannot die as long as his son is alive, because he resembleth his father; so as long as Christians are in the world, that have the Spirit of Christ, Christ cannot die. He lives in them, and Christ is alive no otherwise in the world than in the hearts of gracious Christians, that carry the picture and resemblance of Christ in them. But how are we changed into the likeness of Christ? How come we to be like him? When once we believe in Christ, we are graft into the similitude of his death, and into the likeness of his resurrection. It is a point somewhat mystical, yet it is stood upon in the Scriptures, in Romans 6 especially, at large.

How come we to die to sin by virtue of Christ's death? and to live to righteousness by the fellowship of Christ's resurrection? It is said we are transformed into the likeness of Christ. The phrases of Scripture shew it. But to stand upon these phrases a little.

Beloved, as it was in Christ's own person when Christ died, whole Christ died and was crucified, but yet the death itself, the crucifying was terminate in the human nature: the human nature died and not the God-head; yet by reason of the union, whole Christ died and was crucified: the 'Lord of glory' was crucified, as the Scripture speaks. And as it was in Christ natural, so it is in Christ mystical, whole Christ mystical was crucified, whole Christ mystical is risen again, notwithstanding the crucifying was terminate in Christ the head, not in the members. As his death was terminate in his human nature, it ended and was confined in that; so this crucifying belonged to the head, and the head rose; yet whole Christ, all believers as soon as they are one with Christ, by reason of the mystical union, they are dead and crucified in Christ their head, and risen and sit in heavenly places, in Christ their head. So then a true believer, when he is made one with Christ, he reasons thus, My corruption of nature, this pride of heart that naturally I have, this enmity of goodness, this is crucified; for I am one with Christ. When he died, I and my head did die, and this pride and covetousness and worldliness, this base and filthy carnal disposition, was crucified in Christ my head. I in my head was crucified, and I in my head now am risen and sit in heaven. Therefore now I am in some sort glorious. Therefore I mind things above in my head. And therefore because of the necessary conformity of the members to the head, I must more and more die to sin, be crucified to sin, and rise by the Spirit of Christ and ascend with him. The more I know, and consider, and meditate of this, the more I am transformed into the likeness of his death and resurrection. But to go a little further.

Quest. What things in Christ's death did especially discover themselves to us, when we once believe, to our comfort?

Ans. Three things. In regard of us, wonderful love, that he died for us. In regard of sin, wonderful hatred, that he would die for sin. And wonderful holiness and love of grace. He shewed his hatred of sin, that he would shed his heart-blood for it; and wanting the glory of God, as it were, by feeling the wrath of God for a time, even in hatred to sin.

There were these two affections pregnant in Christ upon the cross, wondrous love for us to die for us, and wondrous hatred of sin to purge it, for which he died; and wondrous holiness, from whence hatred of sin came. Whence doth hatred of sin come, but from wonderful purity and holiness, that cannot endure sin? Thus, when the soul considers it is one with Christ, it hath the same affections that Christ had. Christ in love to us died. Can I apprehend that love of Christ when he died and was crucified and tormented for my sin, but out of love I must hate sin again? And when I consider how Christ stood affected to sin upon the cross, when he died to purge it, and to satisfy for it, can I have other affections, being one with him, than he had upon the cross? I cannot. So, whether I consider his love to me, or the hatred he bore to sin, considering myself one with him by a mystical union, I shall have the same affection of love to him, and be like him every way, to love what he loves, and to hate what he hates.

I cannot but hate sin; and, hating sin, I must act his part anew, that is, as he died for sin, so I die to sin; as he was crucified for it, so it is crucified in me; as he was pierced, so he gives corruption a stab in me; as he was buried, so my corruption is buried; and as he died once, never to die again,

so I follow my sins to the grave, to death, and consumption of old Adam, that he never riseth again. So I say, the consideration of my union with Christ, that I in Christ did die and was crucified, because my head died and was crucified. And then it puts that affection into me that was in Christ, and makes me act Christ's part, to die to sin daily more and more. These and the like thoughts are stirred up in a Christian, which St Paul aims at in Romans 6 and other places. So by the virtue of his resurrection I am conformable more and more to the graces in him; for as the power of God's Spirit raised him up when he was at the lowest, when he had been three days in the grave, so the Spirit in every Christian raiseth them up at the lowest to comfort, to a further degree of grace, more and more; nay, when they are fallen into any sin or any affliction for sin, the same power that raised Christ when he was in the grave, for our sins, in the lowest humiliation that could be, it raiseth them from their sins daily, that they gather strength from their sins. The power that raised Christ at the lowest raiseth a Christian at the lowest in sin and in affliction for sin; for when he is tripped and undermined by his corruptions, God by that power that raised Christ at the lowest recovers and strengthens him, and makes him afresh revenge himself upon his sin. And when he is at the lowest, in the grave, the same power will raise him, like Christ every way. So you see how we are changed to the likeness of Christ.

How shall we know then whether we have the image of Christ stamped upon us or no?

If we be changed into the likeness of Christ, we shall be changed in our understandings, to judge of things as he did. His aim was to please his Father in all things. If we have the same ends, and the same opinion and esteem of things, ...\* He judged matters of grace and of the kingdom of God above all other; for the soul is more worth than the whole world. See the judgment that he passed upon things: 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be cast upon you,' Matthew 6:33. We must be changed in our judgment if we will have his image upon us. We must be like him in our will, in our choice, in the cleaving, and purpose, and resolution of our will. We must have the bent of our soul as his was. Our souls must be edged and pointed as his was, wholly for heaven and the kingdom of God. And so for our affections, there must be a change in them, in our love, and joy, and delight. We must love and joy and delight in whatsoever he did.

Now the way to stir us up to this is to see what image we naturally carry, and to see ourselves in the glass of the law. If a man consider thus, if Christ's image be not upon me, I carry the image of the devil, this would make him labour to get another image upon him. For, beloved, at the day of judgment Christ will not own us if he see not his image upon us. Cæsar will own Cæsar's coin if he see his image upon it. 'Whose image and superscription is this? Give unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's,' Matthew 22:20. If Christ see his stamp on us, he will own us at the day of judgment, or else not. Naturally we are all opposite to Christ; naturally we are full of pride and malice; of the spirit of the world and the devil. Get out this by all means, or else Christ will not own us at the day of judgment. He will not look on us. He cannot abide to see us if we have not his image. We must bear the image of the second Adam as we did the image of the first.

Again, the law of God was written in Adam's heart, it is expressed and copied out. There see ourselves. There see all the curses. There see ourselves guilty of the breach of every commandment. If we understand the law spiritually, that desire of women and revengeful thoughts are murder and adultery. Understand the law spiritually, and see ourselves in that glass, see ourselves utterly condemned. This will make us fly to the glass of the gospel, that we may be

changed into the image of Christ.

There is another image that we more desire to be changed into. We are transformed into the likeness of the world, cast into the mould of the times. We labour to have those opinions that the times have, and those ways of getting and rising to preferment that the world hath, and to have that carriage and disposition every way that the world hath, and so frame to the spirit of the world in all things, that so we might not be observed by others, and crossed in our pleasures, and preferments, and profits. Well, this desire to be transformed into the likeness of the world, to have the spirit of the world, what will it come to in the end? The world shall be condemned. If we will be condemned with the world, let us labour to be transformed into the opinion of the world, and to go with the stream and errors of the time if we desire to be damned. The world must be condemned. It is the kingdom of Satan, wherein he rules. Therefore there is no image or likeness for us to be transformed into, if we will be saved and have comfort, but the image of Christ; and can we have a better likeness to be transformed into than the image of him by whom we hope to be saved? than to be like him, from whom we hope for so great a matter as salvation is?

Use 2. Again, that we may be changed into the likeness of Christ, let us fix our meditations upon him, and we shall find a change we know not how, insensible. As those that stand in the sun for other purposes, they find themselves lightened and heat [ed]; so let us set ourselves about holy meditations, and we shall find a secret, insensible change; our souls will be altered and changed we know not how. There is a virtue goes with holy meditation, a changing, transforming virtue; and indeed we can think of nothing in Christ but it will alter and change us to the likeness of itself, because we have all from Christ. Can we think of his humility and not be humble? Can we think, was God humble, and shall base worms be proud? Shall I be fierce when my Saviour was meek? Can a proud, fierce heart apprehend a sweet, meek Saviour? No. The heart must be suitable to the thing apprehended. It is impossible that a heart that is not meek, and sweetened, and brought low, should apprehend a loving and humble Saviour. There must be a suitableness between the heart and Christ. As he was born of a humble virgin, so he is born and conceived in a humble heart. Christ is born and conceived, and lives and grows in every Christian; and in a humble and lowly heart, made like him by his Spirit: that is the womb. The heart that is suitable, that is the heart that he is formed in.

Use 3. Again, to be changed into this image, when we are once in the state of grace, let us look to the remainder of our corruptions. The best of us shall see that that will make us look after Christ. Look to our worldly mindedness, to our passions, to our rebellions, to our darkness and deadness of spirit, and then go to Christ. Lord, thou hast appointed Christ to be a head, to be a full vessel, that of his grace we might have grace for grace. He was 'anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' Psalms 45:7, but for his fellows. I am earthly-minded, he is heavenly. I am full of rebellions, of lusts; all is at peace in him. The image of God is perfect in him, and he is a head to infuse grace, a head of influence as well as of eminence. He is not only above me, but he hath all grace for me. Therefore, go to Christ. I need thy heavenly-mindedness, and some portion of thy meekness, of thy spiritual strength. I am weak, and dark, and dead, shine on me. Thou hast fulness for me. So go to Christ, and draw upon every occasion virtue and life from Christ our head. This is to know what is meant by being transformed to Christ our head.

There are two conformities, beloved, exceeding comfortable to us, and we must meditate on both.

First, Christ's conformity to us. He was transfigured into our likeness. He became man in love to us; not only man, but in the form of a servant, base man. He took man's nature, and man's base condition, Php 2:8. Here is the ground of our comfort, that Christ took our form, he transfigured himself to our baseness; and shall not we labour to be transformed, to be like him, that out of love stooped so low to be like us? Let us but think of this, beloved! Our blessed Saviour took our nature on him pure and holy by his Spirit. He followed sin to death. He was conceived, and lived, and died without sin, to satisfy for sin; and now by his Spirit he cleanseth out sin. He pursued and chased out sin from his conception in all the passages of his life; so we should be like him. Drive away sin, get the Spirit, that our nature in us may be as it was in him: holy, and pure, and spiritual. Shall he be conformed to us, and shall not we be conform to him? Many such reasons and considerations there be to move us to be changed into the image of Christ.

Christ, in this work of changing, is all in all; for (1.) first of all, by Christ's death and satisfaction to divine justice, we have the Spirit of God that doth all; for the Spirit is the gift of God's love, next to Christ, the greatest. Now Christ having reconciled God, God being reconciled, gives the Spirit. Our sins being forgiven, the fruit of God's love is the Spirit. So we have the Spirit by the merit of Christ.

(2.) Again, we have it from Christ, as a head, derived\* unto us. We have the Spirit for Christ and from Christ. Christ receives the Spirit first, and then he sends it into our hearts. So for Christ's sake, and from Christ as a head, we have the Spirit.

(3.) Again, from Christ we have the pattern of all grace whatsoever, to which we are changed. The pattern of all grace is from Christ. He begins to us in every grace.

(4.) Again, in the fourth place, the reasons inducing are all from Christ. For we are not only changed by power, but by reason. There is the greatest reasons in the world to be a Christian, and to come out of the state of nature. When our understanding is enlightened to see the horrible state of nature, with the angry face of God with it, and then to have our eyes opened at the same time to see the glorious and gracious face of God in Jesus Christ, here is the greatest wisdom in the world to come out of that cursed state to a better. Now, the reasons of this change are fetched from Christ, that by knowing Christ we know by reflection the cursed state out of him, and to see the glorious benefits by Christ's redemption and glorification. These set before the eye of the soul, and then the heart wrought upon these by reasons. If Christ gave himself for me, shall not I give myself to Christ? Paul hath his heavenly logic, 'Christ died for us, that we might live to him,' 2 Timothy 2:11. So we have the merit of the Spirit from Christ, the derivation of the Spirit from Christ as a head, and the pattern of grace from Christ, and the inducing reasons all from Christ, in this changing to his image.

(5.) Again, in that Christ is the image to which we are changed, let us learn, if we would see anything excellent and comfortable in ourselves, see it in Christ first. There is nothing comfortable in man but it is in Christ first, as the first image, the first receiver of all, Christ Jesus himself. If we would see the love of God, see the love of God in Christ our head first, in him that is God's beloved; if we would see the gifts that God hath blessed us with spiritual blessings, but it is in Christ. We have it from our head first. If we would see God's favour, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' Matthew 3:17. I am well pleased in him, and in all his, that are one mystical body with him. If we would see comfortably our ill done away, our sins removed, see it in Christ abased, in Christ crucified, and made a curse. See them all wiped away in the cross of

Christ. If we would see glory upon the removal of our sins, see it in Christ first. He is first risen, and therefore we shall rise. He is ascended, and sits in heavenly places, therefore we ascend and sit in heavenly places with him. All that we have or look to have comfortable in us, see it in the first pattern and platform in Christ. The reason is clear in Romans 8:29. We are elected and predestinate 'to be conformed to the image of his Son.' We are predestinate to be conformed to Christ in all things, to be loved as he is, to be gracious as he is. To rise to be glorious, to be freed and justified afterward from all our sins, as he our surety was. We are ordained to be conformable to him every way. In a word, the flesh of Christ it was holy, it was a suffering flesh, and then a glorious flesh, now it is glorious. So our nature must be like this image. It must be sanctified flesh, by the same Spirit that sanctified the mass that he was made of in the womb. It must be suffering flesh, in conformity to him; for the flesh that he took was suffering flesh, and he had a kingdom of patience before he had a kingdom of glory. So we must go through a kingdom of patience to the kingdom of glory, and then upon conformity in holiness with Christ comes our conformity in glory. When we are content to be conformed to Christ in our suffering flesh, then we shall be conformed to Christ in our glorious flesh; for our flesh must be used as his was. It must be holy and patient and suffering, and then it shall be glorious. So in all things we must look to Christ first; he must have the pre-eminence.

