

WRITINGS OF THOMAS GOODWIN

by Thomas Goodwin

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

43 Chapters

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00.1. Christ Set Forth

Christ Set Forth by Thomas Goodwin

The text of this module was taken from a PDF created by Monergism ©For more free books like this, and other theological literature, please visit www.monergism.com CHRIST God's right hand, & Intercession, As the CAUSE of Justification, and the OBJECT of Justifying Faith

TOGETHER WITH A TREATISE DISCOVERINGThe Affectionate tenderness of CHRIST's HEART now, in Heaven, unto Sinners on Earth.By Thomas Goodwin, B. D.London, Printed by J. G. for R. Dawlman, 1651

00.2. To the Reader

To the Reader

What the scope of this treatise itself is, the title-page and the table that follows will sufficiently inform you: I shall only here acquaint you with what was mine, in a few words. I have by long experience observed many holy and precious souls, who have clearly and wholly given up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him his own way, and who at their first conversion (as also at times of desertion) have made an entire and immediate close with Christ alone for their justification, who yet in the ordinary course and way of their spirits have been too much carried away with the rudiments of Christ in their own hearts, and not after Christ himself: the stream of their more constant thoughts and deepest intentions running in the channel of reflecting upon, and searching into the gracious dispositions of their own hearts, so to bring down, or to raise up (as the apostle's words are, Romans 10:8), and so get a sight of Christ by them. Whereas Christ himself is "nigh them" (as the apostle there speaks), if they would but nakedly look upon himself through thoughts of pure and single faith.

And although the use of our own graces, by way of sign and evidence of Christ in us, be allowed us by God, and is no way derogatory from Christ, if subordinated to faith; and so as that the heart be not too inordinate and immoderate in poring too long or too much on them, to fetch their comfort from them, unto a neglect of Christ: yet as pleasures that are lawful are unlawfully used when our thoughts and intentions are too long, or too frequent, or too vehement in them, so as to dead the heart, either to the present delighting in God, or pursuing after him, with the joint strength of our souls, as our only chief good: so an immoderate recourse unto signs (though barely considered as such), is as unwarrantable, when thereby we are diverted and taken off from a more constant actual exercise of daily thoughts of faith towards Christ immediately, as he is set forth to be our righteousness, either by the way of assurance (which is a kind of enjoyment in his Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Sitting at God's right hand, & Intercession, As the CAUSE of Justification, and the OBJECT of Justifying Faith of him), or recumbency and renewed adherence in pursuit after him.

And yet the minds of many are so wholly taken up with their own hearts, that (as the Psalmist says of God) Christ "is scarce in all their thoughts." But let these consider what a dishonor this must necessarily be unto Christ, that his train and favorites (our graces) should have a fuller court and more frequent attendance from our hearts than himself, who is the "King of Glory." And likewise what a shame also it is for believers themselves, who are his spouse, to look upon their husband no otherwise but by reflection and at second hand, through the intervention and assistance of their own graces, as mediators between him and them.

Now to rectify this error, the way is not wholly to reject all use of such evidences, but to order them, both for the season, as also the issue of them. For the season, so as that the use of them go not before, but still should follow after an address of faith first renewed, and acts thereof put forth upon Christ himself. Thus whenever we would go down into our own hearts, and take a view of our

graces, let us be sure first to look wholly out of ourselves unto Christ, as our justification, and to close with them immediately; and this as if we had no present or by-past grace to evidence our being in him. And if then, while faith is thus immediately clasping about Christ, as sitting upon his throne of grace, we find either present or fore-past graces coming in as handmaids, to attend and witness to the truth of this adherence unto Christ (as after such single and absolute acts of faith it oftentimes falls out);—the Holy Ghost (without whose light they shine not) "bearing witness with our spirits," that is, our graces, as well as to our spirits;—and then again, for the issue of them, if in the closure of all, we again let fall our viewing and comforting ourselves in them, or this their testimony, and begin afresh (upon his encouragement) to act faith upon Christ immediately with a redoubled strength; if thus (I say) we make such evidences to be subservient only unto faith (while it makes Christ its Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all), this will be no prejudice at all to Christ's glory, or the workings of faith itself; for by this course the life of faith is still actually maintained and kept upon wing in its full use and exercise towards Christ alone for justification. Whereas many Christians do habitually make that only but as a supposed or taken for granted principle, which they seldom use, but have laid up for a time of need; but actually live more in the view and comfort of their own graces, and the gracious workings thereof in the duties towards Christ.

