

WRITINGS OF THOMAS ADAMS

by Thomas Adams

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Thomas Adams, compiled for study and devotional reading.

4 Chapters

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S. Diagnosis

Diagnosis by Thomas Adams

ERROR

Indeed heresy cannot possess a church, but it gives a subversion to it. 'I may err, a heretic I cannot be,' says Augustine. Furthermore, Tertullian claims that what is diametrically opposed against the truth is heresy, yea, though it be an ancient and long-received custom. A church may be sick of error, and yet live; but heresy (a wilful error against the fundamental truth, violently prosecuted and persisted in) kills it. Therefore heresy is rather death than sickness. When the truth of doctrine, or rather doctrine of truth, has been turned to the falsehood of heresy, God has removed their candlestick, and turned their light into darkness. Error may make it sick, but so that it may be cured. The churches of Corinth, Galatia, Pergamos had these sicknesses; the Holy Ghost, by Paul and John, prescribes their cures. If they had been dead, what needed any direction of medicine. If they had not been sick, what purpose was there in prescribing a remedy? To God alone, and to his majestic word, be the impossibility offering? That church, that man, shall in this err palpably, that will challenge an immunity; whosoever thinks he cannot err, does in this very persuasion err extremely. I know there is a man on earth, a man of earth, (to say no more,) that challengeth this privilege. Let him prove it. Nay ask his cardinals, friars, Jesuits. This is somewhat to the proverb Ask the sons if the father be a thief.' But he cannot err in his definitive sentence of religion. Then be like he has one spirit in his consistory, and another at home; and it may in some sort be said of him, as Salinist of Cicero: "He is of one opinion sitting, of another standing." 'Let God be true, but every man a liar.' Romans 3:4.

What particular church then may not err? Now can it err, and be sound? Be the error small, yet the ache of the finger keeps the body from perfect health. The greater it is, the more dangerous; especially, either when it possesses a vital part, and infects the rulers of the church. It is ill for the feet when the hand is giddy. Or when it is infectious and spreading, violently communicated from one to another. Or when it carries a colour of truth. The most dangerous vice is that which bears the countenance and wears the cloak of virtue. Or when it is fitter to the mood, and seasoned to the relish of the people. Sedition, affectation, popula/rity, covetousness, are enough to drive an error to a heresy. So the disease may prove a gangrene, and then no means can save the whole, but cutting off the incurable part:

IGNORANCE

Ignorance is a sore sickness in a church, whether it be in the superior or subordinate members; especially when 'the priest's lips preserve not knowledge.' Ill goes it with the body when the eyes are blind. Devotion without instruction often winds itself into superstition. When learning's head is kept under averice's girdle, the land grows sick. Experience has made this conclusion too clear. Our forefathers felt the terror and tyranny of this affliction; who had golden chalices, and wooden priests, who had either no art or no heart to teach the people. Sing not, thou Roman siren, that

ignorance is the dam of devotion, to breed it; it is rather a dam to stifle, restrain, and choke it up. Blindness is plausible to please men, not possible to please God. It is time that our faults in the light are more heinous than theirs who wanted true knowledge. Yet in all reason their sins did exceed in number, who knew not when they went astray, or what was amiss.

Rome has by a strange and incredible kind of doctrine, gone about to prove that the health, which is indeed the sickness of the church, is ignorance. Their Cardinal Cusan saith, that ignorant obedience, lacking reason, is the most absolute and perfect obedience. Chrysostom gives the reason why they so oppose themselves against reason: "Heretical priests shut up the gates of truth; for they know that upon the manifestation of the truth their church would be soon forsaken." If the light, which maketh all things plain, should shine out, then they who before deceived the people could preserve their position no longer, being now smelt out and detected. Hence the people aim at Christ, but either short or far, and not with proper judgement let no man believe other thing of Christ than what Christ would have believed of himself. But alas! ignorance is so far from sanity and sanctity, that it is a spilling and killing sickness. Men are urged to read the Scriptures, that never-emptied treasure-house of knowledge: they answer, "I am no priest; I have a wife, and a domestical charge to look to." This is that pestilence (no ordinary sickness) that infects to death many souls; to think that knowledge belongs only to priests. This is a work of the devil's inspiration, not suffering us to behold the treasure, lest we grow rich by it.

Beloved, 'let the word of God dwell in you plenteously,' Colossians 3:16. Do not give it a cold entertainment, as you would do to a stranger, and so take your leave of it; but esteem it as your best familiar and bosom friend: making it your chamber-fellow study-fellow, bed-fellow. Let it have the best room and the best bed; the parlour of our conscience, the resting-place in our heart. Neglected things are outside the door, less respected within, but near the door. The more worthy things are not trusted to the safety of one door, but kept under many locks and keys. Give earthly things little regard, preserve them with a more removed care. But this pearl of inestimable value, Matt, xiii. 46, this jewel purer than gold of Ophir, Psalms 119:127; lay it not up in the porter's lodge, the outward ear, but in the cabinet and most inward closure of thy heart. Deuteronomy 11:18, 'Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul.' Mary thought that place the fittest receptacle for such oracles. This is that medicine which can only cure the sickness of ignorance: where the ignorant may find what to learn, the refractory what to fear, the labourer wherewith to be rewarded, the weak nourishment, the guest a banquet, the wounded a remedy to cure him. Be not ignorant, be not sick. 'Search the Scriptures,' read, observe. This is not all. The meat nourishes not which stays not in the stomach. It must be digested by meditation and prayer. Meditation shows our want, prayer procures supply. Let it not be said of our perfunctory reading, as it was of the Delphian oracle, that we disregard what we read. Read to learn, learn to practise, practise to live, and live to praise God for ever.

DISSENSION A third sickness, which may inwardly afflict a church, is dissension: a sore shaking to the joints, an enervating the strength, and dangerous degree to dissolution. The world being but one, teacheth that there is but one God that governs it; one God, that there is but one church, one truth. The church is not only the pillar of truth, 1 Timothy 3:15, but also the dove of unity: Song of Solomon 6:10, 'My dove my undefiled is alone.' Dissensions, like secret and close Judases, have given advantageous means to our common enemies, both to scorn and scourge the church.

I confess, indeed, that unity is no inseparable and undoubted mark of the church; for there was a unity in those murdering voices, 'Crucify him, crucify him!' "The kings of the earth have banded themselves together against the Lord,' Psalms 11:2. Those favourers and factors of Antichrist, Rev. xvii, that make war against the Lamb, are all said to 'have one mind.' Nay, Chrysostom says, that it is necessary for the very devils to hearken one another, and to have some mutuality in their very mutiny, a union in their distraction. Yet can it not be denied but that dissension in a church is a sickness to it. It goes ill with the body when the members agree not: those that dwell in one house should be of one mind. It endangers the whole building to ruin, when the stones square and jar one with another. What detriment this has been to whole Christendom, he has no mind that considers not, no heart that condoles not. We may say with the Athenians, "We have strengthened King Philip against us by our own contentions." Christian nation fighting with Christian hath laid more to the possession of the Turk than his own sword. Where is the Greek church, once so famous? Behold, we have laid waste ourselves, who shall pity us? Our own seditions have betrayed the peace of our Jerusalem. He has no tears of Christian compassion in his eyes that will not shed them at this loss. If you ask the reason why the wild boar has spoiled the vineyard, why the filthy and unclean birds, roost themselves in those sanctified dominions, why Mohammed is set up, like Dagon, where the ark once stood, and paganism has thrust Christianity out of her seat, it is answered, Israel is not true to Judah; the rending of the ten tribes from the two and the ten miserable.

It is one of the sorest plagues, (oh, rather let it fall on the enemies of God and his church! let his own never feel it.) when men shall be 'fed with their own flesh, and shall be drunk with their own blood, as with sweet wine,' Isa. xlix. 26, fighting and fighting one against another, till an utter destruction devour and swallow all. The malignity of this sickness has been terrible to particular churches. They that have been least damaged have little cause to joy in it. The Spanish blades have done less hurt unto us than English tongues. Our contentions have laboured about trifles, our damage has been no trifle; but I know not whether more to our loss or our enemy's gain. Look but on the effects, and you will confess this a dangerous sickness. Rome laughs, Amsterdam insults; while the brethren scuffle in the vineyard, athiests and persecutors shuffle in to spoil all. God's Sabbath, his worship, his gospel is neglected. Some will hear none but the refractory and refusers of conformity; others take advantage of their disobedience to condemn their ministry. Wicked hearts are hardened, good ones grieved, weak offended. Is this no sickness? Is it unworthy our deploring, our imploring redress?