Beloved, of all contemplations under heaven, there is no contemplation so sweet and powerful as to see God in Christ, and to see Christ first abased for us and ourselves abased in Christ, and crucified in Christ, and acquitted in Christ. And then raise our thoughts a little higher. See ourselves made by little and little glorious in Christ. See ourselves in him rising and ascending and sitting at the right hand of God in heavenly places. See ourselves, by a spirit of faith, in heaven already with Christ. What a glorious sight and contemplation is this! If we first look upon ourselves what we are, we are as branches cut off from the tree; as a river cut off from the spring, that dies presently. What is in us but we have it by derivation from Christ, who is the first, the spring of all grace, the sum of all the beams that shine upon us? We are as branches cut off. Therefore now to see Christ, and ourselves in Christ, this transforms us to be like his image. It is the sweetest contemplation that can be.

We see this change is wrought by beholding. The beholding of the glory of God in the gospel, it is a powerful beholding; for, saith he, 'we are changed, by beholding,' to the image of Christ. Sight works upon the imaginations in brute creatures; as Laban's sheep, when they saw the parti-coloured rods, it wrought upon their imaginations, and they had lambs suitable.\* Will sight work upon imagination, and imagination work a real change in nature? And shall not the glorious sight of God's mercy and love in Christ work a change in our soul? Is not the eye of faith more strong to alter and change than imagination natural? Certainly the eye of faith, apprehending God's love and mercy in Christ, it hath a power to change. The gospel itself, together with the Spirit, hath a power to change. We partake by it of the divine nature. This glass of the gospel hath an excellency and an eminency above all other glasses. It is a glass that changeth us. When we see ourselves and our corruptions in the glass of the law, there we see ourselves dead. The law finds us dead, and leaves us dead. It cannot give us any life. But when we look into the gospel and see the glory of God, the mercy of God, the gracious promises of the gospel, we are changed into the likeness of Christ whom we see in the gospel. It is an excellent glass, therefore, that hath a transforming power to make beautiful. Such a glass would be much prized in this proud world;

such a glass is the gospel.

Therefore let us be in love with this glass above all other glasses whatsoever. Nothing can change us but the gospel. The gospel hath a changing power, as you have it Isaiah 11:6, seq.: there the lion shall feed with the lamb,' &c. 'For the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,' ver. 9. The knowledge of Christ Jesus is a changing knowledge, that changeth a man even from an untractable, fierce creature, to be tractable, sweet, and familiar. So that the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ, you see, it is a transforming knowledge, and changeth us into the image of Christ, to the likeness of Christ.

Especially upon this ground, that when we look upon Christ, and God in Christ, we see ourselves there in the love of Christ, and in the love of God; and thereupon we are moved to be changed to Christ, not by seeing Christ alone, or by seeing God in Christ alone, but by seeing God's love in Christ to us, and Christ's love to us. For the Spirit of faith, which is given together with the gospel, it sees Christ giving himself for me, and sees God the Father's love in† me in Christ, and giving me to Christ. When the Spirit of faith with this appropriation seeth God, mine in Christ, and seeth Christ mine, and sees myself in the love of God, and in the love of Christ, hereupon the soul is stirred up from a holy desire to be like Christ Jesus, that loved me so much, and to be conformable to God all I can. For if the person be great and glorious, and our friend too, there is a natural desire to be like such, to imitate them, and express them all we can. Now when we see ourselves in the love of God and Christ, out of the nature of the thing itself, it will stir us up to be like so sweet, and gracious, and loving a Saviour.

There are three sights that hath a wondrous efficacy, and they go together.

God sees us in Christ, and therefore loves us as we are in Christ.

Christ sees us in the love of his Father, and therefore loves us as he sees us in his Father's love.

## 28. Three comfortable sights seen in the glass of the gospel

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Three comfortable sights seen in the glass of the gospel We see ourselves in Christ, and see the love of God to us in Christ.

These three sights are the foundation of all comfort. God gives us to Christ, and sees us as given to him in his election. Christ sees us as given of the Father, as you have it John 17:12; and loves us as we are loved of the Father, and then sees us as his own members. And we by a Spirit of faith see Christ, and see ourselves in Christ, and given to Christ by the Father. Hereupon comes a desire of imitation and expression of Jesus Christ. When we see ourselves in Christ God looks upon us in Christ, and we look upon ourselves in Christ; and when we look upon the mercy of God in Christ, it kindleth love, and love kindleth love, as fire kindleth fire. Fire hath that quality, that it turns all to itself. Now the meditation of the glorious love of God in Christ it works love, and love is an affection of changing; love transforms as fire doth. The love of God warms us, and we are fit for all impressions, as things that are warm. Iron is a dull and heavy thing, yet when it is warm it is bright and pliable, and hath as much as may be of the nature of fire imprinted upon it. So our dead, and dull, and inflexible, and unyielding souls become malleable and flexible by the love of Christ shining upon them. His love transforms them and kindles them. So here is the way how the glory of God's love in Christ transforms us, because the discovery of the bowels of mercy in God towards us kindles love to him; and that being kindled it works likeness, for love to greatness transforms us. It works a desire to be like those that are great. Where there is dependence there is a desire to be like, even among men. Much more considering that God so loves our nature in Christ, and that our nature is so full of grace in Christ as it is, the love of God in Christ, that hath done so much for us, it breeds a desire to be like Christ in our disposition, all we can. By looking to the glory of God in Christ we see Christ as our husband, and that breeds a disposition in us to have the affections of a spouse. We see Christ as our head, and that breeds a disposition in us to be members like him.

Quest. How shall we know then that we see God in Christ, and the glory of God in the gospel comfortably?

Ans. Hath this sight a transforming power in thee, to the image of Christ, to make thee like him? If it have not a transforming power, it is a barren, empty contemplation, that hath no efficacy or comfort at all. So far as the sight of God's love in Christ breeds conformity to Christ, so far it is gracious and comfortable. See therefore whether thou art transformed to the image of Christ. If there be not a change, there is no beholding of Christ to speak of. No man ever sees the mercy of God in Christ by the eye of faith, but he is changed.

For, beloved, as there must be a change, so it is in this order, from beholding the mercy of God in Christ. For can you imagine that any soul can see itself in the glass of God's love in Jesus Christ, that it should see in the gospel Christ, and in him God reconciled unto him in particular, but that soul, out of the apprehension of God's love in Christ, will love God again, and be altered and changed? It is impossible such a sight therefore, whereby we see ourselves in this glass, as when

we look in a glass, and see our own image, we see our own selves in Christ, and the love of God.\* Such a sight altereth and changeth alway. It works love, and love is the worker of imitation; for what doth make one labour to express another in their disposition, carriage, and conversation? Oh it is love, as children imitate their parents. Love is full of invention, and of this kind of invention, that it studies to please the person loved, as much as it can every way. Hereupon we come to be desirous to be like Christ, because we see the glory of God's mercy shining in Christ. The adversaries of the grace of God they fall foul upon us, because we preach justification by the free mercy and love of God in Christ. Oh, say they, this is to dead the spirits of men, that they have no care of good works.

Beloved, can there be any greater incentive and motive in the world to sanctification, to express Christ and to study Christ, than to consider what favour and mercy we have in Christ? how we are justified and freed by him, by the glorious mercy of God in Christ? There cannot be a greater. Therefore we see here they depend one upon another. By seeing in the glass of the gospel the glory of God, we are transformed from glory to glory. An excellent glass the gospel is: by seeing God's love in it we are changed. The law is a glass too, but such a glass as St James speaks of, that when a man looks into it, and sees his duty, he goes away, and forgets all, 1:23. The law discovers our sin and misery. Indeed, it is a true glass. If we look there, we shall see the true picture of old Adam and of corruption; but it is such a glass as works nothing upon us. But when this glass is held out by the ministers of the word, whose office it is to hold the glass to people, when they see the love of God in Christ, this is a changing, transforming glass, to make them that were deformed and disfigured before, that bore upon them the image of Satan before, now to be transformed to be like Christ, by whom they must be saved. Is there any study in the world, therefore, more excellent than that of the gospel, and of the mercy of God in Christ, that transforms and changes men from one degree of grace to another, as it follows in the text.

Therefore, those that find themselves to be the 'old men' still, that have lived in corrupt courses, and do so still, let them not think to have any benefit by the gospel. They deceive themselves. They never knew God. For he that saith he hath communion with God, and walks in darkness, he is a liar, 1 John 4:20. St John gives him the lie, for God is light. How can a man see himself in the love of God, and remain in a dark state opposite to love? Will it not alter a man? It will not suffer him to live in sins against conscience. Let no man that doth so, think he hath benefit by Christ. That knowledge is but a notional knowledge, a speculation, a swimming knowledge: it is not a spiritual knowledge; because wheresoever the knowledge of God in Christ is to purpose, there is a change and conversion of the whole man. There is a new judgment and new affections. The bent and bias of them is another way than they were before. There is a change which is called a turning in the Scripture.\* Those things that were before them before, are now behind them; and those things that were behind them, are now before them. Whereas they turned their back upon God and good things, now they turn their faces, they look God-ward and heaven-ward, and to a better condition; for this change is nothing else but conversion. Therefore a man may say as he said, 'I am not I.' Those that have seen Christ, it makes them differ from themselves; this sight works a change.

If there were not a change, it would make God forsworn; as it is Luke 1:13, seq., in Zacharias's song, 'He hath sworn that, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives.' If any man, therefore, say he

is delivered from his enemies, that he thinks he shall not be damned and go to hell, and yet doth not live in holiness and righteousness, he makes God's oath frustrate, for God's oath joins both together: 'He hath sworn that, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we should serve him without fear;' without slavish fear, but with a fear of reverence: 'in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.' Whosoever, therefore, are in a state of deliverance, have grace granted them whereby they may serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life; they are changed into the same image, 'From glory to glory.' By glory is meant especially grace here, and that which accompanies the grace of God, the favour of God. When we are persuaded of it by the Spirit, by which grace is wrought in us, upon grace in us there follows peace, and joy, and comfort, and many such things which the Scripture accounts to be glory.

## 29. Four degrees of the glory of a Christian

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Four degrees of the glory of a Christian We say there are four degrees of the glory of a Christian.

First, initial glory, in his first conversion, and thereupon, the knowledge of his deliverance from that cursed and damnable state that he is in; the knowledge, likewise, of his title to life everlasting. He comes to have friendship with God; he comes to have his nature renewed, that he may be friends with God. There must be an assimilation by the Spirit, like God, in a holy disposition. Now, upon the favour of God we come to be friends with God, and to have our natures altered; and hereupon comes those glorious qualifications, as peace, and joy, and consolation in all conditions, and liberty, and boldness to the throne of grace. This is glory, beloved! Is it not a glory to be friends with God, and to have God deal with us as friends? to reveal his secrets to us of his love and grace in Christ? to discover the hidden mysteries of his love to us, that was hid from the beginning of the world? We never know it till our effectual calling, till our first conversion, for God to be friends with us all our lives: Abraham was the friend of God. And then to have our nature renewed, to have our shame laid aside. Indeed, sin makes us shameful. It is the dishonour and abasement of the soul. The very change of our nature to be such as God may delight in, this is glory. The image of God is glory. Therefore in Romans 3:23, et alibi, it is said we are stripped and 'deprived of the glory of God' since the fall, that is, of the image of God, by Adam's sin, whereby we resembled God in holiness; so grace whereby we resemble God is the image and likeness of God, and that is the glory of man. If one should ask, What is the best glory of a man? that intrinsecal glory that characteriseth a man indeed? It is the stamp of Christ upon him, the image of the second Adam, in his soul to be like him. And hereupon those glorious qualifications that follow upon it, glorious peace, and glorious joy; glorious and unspeakable comfort, above all discomforts whatsoever; as indeed the comforts of religion are comforts triumphing and prevailing above all discomforts. There are no comforts but those in religion, that are above the discomforts we meet with in this world. For what can be set against the wrath of God, against hell and damnation, but the comforts of the gospel? Now when a man is in the state of grace, and hath these glorious things following him, sweet and glorious peace that passeth understanding, that all the world, and all the devils in hell cannot shake, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and comforts above all discomforts whatsoever: and then glorious liberty he hath to come into the presence of God upon all occasions, being a friend of God—are not these things glorious, beloved? And these belong to every Christian.

Second, Now as a Christian grows in assurance of his salvation and further friendship with God, and further peace and joy and comfort, there is a further degree of glory. The growth of grace is glory. Therefore in 2 Peter 1:5, seq., he follows the point at large. When we add grace to grace, he saith it gives a further entrance into the kingdom of God: for the kingdom of God is begun in grace here; and the further we grow in grace, the more we enter into the kingdom of grace; and the further we enter into that, the nearer we are to the kingdom of glory.

Third, The next degree of glory is when the soul enjoys the presence of God in heaven.

Fourth, Then the upshot and conclusion, the closure and consummation of all, at the day of judgment, when body and soul shall be united again. Then is perfect glory. Here it is insinuated, when he saith we are changed from glory to glory, that is, from grace to grace, till all end in glory, which is the perfection of all in heaven, when body and soul shall be both glorious, 'from glory to glory.' In this is considerable, first, that grace is glory: and then, that grace being glory, is growing in a continual course till it come to perfection. We grow 'from glory to glory,' from one degree of grace to another.

[1.] Grace whereby we resemble Christ is glory, and indeed so it is, for the image and likeness of God is our glory. What was Adam's glory but his likeness to God? He was created in God's image. And what is our glory? To be like Christ. Therefore grace is our glory.

[2.] Man's perfection is his glory. But the renewing of God's image in grace is man's perfection. Therefore it is his glory.

[3.] That which makes a man terrible to all opposites whatsoever is glory. But grace makes a man terrible to the devil and to wicked men. Both grace in one man, and grace in the church; for the church is 'terrible, like an army with banners,' Song of Solomon 6:4. When the ordinances of God are set up in glory, and there is glorious obedience to them in the church, it is terrible to the enemies as an army with banners; for there is a lustre and glory in all that is God's, both in the persons of believers, and likewise in the ordinances of God. Grace is glorious. As the wise man saith, 'Wisdom makes a man's face to shine,' Ecclesiastes 8:1. Is not wisdom a glorious thing: to see a wise understanding man able to guide himself and others? It puts a beauty upon a man, to be a wise and understanding man. Humility makes a man glorious; for it makes God put glory upon a man, when a man is glorious, and understands it not. As Moses when his face shined, he knew not that it shined himself. Many humble men are glorious and think not so. They are glorious, and they shine, though they see it not. Is it not a glorious thing to be taken out of ourselves, to deny ourselves, to offer a holy violence to ourselves, and to our corruptions? Is not this a glorious thing, when others lie grovelling like slaves under their corruptions, to stand unmoveable in all the changes of the world, and in all intercourse of troubles to stand as a rock in the midst of all, unmoveable, founded upon the love of God in Christ, and the hope of glory after? Not to be shaken with the wind of temptations from his standing, at least not to be shook off his standing: this is glorious, to have a constant spirit. Is it not glorious to have admittance boldly by grace; to go into the presence of God at all times; to be prevailer with God? Faith overcomes not only the world, but God himself. It binds him with his own promise. Is not faith a glorious grace, that triumphs over the great God himself, binding him with his own word and promise? Is not love a glorious grace, that melts one into the likeness of Christ? Beloved, get love. It is the only artificial worker of imitation. It melts us into the likeness of Christ. It constrains, it hath a kind of holy violence in it. No water can quench it. We shall glory in sufferings for that we love. Nothing can quench that holy fire that is kindled from heaven. It is a glorious grace.