The reason of this defect, among many others, I have attributed partly to a "barrenness" (as Peter's phrase is) "in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ," and of such things revealed about him, as might be matter for faith to work and feed upon: as also to a want of skill (while men want assurance) to bend and bow, and subjugate to the use of a faith for mere adherence, all those things that they know and hear of Christ as made justification unto us. It being in experience a matter of the greatest difficulty (and yet certainly most feasible and attainable), for such a faith as can yet only rely and cast itself upon Christ for justification, yet rightly to take in, and so to make use of all that which is or may be said of Christ, his being made righteousness to us, in his death, and resurrection, as to quicken and strengthen itself in such acts of mere adherence, until assurance itself comes, for whose use and entertainment all truths lie more fair and directly to be received by it. They all serve as a fore-right wind to assurance of faith, to fill the sails thereof, and carry on with a more full and constant gale (as the word used by the apostle for assurance imports), whereas to the faith of a poor recumbent, they serve but as a half sidewind, unto which yet, through skill, the sails of such a faith may be so turned and applied towards it, as to carry a soul on with much ease and quietness unto Christ the desired haven; it notwithstanding waiting all that while for a more fair and full gale of assurance in the end.

Now to help or instruct believers in that latter, namely, the use of such a skill, is not directly the drift of this treatise, I having reserved that part (if God assist me and give leisure, and this find acceptance) unto another about the Acts of justifying faith, wherein this are now mentioned is to be the main scope. That which I have here endeavored, is, to set forth to all sorts of believers (whether they have assurance or not) Christ as he is the object of our faith as justifying, and as the cause of justification to us; and so I send forth this as a premise and preparatory to that other. And to that purpose I have run over some few articles of our faith or creed, as I found them put together in one bundle by the great Apostle, namely Christ, in his death, resurrection, ascension, sitting at God's right hand, and intercession, and have handled these no further than as in all these he is made justification unto us, therein having punctually kept unto the apostle's scope. By all which

you may (in the meantime) see, what abundant provision God has laid up in Christ (in the point of justification) for all sorts of believers to live upon: everything in Christ, whatsoever he was, or whatsoever he did, with a joint voice speaking justification unto us. You may see also that God has in Christ justified us over and over; and thereby come to discern what little reason you have to suffer your hearts to be carried aside to other comforters, and so be spoiled and bereft of these more immediately prepared, and laid up for us in Christ himself. To have handled all those considerations, which his obedience unto death affords unto the justification of a believer, and his comfort therein, in this small tractate, would have made that part too disproportioned to the rest: it alone deserves, and will require a distinct tract, which therefore I have cast into another method; and so in this treatise have touched only upon what may for the present be sufficient to furnish that part, to keep company with its fellows. Only when I had thus presented Christ along from his death, resurrection, and ascension, unto his sitting in heaven, and there performing that great part of his priesthood, the work of intercession, I judged it both homogeneal to all these, and conducing to the greater encouragement of believers in the exercise of their faith, to subjoin that other treatise, How Christ's Heart, now he is in Heaven, stands affected to us Sinners here below. And a better token (take the argument itself, if I could have fully represented it) how to present unto his spouse I know not, than a true character of her Husband's heart, now he is in glory: and (but for method's sake) I would have placed it first, it being more suited to vulgar capacities, whose benefit I aim at. Now in that discourse I confess I have not aimed to keep so strictly unto the matter of justification only, as in the other I have done; but have more generally discussed it, and shown how his heart stands towards us, under all sorts of infirmities whatsoever, either of sin or misery, yet so as it will serve for the matter of justification also. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant us according to the riches of his glory, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and that we may know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge! Amen. ■Thomas Goodwin

01.01. Section One :: Chapter One

Section One :: Chapter One SHOWING BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION THAT CHRIST IS THE EXAMPLE AND OBJECT OF JUSTIFYING FAITH

The scope of these words: that they were Christ's originally. Christ the highest example of believing. Encouragements to our faith from thence.

Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.—Romans 8:34

These words are a triumphing challenge uttered by the apostle in the name of all the elect; for so he begins it in Romans 8:33 foregoing, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies." And then follow these words, "Who shall condemn?" namely, God's elect. "It is Christ that died." This challenge we find first published by Jesus Christ himself, our only champion, Isaiah 50:8 (a chapter made of and for Christ), "He is near that justifies me; who will contend with me?" They were Christ's words there, and spoken of God's justifying him: and these are every believer's words here, intended of God's justifying them. Christ is brought in there uttering them as standing at the high priest's tribunal, when they spat upon him, and buffeted him; when he was condemned by Pilate, then he exercised this faith on God his Father, "He is near that justifies me." And as in that his condemnation he stood in our stead, so in this his hope of his justification he speaks in our stead also, and as representing us in both. And upon this the apostle here pronounces, in like words, of all the elect, "It is God that justifies; who shall accuse?" Christ was condemned, yes, "has died; who therefore shall condemn?" Lo, here the communion we have with Christ in his death and condemnation, yes in his very faith; if he trusted in God, so may we, and shall as certainly be delivered. Observe we first from hence, by way of premise to all that follows.

Observation: Christ lived by faith, as well as we do.

In John 1:16, we are said to "receive of his fullness grace for grace," that is, grace answerable and like unto his; and so (among others) faith.

For explication hereof:

First, in some sense he had a faith for justification like unto ours, though not a justification through faith, as we have. He went not, indeed, out of himself, to rely on another for righteousness, for he had enough of his own (he being "the Lord our righteousness"); yet he believes on God to justify him, and had recourse to God for justification. "He is near" (says he) "that justifies me." If he had stood in his own person merely, and upon his own bottom only, there had been no occasion for such a speech; and yet consider him as he stood in our stead, there was; for what need of such a justification, if he had not been some way near a condemnation? He therefore must be supposed to stand here (in Isaiah) at God's tribunal, as well as at Pilate's, with all our sins upon him. And so the same prophet tells us, Isaiah 53:6, "God made the iniquities of us to meet on him." He was now made sin, and a curse, and stood not in danger of Pilate's condemnation only, but of God's

too, unless he satisfied him for all those sins. And when the wrath of God for sin came thus in upon him, his faith was put to it, to trust and wait on him for his justification, for to take off all those sins, together with his wrath from off him, and to acknowledge himself satisfied and him acquitted. Therefore, in Psalms 22:1-31 (which was made for Christ when hanging on the cross, and speaks how his heart was taken up that while), he is brought in as putting forth such a faith as here we speak of, when he called God his God, "My God! My God!" then, when as to his sense, he had forsaken him, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Yes, he helped his faith with the faith of the forefathers, whom upon their trust in him God had delivered. "Our fathers," says he, "trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them." Yes, at Psalms 22:5, we find him laying himself at God's feet, lower than ever any man did. "I am a worm," says he, (which every man treads on, and counts it a matter of nothing for to kill), "and no man," as it follows; and all this, because he bore our sins. Now his deliverance and justification from all these, to be given him at his resurrection, was the matter, the business he thus trusted in God for, even that he should rise again, and be acquitted from them. So Psalms 16:1-11 (a psalm made also for Christ, when to suffer, and lie in the grave), Psalms 16:8-10, "The Lord is at my right hand, I shall not be moved; Therefore my heart is glad, my flesh also rests in hope," or, as in the original, "dwells in confident sureness." "Thou will not leave my soul in hell," that is, under the load of these sins, and your wrath laid on me for them; "neither will suffer your holy One (in my body) to see corruption." This is in substance all one with what is here said in this one word, "He is near that justifies me," for Christ's resurrection was a justification of him, as I shall hereafter show.