We are all brethren, both by father's and mother's side. It is more than enough that our fallings-out have been a grief to both our parents. If we proceed, the brethren shall suffer for all. Whether we be victors or vanquished, we may destroy ourselves. Let us think we behold our mother calling us to stay our quarrels, and to lay down the cause at her feet. Otherwise, as Jocasta told her two sons, we undertake a war whose victory shall have a sorry triumph. Let every star in our orb know his station, and run his course without erring; the inferior subjecting themselves to the higher powers, whiles the courses of superiors be wisely tempered with moderation and clemency, For, though the office of all God's ministers be common and the same, yet they have different degrees and places. (Calvin).

We have adversaries enough at home to move our tongues and pens against. Oh the arguments of steel and iron might supply the weakness of the other! We have the Edomites with their no God,

and the Babylonians with their new god; dissolute atheists, resolute Papists: the former scoffing us for believing at all, the latter for believing as we do, as we ought. These oppose (though under the pent-house of night) mass against service, sacrament against sacrament, prayer against prayer; confounding the language of England, as the Jews once of Israel. Whiles we are praying in one place, 'O Lord God of Abraham,' &c., they are mumbling in another place, 'O Baal, hear us.' Whiles we pray for fire to consume the sacrifice, they for water to consume the fire; we for the propagation, they for the extirpation of the gospel; hating us and our Christian princes more mortally than if we were Saracens. For as no bond is so strong as that of religion, so no hostility is so cruel and outrageous as that which difference in religion occasioneth. Hence they cross, they curse, they persecute, they excommunicate. Nothing but our blood can ease their stomachs.

We know they hate us; let us the more dearly love one another. The manifestation of enemies should confirm the mutual league and amity of brethren. 'Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem!' Pray we that the deceived may find their errors, correct their opinions, and submit their judgments and affections to the rule of truth. Yea, that the wandering sheep, yea, that those who are yet goats may become sheep, and be brought into one fold, under one shepherd. Whiles they continue weeds there is small hope. Yet Paul was once a tare, who after proved good wheat, and is now in the garner of heaven. *Recte dicitur glaciam nivem calidam esse non posse; nullo enim pacto quamdiu nix est, calida esse potest,* —It is truly said that the frozen snow, can by no means be made hot; for so long as it is snow, and frozen, it will not be warmed. Yet if that snow be melted, the liquid may be made hot. God, that is able to turn a stony heart into a heart of flesh, work this change upon them; unite all our hearts to himself, to one another; and heal our souls of this sickness!

S. Quotes

Choice quotes from the Puritan Thomas Adams, 1583-1652

Courtesy Gracegems.org

Pride thrust . . .

Adam out of paradise,

Saul out of his kingdom,

Nebuchadnezzar out of men's society,

Haman out of court, and

Lucifer out of Heaven!

~ ~ ~ ~

Satan, like a skillful fisherman, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish!

~ ~ ~ ~

Half our virtue arises from our being out of the way of temptation!

~ ~ ~ ~

No man more truly loves God, than he who is most fearful to offend Him.

~ ~ ~ ~

Good deeds are such things that no man is saved for them, nor without them.

~ ~ ~ ~

Death is as near to the young as to the old. Here is all the difference:

death stands behind the young man's back, but before the old man's face.

How certain you are to die, you know;

how soon to die, you know not.

You can name no living man, not the sickest, which you are sure shall die before you.

We spend our years with sighing — it is a valley of tears.

Death is the funeral of all our sorrows!

~ ~ ~ ~

Conscience is God's deputy in the soul.

~ ~ ~ ~

Christ is the sum of the whole Bible, prophesied, typified, prefigured, exhibited, demonstrated, to be found in every leaf, almost in every line — the Scriptures being but as it were, the swaddling bands of the child Jesus.

~ ~ ~ ~

Self-righteousness is the devil's masterpiece to make us think well of ourselves.

~ ~ ~ ~

He who demands mercy and shows none, burns the bridges over which he himself must later pass!

~ ~ ~ ~

Jesus . . .

hides our unrighteousness with His righteousness,

covers our disobedience with His obedience,

shadows our death with His death —

that the wrath of God cannot find us!

S. Semper Idem

Semper Idem Semper Idem; or, the Immutable Mercy of Jesus Christ by Thomas Adams 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.'- Hebrews 13:8. By the name of Jehovah was God known to Israel, from the time of the first mission of Moses to them, and their manumission out of Egypt, and not before. For, saith God to Moses, 'I appeared unto Abraham, and to Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them,' Exodus 6:3. This I AM is an eternal word, comprehending three times: 'that was, that is, and is to come.'

Now, to testify the equality of the Son to the Father, the Scripture gives the same eternity to Jesus that it doth to Jehovah. He is called Alpha and Omega, primus et novissimus, 'the First and the Last: which is, which was, and which is to come,' Revelation 1:1-20 and here, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.' Therefore he was, not only Christus Dei, the anointed of God, but Christus Deus, God himself anointed; seeing that eternity, which hath neither beginning nor ending, is only exclusive and proper to God. The words may be distinguished into a centre, a circumference, and a mediate line, referring the one to the other. The immovable centre is Jesus Christ. The circumference, that runs round about him here, is eternity: 'Yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' The mediate line referring them is, o autoV, the same: 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

I. The centre is Jesus Christ. Jesus was his proper name, Christ his appellative. Jesus a name of his nature, Christ of his office and dignity; as divines speak.

Jesus, a name of all sweetness. Mel in ore, melos in aure, júbilus in corde. (Bernard: Honey in the mouth, music in the ear, joy in the heart.) A reconciler, a Redeemer, a Saviour. When the conscience wrestles with law, sin, death, there is nothing but horror and despair without Jesus. He is 'the way, the truth, and the life;' without him, error, mendacium, mors (error, deception, death). Si scribas, non placet, nisi legam ibi, Jesum, saith Bernard: If thou writest to me, thy letter doth not please me, unless I read there Jesus. If thou converse, thy discourse is not sweet, without the name of Jesus. The blessed restorer of all, of more than all that Adam lost; for we have gotten more by his regenerating grace than we lost by Adam's degenerating sin.

Christ is the name of his office; being appointed and anointed of God a king, a priest, a prophet. This Jesus Christ is our Saviour: of whose names I forbear further discourse, being unable, though I had the tongue of angels, to speak aught worthy tanto nomine, tanto numine (the greater the name, the greater the majesty). All that can be said is but a little; but I must say but a little in all. But of all names given to our Redeemer, still Jesus is the sweetest. Other, saith Bernard, are names of majesty; Jesus is a name of mercy. The Word of God, the Son of God, the Christ of God, are titles of glory; Jesus, a Saviour, is a title of grace, mercy, redemption. This Jesus Christ is the centre of this text; and not only of this, but of the whole Scripture. The sum of divinity is the Scripture; the sum of the Scripture is the gospel; the sum of the gospel is Jesus Christ; in a word, nihil continet verbum Domini, nisi verbum Dominum. There is nothing contained in the word of

God, but God the word. Nor is he the centre only of his word, but of our rest and peace. 'I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,' 1 Corinthians 2:2. Thou hast made us for thee, O Christ; and our heart is unquiet till it rest in thee. It is natural to everything appetere centrum, to desire the centre. But 'our life is hid with Christ in God,' Colossians 3:3. We must needs amare (love), where we must animare (live). Our mind is where our pleasure is, our heart is where our treasure is, our love is where our life is; but all these, our pleasure, treasure, life, are reposed in Jesus Christ. Thou art my portion, O Lord,' saith David. Take the world that pleases, let our portion be in Christ. 'We have left all,' saith Peter, 'and followed thee,' Matthew 19:27; you have lost nothing by it, saith Christ, for you have gotten me. Nimis avarus est, cui non sufficit Christus. He is too covetous, whom Jesus Christ cannot satisfy. Let us seek this centre, saith Augustine: Quæramus inveniendum, quæramus inventum. Ut inveniendus quæatur, paratus est: ut inventus quæatur, immensus est: Let us seek him till we have found him; and still seek him when we have found him. That seeking, we may find him, he is ready; that finding, we may seek him, he is infinite. You see the centre.

II. The referring line, proper to this centre, is Semper idem, '(Always) The Same.' There is no mutability in Christ; 'no variableness, nor shadow of turning,' James 1:17. All lower lights have their inconstancy; but in the 'Father of lights' there is no changeableness. The sun hath his shadow; the 'Sun of Righteousness' is without shadow, Malachi 4:2; the sun turns upon the dial, but Christ hath no turning. 'Whom he loves, he loves to the end,' John 13:1. He loves us to the end; of his love there is no end. Tempus erit consummandi, nullum consumendi misericordiam (Time will be brought to a close, but mercy will never be ended). His mercy shall be perfected in us, never ended. 'In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer,' Isaiah 54:8. His wrath is short, his goodness is everlasting. 'The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee,' Isaiah 54:10. The mountains are stable things, the hills stedfast; yet hills, mountains, yea the whole earth, shall totter on its foundations; yea the very 'heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with heat,' 2 Peter 3:10; but the covenant of God shall not be broken. 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever,' saith God, Hosea 2:19. This marriage-bond shall never be cancelled; nor sin, nor death, nor hell, shall be able to divorce us. Six-and-twenty times in one psalm that sweet singer chants it; 'His mercy endureth for ever,' Psalms 136:1-26. 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' As this meditation distils into our believing hearts much comfort, so let it give us some instructions. Two things it readily teacheth us: a dissuasive caution, and a persuasive lesson.