Hope, what doth it? When it casts anchor in heaven, it keeps us in all the waves. It purgeth our natures to be like the thing hoped for. There is no grace but it is glorious. So that grace is glory. The image of God is glory. It makes a man glorious. It makes him shine.

Beloved, do but represent to your thoughts such a one as Joseph, of a sweet, wise, and loving spirit. It is an excellent state to see a man in his place in the commonwealth. What a glorious sight

is it to see a Joseph, a Nehemiah, to see a man like Paul, all on fire for the glory of God and the good of the church! The care of all the churches lay upon him. The conceit\* of a man shining in grace, what a glorious representation in our thoughts is it! And so in men now living. When we see wisdom and love tending to the common good; when we see a spirit of mortification, when we see a spirit of love, that is not for itself but for other men, a spirit of love above self-love, all for the good of others, as Christ 'went about doing good,' Acts 10:38, it makes them so lovely and glorious, as that no object in the world is so glorious, as to see a man in whom the image of Christ is; it puts a glory upon him.

Besides, it puts an inward glory upon a man, when it makes him rejoice: 'The Spirit of glory rests upon him,' Isaiah 61:1. Nay, in imprisonments and abasements, take a good man in any condition, he is glorious. His carriage is glorious. You shall not see flesh and blood, no revengeful humour. When flesh and blood is subdued, and nothing appears in a man but the image of Christ, he is a glorious creature in the greatest abasement that can be. When Paul was in the stocks, what a glorious condition was he in! When he sung at midnight, when the Spirit of glory was upon him! To see the martyrs suffer without revenge, to pray for their enemies, that they had a spirit that conquered all wrongs and fear of death, and displeasure of men; a triumphant spirit above all things below, to raise them above encouragements and discouragements, what a glorious thing was this! To see a man in his right principles, with the image of God upon him, he sees all things below, beneath him. This is glorious, to see a man that overcomes the world, that cares no more for the offers of preferment on the right hand, or for threatenings on the other hand. All is nothing to him. He breaks it as Samson did his cords. To see such a victorious spirit, is not this glorious! To see a glorious soul, that is above all earthly things whatsoever, that tramples the world under foot, as the 'woman clothed with the sun' treads the 'moon under her foot,' Revelation 12:1. The church clothed with Christ, who is the glory of the church, tramples all earthly things under feet. Grace is victorious and conquering, prevailing over those corruptions that prevail over ordinary men. A Christian as David, when he had Saul in the cave, overcomes himself, 1 Samuel 24:4, seq. It is an argument of a great deal of strength of grace. Christ overcame himself on the cross. He prayed for his enemies. So when the nature of man is so subject to the power of grace, that though there be rebellions in us, as there will be, while we are in this world, yet they cannot overpower the principle of grace. All this while a man is a glorious Christian, because he is not subject to the common humours and infirmities and weaknesses of men. Therefore that makes a Christian glorious, when he brings every thought and affection, and every corruption, as much as may be, to the subjection of the Spirit of glory, to the Spirit of Christ in him. Though old Adam stir in him, yet he brings him down, that he doth not discover himself to the scandal of the gospel and profession, and to the weakening of the love of good things in the hearts of others. It shall not break out. He subjects these rising thoughts. Here grace is glorious.

Another man cannot do this. He cannot love God; he cannot deny himself; he cannot resist temptations, not inwardly. He may forbear an action out of fear, but a Christian can love, and fear, and delight in good things; and he can resist, and he can enjoy the things of this life, in a subordinate manner to better things. A worldling cannot do it. There is a glory upon a Christian, a derivative glory from Christ. For we shine in his beams. We are changed according to his image 'from glory to glory.'

## 30. Why the world despiseth those that are gracious

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Why the world despiseth those that are gracious

Obj. The thing is not much questionable that grace is glorious, but it may be objected, Doth grace make one glorious? Then how comes the world to despise such as have grace? such as are like Christ?

Ans. 1. I answer it is from blindness, from spiritual drunkenness and madness. They cannot discern of things; they are besotted; they see no difference. Therefore they cannot discern things that are excellent. But take a man in his right principles; take a sober man, and he will see an excellency in a Christian above himself.

Ans. 2. Again, grace is not made so much of oftentimes in the world, because it is joined with so many infirmities. Our life 'is hid with Christ,' Colossians 3:3. It is hid under infirmities and under afflictions oftentimes; and being hidden it doth not appear so much in this world.

Ans. 3. And then again, however men force upon themselves a contempt of grace, and of the best things, yet notwithstanding it is but forced; for their conscience stoops at it. Witness conscience when it gives evidence on their deathbed. Take a man when he is himself, when he is sober, when he is best able to judge, when those things are taken from him, that obscured and darkened his judgment, and then you shall have him justify all things that are good, both grace and the means of grace.

Ans. 4. Again it must be so, that we may be conformable to Christ. The world misguideth\* the state of a Christian. They think them vile and base persons. So they did Christ the head of the church. You see how Christ was esteemed. His glory was veiled with our nature and with misery a while; but it sparkled out oftentimes in his miracles. Now this was that he might suffer and perform the work of salvation. For the devil nor the wicked world would never have done that they did to him, if his glory had broken forth to the full lustre of it. So it is with the body mystical of Christ. The world misjudgeth of them. It appears not now what they shall be hereafter, nor what they are now indeed; because God will have them conformable to Christ. If so be that the glory of Christians were discovered in the true lustre, who would wrong a Christian? If they did see him indeed to be a member of Christ and an heir of heaven, the care of angels and the price of Christ's death; if they did see him in his excellency, all the world would admire him, and make another man of him than of potentates and monarchs! But how then should he be conformable to his head in afflictions? The head was to save us by death. He must be abased. The world must take him as a strange man, and we that must be conformed to him, we must pass as unknown men in the world. But not so unknown, but that grace breaks out sometimes to admiration and imitation; and when it hath not imitation, it stirs up envy and malice in others, in the children of the devil. Therefore, notwithstanding all objections, grace is glory. It makes us like Christ, who is glorious, who is 'the Lord of glory.' And then it draws glory with it, glorious peace and glorious comfort, and joy in the Holy Ghost, the attendants of grace in the hearts of God's people. Is it not, as I said, a glorious

thing for a man to have that peace in him that passeth all understanding, that shall settle and quiet his soul in all tumults in the world? When all things are turned upside down, for a Christian to stand unmoveably built upon the rock: whence comes this glorious pitch, but from grace? Grace and peace: one follow another. Then for a man to have inward joy and comfort in the midst of afflictions and disconsolations in the world, it is a wonderful and a glorious thing. It is called 'joy unspeakable,' 1 Peter 1:8, and 'glorious grace,' 2 Corinthians 3:8. Therefore in regard of that that follows it, in this world it is glory.

Hence it is that the wise man saith, that 'the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.' He is more glorious than another man, as pearls are above pebbles. He is more excellent in life, in death, and after death especially; for there is a growing from glory to glory. He is glorious in life, more glorious in death, when his soul shall be put into glory in heaven; and most of all glorious when Christ shall come to be glorious in his saints, as it is in 2 Thessalonians 1:10. So he is excellent in life, and in death, and for ever. For another man, that is but a man—a man, said I, nay, if a man be but a man, he is either like a devil in subtlety, or a beast in sensuality; he carries the image either of a beast or of the devil, besides a man. A righteous man therefore that hath the image of God stamped upon him, he is better than another man every way; for he is in a higher rank of creatures. Grace sets a man as far above other men as other men are above other creatures. At the first the creatures revered God in Adam. They came and took their names from him. They were subject to him. So grace is a glorious, majestic thing. Wicked men, even Herod, revered grace in John Baptist, Mark 6:20, and evil men reverence it in their hearts, in God's people, though their mouths speak against it. A Christian is a spiritual man. As reason lifts a man above other creatures, so the image of God set upon a man, it lifts and raiseth him above other men.

Use 1. If grace and the image of God and Christ in us be glory, and make us excellent, let us all labour for grace above all things. We all, as I said before, desire liberty; and as we desire liberty, so we desire glory; but we know not the way how to come to it. In seeking liberty, we seek licentiousness; in seeking glory, we seek it from men that cannot give it. We seek glory in outward things that are nothing. What is the glory of all outward things, but the shining of a rotten piece of wood in the night time, or as a glow-worm? What is all this glory but a flash? It is nothing. If we would seek true glory indeed, as naturally all do, let us seek grace. Thereby we resemble Christ, 'the Lord of glory;' thereby we are glorious in the eyes of Christ; thereby we are glorious both without and within. Though this glory for the present be hid, thereby we are terrible to the devil and all enemies. For ever since his head was crushed by Christ, that broke the serpent's head, he is afraid of man's nature in Christ; he is afraid of Christians, as knowing that they be better than himself. And he shall be judged by them ere long. The devil shall be judged by Christians. Therefore let us study for this glory. A man is never glorious till he be a Christian.

It is said of Antiochus, that he was a vile person. What! Though he was a king (i)? Yes. Let a man be never so great in the world, if he be a wicked man, a man that dishonoureth his tongue, that should be his glory, that hath not the language of Canaan, that dishonours and defiles his body, that should be the 'temple of the Holy Ghost,' 1 Corinthians 6:19, a man that carries a malicious and malignant spirit, that hath the image of the devil in his soul: if he be never so great a person, he will be vile ere long, when all relations shall end in death. All excellencies must be laid down in death. Therefore seeing all other excellencies cannot keep a man from being a vile person, let us

labour for that that will put a glory upon us. Labour for the image of Christ to be stamped upon our soul. There is a great humour in this age in looking to pieces of workmanship. If a man have skill to discern a piece, as they call it, it is more than ordinary. Beloved, what a vanity is this (though these pictures be lawful; they are a kind of mute poetry). But what is this to the having of the glorious image of Christ stamped upon us; to be glorious in the eye of God and in the very judgment of carnal men!

There is nothing so excellent as grace, and nothing so base as sin. Indeed there is nothing base but sin; and nothing excellent but grace. So that God's children, not only in their glorious riches and prerogatives to be the sons of God and heirs of heaven, are glorious, but they have an inward glory. 'The spouse of Christ is glorious within,' Psalms 45:13. Insomuch that Christ is in love with his own graces. He wonders at his own graces in his children.

Use 2. Again, oppose this to the scorn and hatred of the world; base-minded persons, that disgrace goodness that their illness may be the less discerned. They labour to make all alike, all they can, by slanders at least, that their illness may not appear. Oppose the judgments of God's Spirit that esteems grace glory against all the judgment of the base world. Beloved, they shall know one day, that those that they despise shall judge them; and their hearts secretly tell them so. What makes them malign men better than themselves? They have a secret conceit, he is above me. 'The spiritual man judgeth all things,' 1 Corinthians 2:15. He is a man that discerns by a spiritual eye. He judgeth and condemneth my ways, and hereafter he will judge me. A secret conscience in him makes him fear a good man. Though he deprave\* and malign him, yet his heart stoops.

Use 3. Again, is grace glory? When God sets in† on us, shall we cast our crown in the dirt? Shall we defile and blemish our glory by sinning against conscience? We forget our excellency, that grace is glory. It teacheth us how to carry ourselves to ourselves. If there be grace in us, let us be honourable to ourselves. It is a good caveat that we should be venerable to ourselves; that is, Christians should take a holy state to themselves. What! I that am an heir of heaven; I that am a king; I that am a conqueror; I that am the son of God; I that am a freeman: should I tangle myself with these things? Shall I go and stain myself? Is it not an unsightly thing to see a golden pillar daubed with dirt? or to see a crown cast into the dirt? God hath put a crown upon me; he hath made me a king; he hath made me an heir of heaven; he hath made me his son; he hath put a glory upon me;—shall I abase myself to devilish base courses? No. I will be more honourable in my own eyes. Let us think ourselves too good for the base services of Satan. These thoughts we should take to ourselves. These are not proud thoughts, but befitting our condition. When we are tempted to any base course, whatsoever it is, it is contrary to my calling.

Use 4. And let us comfort ourselves in the work of grace, though it be wrought in never so poor a measure, in all the disparagements of the world; for those that are besotted with false vain-glory, they have the eyes of their souls put out, and dimmed and dazzled with false glory. They cannot judge of the glory of a Christian. They want eyes. Therefore let us be content to pass in the world as hidden. Christ passed concealed in the world; only now and then the beams of his glory brake forth in his miracles. So we must be content. For our glory is hid in Christ, for the most part; and it is clouded with the imputations and malice of men, and sometimes with infirmities, as it will in this world. Let us comfort ourselves with this, that we are glorious howsoever, and glorious within; and

this glory will break out in a holy conversation. And it is better to be glorious in the eyes of God, and angels, and good men, and in the consciences of ill men, than to have glory from their mouths. Malice will not suffer them to glorify them with their mouths, but their consciences must needs stoop to goodness; for God hath put a majesty into goodness, that any man that is a man, that is not a beast, that hath natural principles, will reverence it; and the consciences of such men will make them speak the truth one day, and they shall say, 'We fools thought these men mad,' but 'now we see ourselves fools.' Therefore in the disparagements of worldly men, that know not where true glory lies, let us be content with this, that God hath made us truly glorious by working a change in a comfortable measure; let us comfort ourselves in this.

Use 5. Again, by this we may know whether we have grace in us or no. If we think grace to be glory, let us have that judgment and conceit of grace.

(1.) Of the change of our natures, by the Spirit of God, and the truth of God, as the Holy Ghost hath here, calling it glory. That very judgment shews that there is an alteration in our affections; that we are changed in the spirit of our minds; that we have a right conceit of heavenly things. For none but a Christian indeed can judge grace to be glory, that can truly think so. For if a man think grace to be glory truly, if he be convinced by the power of the Spirit, he will be gracious. For there is an instinct in all men by nature to glory in something. You have the gulls\* of the world, they glory in something, in swaggering, beastly courses. You have devilish men glory that they can circumvent others. Rather than men will have no glory, they will glory in that that is shame indeed. Man having a disposition alway to glory in something, if he be convinced that grace is glory, he will be gracious.