Second, neither did he exercise faith for himself only, but for us also, and that more than any of us is put to it, to exercise for himself; for he in dying, and emptying himself, trusted God with the merit of all his sufferings forehand, there being many thousands of souls to be saved thereby a long while after, even to the end of the world. He died and trusted all that stock into his Father's hands, to give it out in grace and glory, as those for whom he died should have need. And this is a greater trust (considering the infinite number of his elect as then yet to come) than any man has occasion to put forth for himself alone. God trusted Christ before he came into the world, and saved many millions of the Jews upon his bare word. And then Christ, at his death, trusts God again as much, both for the salvation of Jews and Gentiles that were to believe after his death. In Hebrews 2:12-15, it is made an argument that Christ was a man like us, because he was put to live by faith like as we are (which the angels do not); and to this end, the apostle brings in these words prophesied of him, as spoken by him of himself, "I will put my trust in him," as one proof that he was a man like unto us. Now for what was it that he trusted God? By the context it appears to be this, that he should be the salvation of his "brethren" and "children," and that he should have "a seed and a generation to serve him," and raise up a church to God to praise him in. For this is made his confidence, and the issue of his sufferings, in that fore-cited Psalms 22:22-31.

Use. How should the consideration of these things both draw us on to faith, and encourage us therein, and raise up our hearts above all doubtings and withdrawals of spirit in believing! For in this example of Christ we have the highest instance of believing that ever was. He trusted God (as we have seen) for himself, and for many thousands besides, even for all his elect; and have not you the heart to trust him for one poor soul? Yes, Christ thus trusted God upon his single bond; but we, for our assurance, have both Christ and God bound to us, even God with his surety Christ (for he is God's surety as well as ours). A double bond from two such persons, whom would it not

secure? If God the Father and God the Son thus mutually trusted one another for our salvation, whom would it not induce to trust them both, for one's own salvation, when as otherwise they must be damned that will not?

This example of Christ may teach and incite us to believe. For did Christ lay down all his glory, and empty himself, and leave himself worth nothing, but made a deed of surrendering all he had into his Father's hands, and this in a pure trust that God would "justify many by him" (as it is in Isaiah 53)? And shall not we lay down all we have, and part with whatever is dear unto us beforehand, with the like submission, in a dependence and hope of being ourselves justified by him? And further;—

It may encourage us to believe, especially against the greatness of sins. Have you the guilt of innumerable transgressions coming in and discouraging you from trusting in him? Consider but what Christ had, though not of his own; Christ was made (as Luther boldly, in this sense that we speak of him, speaks), the greatest sinner that ever was, that is, by imputation; for the sins of all God's chosen met in him. And yet he trusted God to be justified from them all, and to be raised up from under the wrath due to them. Alas! You are but one poor sinner, and your faith has but a light and small load laid upon it, namely, your own sins, which to this sum he undertook for, are but as a unit to an infinite number. "God laid upon him the iniquities of us all." Christ trusted God for his own acquittance from the sins of all the world, and when that was given him, he yet again further trusted him, to acquit the world for his satisfaction's sake.

But you will say, Christ was Christ, one personally united to God, and so knew that he could satisfy him; but I am a sinful man. Well, but if you believe, and so are one of those who are one with Christ, then Christ speaking these words in the name both of himself and of his elect, as has been showed, you have the very same ground to utter them that he had, and all that encouraged him may embolden you, for he stood in your stead. It was only yours and others' sins that put him in any danger of condemnation; and you see what his confidence beforehand was, that God would justify him from them all. And if he had left any of them unsatisfied for, he had not been justified; and withal, in performing his own part undertaken by him, he performed yours also and so in his being justified you were justified also. His confidence, then, may be your confidence now; only his was in and from himself, but yours must be on him. Yet so as by reason of your communion with him in his both condemnation and justification, you may take and turn all that emboldened him to this his trust and confidence, to embolden you also in yours, as truly as he did for himself. Yes, in this you have now a farther prop and encouragement to your faith than he had; for now (when you are to believe), Christ has fully performed the satisfaction he undertook, and we now see Jesus crucified, acquitted, yes crowned with glory and honor, as the apostle speaks; but he when he took up this triumph, was (as Isaiah here foretold and prophesied it of him), but as then entering upon that work. The prophet seeing the day of his arraignment and agony, utters these words as his; showing what thoughts should then possess his heart, when Pilate and the Jews should condemn him, and our sins come in upon him. 'God is near that justifies me; who therefore shall contend with me?' But now this comes to be added to our challenge here, that 'Christ has died, and is also risen again;' that he was condemned and justified; who therefore shall condemn? May we say, and say much more.