1. It dissuades our confidence in worldly things, because they are inconstant. How poor a space do they remain, Ta auta, 'the same.' To prove this, you have in Jude 1:7, a jury of threescore and ten kings to take their oaths upon it. Every one had his throne, yet there they lick up crumbs under another king's table; and shortly even this king, that made them all so miserable, is made himself most miserable. Solomon compares wealth to a wild fowl. 'Riches make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle toward heaven,' Proverbs 23:5. Not some tame house-bird, or a hawk that may be fetched down with a lure, or found again by her bells; but an eagle, that violently cuts the air, and is gone past recalling.

Wealth is like a bird; it hops all day from man to man, as a bird doth from tree to tree; and none can say where it will roost or rest at night. It is like a vagrant fellow, which because he is big-boned, and able to work, a man takes in a-door, and keeps him warm; and perhaps for a while he works hard; but when he spies opportunity, the fugitive servant is gone, and makes away more with him than all his service came to. The world may seem to stand thee in some stead for a season, but at last it irrevocably runs away, and carries with it thy joys; thy goods, as Rachel stole Laban's idols; thy peace and content of heart goes with it, and thou art left desperate.

You see how quickly riches cease to be 'the same:' and can any other earthly thing boast more stability? Honour must put off its robes when the play is done; make it never so glorious a show on this world's stage, it hath but a short part to act. A great name of worldly glory is but like a peal rung on the bells the common people are the clappers; the rope that moves them is popularity; if you once let go your hold and leave pulling, the clapper lies still, and farewell honour. Strength, though, like Jeroboam, it put forth the arm of oppression: it shall soon fall down withered, 1 Kings 13:4. Beauty is like a almanack: if it last a year it is well. Pleasure is like lightning: oritur, moritur (heard, it dies); sweet, but short; a flash and away.

All vanities are but butterflies, which wanton children greedily catch for (Anselm): and sometimes they fly beside them, sometimes before them, sometimes behind them, sometimes close by them; yea, through their fingers, and yet they miss them; and when they have them, they are but butterflies; they have painted wings, but are crude and squalid worms. Such are the things of his world, vanities, butterflies. *Vel sequendo labimur, vel assequendo laedimur* (often that which we struggle after will hurt us when we gain it). The world itself is not unlike an artichoke; nine parts of it are unprofitable leaves, scarce the tithe is good about it there is a little picking meat, nothing so wholesome as dainty: in the midst of it there is a core, which is enough to choke them that devour it.

O then set not your hearts upon these things: *calcanda sunt* (they are to be tread upon), as Jerome observes on Acts 4. 'They that sold their possessions, brought the prices, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet,' Acts 4:35. At their feet, not at their hearts; they are fitter to be trodden under feet, than to be waited on with hearts. I conclude this with Augustine. *Ecce turbat mundus, et amatur: quid si tranquillus esset? Formoso quomodo hareres qui sic amplecteris faedum? Flores ejus quam colligeres, qui sic a spinis non revocas manum? Quam confideres aeterno, qui sic adhaeres caduco?* Behold, the world is turbulent and full of vexation, yet it is loved; how would it be embraced if it were calm and quiet? If it were a beauteous damsel, how would they dote on it, that so kiss it being a deformed stigmatic? How greedily would they gather the flowers, who would not forbear the thorns? They that so admire it being transient and temporal, how would they be enamoured of it if it were eternal? But 'the world passeth,' 1 John 2:17, and God abideth. 'They shall perish, but thou remainest: they all shall wax old as doth a garment and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail,' Hebrews 1:11-12. Therefore, 'trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God,' 1 Timothy 6:17. And then, 'they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever,' Psalms 125:1. 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.'

2. This persuades us to an imitation of Christ's constancy. Let the stableness of his mercy to us work a stableness of our love to him. And howsoever, like the lower orbs, we have a natural

motion of our own from good to evil, yet let us suffer the higher power to move us supernaturally from evil to good. There is in us indeed a reluctant flesh, 'a law in our members warring against the law of our mind,' Romans 7:23. So Augustine confesseth: *Nec plane nolebam, nec plane volebam. And, Ego eram qui volebam, ego qua nolebam.* (Confessions) I neither fully granted, nor plainly denied; and it was I myself that both would and would not. But our ripeness of Christianity must overgrow wavering thoughts.

Irresolution and unsteadiness is hateful, and unlike to our master Christ, who is ever the same. 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways,' James 1:8. The inconstant man is a stranger in his own house: all his purposes are but guests, his heart is the inn. If they lodge there for a night, it is all; they are gone in the morning. Many motions come crowding together upon him; and like a great press at a narrow door, while all strive, none enter. The epigrammatist says wittily, *Omnia cum facias, miraris cur facias nil?*

Posthumè, rem solam qui facit, ille facit.

(In all that you do, do you wonder why you accomplish nothing?

After you die, you will do one thing, namely that.)

He that will have an oar for every man's boat, shall have none left to row his own. They, saith Melancthon, that will know aliquid in omnibus (something about everything), shall indeed know nihil in toto (nothing completely). Their admiration or dotage of a thing is extreme for the time, but it is a wonder if it outlive the age of a wonder, which is allowed but nine days. They are angry with time, and say the times are dead, because they produce no more innovations. Their inquiry of all things is not *quam bonus* (what is good?), but *quam novum* (what is new?). They are almost weary of the sun for continual shining. Continuance is a sufficient quarrel against the best things; and the manna of heaven is loathed because it is common. This is not to be always the same, but never the same; and while they would be every thing, they are nothing: but like the worm Pliny writes of, *multipoda*, that hath many feet, yet is of slow pace. Awhile you shall have him in England, loving the simple truth; anon in Rome, grovelling before an image. Soon after he leaps to Amsterdam; and yet must he still be turning, till there be nothing left but to turn Turk. To winter an opinion is too tedious; he hath been many things. What he will be, you shall scarce know till he is nothing. But the God of constancy would have his to be constant. Steadfast in your faith to him. 'Continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel,' Colossians 1:23. Steadfast in your faithfulness to man, promising and not disappointing, Psalms 15:4. Do it aliud stantes, aliud sedentes, (whether standing or sitting) lest your changing with God teach God to change with you. *Nemo potest tibi Christum auferre, nisi te illi auferas* (Ambrose). No man can turn Christ from thee, unless thou turn thyself from Christ. or 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday,' &c.

III. We now come to the circumference, wherein is a distinction of three times; past, present, future. *Tempora mutantur*: the times change, the circumference wheels about, but the centre is 'the same for ever.'

We must resolve this triplicity into a triplicity. Christ is the same according to these three distinct terms, three distinct ways:- 1. Objectivè, in word; 2. Subjectivè, in his power; 3. Effectivè, in his gracious operation.

1. Objectively.-Jesus Christ is the same in his word; and that (1) Yesterday in pre-ordination; (2) To-day in incarnation; (3) Forever in application.

(1.) Yesterday in pre-ordination.-So St Peter, in his sermon, tells the Jews, that 'he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,' Acts 2:23. And in his epistle, that 'he was verily preordained before the foundation of the world,' 1 Peter 1:20. He is called the 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' Revelation 13:8. Prius profuit, quam fuit (Before something can work, it must exist). His prophets did foretell him, the types did prefigure him, God himself did promise him. Ratus ordo Dei: the decree of God is constant.

Much comfort I must here leave to your meditation. If God preordained a Saviour for man, before he had either made man, or man marred himself, -as Paul to Timothy, 'He hath saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,' 2 Timothy 1:9;-then surely he meant that nothing should separate us from his eternal love in that Saviour, Romans 8:39. Quos elegit increatos, redemit perditos, non deseret redemptos. Whom he chose before they were created, and when they were lost redeemed, he will not forsake while they are being sanctified.