Therefore, I beseech you, enter into your own souls, and see what conceits you have of the image of God, of the graces of Christianity, and then certainly it will raise a holy ambition to have that stamp set upon you.

(2.) Again, this is another evidence that a man is gracious, if he can look upon the life of another that is better than he with a conceit that it is glory, and loving of it as glory. Many men see grace in other men, but with a maligning eye. They see it to disgrace it. For naturally this is in men. They are so vain-glorious and ambitious, that when they see the lives of other men outshew theirs, instead of imitation, they go to base courses. They obscure and darken that light with slanders, that they will not imitate in their courses. This is in the better sort of men, the prouder, and greater sort of men. What grace they will not imitate they will defame. They will not be outshined by anything. Therefore, those that can see so far into the life of another man, as they love it, and honour the grace of God in another man, it is a sign there is some work of glory begun in them. Men can endure good things in books, and by reports, and good things of men that are dead, &c., but they cannot endure good things running in their eyes. Especially when it comes in a kind of competition and comparison, they love not to be outshined.

'From glory to glory.'

We see the state of God's children here, and the state in heaven, come both under one name; both are 'glory.' The children of God are kings here, they shall be kings in heaven. They are saints here, as they be saints in heaven. There is an adoption of grace as well as an adoption of glory, Romans 8:30, et alibi. There is a regeneration here of our souls; there is a regeneration of soul

and body then. We are new creatures here; and we shall be new creatures there.

## 31. Grace and glory go both under one name

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Grace and glory go both under one name

Quest. Why do all come under one name, the state of glory in heaven, and the state of grace here? Is there no difference?

Ans. Yes. But the difference is in degrees, and not otherwise. For heaven must be begun here. If ever we mean to enter into heaven hereafter, we enter into the suburbs here. We must be new creatures here. We are kings here; we are heirs apparent here; we are adopted here; we are regenerate here; we are glorious here, before we be glorious hereafter. Therefore, beloved, we may read our future state in our present. We must not think to come *de scelo in cœlum*, as he saith (j), out of the filth of sin to heaven, but heaven must be begun here. You see both have the same name, grace, and glory. Therefore, wouldst thou know what thy condition shall be afterwards? Read it in thy present disposition. If there be not a change and a glorious change here, never look for a glorious change hereafter. What is not begun in grace shall never be accomplished in glory. Both grace here and glory hereafter coming under the same name, it forceth this. And likewise it is a ground of comfort; for why have we the same term here? When we are in the state of grace, why are we decked and adorned with the same title as we shall be in heaven?

It is partly for certainty. Grace is glory, as well as the perfection of it is glory, to shew that where grace is truly begun it will end in glory. All the powers in the world cannot interrupt God's gracious progress and way. What is begun in grace will end in glory. Where the foundation is laid, God will be sure to put up the roof. He never repents of his beginnings. Solomon saith that the 'righteous is like to the sun,' that grows brighter and brighter, till he come to his full strength, Proverbs 4:18. So the state of the godly grows more and more, from light to light, till he come to full strength. The state of the wicked is clean contrary. The state of the wicked is like the declining day. The sun grows down and down till it be twilight, and thence to darkness, and then to utter darkness. So they being dark in themselves, they grow from the darkness of misery and terror of conscience to eternal darkness, black, dismal darkness in hell. But the state of the godly it is like the course of the sun after midnight, that is growing up, up still, till it come to mid-day. So the state of the godly it is alway on the mending hand; it is always a growing state; it is a hopeful condition. They go from glory to glory. And therefore let us be assured of eternal glory for the time to come, as sure as we are of the beginnings of grace here wrought. You see, then, a main difference between the godly and others. Other men grow backward, *proficere in pejus*, as we say. They take degrees back from worse to worse, till they end in utter desolation and destruction for ever. But the other riseth by degrees, till they come to that happiness that can admit no further degrees. All the glory of the world ends in vanity and in nothing; but the glory of a Christian that begins in grace, you see it proceeds from glory to glory, alway growing and amending. If men were not spiritually mad, would they not rather be in a condition alway amending and growing more and more hopeful still, than to be in a condition alway declining, and most subject to decline when it is at the top. There is no

consistence in any human felicity, but it is in præcipite, near a downfall when it is at the highest. God's children are near rising when they are at the lowest. There is a spirit of glory lights, and not only so, but rests on them. It doth not light upon them and then go away. It is not as a flash or blaze of flax or so (k). But the Spirit rests and grows still upon them, 'from glory to glory.' The state of a Christian it is comfortable, that is soundly converted, when he shall think every day brings me nearer my glory; every day I rise I am somewhat happier than I was the day before, because I am somewhat more glorious and nearer to eternal glory; when another wretch that lives in sins against conscience may say, I am somewhat nearer hell, nearer eclipsing, and ebbing, and declining than before. So every day brings terror to the one, and matter of comfort to the other.

'From glory to glory.'

Grace, we see, is glory, especially when it is in strength; and the more grace grows, the more glory. The more it shines, the more glory. We say of fire, the more it burns the less it smokes; the less infirmity appears that may disgrace it, the more grace. The more light and lustre, and the less infirmity. Glory belongs to the growth of grace in this world. For is not a Christian a glorious Christian when he is a grown Christian? when he sends a lustre as a pearl? when as a glorious light he shines to the example of others? when he is able, as Paul saith gloriously of himself, 'I can do all in Christ that strengtheneth me,' Philip. 4:13, to want and to abound. Cast him into any condition what you will, he is like himself. Cast Joseph into prison, he is Joseph still; cast Paul in the dungeon, he is Paul still, and is never more glorious than in the midst of afflictions. So grace growing to some perfection is glorious; 'wisdom makes a man's face to shine,' saith Solomon, Ecclesiastes 8:1. So it is true of all other graces in some perfection. They make a man shine. There is nothing in the world so glorious as a Christian that is grown to some perfection. Indeed, he is so glorious, that the eye of the world, when it is cast upon him, it stirs up envy, as carnal persons, when they see a Christian man unmoveable in the midst of all motions, and unchangeable in all changes, when nothing can alter him, but he goes on, they wonder at the condition of this man, whenas indeed his grounds and resolutions are above all discouragements or encouragements that the world can afford. David was a king and a prophet, and David was a holy man, and David, for constitution of body, was ruddy and of a sweet complexion; and David, for the manner of his kingdom, was a king of a great people, There were many excellencies of David. Oh but what doth David account the prerogative of a man? 'Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven, in whose spirit there is no guile,' Psalms 32:2; that is, that is truly sanctified in spirit; that is in the state of justification; and as a witness of that, of the forgiveness of his sins, hath a spirit without guile. Happy is that man, not that is a king, or a prophet, or a strong man, or a beautiful man, or hath this endowment or that; but happy is the man whose sins are forgiven, and whose spirit is sanctified.

'From glory to glory.'

We see then that there must be an increase, a growing 'from glory to glory.' There is no stop nor stay to be made in religion. There must be of necessity a desire to grow better and better; for glory will grow still to glory. Grace will never cease till it end in glory.

[1.] Both in our dispositions that have it wrought in us; we shall desire it may increase in us the image of God and Christ more and more.

[2.] And in God's purpose. Where he begins he makes an end. Whether we look to him that will not have us in a state of imperfection,\*.... He hath not chosen us to imperfection, but to perfection; and he hath called us not to imperfection, but to perfection. He hath elected us to perfection. He hath chosen us to be spotless, not to be conflicting with our corruptions, and to be halting always as Jacob. We shall have perfect strength. We are called and elected to perfection. Therefore there is no standing at a stay in religion; there must be a perpetual growth. It is our disposition to desire and endeavour it still.

For, beloved, it is that that is inbred to all things that are imperfect, to hasten to perfection, till they come to their ubi, to their pitch. We see it in grain, weak grain. Till it come to the full growth, it breaks through clods, through harder things than itself. There is a nature in corn and seeds, that have a beginning of life in their kind in them, till those seeds come to growth, they put out themselves with a great deal of strength against opposition. So grace is of such a strong nature. Being intended by God to perfection, it will not rest in mean beginnings, but puts itself forward still, and breaks through opposition. I will not stand upon the common place of growth in grace. It is a large discourse, and I touched it upon many occasions. You see the necessity of it. There must be a growth from glory to glory. A growth not in parts as we say. For at the first regeneration, in the first beginning, when we are gracious, there is the beginning of a new life, and there is the seeds of all graces. But especially this growth is in intension and extension. Grace grows more and more in strength, and extends and reacheth itself further and further to the use of many. Grace grows, I say, in the intension of itself, and extends and reacheth itself to the use of more. The more a Christian lives, when he is in a right state and frame as a Christian should be, he is of more strength in all particular graces, and doth the more good, and shines more in his life and conversation to others. And likewise, as there is a growth in intension and extension, so there is a growth in the quality and purity of grace; for the longer a man lives, those graces that he hath grow more refined. When a Christian is but a new Christian, he tastes much of the old stock. As all fruit at the first will taste of the stock, so there is no fruit of righteousness that comes from a man, at his first conversion, but it tastes a great deal of old Adam. It savours of the old stock. The more he live, and grows spiritual, the more that that comes from him relisheth of the Spirit, the more refined is his wisdom, the more refined is his love, the more refined from self-love, his joy and delight is more refined.

Obj. Hence we may answer an objection by the way; an old man seems not to grow in grace. He seems not to be so good a man, not to be so zealous as when he was young; not so forward.

Ans. Beloved, In those that are young there is a great deal of nature joined with a little grace, and that grace in them makes a greater expression, because it is carried with the current of nature. But in age it is more refined. That that is, that knowledge they have, is more pure and more settled, and that love and affection is more refined. There is less self-love, and that zeal they have it is joined with more heavenly discretion. There is less wild fire, there is less strange fire with it. Though there be less heat of nature, that it do not work in outward demonstrations to the eye of the world, yet it is more refined and pure. So grace grows thus likewise in the purity and perfection of it; not altogether pure, for somewhat will stick to our best performances, savouring of the worst principle in nature. For as we carry flesh and spirit away, so that that comes from them will savour of corruption; yet less in a grown Christian, that is a father in Christianity, than in another.

'From glory to glory.'

Grace is glory in regard of the state before. The least degree of grace is glory in regard of the state of nature. But grace is not glory properly till it come to a growth. Grace is not glorious, so in comparison to other Christians that are grown. In regard of the state of nature, grace is glory, take it in the lowest; for is not this a glory for a man to be taken into the fellowship of Christ? to be the son of God, and an heir of heaven? to have angels for his attendants? to be begotten by the glorious gospel, the word of God, that immortal seed? Whatsoever thing is about a Christian it is glorious. Is not he glorious that hath God the Father, and God the Son, the Lord of glory, and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of glory, and the glorious gospel, and glorious angels for his attendants? Every thing is glorious in a Christian. In every Christian there is this. So grace is a kind of glory; but notwithstanding we must not content ourselves with that. Grace is then especially glory when it comes to growth. We must labour that grace may appear. What is glory? Properly glory is excellency and victory over the contrary with manifestation, excellency manifested. Now a man is said to be glorious in grace, when his grace comes to be excellent in view, and victorious over the contrary with public manifestation.

Use 1. Now this we ought to labour for; though grace be glory in respect of the former estate, yet in the rank of Christians we ought to be glorious, that is, more and more gracious; both. In regard of God, that God may have the more glory from us. The more grace, the more esteem from him, because we resemble him. And in regard of Christ Jesus: the more glorious we are, the more we resemble him. Let us labour to be more and more glorious, in regard likewise of the church, whom we shall benefit more. The more we grow in grace, the more we shall prevail with God by our prayers. Who prevailed more with their prayers than Moses, and such men? Again, when grace is glorious, that is, with victory and full manifestation, the more we are fit to give a lustre and light, that others seeing it may glorify God; to draw others to the love of grace, when they see grace glorious. Now grace is then glorious in us that others may be encouraged. When we can resist strong temptations, when we are not like children 'carried away with the wind of every doctrine,' Ephesians 4:14, this is a glorious thing. When a Christian can hold his own in the worst times; when it is a witty\* thing to be a Christian: as Hilary said in a time of schism, 'it required a great deal of wit to be a Christian' (l), it requires a great deal of wit and study to hold a man on in Christianity. And for a man to be strong against temptations and the world, whether it frown or fawn, that he cares for neither, but holds his own, is not this a glorious thing? When a man shall carry himself as a lion, break through oppositions in ill times, and fall square, cast him as you will, in all conditions,—here is a glorious Christian. Therefore through grace be glory, that must not content us, but we must labour to have such a measure of glory as that we may be glorious in our own rank. Is it not a glorious thing when a man can break through doubts and fears that trouble other folk too much? As the sun is said to be in glory when he is gotten on high; there are many clouds in the morning, but when the sun is gotten to his height at noon-day, he scatters all. So a Christian is in his glory and exaltation when he can scatter doubts, and fears, and terrors that trouble other weak beginning Christians. Therefore when we are troubled with scruples, with this and that, we should labour to get out of them, that grace may be glorious; to shew that we have gotten such a light and such a convincing knowledge, and that we are so rooted in faith and grace, that the Spirit of Christ in us hath broken through all these clouds and mists, and made us glorious.

'From glory to glory.' Our glory it is not like a torrent that runs amain for a time, and after is dried up for ever. Grace it is a continuing and an increasing thing. It continues still. As the stream that it is fed with is an ever-living spring, so is grace. It is fed with the grace in Christ, and he is a never-dying spring, a fountain. For that grace in him is fed with his divinity. Therefore there must be a perpetual spring in Christ. So where Christ hath opened a spring in the heart, he will feed that grace perpetually.

Use 2. Let none be discouraged that have grace begun in them. God will I go on with his own grace. When he hath begun a good work, 'he will finish it to the day of the Lord,' 1 Corinthians 1:8. Though grace be little at the first, yet it shall not stay there. It grows up we know not how; but at last it is glorious indeed. For till grace be grown, it is little discerned from other things: as between weeds and herbs there is little difference when they be green, till they be grown. Grace is little at the first, as a grain of mustard-seed, Matthew 13:31. Jerusalem is not built in a day, as we say of Rome. You have some that are a weaker sort of Christians, that are good, they would fain be in Canaan, as soon as ever they are out of Egypt, and I cannot blame them. But hereupon they are discomfited. As soon as ever they have grace in them, they would have their pitch presently, out of spiritual covetousness. Oh that I had more knowledge and more victory! &c. These desires are good; for God puts not in vain desires into the hearts of his children, but they must be content to be led from glory to glory, from one degree of grace to another. Christ himself grew more in favour with God and man. As that little stone grew to a mountain, Daniel 2:34, so we must be content to grow from grace to grace. There is a gradual proceeding in the new creature. We must not be presently in Canaan. God will lead us through the wilderness, through temptations and crosses, before we come to heaven. Many because they see they are far short of others that are stronger Christians, therefore they think they have no grace at all.