But you will yet say, He knew himself to be the Son of God, but so do not I? Well, do you but cast yourself upon him, to be adopted and justified by him, with a giving up your soul to his saving you his own way, and though you know it not, the thing is done. And as for that so great and usual discouragement unto poor souls from doing this, namely, the greatness and multitudes of sins, this very example of his faith, and the consideration of it, may alone take off, and help to remove it, more than any I have ever met with; for he, in bearing the sins of his elect, did bear as great and infinitely more sins than yours, yes, all sorts of sins whatever, for some one of his elect or other, for he said upon it that all (that is, all sorts of) sins shall be forgiven unto men, and therefore were first borne by him for them. And yet you see how confident beforehand he was and is now clearly justified from them all.

And by virtue of his being justified from all sorts of sins, even so shall all sort of sinners in and through him be justified also; and therefore, should not you also hope to be from yours? Certainly for this very reason our sins, simply and alone considered, cannot be supposed any hindrance to us.

Thus we have met with one great and general encouragement at the very portal of this text, which comes forth to invite us before we are entered into it, and which will await upon us throughout all that shall be said, and have an influence into our faith, and help to direct it in all that follows.

01.02. Section One :: Chapter Two

Section One :: Chapter Two

The scope and argument of this discourse is, either direction to Christ as the object of faith, or encouragement to believers, from all those particulars in Christ mentioned in the text.

Faith and the supports of it, or rather Christ, as by his death and resurrection, he is the foundation of faith and the cause of our justification, and is the main subject of these words. All which therefore, to handle more largely, is the intended subject of this discourse. And therefore, as we have seen Christ's faith for us, so now let us see what our faith is to be towards him: only take this along with you, for a right hounding of all that follows, that the faith (the object and support of which I would discourse of), is only faith as justifying; for justification was properly here the matter of Christ's faith for us, and is also answerably here held forth by Paul, as that faith which believers are to have on him. Now faith is called justifying, only as it has justification for its object, and as it goes out to Christ for justification; so that all that shall be spoken must be confined to this alone, as the intendment of the text. And concerning this, the text does two things:

1. It holds forth Christ the object of it, "Who shall condemn? Christ has died." And he being the sole subject of those four particulars that follow, as encouragements to faith, must necessarily be therefore the object here set forth unto our faith.
2. In Christ we have here all those four things made matter of triumph to believers, to assure them they shall not be condemned, but justified: in that Christ (1.) died, (2.) rose again, (3.) is at God's right hand, (4.) intercedes.

So that (for the general), I am to do two things; and therein I shall fulfill the text's scope.

1. Direct your faith to Christ, as to its right object.
2. To encourage your faith from these several actions of Christ for us, and show how they all contain matter of triumph for faith in them, and also teach your faith how to triumph from each of them. And herein I am to keep close to the argument propounded, namely, faith as justifying; or to show how faith, seeking justification in Christ, may be exceedingly raised from each of these particulars, and supported by them, as by so many pillars of it. So as although Christ's death, and resurrection, may fitly serve to encourage our faith in many other acts it uses to put forth (as in point of sanctification to be had from Christ, into which his death and resurrection have an influence), yet here we are limited to the matter of justification only; "It is God that justifies; who shall condemn, seeing Christ has died?" Romans 8:33-34. And herein to show how his death, and resurrection, may and do afford matter of comfort and triumphing in point of justification from all these. And thus you have the sum of these words, and of my scope in this ensuing treatise.