(2.) To-day in incarnation.-'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman,' Galatians 4:4. 'The Word was made flesh' John 1:14; which was, saith Emissenus, Non deposita, sed seposita, majestate (Not putting away but putting aside majesty). Thus he became younger than his mother, who was as eternal as his Father. He was yesterday God before all worlds, he is now made man in the world. Sanguinem, quem pro matre obtulit, antea de sanguine matris accepit. (Eusebius) The blood that he shed for his mother, he had from his mother. The same Eusebius, on the ninth of Isaiah, acutely, 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,' Isaiah 9:6. He was Datus ex Divinitate, natus ex virgine. Datus est qui erat; natus est qui non erat. He was given of the Deity, born of the Virgin. He that was given, was before; he, as born, was not before; Donum dedit Deus aequale sibi: God gave a gift equal to himself. So he is the same yesterday and to-day, objectively in his word. Idem qui velatus in veteri, revelatus in novo. (That which was in the old concealed, is in the new revealed.) In illo praedictus, in isto praedicatus. Yesterday prefigured in the law, to-day the same manifested in the gospel.

(3.) For ever in application. He doth continually by his Spirit apply to our consciences the virtue of his death and passion. 'As many as receive him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,' John 1:12. 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' Hebrews 10:14. This is sure comfort to us; though he died almost 1629 years ago, his blood is not yet dry. His wounds are as fresh to do us good, as they were to those saints that beheld them bleeding on the cross. The virtue of his merits is not abated, though many hands of faith have taken large portions out of his treasury. The river of his grace, 'which makes glad the city of God,' runs over its banks, though infinite souls have drank hearty draughts, and satisfied their thirst. But because we cannot apprehend this for ourselves of ourselves, therefore he hath promised to send us the 'Spirit of truth, who will dwell with us,' John 14:17, and apply this to us forever. Thus you have seen the first triplicity, how he is the same objectively in his word. Now he is-

2. Subjectively, in his power the same; and that (1) Yesterday, for he made the world; (2) To-day, for he governs the world; (3) For ever, for he shall judge the world.

(1.) Yesterday in the creation. 'All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made,' John 1:3. 'By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him,' Colossians 1:16. All things, even the great and fair book of the world, of three so large leaves, coelum, solum, salum; heaven, earth, and sea. The prophet calls him 'the everlasting Father,' Isaiah 9:6; Daniel, the 'Ancient of days,' Daniel 7:9. Solomon says, that 'the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old,' Proverbs 8:22. So himself told the unbelieving Jews, 'Before Abraham was, I am,' John 8:58.

We owe, then, ourselves to Christ for our creation; but how much more for our redemption? Si totum me debeo pro me facto, quid addam jam pro me refecto? In primo opere me mihi dedit: in secundo se mihi dedit. (Bernard) If I owe him my whole self for making me, what have I left to pay him for redeeming me? In the first work, he gave myself to me; in the second, he gave himself to me. By a double right, we owe him ourselves; we are worthy of a double punishment, if we give him not his own.

(2.) To-day in the governing. 'He upholdeth all things by the word of his power,' Hebrews 1:3. He is pater familias (the ruler of the family), and disposeth all things in this universe with greater care and providence than any householder can manage the business of his private family. He leaves it not, as the carpenter having built the frame of an house, to others to perfect it, but looks to it himself. His creation and providence are like the mother and the nurse, the one produceth, the other preserveth. His creation was a short providence; his providence a perpetual creation. The one sets up the frame of the house, the other keeps it in repair.

Neither is this a disparagement to the majesty of God, as the vain Epicures imagined, curare minima, to regard the least things, but rather an honour, curare infinita, to regard all things. Neither doth this extend only to natural things, chained together by a regular order of succession, but even to casual and contingent things. Oftentimes, cum aliud volumus, aliud agimus (though we intend one thing we do another), the event crosseth our purpose; which must content us, though it fall out otherwise than we purposed, because God purposed as it is fallen out. It is enough that the thing attain its own end, though it miss ours; that God's will be done, though ours be crossed. But let me say, Hath God care of fowls and flowers, and will he not care for you, his own image? Matthew 6:26-30. Yea, let me go further; hath God care of the wicked? Doth he pour down the happy influences of heaven on the 'unjust man's ground?' Matthew 5:45. And shall the faithful go without his blessing? Doth he provide for the sons of Belial, and shall his own children lack? He may give meat and raiment to the rest, but his bounty to Benjamin shall exceed. If Moab, his wash-pot, should taste of his benefits, then Judah, the signet on his finger, cannot be forgotten. The king governs all the subjects in his dominions, but his servants that wait in his court partake of his most princely favours. God heals the sores of the very wicked; but if it be told him, 'Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick,' (John 11:3), it is enough, he shall be healed. The wicked may have outward blessings without inward, and that is Esau's pottage without his birthright; but the elect have inward blessings, though they lack outward, and that is Jacob's inheritance without his pottage.

(3.) For ever: because he shall judge the world. 'God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained,' Acts 17:31. 'In the day that God

shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ,' Romans 2:16. Let the wicked flatter themselves that all is but talk of any coming to judgment; all is but terriculamenta nutricum, mere scare-babes. Scribarum pennee mendaces; they have written lies, there is no such matter. But when they shall see that Lamb 'whom they have pierced' and scorned (Revelation 1:7), 'they shall cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall upon us, and cover us,' Revelation 6:16. Now they flatter themselves with his death; Mortuus est, he is dead and gone; and Mortuum Caesarem quis metuit? Who fears even a Caesar when he is dead? But 'He that was dead, liveth; behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen,' Revelation 1:18. Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' Quaesitor scelerum veniet, vindexque reorum. (The Judge of wickedness will come and punishment will be done.)

Here is matter of infallible comfort to us: 'Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh,' Luke 21:28. Here we are imprisoned, martyred, tortured; but when that great assize and general jail-delivery comes, mors non erit ultra, 'There shall be no more death nor sorrow, but all tears shall be wiped from our eyes,' Revelation 21:4. 'For it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels,' 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7. We shall then find him the same;-the same Lamb that bought us shall give us a Venite beati, Come, ye blessed, receive your kingdom.' 'Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus,' Revelation 22:20.

3. Effectually in his grace and mercy. So he is the same, (1) Yesterday to our fathers; (2) To-day to ourselves; (3) For ever to our children.

(1.) Yesterday to our fathers.-All our fathers, whose souls are now in heaven, those 'spirits of just men made perfect,' Hebrews 12:23, were, as the next words indicate, saved, 'by Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, sand by the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Whether they lived under nature, or under the law, Christ was their expectation; and they were justified credendo in venturum Christum, by believing in the Messiah to come. So Luke 2:25, Simeon is said to 'wait for the consolation of Israel.'

(2.) To-day to ourselves. -His mercy is everlasting; his truth endureth from generation to generation. The same gracious Saviour that he was yesterday to our fathers, is he to-day to us, if we be to-day faithful to him. All catch at this comfort, but in vain without the hand of faith. There is no deficiency in him; but is there none in thee? Whatsoever Christ is, what art thou? He forgave Mary Magdalene many grievous sins; so he will forgive thee, if thou canst shed Mary Magdalene's tears. He took the malefactor from the cross to Paradise; thither he will receive thee if thou have the same faith. He was merciful to a denying apostle; challenge thou the like mercy, if thou have the like repentance. If we will be like these, Christ, assuredly, will be ever like himself. When any man shall prove to be such a sinner, he will not fail to be such a Saviour.

To-day he is thine, if to-day thou wilt be his: thine tomorrow, if yet to-morrow thou wilt be his. But how if dark death prevent the morrow's light? He was yesterday, so wert thou: he is to-day, so art thou: he is to-morrow, so perhaps mayest thou not be. Time may change thee, though it cannot change him. He is not (but thou art) subject to mutation. This I dare boldly say: he that repents but one day before he dies, shall find Christ the same in mercy and forgiveness. Wickedness itself is glad to hear this; but let the sinner be faithful on his part, as God is merciful on his part: let him be sure that he repent one day before he dies, whereof he cannot be sure, except he repent every

day; for no man knows his last day. *Latet ultimus dies, ut observetur omnis dies.* Therefore (saith Augustine) we know not our last day, that we might observe every day. 'To-day, therefore, hear his voice,' Psalms 95:7.

Thou hast lost yesterday negligently, thou lovest to-day wilfully; and therefore mayest lose for ever inevitably. It is just with God to punish two days' neglect with the loss of the third. The hand of faith may be withered, the spring of repentance dried up, the eye of hope blind, the foot of charity lame. To-day, then, hear his voice, and make him thine. Yesterday is lost, to-day may be gotten; but that once gone, and thou with it, when thou art dead and judged, it will do thee small comfort that 'Jesus Christ is the same for ever.'

(3.) For ever to our children.-He that was yesterday the God of Abraham, is to-day ours, and will be for ever our children's. As well now 'the light of the Gentiles,' as before 'the glory of Israel,' Luke 2:32. I will be the God of thy seed, saith the Lord to Abraham. 'His mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation,' Luke 1:50.