Therefore let those that are on the growing hand, though they be short of many that are before them, let them not be discouraged with their over-little beginnings. For it is God's ordinance and course in this world, to bring his children by little and little through many stations. As they were led in the wilderness from standing to standing, and from place to place, so God brings his children by many standings to heaven. And it is one part of a Christian's meekness to [be] subject to God's wisdom in this kind, and not to murmur that they are not so perfect as they would be, or as they shall be; but rather to magnify the mercy of God that there is any change in such defiled and polluted souls; that he hath vouchsafed any spiritual light of understanding, any love of good things; that the bent of their affections are turned to a contrary course than they were before; that God hath vouchsafed any beginnings. Rather magnify his mercy than quarrel with his dispensation, that he doth not this all at once; and, indeed, if we enter into our own hearts, it is our fault that we are not more perfect. But let us labour to be meek, and say, Lord, since thou hast ordained that I shall grow from glory to glory, from one degree of grace to another, let me have grace to magnify thy mercy, that thou hast given me any goodness, rather than to murmur that I have no more. And be content in the use of means, and endeavour to grow further, though we have not so much as others have. Nay, we may not be discouraged, because of the weakness of grace, but we may not be discouraged with a seeming interruption in our spiritual growth. God sometimes works by contraries. He makes men grow by their puttings back, and to stand by their falls. Sometimes, when God will have a man grow, he will suffer him to fall, that by his fall he may grow in a deeper hatred of sin, and in jealousy over his own heart, and a nearer watchfulness over

his own ways; that he may grow more in love with God for pardoning of him, and grow more strong in his resolution for the time to come;’ that he may grow more in humility. None grow so much as those that have their growth stopped for a time. Let none be discouraged when they find a stop, but consider that God is working grace in another kind. The Spirit appears in one grace when it doth not in another. It grows in one grace when it doth not in another. Sometime the Spirit will have us grow in humility; as the juice of the herbs runs to the root in the winter, it is in the leaves in the spring, it is in the seed in the autumn; as the life sometime appears in the plant in one part and sometime in another; so the Spirit of God appears sometime in humility, sometime in joy, sometime in spiritual strength and courage. Let none be discouraged overmuch when they find a stop; for there is no interruption of Spirit altogether, and this little interruption is like a sickness that will make them grow and shoot up more afterwards. It spends the humours that hinders growth. There is such a mystery in the carrying of men from glory to glory, that it makes men more glorious sometimes by base sins. I would have no man discouraged therefore. Indeed, God will work so, that he shall wish he had not given him occasion to shew his strength in his weakness, his glory in his shame; but God, where he hath begun he will go through with the work, and will turn all to good. And to encourage us here, grace begun hath the same name as grace perfect. Both are glory. Why doth God call them by one name? To encourage Christians. He tells them that if it be begun it is glory, not that it is so properly, but if it be begun it shall never end till it come in heaven. Therefore God styles grace in all the latitude, from the highest to the very beginnings, by the same name, to encourage Christians. If they be within the door of the temple, though they be not so far as those that are in high and glorious places, yet they are going thither. To encourage Christians to know that unavoidably and indefeasibly they shall come to perfection of glory if it be begun. And God looks not on Christians as they are in their imperfections and beginnings, but that that in time he means to bring them to. He intends to bring them to glory. Therefore he gives grace the style of glory. As in the creatures God looked not on the seeds of trees as such, but he looked on them as seeds that he meant to make trees of; and when God looks upon his children, he looks not on them as they are children, but as they shall be perfect men. Doth the wisdom of God look on the seeds of trees as he intends to make them trees? and doth he not look upon Christians, that are babes in grace, as he intends to make them men, to come to the perfect stature of Christ? He views us at once in our beginnings and perfections. All is presented at once to him. Therefore he gives one name to the whole state of grace, grace and glory, all is glory. I beseech you therefore, if there be any goodness, any blessed change in us, let us be comforted; for he that hath brought us to the beginnings of glory will never fail till he hath brought us to perfect glory in heaven, and there our change shall rest. There is no further change there, when we are once in our element. For even as God, when he made man, he rested from all his work upon the Sabbath; man was his excellent piece. So the Spirit of God will rest, sanctifying and altering of us. When we are once in heaven, in that eternal Sabbath, then we shall need no changes from glory to glory. We shall for ever be filled with the fulness of God, till which time there is no creature in the world so changeable as a Christian.

For, first, you see he was made in God’s image and likeness in his state of standing.

After he fell there was a change, to his second state of sin.

After the state of fall, there is a change to the state of grace.

After that from one degree of grace to another in this world till he die. And then the soul is more perfect and glorious. But at the last, when body and soul shall be united, there shall be no more change; there shall be an end of all alteration. So we see that God intends by his Spirit to bring us to perfection, though by little and little, to perfection of glory as far as our nature is capable, and this shall be at the latter day.

Quest. Why not before? why not in this world?

Ans. Beloved, we are not capable here of that fulness of glory. Saint Peter on the mount had but a glimpse of the glory of heaven, and he was spiritually drunk as it were, he knew not what he said, Mark 9:6. We are not capable. Therefore we must grow here from glory to glory, till we come to that perfection of glory. God that gives us the earnest could make up the bargain here if we were capable of it, but we are not.

God will have a difference between the militant and the triumphant church, and will train us up here to live the life of faith, till we come to live the life of sight, the life of vision for ever in heaven.

Doth God by his Spirit change us by his Spirit to the likeness of Christ, 'from glory to glory,' till he have brought us to perfection of glory in heaven? Oh let us comfort ourselves in our imperfections here. We are here lame Mephibosheths. He was a king's son, but he was lame. We are spiritually lame and defective, though we be kings' sons (m). Oh, but we shall grow from glory to glory, till all end in perfection in heaven. What a comfort is this in our imperfections, that as every day we live in this world cuts off a day of our life, for we live so much the shorter, so every day we live brings us nearer to heaven; that as we decay in the life of nature every day, so we grow up another way, 'from glory to glory,' till we come to perfect glory in heaven; is not this a sweet comfort? Let us comfort ourselves with these things.

Use 3. Again, if the state of God's people be thus sweet and comfortable, and full of well-grounded hopes, that glory shall go further on to glory, and end in glory, then why should we be afraid of death? For grace will but end in glory. A mean glorious estate will but even be swallowed up of a truly glorious estate. Indeed grace is swallowed up of glory, even as the rivers are swallowed up of the ocean. Glory takes away nothing, but perfects all better by death. Why should we be afraid of death? We are afraid of our glory, and of the perfection of our glory.

## 32. Degrees in the glory of a Christian

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### Degrees in the glory of a Christian

There be degrees of glory. There is glory begun here in grace, and there is the glory of the soul after death, and the glory both of soul and body for ever in heaven, and these make way one to another. A Christian is glorious while he lives, and he grows in glory while he lives. He is more glorious when he dies, for then his soul hath perfectly the image of Christ stamped upon it. But he is most glorious at the day of resurrection, when body and soul shall be glorious, when he shall put down the very sun itself. All glory shall be nothing to the glory of the saints, 'They shall shine as the sun in the firmament,' Daniel 12:3. And indeed there will be no glory but the glory of Christ and of his spouse; all other glory shall vanish and come to nothing. But the glory of the King of heaven and his queen that he hath chosen to himself to solace himself eternally with, when the spiritual marriage shall be accomplished, they shall be for ever glorious together. Why then should we be afraid of death? For then there shall be a further degree of glory of the soul, and after that a further degree of body and soul, when our bodies shall be conformable to the glorious body of Christ, when they shall be spiritual, as it is in 1 Corinthians 15:44. I beseech you, therefore, let us learn this to comfort ourselves against those dark times of dissolution, when we shall see an end of all other glory. All worldly glory shall end in the dust, and lie down in the grave; when we must say that 'rotteness is our father,' and the 'worm our mother,' Job 17:14. We can claim no other kin in regard of our body, yet then we shall be more glorious in regard of our souls. Christ shall put a robe of glory upon us, and then afterward we shall be more glorious still.

Therefore it is base infidelity to be afraid of our dissolution, when indeed it is not a dissolution, but a way to glory. We should rather consider the conjunction, than the dissolution. Death takes in pieces body and soul, but it joins the soul to Christ. It makes the soul more glorious than it was before. We go from glory to glory. Our Saviour Christ saith, 'He that believeth in me shall never die,' John 11:26. What doth he mean by that?

Indeed, we shall never die, for grace shall be swallowed up of glory. As soon as ever the life of nature is gone, he lives the life of glory presently. So he never dies. There is but a change of the life of grace and of nature for the life of glory.

What that glory shall be at that day, it is a part of that glory to know; for indeed it is beyond expression, and beyond the comprehension of our minds. They cannot conceive it nor our tongues express it. Peter, as I said, seeing but a glimpse of it, said, 'It is good for us to be here.' He forgot all his former troubles and afflictions. If such a little glimpse of glory could so possess the soul of that blessed man Peter, as that it made him forget all his former miseries, and all his afflictions whatsoever, to be in love with that condition above all others, what shall the glory of heaven be then! Shall we think then of our former misery, and baseness, and trouble, and persecutions? Oh no.

Use 4. Again, let us be exhorted by this to try the truth of grace in us, by our care to grow and proceed from glory to glory, still to be more glorious in Christianity. Beloved, of necessity it must be so. Let us not deceive ourselves in our natural condition. Do we content ourselves that we live a sick man's life? No. We desire health. When we have health, is that all? No. When we have health, we desire strength too, that we may encounter oppositions. Is it so in nature, that life is not enough, but health; and that is not enough, but strength too? And is it not so much more in the new creature, in the new nature, in the divine nature? If there be life, there will be a desire to have health, that our sick souls may be more and more healed; that our actions that come from our faculties sanctified be not sick actions; that they be not weak languishing actions; that we may have healed souls; that God together with pardoning grace may join healing grace, to cure our souls daily more and more, that we may be more able to performances. And then, when we have got spiritual health, let us desire spiritual strength to encounter oppositions and temptations, to go through afflictions, to make way through all things that stand in our way to heaven. Let us not deceive ourselves. This will be so. If there be truth of grace, still a further and further desire of grace, carrying us to a further and further endeavour. The more we grow in grace, the more God smells a sweet sacrifice from us; that that comes from us is more refined and less corrupt. It yields better acceptance to God. And then for others, the more we grow in grace, the more we grow in ability, in nimbleness, and cheerfulness to do them good; and that that comes from us finds more acceptance with others, being carried with a strong spirit of love and delight, which always is accepted in the eyes of men. The more we grow in grace, the more cheerful we shall be in regard of ourselves. The better we are, the better we may be; the more we do, the more we may do. For God further instills the oil of grace, to give us strength and cheerfulness in good actions, so that they come off with delight. Our own cheerfulness increaseth as our growth increaseth. In a word, you see glory tends to glory, and that is enough to stir us up to grow in it. Seeing glory here, which is grace, tends to glory in heaven, we should never rest till we come to that perfection; till the glory of grace end in glory indeed. For what is the glory of heaven but the perfection of grace? And what is the beginnings of grace here but the beginnings of glory? Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected. Therefore, if we would be in heaven as much as may be, and enter further and further into the kingdom of God, as Peter saith, 2 Peter 1:5, seq., let us be always adding grace to grace, and one degree to another. Put somewhat to the heap still, that so we may go from glory to glory, from knowledge to knowledge, from faith to faith, from one degree to another.

Obj. But it will be objected that Christians sometimes stand at a stay, sometimes they seem to go back.

Ans. In a word, to answer that, some because they cannot see themselves in growing, they think they grow not at all. It is but ignorance; for we see the sun moves, though we see him not in moving. We know things grow, though we see them not in growing. Therefore it follows not, that because we perceive not our growth from grace to grace, that therefore we grow not. But put the case indeed that Christians decay in their first love and in some grace. There is a suspension of growth. It is that they may grow in some other grace. God sees it needful they should grow in the root, and therefore abaseth them in the sense of some infirmity, and then they spring out again. As after a hard winter comes a glorious spring, upon a check grace breaks out more gloriously. And there is a mystery in God's government in that kind, that God often increaseth grace by the sight and sense of our infirmities. God shews his powerful government in our

weakness; for God's children never hate their corruption more than when they have been overcome by it. Then they begin to be sensible of it, that there is some hidden corruption that they discerned not before, that it is fit they should take notice of. The best man living knows not himself till he comes to temptation. That discovers himself to himself. Temptation discovers corruption and makes it known, and then stirs up hatred for it. As love stirs up endeavour, so hatred aversation\* and loathing. It is profitable for God's children to fall sometimes. They would never be so good as they are else. They would not wash for spots; but when they see they are foul indeed, then they go to wash. But this is a mystery; God will have it so for good ends.

It checks the disposition of some good people. They think they have not grace, because they have but a little. This phrase shews that we have not all at once. God carries us by degrees, 'from glory to glory,' from one degree of grace to another. God's children, when they have truth of grace wrought in them, their desires go beyond their endeavour and strength. Their desires are wondrous large, and their prayers are answerable to their desires. Therefore in the Lord's prayer what say we? 'Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,' Matthew 6:10. Can it be so in this world? No. But we must pray till we come to it. We must pray till we come to heaven, where prayer shall cease. So the prayers and desires of God's people transcend their endeavours. Their prayers are infinite. Hereupon, the chief thing in conversion being the desire, the turning of the stream of the will, when they find their will and their desire good, and their endeavour to fall short of their purposes, they say, Surely I have no good, because I have not that I would have, as if they should have heaven upon earth. We must grow 'from glory to glory.' And thank God for that beginning. It is God's mercy that he would work the least degree of grace in such rebellious hearts as all of us have; that he would work any goodness, any change, though never so little. God looks not to the measure, so much as to truth. For he will bring truth to perfection, though it be never so little. Let us be comforted in it. And it is God's government, to bring his children to glory by little and little, that so there may be a dependence of one Christian upon another; the weaker on the stronger: and that there may be pity, and sweet affections of one Christian to another; and that there may be perpetual experience of God's mercy in helping weak Christians; and a perpetual experience of that which is the true ground of comfort, justification; that we must needs be justified, and stand righteous before God, by Christ's absolute righteousness, having experience of our imperfect righteousness. So a little measure of grace in us is for great purpose. Therefore let none be discouraged, especially considering that God, whom we desire to please, values us by that little good we have, and esteems us by that condition he means to bring us to ere long to perfection. So long as we take not part with our corruptions, but with the Spirit of God, and give way to him, and let him have his work in us; so long be of good comfort in any measure of grace whatsoever.