01.03. Section One :: Chapter Three

Section One :: Chapter Three

First, directions to Christ as the object of faith. How in a three-fold consideration Christ is the object of justifying faith.

But before I come to encourage your faith from these, let me first direct and point your faith aright to its proper and genuine object, Christ. I shall do it briefly, and only so far as it may be an introduction to the encouragements from these four particulars, the things mainly intended by me.

Christ is the object of our faith, in joint commission with God the Father.

Christ is the object of faith, in opposition to our own humiliation, or graces, or duties.

Christ is the object of faith, in a distinction from the promises.

First, Christ is the object of faith, in joint commission with God the Father. So here, "it is God that justifies," and "Christ that died." They are both of them set forth as the foundation of a believer's confidence. So elsewhere, faith is called a "believing on him (namely, God), that justifies the ungodly," Romans 4:5; and a "believing on Christ," Acts 16:31. Wherefore faith is to have an eye unto both, for both do alike contribute unto the justification of a sinner. It is Christ that paid the price, that performed the righteousness by which we are justified; and it is God that accepts of it, and imputes it unto us: therefore justification is ascribed unto both. And this we have, Romans 3:24, where it is attributed unto them both together, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." Where we see that God's free grace and Christ's righteousness do concur to our justification. Christ paid as full a price, as if there were no grace shown in justifying us (for mercy bated Christ nothing); and yet that it should be accepted for us, is as free grace, and as great as if Christ had paid never a farthing. Now as both these meet to justify us, so faith in justification is to look at both these. So it follows in the next verse, Romans 3:25, "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." And though it be true, that God justifying is the ultimate object of our faith, for Christ "leads us by the hand" (as the word is, Ephesians 2:18), "unto God;" and 1 Peter 1:21, we are said "by Christ to believe on God who raised him, that so our faith and hope might be on God." Yet so, as under the New Testament, Christ is made the more immediate object of faith; for God dwelling in our nature is made more familiar to our faith than the person of the Father is, who is merely God.

Under the Old Testament, when Christ was but in the promise, and not as then come in the flesh, then indeed their faith had a more usual recourse unto God, who had promised the Messiah, of whom they then had not so distinct, but only confused, thoughts; though this they knew, that God accepted and saved them through the Messiah. But now under the New Testament, because Christ as mediator exists not only in a promise of God's, but is come and manifest in the flesh, and is "set forth by God" (as the apostle's phrase is), to transact all our business for us between God and us; hence the more usual and immediate address of our faith is to be made unto Christ; who

as he is distinctly set forth in the New Testament, so he is as distinctly to be apprehended by the faith of believers. "Ye believe in God" (says Christ to his disciples, whose faith and opinion of the Messiah was until Christ's resurrection, of the same elevation with that of the Old Testament believers), "believe also in me," John 14:1. Make me the object of your trust for salvation, as well as the Father. And, therefore, when faith and repentance come more narrowly to be distinguished by their more immediate objects, it is "repentance towards God," but "faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:21; not that God and Christ are the objects of both, but that Christ is more immediately the object of faith, and God of repentance, so that we believe in God through believing in Christ first, and turn to Christ by turning to God first. And this is there spoken, when they are made the sum of Christian doctrine and of the apostles' preaching.

And, therefore, the faith of some being much enlarged to the mercies of God and his free grace, and but in way of supposition unto Christ, or in a taking for granted that all mercies are communicated in and through Christ, yet so as their thoughts work not so much upon, nor are taken up about Christ; although this may be true faith under the New Testament, in that God and his free grace is the joint object of faith, together with Christ and his righteousness,—and the one cannot be without the other,— and God often does more eminently pitch the stream of a man's thoughts in one channel rather than in another, and so may direct the course of a man's thoughts towards his free grace, when the stream runs less towards Christ, yet it is not such a faith as becomes the times of the gospel; it is of an Old Testament strain and genius. Whereas our faith now should, in the more direct and immediate exercises of it, be pitched upon Jesus Christ, that "through him," first apprehended, "our faith might be in God" (as the ultimate object of it), as the apostle speaks, 1 Peter 1:21. And so much for the first.