Many persons are solicitously perplexed, how their children shall do when they are dead; yet they consider not how God provided for them when they were children. Is the 'Lord's arm shortened?' Did he take thee from thy mother's breasts; and 'when thy parents forsook thee,' (as the Psalmist saith), became thy Father? And cannot this experienced mercy to thee, persuade thee that he will not forsake thine? Is not 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever?' 'I have been young,' saith David, 'and am now old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken'-that is granted, nay-'nor his seed begging bread,' Psalms 37:25.

Many distrustful fathers are so anxious for their posterity, that while they live they starve their bodies, and hazard their souls, to leave them rich. To such a father it is said justly: *Dives es haredi, pauper inopsque tibi.* Like an over-kind hen, he feeds his chickens, and famisheth himself. If usury, circumvention, oppression, extortion, can make them rich, they shall not be poor. Their folly is ridiculous; they fear lest their children should be miserable, yet take the only course to make them miserable; for they leave them not so much heirs to their goods as to their evils. They as certainly inherit their father's sins as their lands: 'God layeth up his iniquity for his children; and his offspring shall want a morsel of bread,' Job 21:19. On the contrary, 'the good man is merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed,' Psalms 37:26. That the worldling thinks shall make his posterity poor, God saith shall make the good man's rich. The precept gives a promise of mercy to obedience, not only confined to the obedient man's self, but extended to his seed, and that even to a thousand generations, Exodus 20:6. Trust, then, Christ with thy children; when thy friends shall fail, usury bear no date, oppression be condemned to hell, thyself rotten to the dust, the world itself turned and burned into cinders, still 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.'

Now then, as 'grace and peace are from him which is, and which was, and which is to come;' so glory and honour be to him, which is, and which was, and which is to come; even to 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,' Revelation 1:4.

S. The Passion of Christ!

The Passion of Christ! by Thomas Adams (1583-1653)

"He has given himself for us — an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." Ephesians 5:2 This latter part of the verse is a lovely and living crucifix, cut by the hand of a most exquisite carver — not to amaze our eyes with a piece of wood, brass, or stone, curiously engraved, or to the increase of a carnal devotion — but to present to the eye of the conscience the grievous passion, and gracious compassion of our Savior Jesus Christ. This crucifix presents to our eye, seven considerable aspects:

1. Who? — Christ.
2. What? — Gave.
3. Whom? — Himself.
4. To whom? — To God.
5. For whom? — For us.
6. After what manner? — An offering and sacrifice.
7. Of what effect? — For a sweet smelling savor. The points, you see, lie as ready for our discourse as the way did from Bethany to Jerusalem. Only fail not my speech, nor your attention, until we come to the journey's end.

1. Who? — Christ. The person who gives, is Christ; the quality of his person does highly commend his exceeding love to us. We will ascend to this consideration by four stairs or degrees, and descend by four others. Both in going up and coming down — we shall perceive the admirable love of the giver.

1. We will consider him — as a man. "Behold the man!" (John 19:5), says Pilate. We may tarry and wonder at his lowest degree, that a man should give himself for man. "For scarcely for a righteous man, will one die," (Romans 5:7). But this man gave himself for unrighteous men, to die, not an ordinary — but a grievous death; exposing himself to the wrath of God, to the tyranny of men and devils. It would pity our hearts to see a poor dumb beast so terrified; how much more a man, the image of God!

2. The second degree gives him — as an innocent man. Pilate could say, "I have found no fault in this man" (Luke 23:14), no, nor yet Herod. No, nor the devil, who would have been glad of such an advantage. So Pilate's wife sent her husband word, "Have nothing to do with that just man," (Matthew 27:19). So the person is not only a man — but a just man, who gave himself to endure such horrors for us. If we pity the death of malefactors — then how should our compassion be to one innocent!

3. In the third degree, he is not only a man, and a good man; but also a great man, royally descended from the ancient patriarchs and kings of Judah. Pilate had so written his title, and he would not alter it, "What I have written, I have written." And what was that? "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," (John 19:19).

Now as is the person — so is the passion. The more noble the giver — the more excellent the gift. That so high a king would allow such contempt and obloquy to be cast upon him — when the least part of his disgrace had been too much for a man of base condition! That a man, a good man, a great man, bore such calumny, such calamity, for our sakes — here was an unmatched, an unspeakable love!

4. This is enough — but this is not all. There is yet a higher degree in this ascent; we are not come to our full ascent. It is this — he was more than man; not only the greatest of men; yes, greater than all men — even the Son of God. As the centurion acknowledged. "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39).

Here are all the four stairs upwards:

a man,

a blameless man,

a princely man,

and yet more than man, even God himself!

Solomon was a great king — but here is a greater than Solomon. Solomon was the anointed by the Lord — but this is the Lord himself anointed. And here all tongues grow dumb, and admiration seals up every lip. This is a depth beyond sounding. You may perhaps drowsily hear this, and coldly be affected with it; but let me say, principalities and powers, angels and seraphims, stood amazed at it! We see above, the ASCENT. Shall we bring down again this consideration by as many stairs? Behold the DESCENT!

(1.) Consider him, Almighty God, taking upon him man's nature. This is the first step downwards. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). And this was done, by putting on our nature, not by putting off his own. (Humanity is united to the Godhead — but the Godhead is not disassociated from itself.) He is both God and man, yet but one Christ; one, not by confusion of substance — but by unity of person.

Now in that this eternal God became man, he suffered more than man can suffer. That man should be turned into a beast, into a worm, into dust, into nothing — is not so great a disparagement as that the glorious God should become man! "He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was made in the likeness of man." He who is "more excellent than the angels," became lower than the angels. Even the brightness of God's glory, takes on him the baseness of our nature. He who laid the foundations of the earth, and made the world — is now in the world made himself. This is the first descending degree.

(2.) The second stair brings him yet lower. He is made man — but what kind of man? Let him be universal monarch of the world, and have fidelity and homage acknowledged to him from all kings and emperors, as his viceroys. Let him walk upon crowns and scepters, and let princes attend on his court — here was some majesty that might a little become the Son of God. No such thing! "He took upon him the form of a servant," (Php 2:7). He instructs us to humility by his own example. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto — but to minister," (Matthew 20:28). "O Israel, you have made me to serve with your sins," (Isaiah 43:24). He gave himself as a minister, not as a master. He who is God's Son — is made man's servant!

Proudly blind, and blindly poor man, that you should have such a servant, as your Maker, the Son of God! This is the second step downwards.

(3.) This is not low enough yet; "I am a worm, and no man," says the Psalmist in his person. Yes, the shame of men — and contempt of the people. He is the King of glory (Psalms 24:7). But Isaiah says, "He is despised and rejected of men; we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

O the astonishing pity of God, that those two should come so near together — the King of glory, and the shame of men. The loftier the majesty — the lovelier the humility. Thus says the apostle, "He made himself of no reputation," (Php 2:7). He who requires all honor as properly due to him — makes himself (not of little — but) of no reputation. Here was humiliation, yes, here was rejection.

Let him be laid in his poor cradle, the Bethlehemites reject him; the animal's feeding trough must serve. There is no room for him in the inn for him.

Yes, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). All Israel is too hot for him; he is glad to fly into Egypt for protection.

He comes to Jerusalem, which he had honored with his presence, instructed with his sermons, amazed with his miracles, wet and bedewed with his tears! Yet they reject him! "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" Matthew 23:37 He comes to his kindred. They deride and traduce him, as if they were ashamed of his alliance.

He comes to his disciples. "From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him." (John 6:66). Will yet his apostles tarry with him? So they say (verse 68), "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." Yet at last one betrays him, another forswears him; all forsake him! And Jesus is left alone in the midst of his enemies! Can malice yet add some further aggravation to his contempt? Yes, they crucify him with malefactors. The character of his company is made to increase his dishonor. In the midst of thieves, as it were the prince of thieves, He who "thought it no robbery to be equal to the most holy God," is made equal to thieves and murderers! Yes, as it were, he was a captain among them. This is the third step.

(4.) But we must go yet lower. Behold now the deepest stair and the greatest rejection. "The Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" (Lamentations 1:12). "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief," (Isaiah 53:10). No burden seems heavy, when the comforts of God help to bear it. When God will give solace, vexation makes but idle offers and assaults. But now, to

the rejection of all the former, the Lord Himself turns his back upon him as a stranger! The Lord Himself wounds him as an enemy! He cries out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" How could the sun and stars, Heaven and earth, stand — while their Maker thus groaned! The former degree was deep; he was crucified with evil-doers; reckoned among the wicked. Yet thieves fared better in death, than he! We find no derision, no insultation, no taunts, no invectives against them. They had nothing upon them but pain. Christ had both contempt and torment. If scorn and derision can vex his good soul — then he shall have it shot against him! Even the basest enemies shall give it; Jews, soldiers, persecutors, yes, suffering malefactors — spare not to flout him. His blood cannot appease them, without their reproaching him. But yet, the disciples are but weak men,

the Jews are but cruel persecutors,

the devils are but malicious enemies —

all these act according to their natures. But the lowest degree is, God forgets him — he is forsaken by his own Father! Weigh all these circumstances, and you shall truly behold the person who gave himself for us!