### 33. Christians compared to the best things

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#### Christians compared to the best things

Use. 5. Again, in that grace is of a growing nature, in all changes and alterations, whatsoever we decay in, let us not decay in grace. Beg of God. Lord, whatsoever thou takest from me, take not thy Spirit from me! take not thy stamp from me! Let me grow in the inward man although I grow not in the world. Let us labour to grow 'from glory to glory,' though we lose otherwise. That is well lost and parted with in the world that is with the gain of any grace, because grace is glory. It is a good sickness that gets more patience, and more humility. It is a good loss that makes us grow less worldly-minded and more humble by it. All other things are vanity in comparison. And that grace that we get by the loss of them is well gained. Grace is glory; and the more we grow in grace, the more we grow in glory. Therefore I beseech you labour to thrive that way, to grow up heavenward, daily more and more in our disposition. Beloved, the more grace we get the more glory; and the more like we are to Christ and to God, the more we adorn our profession; and the more we shame Satan and his instruments, and stop their mouths, the more duties come off naturally and sweetly from us without constraint. It is good for us to be grown Christians, that we need not be cumbered with corruptions. The more we grow, the more nimble and cheerful and voluntary we shall be in duty. We shall partake more of that anointing that makes us nimble in God's service. There is nothing in the world so glorious as a grown Christian. Therefore let us be in love with the state of Christianity, especially with grown Christians. Of all things, he is compared with the best. If he be a house, he is a temple; if he be a plant, he is a cedar growing up; if he be a flower, he is a lily rising and growing fresher; if he be a stone, he is a pearl. He grows in estimation and use more and more. Beloved, if we had spiritual eyes to see the state of a Christian, of a grown Christian especially, we would labour above all things to thrive in this way. Have we not many works to do? Have we not many enemies to resist? Have we not many graces to perfect? Are we not to die and to appear before God? Are we not to enjoy the blessings of God purely? and do not these things require a great deal of strength of grace? Oh they do. Therefore labour above all things in the world to behold God's love in Christ, and to behold Christ, that by this sight we may grow from glory to glory. And this will make us willing to die. What makes a man willing to die, but when he knows he shall go from glory to greater glory? After death is the perfection of glory. Then we are glorious indeed, when we are in heaven. A weak sight here by faith changeth us; but a strong sight, when we shall see face to face, perfectly changeth us. Then we shall be like him, when we shall see him face to face. A wicked man cannot desire death, he cannot desire heaven itself. Why? Because heaven is the perfection of grace. Glory [which] is but grace he loves not. Therefore it is a certain evidence of future glory, for a man to love grace, and to grow. I say such a man is willing to die. A wicked man, that hates grace, that loves not Christ in his image, in his children, or in his truth, he hates glory that is the perfection of grace; for peace, and joy, and comfort, they are but those things that issue from grace, and spring from grace. Grace is the chief part of heaven, the perfection of the image of God, the perfection of all the powers to be like Christ. But for peace and comfort that springs from it, a wicked man loves peace and quiet, but to have

his nature altered he loves not that; and if he love not grace, how can he love glory? There is no man but a Christian that loves heaven. We are ready to drop away daily. Now to be in a state unchanged, it is a fearful thing. Unless we be changed by the Spirit of God, we shall be afraid to die. We cannot desire to be in heaven. The very heaven of heavens is the perfection of grace. To see God to be all in all, and by the sight of God to be transformed into his likeness, it is the chief thing in heaven. Therefore I beseech you let us labour more and more to grow in grace; set Christ before us. Let me add this one thing, make use of our patterns among us. Christ is now in heaven, but there will be the Spirit of Christ in his children to the end of the world; and grace is sweetly conveyed from those that we live amongst. We grow up in grace by growing in a holy communion one with another. Christ will kindle lights in every generation. Therefore let us labour to have the spirit of those we live with given to us; in conversing, to be like Christ in his members; to love the imago of Christ in his children, and to converse with them; to be altered into their likeness. This will change us to the glorious likeness of Christ more and more.

Those that care not what company they keep, those that despise the image of Christ in those among whom they live, can they grow in grace?

We shall give account of all the good examples we have had. Doth God kindle lights for nothing? We should glorify God for the sun and moon and stars, and other creatures. Is not a Christian more glorious than all the creatures in the world? We should glorify God for grace in Christians, and labour to be transformed to them that we may grow the liker to Christ, that we may grow more and more glorious. I speak this to advance the communion of saints more and more, as we desire to partake more and more of this grace, and to grow 'from glory to glory.'

Use 6. Again, considering that God means to bring us, by little and little, by degrees, to perfect glory of body and soul, and condition in heaven to be like Christ, let this make us be content to be vile for Christ in this world, as David said when he was scorned, 'I will be yet more vile,' 2 Samuel 6:22, 'do you think I think much to shew myself thus, for the honour of God?' When Michal scoffed, 'I will be more vile.' Let us be content to go out of the camp, and bear the reproach of Christ, Hebrews 11:26, bear the reproach of religion. Let the world scorn us for the profession of religion. God is bringing us from glory to glory, till he bring us to perfect glory; and shall we suffer nothing for him? Let us be content to be more vile, and to bear the reproach of religion. The very worst thing in religion, the reproach of Christ, as Moses made a wise choice, it is better than the treasures of Egypt, Hebrews 11:26. The most excellent things in the world are not so good as the worst thing in religion, because reproach ends with assurance of comfort, that God will take away that, and give us glory after. Therefore, let us not be discouraged from a Christian course, but go through good report and bad report, break through all, to finish our course with joy, as St Paul speaks of himself, Acts 20:24.

Use 7. And doth God bring us from glory to glory, till he have brought us to perfection of glory? Then, I beseech you, let us beforehand be thankful to God, as we see in the epistles of blessed St Paul and Peter: 'Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that hath begotten us to an inheritance immortal, undefiled, reserved in heaven,' saith St Peter, 1 Peter 1:4; and so St Paul. Let us begin the employment of heaven beforehand. For why doth God discover to us that he will bring us to glory? why doth he discover it to our faith, that excellent state? That we might begin heaven on earth, as much as might be. And how shall we do that? By the employment of heaven.

What is that? 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,' Revelation 4:8. There is nothing but magnifying and glorifying of God. There shall be no need of prayer. There are praises always; and so much as we are in the praises of God, and glorifying of God for his mercy and love in Christ, so much we are in heaven before our time. I beseech you, therefore, be stirred up in consideration of this, that we are leading on by degrees, from glory to glory, till we come to perfection. Let us even give God the praise of all beforehand. For it is as sure as if we had it. For one way, how things to come are present, is by faith. Glory to come is present two or three ways already, that may stir us up to glorify God beforehand.

(1.) The glory to come is present to Christ our head. We, in our husband, are in heaven. Now he hath taken heaven for us!

(2.) And in regard of faith, that is the evidence of things not seen. It is the nature of faith to present things to come as present. To faith, glory to come is present, present in Christ, and we are part of Christ, Christ mystical, and members. And we in our head are in heaven already, and sit there. And to faith, that makes things present that are to come, we are in heaven already.

(3.) And we have the earnest of heaven, the first-fruits of the Spirit. We have grace which is glory, the beginnings of glory. We have the first-fruits and earnest. Now, an earnest is never taken away, but is made up by the bargain with the rest; so the earnest of the Spirit of God, the first-fruits of peace and joy, of comfort and liberty to the throne of grace, these are the beginnings of heaven. Therefore, be much in praising God. Oh that we could be so! If we could get into a frame and disposition to bless God, we could never be miserable; no, not in the greatest afflictions, for thankfulness hath joy always. When a man is joyful, he can never be miserable, for joy enlargeth the soul. When is a man most joyful, but in a state of thankfulness? And what makes us thankful so much, as to consider the wonderful things that are reserved in another world, the glory that God is leading us to by little and little, from glory to glory, till we be perfect?

'Even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

'As' here is taken according to the phrase in the Greek; and there is the like word in the Hebrew. It signifieth likeness and similitude sometimes, and sometimes otherwise.\* It is not here meant as if we were like the Spirit of the Lord, but this change is wrought even as by the Spirit of the Lord. That is, it is so excellent and so strong, that you may know that it is done by none but the Spirit of God.

Again, 'as by the Spirit of the Lord,' that is, so far as the Spirit of the Lord changeth us. It implieth those two things, that is, it is done by the power of the Spirit, that we may know it is done by the Spirit of the Lord; and then, as by him and no further, for we no further shine than he enlighteneth us. As the air, it is no further light than the sun shines into it; so we have no more glory, strength, comfort, and peace, or anything gracious or glorious, than the Spirit of God shines into us: therefore he saith, 'as by the Spirit of the Lord.' It is so glorious and excellent, and so far forth as he doth it. 'As by the Spirit of the Lord;' so he expresseth the meaning of that phrase.

Now you see here the doctrine is clear, that all that I have spoken of before comes from the Spirit of the Lord, and from no other cause. The beholding, the transforming, the degrees of transforming from glory to glory, the taking away of the veil, all is from the Spirit of the Lord. To go over the particulars. The Holy Ghost doth open our eyes to behold the glory of the Lord, and therefore he is

called the Spirit of illumination. The Holy Ghost takes away the veil of ignorance and unbelief, and thereupon he is called the Spirit of revelation. The Holy Ghost upon revealing the love of God to us in Christ, and the love of Christ to us, and illuminating our understandings to see these things, he breeds love to God again, shewing the love of God to us, and thereupon he is called the Spirit of love. Now when God's love is shed into us by the Spirit of illumination and revelation, then we are changed according to the image of Christ; and thereupon the Holy Ghost, from the working of a change, is called the Spirit of sanctification, because he is not only the holy temple of that blessed person, but he makes us holy; and because this change is a glorious change, a change from one degree of grace to another, till we come to be perfect in heaven; hereupon it is called a Spirit of glory, as St Peter saith, 'the Spirit of glory resteth on you,' 1 Peter 4:14, that is, the Spirit of peace, of love, of comfort, of joy, &c. The Spirit, in regard of this blessed attribute, working all these, he is called the Spirit of glory. The Spirit hath divers names according to the divers operations he works in the saints and people of God; as here the Spirit of illumination, of revelation, of love, of sanctification, of glory, all is by the Spirit. Whatsoever is wrought in man it is by the Spirit. All comes from the Father as the fountain, and through the Son as Mediator; but whatsoever is wrought it is by the Holy Ghost in us, which is the substantial vigour in the Trinity. All the vigour and operation in the Trinity upon the creature, it is by the Holy Ghost, the third person. As in the creation the Spirit moved upon the waters, and moving there and brooding on them, framed the whole model of the creatures; all were framed by the Holy Ghost; so the Holy Ghost upon the water of our souls frames the new creature, frames all this change 'from glory to glory,' all is by the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is here in the passive term, 'We are changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.' So in the chain of salvation you have passive words in them all. 'Whom God foreknew he chose: and whom he chose he justified: and whom he justified he glorified,' Romans 8:30, all because they come from God, and the Spirit of God. So here we are transformed from glory to glory, all is by the Spirit of God, the third person. For, beloved, even as from God toward us all things come through the Son by the Spirit, so back again, all things from us to God must come by the Spirit and through Christ. We do all by the Spirit, as all things are wrought in us by the Spirit. God gives us the Spirit of prayer and supplication, and the Spirit of sanctification; and we pray in the Spirit, and work in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit. We do all in the Spirit, to shew that the Spirit doth all in all. In this new creature and work of sanctification it is by no less than the Spirit of the Lord. For, beloved, as it was God that redeemed us, so it is God that must change us; as it was God that wrought our salvation and reconciled us,—no less person could do it,—so it must be God that must persuade us of that glorious work, and fit us for it by his Holy Spirit. It is God that must knit us to our head Christ, and then by little and little transform us to that blessed condition that Christ hath purchased for us. God the Son doth the one, and God the Spirit doth the other. You have all the three persons in this place, for we see the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost shining in Jesus Christ. Christ is the image according to which we are changed. The Spirit is he that changeth us according to that image. God shows his mercy in Christ. We knowing and apprehending the mercy of God in Christ by the Spirit, are changed by that Spirit 'from glory to glory.' So that the blessed Trinity, as they have a perfect unity in themselves in nature, for they are all one God, so they have a most perfect unity in their love, and care, and respect to mankind. We cannot want the work of any one of them all. Their work is for the good of mankind. The Father in his wisdom decreed and laid the foundation how mercy and justice might be reconciled in the death of the Mediator. Christ wrought our salvation. The Holy Ghost assures us of it and knits us to

Christ, and changeth and fits us to be members of so glorious a head, and so translates and transforms us more and more 'from glory to glory.'

It is a comfortable consideration to see how our salvation and our fitting for salvation, till we be put in full possession of it, stands upon the unity of the three glorious persons in the Trinity, that all join in one for the making of man happy.

I will name two or three doctrines, before I come to that which I mean to dwell on.

As, first, that Doct. The Spirit comes from, Christ.

It is said here, 'By the Spirit of the Lord,' that is, of Christ; because Christ doth spirare,\* as well as the Father. The Father doth spirare, and the Son doth breathe. The Holy Ghost proceeds by way of spiration from both. Therefore the Spirit is not only the Spirit of the Father, but of the Son, as we see here, 'The Spirit of the Lord.' Christ sends the Spirit, as well as the Father. 'I will send you the Comforter.' The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son; and he doth report to us the love of the Father and of the Son; and therefore, 2 Corinthians 13:14, the shutting of the chapter, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost,' &c. As the Holy Ghost hath communion in proceeding from the Father and the Son, and knows the secrets of both; so he reveals them to us. The love of God the Father, and the Son, and the communion of the Holy Ghost; so the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father; he is called here the Spirit of the Lord.

Then again, the Spirit is a distinct person from Christ. It is said before, 'The Lord is that Spirit.' That might trouble men, how to know that 'the Lord is that Spirit.' Men might think that Christ is all one with the Spirit. No. Here the Spirit is said to be the Spirit of the Lord. He means he is another distinct person from Christ; and the Spirit is God as well as Christ, because the Spirit hath the operations of God attributed to him, to change and transform, and make new. We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, 'even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Creation and renovation of all new is from an almighty power. All the power in heaven and earth cannot make that that was not, to be, especially that that was contrary and opposite, to be. Now for a man in opposition and enmity to religion, to be changed to a better image, to the image of Christ, it argueth an almighty power. These doctrinal points I do but only touch. I come to that that I judge more useful; that is, that Doct. Whatsoever is good in us comes from the Spirit of God.