2. What? — Gave.

We come to the action. Giving is the result of a free disposition. "I lay down my life; no man takes it from me — but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again," (John 10:17-18). He who gives life to us — gave up his own life for us! He did not sell, or lend — but give. He was offered — because he wanted to be offered. No hand could cut that stone from the quarry of heaven; no violence pull him from the bosom of his Father — but his own mercy!

He gave! "He comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills," (Song of Solomon 2:8). He comes with willingness and celerity! No human resistance could hinder him — not the hills of our lesser infirmities, not the mountains of our grosser iniquities — could stay his merciful pace towards us.

He gave his life — who could bereave him of it? To all the high priest's armed forces, he gave but a verbal encounter, "I am he!" and they retire and fall backward — his very breath dispersed them all. He could as easily have commanded fire from heaven to consume them, or vapors from the earth to choke them! He who controls devils, could easily overpower men. More than twelve legions of angels were at his beck, and every angel able to conquer an army of men!

He gives them permission to capture him, yes power to kill him. From himself is that power which apprehends himself. Even while he stands before Pilate scorned, yet he tells him, "You could have no power against me — unless it were given you from above." His own strength leads him, not his adversaries; he could have been freed — but he would not. The loss of his life was necessary — yet was it also voluntary; therefore he gave up himself. In spite of all the malice of the world, he could have lived — but he would not. The world should have been burned to cinders, and all creatures on earth resolved to their original dust — before he could have been forced! Man could not take away his life; therefore he gave it. Otherwise, his passion could not have been meritorious, or afforded atonement for us. For that is only done well, which is done willingly. But it

is objected out of (Hebrews 5:7), that "he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him who was able to save him from death." Hence some blasphemers say, that Christ was a coward in fearing the natural death of the body. If he had so feared it — then he needed not to have tasted it. Christ indeed did humanly fear death, otherwise he had not been so affected as an ordinary man.

Yet he willingly suffered death, otherwise he had not been so well impacted as an ordinary martyr. But he prays thrice, "Let this cup pass from me." Divines usually distinguish here thus: That there was in Christ a double human or created will, the one a natural will; the other a reasonable will. Christ, according to his natural will, trembled at the pangs of death, and this without sin; for nature abhors all destructive things. But in regard of his rational will, he willingly submits himself to drink that cup. "Not as I will, O Father — but as you will." A man, says Aquinas, will not naturally endure the cutting off of any member, yet by his reasonable will, he consents to it. For the good of the whole body, reason masters sense — and cutting is endured.

Just so, Christ, by the strength of his natural will, feared death. But by his reason, perceiving that the cutting, wounding, crucifying of the Head — would bring health to the whole body of his church, and either he must bleed on the cross — or we must all burn in Hell! Behold how he willingly and cheerfully gives himself an offering and sacrifice to God for us. But was it a mere physical death that our Savior feared? No, he saw the fierce wrath of his Father, and therefore feared. Many resolute martyrs have endured great torments with magnanimity. But now when he who gave them strength quakes at death, shall we say he was a coward? Alas, that which would have overwhelmed mere man, would not have made him shrink. That which he feared, no mortal man but himself ever felt; yet he feared. The despair of many thousand men was not so much as for him to fear. He saw that which none saw — the anger of an infinite God! He perfectly apprehended the cause of fear — our sin and torment! He saw the bottom of the cup, how bitter and dreggish every drop of that vial was! He truly understood the burden which we make light of.

Men do not fear Hell, because they neither know it or believe it. If they could see through the opened gates, the insufferable horrors of that infernal pit — trembling and quaking would run through their bones! This insupportable load he saw — that the sponge of vengeance must be wrung out to him, and he must suck it up to the last and least drop! Every pound of our iniquities must be laid upon him, until, as "a cart, he is laden with sheaves," (Amos 2:13). And with all this pressure he must mount his chariot of death, the cross, and there bear it, until the appeased God gave way to a completion: "It is finished." The philosopher could say, that a wise man miserable, is more miserable than a fool miserable — because he understands his misery. Just so, our Savior's pangs were aggravated by the fullness of his knowledge. It is no marvel that he might justly take David's words out of his mouth, "Why, O LORD, do You reject me and hide Your face from me? From my youth I have been afflicted and close to death; I have suffered Your terrors and am in despair. Your wrath has swept over me; Your terrors have destroyed me!" Psalms 88:14-16 This thought drew from him those tears of blood. His eyes had formerly wept for our misdoings — his whole body now weeps — not a faint dew — but he sweat out solid drops of blood. The thorns, scourges, nails, fetched blood from him — but not with such pain as this bloody sweat. External violence caused those; but the bloody sweat was caused by the extremity of his anguished soul.

Here, then, was his cause of fear. He saw our everlasting destruction — if he suffered not. He saw the horrors which he must suffer to ransom us, hence those groans, tears, cries, and sweat — yet his love conquered all. By nature he could willingly have avoided this cup; for love's sake to us, he took it in a willing hand — so he had purposed, so he has performed. And now to testify his love, says my text, he freely gave.

3. WHOM? — Himself. This is the third circumstance, the gift is himself! Not an angel; for an angel cannot sufficiently mediate between an immortal nature offended, and a mortal nature corrupted. The glorious angels are blessed — but are finite and limited, and therefore unable for this expiation. They cannot be so sensibly, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebrews 4:15), as he who was, in our own nature, in all points tempted like as we are, sin only excepted. Not saints, for they have no more oil than will serve their own lamps. They have enough for themselves — not of themselves, all of Christ — but none to spare. Fools cry, "Give us some of your oil!" They answer, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you!" (Matthew 25:9). They could not propitiate for sin — who were themselves guilty of sin, and by nature liable to condemnation. Not the riches of the world, "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," (1 Peter 1:18). Were the riches of the old world brought together, and added to the riches of the new world; were all the mineral veins of the earth emptied of their purest precious metals — all this would not be acceptable to God, for the price of man's sin. It will cost more to redeem souls! "They trust in their wealth, and boast in the multitude of their riches — yet cannot by any means redeem their brother, nor give to God a ransom for him," (Psalms 49:6-7). Not the blood of bulls or goats (Hebrews 9), Alas! those legal sacrifices were but emblems of this tragedy of the cross — the mere figures of this oblation, mystically presenting to their faith, that "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." This Lamb was prefigured in the sacrifices of the law, and now presented in the sacraments of the gospel. Whom did he give then? HIMSELF, who was both God and man; that so participating of both natures — our mortality and God's immortality — he might be a perfect mediator. He came between mortal men and immortal God — mortal with men, and just with God. As man he suffered — as God he satisfied divine justice. As God and man he saved his people. He gave himself — Himself wholly, Himself alone.

1. He gave ALL of himself, his whole person, soul and body, godhead and manhood. Though the Deity could not suffer, yet in regard of the personal union of these two natures in one Christ, his very passion is attributed in some sort to the Godhead. So (Acts 20:28), it is called the "blood of God." and (1 Corinthians 2:8), "The Lord of glory" is said to "be crucified." As God alone, he would not, make this satisfaction for us. As man alone, he could not make this satisfaction for us. The Deity is impassible; yet was it impossible, without this Deity, for the great work of our salvation to be wrought.

If any ask, how the manhood could suffer without violence to the Godhead, being united in one person, let him understand it by a familiar comparison. The sunbeams shine on a tree, the axe cuts down this tree — yet can it not hurt the beams of the sun. So the Godhead still remains unharmed, though the axe of death did for a while fell down the manhood. His body suffered both sorrow and the sword. His soul suffered sorrow — but not the sword. His deity neither suffered sorrow nor the sword. The Godhead was in the person pained, yet not in the pain.

2. He gave Himself alone, and that without a partner or a comforter.

(1.) He suffered without a partner who might share either his glory or our thanks — of both which he is justly jealous. The sufferings of our Savior need no help.

Upon good cause, therefore, we abhor that doctrine of the papists, that our offences are expiated by the passions of the saints. No, not even the blessed Virgin has performed any part of our justification, nor paid any farthing of our debts. But thus sings the choir of Rome (Holy Virgin, enrich us with your virtue, create in us new hearts!) Wherein there is pretty rhyme, pretty reason — but great blasphemy! As if the Virgin were able to create a new heart within us. No, "but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin," (1 John 1:7). His blood, and his only. O blessed Savior, every drop of your blood is able to redeem a believing world. What then, need we the help of men? How is Christ a perfect Savior — if any act of our redemption is left to the performance of saint or angel? No, our souls must die — if the blood of Jesus cannot save them. And whatever witty error may dispute for the merits of saints, the distressed conscience cries, "Christ, and none but Christ!" They may sit at tables and discourse, enter the schools and argue, get up into the pulpits and preach that the works of good men is the church's treasure, given by indulgence, and can give indulgence, and that they will do the soul good. But when we lie upon our deathbeds, panting for breath, driven to the push, tossed with tumultuous waves of afflictions, anguished with sorrow of spirit, then we sing another song, "Christ, and Christ alone! Jesus, and Jesus alone! Mercy, grace, pardon, comfort, for our Savior's sake!"