What need I stand upon reasons? Whatsoever is above nature it must come from God's Spirit. The Spirit is the author of all things above nature. Grace whereby we are like Christ, is above nature; therefore it must be by the Spirit of God.

Besides, that which riseth of nothing, and is opposite, and hath Satan to oppose it, it must have an almighty power to work it. Therefore whosoever works anything that is supernaturally good in us, he must be above the devil. We cannot so much as call Jesus,\* with a feeling, but by the Spirit of God. We cannot think a good thought. All is by the Spirit, whatsoever is gracious and comfortable in us. I should be over-troublesome to you to be much in so clear a common argument as this is. Therefore I will hasten to make some use of it.

Use 1. And therefore put out of your thoughts, I beseech you, when you look to have any grace or comfort wrought, shut out of your hearts too much relying upon any outward thing. Think not that

education can make a man good, or plodding can make a man good: in bodily exercise, in hearing much, in conferring much, in custom or education, or any pains of our own. These are things that the Spirit will be effectual in, if we use them as we should; but without the Spirit what are they? Nay, what is the body of Christ without the Spirit? 'The flesh profiteth nothing,' John 6:63. What is the sacrament and the word? Dead things without the Spirit of the Lord. Nothing can work upon the soul, no outward thing in the world, but the Spirit of God; and the Spirit of God works upon the soul by the means of grace, by gracious habits and qualities wrought. For he doth not work upon the soul immediately. Before he alter and change the soul, the Spirit works upon the soul by altering, and changing of it; and when it hath altered the soul, then it joins with the soul, and alters and changeth it according to the image of Christ, more and more still.

I beseech you, in your daily practice, all learn this, that you trust not too much to any outward performance or task; to make idols of outward things. People when they would change their dispositions, and be better, they take a great deal of pains in hearing, and reading, and praying. All these are things necessary; but they are dead things without the Spirit of Christ. Therefore in the use of all those outward things, whatsoever they be, look up to Christ, that is the quickening Spirit, that sends the Spirit into our hearts. The Spirit must enliven and give vigour to all these things, and then somewhat will be done in religion, in hearing, and reading, and praying, and receiving the sacrament. Therefore in all these look to the Spirit first. He laboureth in vain that relieth not wholly upon the Spirit of God, that trusts not to a higher strength than his own. It must be a higher strength than our own that must work any good in our souls, either grace, or comfort, or peace. And therefore in the use of all things, as the proverb is, *oculos ad cælum, &c.* Let the eye be to heaven, when the hand is at the storn† at the same time; and then we shall be transformed and changed by the Spirit of God. Know that in all means alway the Spirit is the principal, efficient, blessing, cause of all. And therefore before we set upon anything that is good, wherein we look for any spiritual good, desire God by his Holy Spirit that he would clothe what shall be said. Words are wind without the Spirit. The Spirit must go with the ordinances, as the arteries go together with the veins. You know in the veins in the body there are arteries that go with them. They convey the spirits. The veins convey the blood. That is a dull thing, without the spirits, of itself. If there were no spirits in the arteries, what would the blood in the veins be? Nothing but a heavy uncomfortable humour. But the arteries that come from the heart, the fountain of life, being joined, and conveying the spirits, they quicken the blood that comes from the liver. So the veins and arteries join together to make the blood cheerful. The word and truth of God are like the blood in the veins. There is a great deal of matter in them, but there is no life at all. There must the Spirit go along with them to give life and quickening to the word, to clothe those divine truths with the Spirit, and then it works wonders, not else. Paul spake to Lydia, Acts 16:14, seq., but the Holy Ghost opened her heart. The Spirit hath the key of the heart to unlock and open the heart. We speak to the outward man, but except the inward man be opened by the Spirit of God and unlocked, all is to no purpose. Therefore let us pray for the Spirit of this changing. All is by the Spirit of the Lord.

It is in mystical Christ, even as it was in natural Christ; all his grace was from the Holy Ghost as man. For though he were conceived of the Holy Ghost, he was anointed by the Holy Ghost; he was sealed by the Holy Ghost; he was led by the Holy Ghost into the wilderness; he offered himself by the Spirit; he was raised by the Spirit; he was full of the Spirit. As it was in Christ natural, so it is in Christ mystical; that is, in the church all is by the Spirit. As he was conceived in

the womb by the Spirit, so we are conceived to be Christians by the Spirit. The same Spirit that sanctified him sanctifieth us. But first the Spirit by way of union sanctifieth us, by knitting us to him the head of all; and then unction comes after union; anointing after union. Then the Spirit, when he hath knit us to Christ, works the same anointing that he did in Christ. Therefore we are called Christians of Christ, not only partakers of the naked name, but of the anointing of Christ—that anointing that runs down the head of our spiritual Aaron to the skirts, to every poor Christian. All change, all comfort, all peace is from the Spirit of Christ. Therefore give him the glory of all. If we find any comfort in any truth, it comes not from us, but from his Spirit; and we must go upward to him again. As all descends from heaven, from the Father of lights and from the Spirit of God, so all must ascend again. Yield him the praise of all. And one work of the Spirit is to carry our souls up. For the Spirit, as it comes from heaven to change, so it carries us up again to view and to imitate Christ, to be where Christ is. As water when it is to be carried up, it is carried as high as the spring head, from whence it came, so the Spirit coming from Christ, it never leaves changing and altering of us till it have carried us to Christ again. Therefore as it is the work of the Spirit to carry us to Christ, so let us desire it may carry us beforehand for the good work begun in us, in thankfulness, that we may begin heaven upon earth. All is from the Spirit of Christ. A man now in the state of grace must look for nothing from himself; for as we are saved altogether out of ourselves by Christ the mediator, so the fitting for that glorious salvation that we have purchased by Christ, it is by the Spirit. The working of our salvation is by God, and the assurance of it to our souls is by the Holy Ghost, by the witness of God sealed to us. And the fitting and preparing and changing and sanctifying of us, it is by the Holy Ghost. All is out of us in the covenant of grace, wherein God is a gracious Father in Christ. All is out of us in regard of the spring. The work indeed is terminated in us. The Spirit of God alters our understanding, will, and affections, but the spring is out of us. As in paradise those four streams that watered paradise, that ran through it, yet the head of them was out of paradise, in another part of the world. So though the work of the Holy Ghost, the streams of the Spirit, run through the soul and water it; yet the spring of those graces, the Holy Ghost, is out of us, and Christ the root of salvation is out of us. For God in the covenant of grace will not trust us, as in Adam God trusted us with grace, he had grace in his own keeping. If he would he might have stood. He had liberty of will, but God saw we were all ill husbands of grace and goodness, that he would not trust us again. Therefore he trusted God-man, the second Adam, with grace; and he sends his Spirit into us, and conveys grace 'from glory to glory' by degrees, and all by the Spirit of the Lord.

And, in the next place, this point of doctrine should marvellously comfort and stay us, and direct us.

Use 2. It should comfort us when we find no goodness at all, nor no strength at all in our natures. Doth God expect that we should have anything from ourselves? Who expects anything from a barren wilderness? Our hearts are such. God knows it well enough. There is no goodness in us, no more than there is moisture in a stone or a rock. Therefore he looks that we should beg the Spirit of him, and depend upon him for the Spirit of his Son, to open our eyes with the Spirit of illumination; to reveal his love to us, and then to sanctify us and to work us more and more to glory, and to work out all corruption by little and little. He expects that we should depend upon him for the Spirit in all things we do.

Therefore Christians are much to blame. They think to work and to hew out of their own nature the love of God, and keep ado with their own hearts, as if they had a principle of grace in themselves as of themselves; and they may long enough work that way. But that is not the way, but acknowledgment that in ourselves, as of ourselves, as Saint Paul saith, we cannot do anything, Philip. 2:13. We cannot so much, by all the power in the world, as think a good thought. If we should live a thousand years, there cannot rise out of our hearts a good desire of ourselves. All is out of us from the Spirit of the Lord. Now thereupon we must not look for it in ourselves, but go to God for his Holy Spirit. Go to Christ for his Spirit, for the Spirit proceeds from them both, that he would enlighten us and sanctify us, as I shewed in particular before. We must not therefore presume that we can do anything of ourselves; and so we must not despair. Shall we despair when once we believe in Christ? when we have abundance of grace and Spirit in our head Christ? And he can derive\* his Spirit as he pleaseth. He gives the Spirit by degrees as he pleaseth; for he is a voluntary head to dispense it as he will. He is not a natural head. Who shall despair when he is in Christ, who is complete? And in him we receive grace for grace, grace answerable for grace in him.

Let none presume that he can do anything of himself, for you see how God suffered holy men to miscarry. It was folly in this case in Peter to presume of his own strength: 'Though all forsook Christ,' Mark 14:31, seq., yet would not he. He presumed upon his own strength. God left him to himself. You see how foully he fell. So it is with us all, when we presume upon the strength of our nature and parts. We must not come to this holy place in the strength of our own wit and parts, but come with a desire that the Spirit may join with his ordinances, and make them efficacious for our change. All change is by the Spirit of the Lord. Nothing works above his own sphere. It is above the power of nature to work any thing supernatural. Therefore if we will profit by the word, come not with presumptuous spirits, but lift up our hearts to God, that his Spirit may clothe the ministry with vigour and power, that he may convey holy truths into our hearts, and make them effectual for the changing of the inward and of the outward man. Then we come as we should. All is by the Spirit of the Lord, blessing all means whatsoever, without which all means are dead. Therefore we must open as that flower that opens and shuts as the sun shines on it (n). So must we as Christ shines on us; and we ebb and flow as he flows upon us. We shine or are dark as he shines on us. As the air is no longer light than the sun shines, so we are no longer lightsome and open, and flow and are carried to anything, than Christ by his Spirit flows on us. For we do what we do, but we are patients first to receive that power from the Spirit. We hear and do good works, but the activity and power and strength comes all from the Spirit of God.

Use 3. Hence likewise we may make another use of trial, whether we have the Spirit of Christ or no: whether we have the Holy Ghost, which is called here the Spirit of the Lord.

I will not go out of the text for trials.

## 34. Marks whereby we know that we have the Spirit

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Marks whereby we know that we have the Spirit

(1.) If a man have the Spirit of God, it openeth the eyes of the soul to see in the glass of the word, the face of God shining on him in Christ. If a man have the Spirit he sees God as a Father, by the Spirit of illumination.

(2.) Again, if thou hast the Spirit of God, thou hast the Spirit of love. God's Spirit manifesteth the hidden love of God, that was hid in the breast of God, to his soul; for the Spirit of God searcheth the breast of God and the secret of God, and it searcheth my heart. Now he that hath the Spirit of God knows the love of God in Christ to him; it reveals the love of God, the height, and breadth, and depth of it to our spirits. As in the text, we see the gracious love of God in Christ, and then we love him again.

(3.) And thereupon where the Spirit is it changeth. It is not only a Spirit of illumination, but of sanctification. Where he dwells he sanctifieth the house, and makes it a temple. It is efficacious. Where the Spirit is, it will work. It is like the wind. Where it is it will stir, it will move. Where it moves not it is not at all. Where the Spirit alters not the condition from bad to good, and from good to better, suspect that it is not there; at least it will move. As the pulses will have a drawing in, and a sending out, by stirring, so there will be some operation of the Spirit that is discernible to a judicious eye; alway some stirring where the Spirit of God is. The papists slander us willingly: I think against many of their consciences that understand anything. Oh, say they, we will have Christians like Satan, to appear as angels of light, and blackamores in white garments, that have their teeth white, and nothing else. So your Christians put on the garment of Christ's righteousness. Let them put on that, and then though they be not changed a whit, it is no matter. Who teacheth thus? We teach out of this text, that,

First of all, the Spirit of God opens our eyes. He takes off the veil, and then we see the glory of God's mercy in Christ, pardoning our sins for the righteousness and obedience of Christ; and then that love warms our hearts, so that it changeth our hearts by the Spirit, from one degree of grace to another. There is a changing power that goes with the love of Christ, and with the mercy of God in Christ. This [is] our doctrine. The same Spirit that justifieth us by applying to us the obedience of Christ, the same Spirit sanctifieth us. Therefore their allegations and objections are to no purpose. We see here the Spirit of the Lord changeth us. And so for your common atheistical professors, that profess themselves Christians. They partake of the name, but not of the anointing of Christ. True Christians that are anointed with the Spirit of Christ, it will enforce a change. Beloved, we cannot behold the sun, but we must be enlightened; we cannot behold the Sun of righteousness, but we shall be changed and enlightened. The eye of faith, though we think not of it, though it look upon Christ for justification and forgiveness of sins, yet notwithstanding at the same time insensibly there is an alteration of the soul. If a man look up for other ends, yet at the same time there is an enlightening by the sun. So at the same time that we look upon the mercy of God in Christ, at the same time there is a glory shines upon us, and we are altered and changed, though

we think not of it. At the very instant that we apprehend justification and forgiveness of sins, in the mercy of God in Christ, at the same instant there is a glory put upon the soul. We cannot have commerce with the God of glory, but we shall be glorious. Therefore, there is no man that hath anything to do with God, that hath not some glory put into his soul, whatsoever he is.

Therefore, let no man think he hath anything to do in religion till he find the work of the Spirit altering and changing him. He hath the title of Holy Spirit, from the blessed work of sanctifying and changing: he doth change us.

(4.) And when he hath changed us, he governs and guides us from glory to glory. Where the Holy Ghost is, therefore, he promotes the work of grace begun. He doth not only move us but promote; he promotes the work begun. Therefore those that have the Spirit of God, they rest in no degree of grace, but grow from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from faith to faith, till they come to that measure of perfection that God hath appointed them in Christ. Those, therefore, that set up their staff, and will go no further, that think all is well, they have not the Spirit of God. For the Spirit stirs up to grow from one degree of grace to another, to add grace to grace, and to enter further and further into the kingdom of grace, and to come nearer to glory still.