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," (Acts 4:12).

(2.) He suffered without a Comforter. He was so far from having a sharer in his passion, that he had none in compassion, who might anyways ease his sorrows. Pity is but a poor comfort in calamity — yet even that was lacking. "Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by?" (Lamentations 1:12). Is it so sore a sorrow to Christ — and is it nothing to you? It is a matter not worth your regard, your pity? Man naturally desires and expects, if he cannot be delivered — yet to be pitied. "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God has touched me!" (Job 19:21). Christ might make that request of Job — but in vain; there was none to comfort him, none to pity him.

It is yet a little bit of comfort if others are touched with a sense of our misery; that in their hearts they wish us well, and would give us ease if they could. But Christ has in his sorest pangs not so much as a comforter! The martyrs have fought valiantly under the banner of Christ, because he was with them to comfort them. But when himself suffers, no relief is permitted. The most grievous torments find some mitigation in the pity of friends and comforters. Christ after his combat with the devil in the desert, had angels to attend him. In his agony in the garden, an angel was sent to comfort him. But when he came to the main act of our redemption, not an angel must be seen! None of those glorious spirits may look through the windows of heaven, to give him any ease. And if they would have relieved him, they could not. Who can lift up, where the Lord will cast down? What surgeon can heal the bones which the Lord has broken? But his mother, and other friends, stand by, seeing, sighing weeping. Alas! What do those tears do, but increase his sorrow? Might he not justly say with Paul, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart?" (Acts 21:13). Of whom then, shall he expect comfort? Of his apostles? Alas! they turn their heels on Christ. Fear of their own danger, drowns their compassion of his misery. He might say with Job, "Miserable comforters

are you all!" Of whom, then? The Jews are his enemies, and vie in unmercifulness with devils!

There is no other refuge but his Father. No, even his Father is angry; and he who once said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," (Matthew 3:17) — is now incensed. He hides his face from him — but lays his hand heavy upon him, and buffets him with anguish. Thus, he gave himself, and only himself, for our redemption.

4. To whom? — To God. That is the fourth circumstance. To whom should he offer this sacrifice of expiation, but to him that was offended? And that is God. "Against you, you only have I sinned, and done this evil in your sight," (Psalms 51:4). "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight," (Luke 15:21). All sins are committed against him! His justice is displeased, and must be satisfied.

He offered this sin-atoning sacrifice to God — for God is angry. What is God angry with — and whom? With sin and us — and us for sin. In his just anger he must smite — but whom? In Christ was no sin.

Now shall God do like Annas or Ananias? "If I have spoken evil," says Christ, "bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you smite me?" (John 18:23). So Paul to Ananias, "God shall smite you, you white-washed wall; for sit you to judge me after the law, and command me to be smitten contrary to the law!" (Acts 23:3). So Abraham pleads to God, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). Especially right to his Son, and to that Son who glorified him on earth, and whom he has now glorified in Heaven?

We must fetch the answer from Daniel's prophecy, "The Messiah shall be cut off — but not for himself," (Daniel 9:26). Not for himself? For whom, then? For solution hereof we must step to the fifth point, and we shall find.

5. For whom? — For us!

He became surety for us; and, lo! now the course of divine justice may proceed against him! He who will become a surety, and take on him the debt, must be content to pay it. Hence that innocent lamb must be made a sacrifice. "He who knew no sin in himself, must be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Seven times in three verses does the prophet Isaiah inculcate this: we, ours, us; (Isaiah 53:4-6). We were all sick, grievously sick; every sin was a mortal disease. "He heals our infirmities," says the prophet; he was our physician, a great physician. The whole world was sick to death, and therefore needed a powerful physician. So Christ took a strange course for our cure; which was not by giving us medicine — but by taking our medicine for us. Patients must themselves drink the prescribed potion — but our Physician drank the bitter potion himself, and so recovered us! FOR US! He who had no cause to suffer for himself, suffered for me! O Lord Jesus you suffer for my sins! So monstrous were our sins, that the hand of the everlasting justice was ready to strike us with a fatal and final blow. Christ steps between the stroke and us, and bore that penalty which would have sunk us forever!

Christ loved US — and such us, who were his utter enemies. "Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!" Romans 5:6; Romans 5:8

Here then was love without limitation — beyond imitation! "Unspeakable mercy," says Bernard, "that the King of eternal glory should yield himself to be crucified for so poor a wretch — yes, for a worm — and that not a loving worm, not a living worm — for we both hated Him and were dead in sins and trespasses."

We are those for whose cause our blessed Savior was crucified. For us, he endured those grievous pangs — that we might never taste them.

Let him be fixed wholly in our hearts — who was wholly for us fastened to the cross!

We shall consider the USES we are to make of this, by the ENDS for which Christ performed this.

It serves to save us — and to move and to mortify us.

1. To save us. This was his purpose and performance: all he did, all he suffered — was to redeem us. "By his stripes we are healed," (Isaiah 53:5). By his sweat, we are refreshed;

by his sorrows, we are comforted;

by his death, we are saved. For even that day, which was to him, the heaviest day that ever any man bore, was to us "the accepted time, the day of salvation," (2 Corinthians 6:2). The day was evil in respect of our sins and his sufferings; but eventually, in regard of what he paid and what he purchased — it was a good day, the best day, a day of joy and jubilation. But if this salvation is wrought for us, it must be applied to us. For that some receive more profit by his passion than others, is not his fault who suffered it — but theirs who do not believe it; to apply it to their own consciences. We must not only believe this text in gross; but let everyone take a handful out of this sheaf, and put it into his own bosom. So turn this 'for us' into 'for me.' As Paul, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," (Galatians 2:20). Blessed faith, that into the plural, 'us,' puts in the singular soul, 'me.' Everyone is a rebel, guilty and convicted by the supreme law; death waits to arrest us, and damnation to receive us. What should we do but pray, beseech, cry, weep, until we can get our pardon sealed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and find a sure testimony our soul, that Christ gave himself for me.

2. This should move us. Was all this done for us, and shall we not be stirred? "Have you no regard? Is it nothing to you, that I suffer such sorrow as was never suffered?" (Lamentations 1:12). All his agony, his cries, and tears, and groans, and pangs, were for us. Shall he thus grieve for us — and shall we not grieve for ourselves? For ourselves, I say; not so much for him. Let his passion move us to compassion, not for his sufferings (alas! our pity can do him no good); but for our sins which caused them. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me — but weep for yourselves, and for your children, (Luke 23:28). Shall he weep to us, for us — and shall we not mourn? Shall he drink so deeply for us in this cup of sorrow — and shall we not pledge him? Does the wrath of God make the Son shriek out — and shall not the servants for whom he suffered tremble? Every creature seems to suffer with Christ; sun, earth, rocks, sepulchers. Only man suffers nothing — for whom Christ suffered all. Does his passion tear the veil, rend the stones, cleave the rocks, shake the earth, open the graves — and are our hearts more hard than those insensible things, that they cannot be penetrated? Does heaven and earth, sun and elements, suffer with him — and is it nothing to us? We, wretched men that we are — were the principals in this murder of Christ! Whereas Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, soldiers, Jews, were all but accessories and instrumental

causes. We may seek to shift it from ourselves, and blame this heinous fact upon the Jews. But sin, our sins, were the murderers! For us, he suffered. Unite these in your thoughts, and tell me if his passion does not move us. And yet so obdurate are our hearts, that we cannot endure one hour's discourse of this great business. Christ was many hours in dying for us — we cannot sit one hour to hear of it. O that we should find fault with heat or cold in harkening to these heavenly mysteries — when he endured for us such a heat, such a sweat, such agony, that through his flesh and skin, he sweat drops of blood. Does he weep tears of gore-blood for us — and cannot we weep tears of water for ourselves? Alas! how would we die for him — when we are weary of hearing what he did for us.

3. This should mortify us. Christ delivered himself to death for our sins, that he might deliver us from death and our sins. He came not only to destroy the devil — but to "destroy the works of the devil," (1 John 3:8). Neither does he take only from sin, the power to condemn us — but also, (Romans 6:6; Romans 6:12), the power to rule and reign in us. So that Christ's death, as it answers the justice of God for our misdeeds — so it must kill in us the will of sinning. Christ in all parts suffered — that we in all parts might be mortified. His sufferings were so abundant, that men cannot know their number — nor angels their nature — neither men nor angels their measure. His passion found an end — our thoughts cannot fathom them.

He suffered at all times, in all places, in all senses, in all members, in body, and soul also — all for us!

(1.) He suffered in all times. In his childhood by poverty, and Herod. In the strength of his days, he suffered by the powers of earth, and by the powers of Hell. In the day he lacks food — in the night he lacks a pillow for his head.

Even that holy time of the great Passover is destined for his dying. When they should kill the paschal lamb in thankfulness — they slay the lamb of God in wickedness. They admire the shadow — yet condemn the substance! All for us; that all times might yield us comfort. So the apostle sweetly, "He died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him," (1 Thessalonians 5:10).

(2.) He suffered in all places. In the cradle, by that fox Herod. In the streets, by revilers. In the the mountain, by those who would have thrown him down headlong. In the the temple, by those who "took up stones to cast at him," (John 8:59). In the the garden, by betrayers. In the the high priest's hall, by buffeters.

Along the way, laden with his cross.

Lastly, in Calvary, a vile and stinking place, among the bones of crucified malefactors.

Still he suffered all for us, that in all places the mercy of God might protect us.

(3.) He suffered in all senses. For his taste, lo! it is afflicted with gall and vinegar — a bitter draught for a dying man! His touch felt more — the nails driven into his hands and feet — places most sensible of pain, being the most sinewy parts of the body. His ears are full of the blasphemous insults which the savage multitude belched out against him. "Not him — but Barabbas!" they cry to Pilate — preferring a murderer before a Savior. (See Matthew 27:29; Matthew 27:39; Matthew 27:42; Matthew 27:44; Matthew 27:49.) Consider their blasphemy — and his patience. For his

eyes, where can he turn them without spectacles of sorrow? The despite of his enemies on the one side, showing their extreme malice. The weeping and lamenting of his mother on the other side, whose tears might wound his heart.

If any sense were less afflicted, it was his smell; and yet the putrified bones of Calvary could be no pleasing savor.

Thus suffered all his senses! That taste which should be delighted with the wine of the vineyard, that "goes down sweetly" — is fed with vinegar. He looks for good grapes — behold "sour grapes" (Isaiah 5:4). He expects wine — he receives vinegar. That smell which should be refreshed with the odoriferous scent of the "beds of spices," the piety of his saints — is filled with the stench of iniquities!

Those hands which sway the scepter of the heavens — are glad to carry the reed of reproach, and endure the nails of death.

Those eyes that were as a "flame of fire" (Revelation 1:14), in respect of which the very sun was darkness — must behold the afflicting objects of shame and tyranny.

Those ears, which to delight the high choristers of Heaven, sing their sweetest notes — must be wearied with the taunts and scoffs of blasphemy. And all this for us! Not only to satisfy those sins which our senses have committed — but to mortify those senses, and preserve them from those sins. That our eyes may be no more full of adulteries, nor throw covetous looks on the goods of our brethren. That our ears may no more give so wide admission and welcome entrance to lewd reports — the incantations of Satan. That sin in all our senses might be put to death — the poison exhausted, the sense purified.

(4.) He suffered in all members. Look on that blessed body, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a pure virgin — it is scourged all over, stricken, smitten, tortured, mangled! What places can you find free? That head which the angels reverence — is crowned with thorns! That face, which is "fairer than the sons of men" (Psalms 45:2) — must be odiously spit on by the filthy Jews!

Those hands which made the heavens — are extended and fastened to the cruel cross! The feet which tread upon the necks of his and our enemies — feel the like anguish. And the mouth must be buffeted — which "spoke as never man spoke," (John 7:46).

Still all this was suffered for us! His head bled, for the wicked imaginations of our heads. His face was besmeared with spittle, because we had spit impudent blasphemies against Heaven. His lips were afflicted, that our lips might henceforth yield savory speeches. His feet bled, that our feet might not be swift to shed blood.

All his members suffered — for the sins of all our members, and that our members might be no more servants to sin — but "servants to righteousness unto holiness," (Romans 6:19).

He would be polluted with their spittle, that he might wash us.

He would be blindfolded, that he might take the veil of ignorance from our eyes.

He allowed his head to be wounded, that he might renew health to all the body.

Six times we read that Christ shed his blood:

1. When he was circumcised; at eight days old his blood was spilt.
2. In his agony in the garden, where he sweat drops of blood.
3. In his scourging, when the merciless tormentors fetched blood from his holy back and sides.
4. When he was crowned with thorns; those sharp prickles raked and harrowed his blessed head, and drew forth blood.
5. In his crucifying, when his hands and feet were pierced, blood gushed out.
6. Lastly, after his death, "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," (John 19:34).

All his members' bled — to show that he bled for all his members. Not one drop of this blood was shed for himself — all was for us; for his enemies, persecutors, crucifiers — for ourselves! But what shall become of us, if all this cannot mortify us? We are dead indeed unto sin — but living unto righteousness. As Elisha revived the Shunamite's child: "He lay upon it; put his mouth upon the child's mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm," (2 Kings 4:34). So the Lord Jesus to recover us that were dead in our sins and trespasses, spreads and applies his whole passion to us! He lays . . .

his mouth of blessing, upon our mouth of blasphemy;

his eyes of holiness, upon our eyes of lust;

his hands of mercy, upon our hands of cruelty!

He stretches his gracious self upon our wretched selves, until we begin to wax warm, to get life, and the Holy Spirit revives us.

(5.) He suffered in his soul. All the previous, was but the outside of his passion. "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour," (John 12:27). The pain of the body — is but the body of pain. The very soul of his sorrow — is the sorrow of his soul.

All the outward afflictions were but gentle prickings — in comparison to what his soul suffered. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Proverbs 18:14). He had a heart within that suffered unseen, unknown anguish! This pain drew those strong cries, those bitter tears, (Hebrews 5:7). He had often sent forth the cries of compassion — but of soul passion and distress, not until now. He had wept the tears of pity, the tears of love — but never before the tears of anguish. When the Son of God thus cries, thus weeps — here is more than the body distressed — the soul is agonized!

Still all this he suffered for us! His soul was in our souls' stead — and all for us! For your drunkenness and pouring down strong drinks — he drunk vinegar. For your intemperate gluttony — he fasted. For your sloth — he himself suffered the pains of crucifixion.

You sleep secure — your Savior is then waking, watching, praying. Your arms are accustomed to lustful embracings — he for this, embraces the rough cross.

You deck yourself with proud attire — he is humble and lowly for it.

You ride in pomp — he journeys on foot.

You wallow on your down beds — your Savior has not a pillow to lay his head.

You fill your stomachs — and he sweats out a bloody sweat.

You fill and swell yourself with wickedness. Behold, your Savior bleeds to death!

Since Christ did all this for you and me; pray then with Augustine: "Lord give me a heart to desire you; desiring to seek you; seeking to find you; finding to love you; loving, no more to offend you."

There are two main parts of this Crucifix yet to handle. I must only name them, being sorry that it is still my custom to trouble you with prolixity of speech.

6. After what manner? — An offering and sacrifice. His whole life was an offering. His death was a sacrifice. He gave himself for us once an expiatory sacrifice. In his life, he did for us all that we should do; in his death, he suffered for us all that we should suffer. "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree," (1 Peter 2:24).

Some of the Hebrews have affirmed that in the fire which consumed the legal sacrifices, there always appeared the face of a lion, which mystery they thus resolve, that the Lion of Judah should one day give himself for us, a perfect expiatory sacrifice. Thus, "once in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," (Hebrews 9:26).

7. Of what effect? — For a sweet smelling savor. Here is the fruit and efficacy of all. Never was the Lord pleased with sinful man, until now. Were he ever so angry — here is a pacification, a sweet savor. If the whole world were quintessenced into one perfume, it could not yield so fragrant a smell. We are all of ourselves, dead and stinking carcasses — the pure nostrils of the Most Holy cannot endure us. Behold the perfume that sweetens us — the redeeming blood of the Lord Jesus. This so fills him with a delightful fragrance, that he cannot smell our putrid wickedness!

Let me leave you with this comfort in your bosoms. However unsavory our own sins have made us, yet if our hand of faith lays hold on this Savior's censer — God will smell none of our corruptions; but we shall smell sweetly in his nostrils.

We should die, and Jesus died in our stead!

We have offended, and Jesus is punished! This is . . .

a mercy without example,

a favor without merit,

a love without measure!

Therefore I conclude my sermon, as we all end our prayers, with this one clause, "Through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

O Father of mercy, accept our sacrifice of prayer and praise — for his sacrifice of pain and merit — even for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake! To whom, with the Father and blessed Spirit, be all glory, forever and ever. Amen.

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