(5.) For this end the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and guides us, as it is, Romans 8:26. He is a tutor to us. Where the Holy Ghost is in any body, it is as a counsellor. 'Guide me by thy counsel, till thou bring me to glory,' Psalms 31:3, et alibi. It is a tutor. As noblemen's children they have their tutors, so God's children are nobly born. They have their tutor and counsellor, as well as angels to attend them. They have the Spirit of God to tell them, This do, and that do, and here you have done ill. They have a voice behind them, to teach them in particular wherein they have done amiss. They that have the Spirit, find such a sweet operation of the Spirit, the Spirit is a teacher and a counsellor to them. They that are acquainted with the government of God's Spirit, they find it checking them presently when they do ill. It grieves them when they grieve the Spirit, so it teacheth them in particular businesses, Do this, do not that. Thus may we know if we have the Spirit, if it guide and govern us from glory to glory, till we come to perfection, where the Spirit is all in all in heaven.

(6.) Another evidence is this, the Spirit where it is it rests and abides; because it doth not only change us at the first, but it leads us from glory to glory. As St Augustine saith, 'Wicked men have the Spirit of God knocking, and he would fain enter' (o); as the wickedest man, when he hears holy truths discovered, the Spirit of God knocks at his heart, and he finds sweet motions in his poisonous rebellious nature, but this is but the Spirit knocking, that would have entrance. But God's children have the Spirit entering, and dwelling and resting there. The Spirit of God resteth on Christ, and it rests on Christ's members. How can it change them, and having done so, guide and govern them from glory to glory; but he must rest there, he must take up his lodging and residence. A Christian is not an ordinary house, but a temple; he is not an ordinary man, but a king; he is not an ordinary stone, but a pearl; he is not an ordinary tree, but a cedar; he is an excellent person. And therefore the Spirit of God delights to dwell in him. As the excellency of the body is from the soul, so the excellency of the soul is from the Spirit dwelling in him. However, in particular operations, the Spirit suspends his acts of comforting and guiding, to humble them for their presumption, always the Holy Ghost is in the heart, though he be hid in a corner of the heart. 'I will send you the Comforter, and he shall abide with you for ever,' saith Christ, John 14:16. Thus we may see how we may try

ourselves, whether we have the Spirit of the Lord or no. If we have not the Spirit, we are none of his, we are none of Christ's, Romans 8:13-14. And then whose are we, if we be none of Christ's? Do but think of that. Therefore if we would not be men not having the Spirit, that is, men dead, led with a worse spirit than our own, let us labour to know whether we have the Spirit of Christ or no. Let us see what change there is to the likeness of Christ. For,

(7.) The Spirit, as it comes from the Lord, so it makes us like the Lord, and we are changed by reasons from the Lord; by reasons and considerations from Christ, and from the love of God in Christ; because the Spirit takes from Christ whatsoever he hath: 'He shall take of mine,' &c., John 16:13. That is the comfort he comforts the soul with; he fetches them from his death and bloodshed, and the love of God in him. That he takes of Christ. So there is a change wrought in us by reasons fetched from the love of God in Christ, those conforming reasons. God hath given his Son, and Christ hath given himself, and we feel the love of God by the Spirit. If the Spirit work any grace or comfort by considerations fetched from Christ, this is the true Spirit. The change and alteration that it works in us is according to the image of Christ, that we may be like Christ. So Christ is the beginning and the end, and Christ is all. He works from Christ and to Christ. Let us examine therefore if we have the Spirit of Christ, whether it change us; and examine if we have the Spirit, from what reasons and grounds it changes us; and then we may upon some comfortable grounds say we have the Spirit indeed.

If we have not the Spirit, how shall we come to have the Spirit? What means must we use to get it? In a word, this chapter excellently sets out that, for,

[1.] The gospel is called the ministry of the Spirit; for the opening of the love of God in Christ, which is the gospel, is the ministry of the Spirit. Why? Because God hath joined the Spirit with the publishing and opening of these mysteries. Therefore study the gospel, and hear unfolded divine evangelical truths. The more we hear of the sweet love of God in Christ, the more the Spirit flows into the soul together with it. The Spirit goes together with the doctrine of the gospel; which is called the ministry of the Spirit. Therefore let us delight in hearing evangelical points, the love of God opened in Christ. A civil moral man, Oh he is taken mightily, if he hear a moral witty politic discourse that toucheth him; and he is in his element then. What is this to the gospel? This hath its use. Oh but the Spirit goes with the opening of the gospel, with evangelical points; and if our hearts were ever seasoned with the love of God, these points of Christ, and the benefits and privileges by Christ, they will affect us more than any other thing in the world. That is one means to study the gospel, and to hear the truths of the gospel opened where the Spirit works.

[2.] Again, the Spirit of the Lord it is given to us usually in holy community. The Holy Ghost fell upon them in the Acts when they were gathered together, Acts 4:31; and surely we never find sweeter motions of the Spirit than now, when we are gathered at such times, about holy business, as this day. We never find the Spirit more effectual to alter and change our souls, than at such times. 'Where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midst of you,' Matthew 18:20, but by the Spirit, saith Christ, warming, and altering, and changing the soul. For God infuseth all grace in communion, as we are members of the body mystical. Those that have sullen spirits, a spirit of separation, that scorn all meetings, they are carried with the spirit of the devil, and of the world. They know not what belongs to the things of God. It is the meek spirit that subjects itself to the ordinance of God. The Holy Ghost falls usually upon men when they are in holy communion.

[3.] And in Luke 11:13, there God will give the Holy Ghost to all that beg him. Pray for the Holy Ghost, as the most excellent thing in the world. He shall be given to them that beg him, as if he should say, there is nothing greater than that, and God will give him to them that ask him. Therefore, come to God, and in any thing we have to do, empty ourselves and beg the Spirit; for the more a man empties him of his own confidence, in regard of holy performance of duties, the more we will desire to be filled with the fulness of the Spirit; and this sense of our own emptiness will force prayer.

Therefore, know that of ourselves we can do nothing holily, that may further our reckoning, but by the Spirit. Do all things therefore in a sense of our own emptiness, and beg the Spirit. As likewise when we are framed by the Spirit to obedience. Those that obey the motions of the Spirit, the Spirit joins more and more closely with their souls. God gives his Spirit to them that obey him. Those that obey the first motions of the Spirit, they have further degrees. What is the reason that men have no more Spirit in the ordinances? The Holy Ghost knocks at their hearts, and would fain have entrance, and they resist it, as Stephen saith, Acts 7:51. Now the Holy Ghost is willing to enter upon the soul, but he is resisted. Therefore if you will have him more and more, let us open our souls, that the King of glory may come in. The Spirit is willing to enter, especially in holy assemblies. Saith St John, Revelation 1:10, 'I was on the Lord's day, I was in the Spirit,' that is, as if he were drowned in the Spirit on the Lord's day. When we are about holy exercises we are never more in the Spirit than then. Let us open our souls to the Spirit, and then we shall find the Spirit joining with our souls. The Spirit is more willing to save us, and to sanctify us, than we are to entertain him. Oh that we were willing to entertain the sweet motions of the Spirit! Our natures would not be so defiled, and we so uncomfortable as we are. There are none of us all, but we find comfortable motions in holy exercises. Thus we may get the Spirit of the Lord, that doth all, that illuminates, and sanctifieth, and ruleth, and rests in us.

(8.) And let us learn, I beseech you, hence to give the third glorious person, the Holy Ghost, his due. Since we have all by the Spirit, let us learn to give the Spirit his due, and learn how to make use of the work of the Spirit. There are several works of the Spirit. You see here what the Spirit doth, 'We all.' The Spirit unites us together. It is a Spirit of union. It knits all together by one faith to God. All meet in God the Father reconciled; and we all are joined together by love, wrought by the Spirit, 'with open face.' Who takes away the veil? We are all veiled by nature. The Spirit takes away the veil from our eyes, and from the truth. What is the reason the gospel is so obscure? The Spirit takes not away the veil, it teacheth not by the ministry; or else it takes not away the veil from the eyes. The Spirit takes away the scales from our eyes, and the Spirit in the ministry takes away the obscurity of the Scriptures. All those that we call graces, the free gifts, the ministerial gifts, they are the gifts and the graces of the Spirit; and they are for the graces of the Spirit. Skill in tongues and in the Scriptures, and in other learning, are given to men that they may take away the veil from the Scriptures, that they may be lightsome; and then when the Spirit is given, he takes away the veil from the soul by his own work; and then with open face 'we behold the glory of the Lord.' What doth open our eyes to see, when the veil is taken off? The Spirit. We have no inward light nor sight, but by the illumination of the Spirit. All light in the things, and all sight in us, it is by the illumination of the Spirit. And then the change according to the image of Christ, this is altogether by the Spirit of Christ, it is altogether from the Holy Ghost. Christ baptizeth 'with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,' Matthew 3:11, and Christ came 'by blood, and by water,' 1 John 5:6; by blood, to die

for us; and by water, by his Spirit to change us and purge and cleanse us. All is by the Spirit. Christ came as well by the Spirit as by blood. This change, and the gradual change from glory to glory, all is by the Spirit. Therefore we should not think altogether of Christ, or God the Father, when we go to God in prayer; but think of the work of the Spirit, that the Holy Ghost may have his due.

Lord, without thy Spirit, my body is as a thing without a soul, a dead, loathsome, stiff, unapt carcase, that cannot stir a whit; and so my soul without the operation of thy Holy Spirit, it is a stiff, dead, unmoveable thing; and therefore by thy Spirit breathe upon me. As thy Holy Spirit in the creation did lie upon the waters, and brood as it were all things there; lying upon the waters it fashioned this goodly creature, heaven and earth, this mundus. So the Spirit of God lying upon the waters of the soul, it fashions all graces and comforts, whatsoever they are; all is wrought by the Spirit in the new creature, as all in this glorious fabric of the world was by the Spirit of God. Let the Spirit of God therefore have due acknowledgment in all things whatsoever. And what are we to look to mainly now? The knowledge of God the Father, and his love to us shining in Christ, all is in Christ; and if we would have anything wrought in us, any alteration of our natures, let us beg the Spirit, that we may have the discovery of the love of God in Christ, and the Spirit attending upon the gospel. And because we have all these abundantly in these latter times of the church, in the second spring of the gospel, in the reformation of religion, after our recovery out of popery, there is a second spring of the gospel. Oh, beloved, how much are we beholding to God! Never since the beginning of the world was there such glorious times as we enjoy. We see how the holy apostle doth prefer these times before former times, when the veil was upon their eyes, and when all was hid in ceremonies, and types, and such things among the Jews. 'Now,' saith he, 'we behold the glory of God, and are changed by the Spirit from glory to glory.' To conclude all. Therefore consider that the glory of the times, and the glory of places and persons, all is from the revelation of Christ by the Spirit, which hath the Spirit accompanying it. The more God in Christ is laid open, the more the times, and places, and persons are excellent. What made the second temple beyond the former? Christ came at the second temple. Therefore though it were baser in itself, yet the second temple was more glorious than the first. What made Bethlehem, that little city, glorious? Christ was born there. What makes the heart where Christ is born more glorious than other folk? Christ is born there. Christ makes persons and places glorious. What makes the times now more glorious than they were before Christ? What made the least in the kingdom of heaven greater than John Baptist? He was greater than all that were before him; and all that are after him are greater than he. Because his head was cut off, he saw not the death and resurrection of Christ, and the giving of the Holy Ghost. He saw not so much of Christ. So that the revelation of Christ and the love of God in Christ, it is that that makes times, and persons, and places glorious, all glorious, because the veil is taken away from our eyes. We see Christ the King of glory in the gospel flourishing, and the love of God manifested, and by the Spirit of God the veil is taken away inwardly as well as outwardly. Now for a fuller discovery of Christ than in former times, comes the glory of the times. Now there are more converted than in former times, because the Spirit goes together with the manifestation of Christ. What is the reason that this kingdom is more glorious than any place beyond the seas? Because Christ is here revealed more fully than there. The veil is taken off, and here 'we see the glory of God with open face,' which changeth many thousands from glory to glory by the Spirit of God that accompanies the revelation of the gospel. Is there any outward thing that advanceth our kingdom before Turkey, or Spain, &c.? Nothing. Their government. and riches, and outward things are as much as ours, if not more. The glory of places

and times are from the revelation of Christ, that hath the Spirit accompanying of it. That Spirit changeth us 'from glory to glory.' Our times are more glorious than they were a hundred years or two before. Why? Because we have a double revelation of Christ, and of antichrist. We see Christ revealed, and the gospel opened, and the veil taken off. We see antichrist revealed, that hath masked under the name of head of the church, and hath seduced the world.

Now this double revelation challengeth acknowledgment of these blessed times. What should all this do but stir us up to know the time of our visitation, and to thankfulness; to bless God that hath reserved us for these places and countries that we live in, to cast our times to be in this glorious light of the gospel to be born in. What if we had been born in those dark Egyptian times of popery? Our lives had not been so comfortable. Now we live under the gospel, wherein 'with open face' we see the glory of the mercy of God in Christ, the 'unsearchable riches' of Christ opened and discovered to us. And together with the gospel, the ministry of the Spirit, goeth the Spirit; and those that belong to God, thousands by the blessing of God are changed from glory to glory.

Certainly if we share in the good of the times we will have hearts to thank God, and to walk answerably, that as we have the glorious gospel, so we will walk gloriously, that we do not by a base and fruitless life dishonour so glorious a gospel. I beseech you let us think of the times, else if we be not the better for the glorious times, if the veil be not taken away, we are under a fearful judgment. 'The god of this world hath blinded our eyes,' 2 Corinthians 4:4. Do we live under the glorious light, and yet are dark, that we see no glory in Christ? We see nothing in religion, but are as ready to entertain popery as true religion. Is this the fruit of the long preaching of the gospel, and the veil being taken off so long? Certainly the god of this world hath cast the dust of the world into our eyes, that we can see nothing but earthly things. We are under the seal of God's judgment. He hath sealed us up to a dark state, from darkness of judgment to the darkness of hell without repentance. Therefore let us take heed how we live in a dull and dead condition, under the glorious gospel, or else how cursed shall we be! The more we are exalted and lifted up above other people in the blessings of God this way, the more we shall be cast down. 'Woe be to Chorazin,' &c., Matthew 11:21; and Hebrews 2:3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?'

I beseech you let us take heed how we trifle away our time, these precious times and blessed opportunities; for if we labour not to get out of the state of nature into the state of grace, and so to be changed from glory to glory, God in justice will curse the means we have, that in hearing we shall not hear, and seeing we shall not see, and he will secretly and insensibly harden our hearts. It is the curse of all curses, when we are under plenty of means, to grow worse and duller. Oh take heed of spiritual judgments above all others, tremble at them. They belong to reprobates and castaways. Let us labour for hearts sensible of the mercies of God in Christ, and labour to be transformed and moulded into this gospel every day more and more. That that hath been spoken shall be sufficient for this time, and for this whole text.

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