The second is, that Christ is to be the object of our faith, in opposition to our own humiliation, or graces, or duties.

(1.) We are not to trust, nor rest in humiliation, as many do, who quiet their consciences from this, that they have been troubled. That promise, "Come to me, you that are weary and heavy laden, and you shall find rest," has been much mistaken; for many have understood it, as if Christ had spoken peace and rest simply unto that condition, without any more ado, and so have applied it unto themselves, as giving them an interest in Christ; whereas it is only an invitation of such (because they are most apt to be discouraged) to come unto Christ, as in whom alone their rest is to be found. If therefore men will set down their rest in being "weary and heavy laden," and not come to Christ for it, they sit down besides Christ for it, they sit down in sorrow. This is to make John (who only prepared the way for Christ) to be the Messiah indeed (as many of the Jews thought), that is, to think the eminent work of John's ministry (which was to humble, and so prepare men for Christ) to be their attaining Christ himself. But if you be weary, you may have rest indeed, but you must come to Christ first. For as, if Christ had died only, and not arose, we had "been still in our sins," (as it is 1 Corinthians 15:17), so though we die by sin, as slain by it, (as Paul was, Romans 7:11-13, in his humiliation), yet if we attain not to the resurrection of faith (so the work of faith is expressed, Php 3:12-13), we still remain in our sins.

(2.) Secondly, we are not to rest in graces or duties; they all cannot satisfy our own consciences, much less God's justice. If "righteousness could have come" by these, then "Christ had died in vain," Galatians 2:21. What a dishonor were it to Christ, that they should share any of the glory of

his righteousness! Were any of your duties crucified for you? Graces and duties are the daughters of faith, the offspring of Christ; and they may in time of need indeed nourish their mother, but not at first beget her.

In the third place, Christ's person, and not barely the promises of forgiveness, is to be the object of faith. There are many poor souls humbled for sin, and taken off from their own bottom, who, like Noah's dove, fly over all the word of God, to spy out what they may set their foot upon, and eyeing therein many free and gracious promises, holding forth forgiveness of sins, and justification, they immediately close with them, and rest on them alone, not seeking for, or closing with Christ in those promises. Which is a common error among people; and is like as if Noah's dove should have rested upon the outside of the ark, and not have come to Noah within the ark; where though she might rest for a while, yet could she not ride out all storms, but must necessarily have perished there in the end. But we may observe, that the first promise that was given, was not a bare word simply promising forgiveness, or other benefits which God would bestow; but it was a promise of Christ's person as overcoming Satan, and purchasing those benefits. "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head" Genesis 3:15. So when the promise was renewed to Abraham, it was not a bare promise of blessedness and forgiveness, but of that seed, that is Christ (Galatians 3:16), in whom that blessedness was conveyed. "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" Genesis 22:18.

So that Abraham's faith first closed with Christ in the promise, and therefore he is said to see Christ's day, and to rejoice in embracing him. And so all the succeeding fathers (that were believers) did, more or less, in their types and sacraments, as appears by 1 Corinthians 10:1-2. And if they, then much more are we thus to look at Christ, unto whom he is now made extant, not in promises only, but is really incarnate, though now in heaven. Hence our sacraments (which are the seals added to the word of faith) do primarily exhibit Christ unto a believer, and so in him all other promises, as of forgiveness are ratified and confirmed by them. Now there is the same reason of them, that there is of the promises of the gospel, for they preach the gospel to the eye, as the promise does to the ear, and therefore as in them the soul is first to look at Christ, and embrace him as tendered in them, and then at the promises tendered with him in them, and not to take the sacraments as bare seals of pardon and forgiveness. So in like manner, in receiving of or having recourse to a promise, which is the word of faith, we are first to seek out for Christ in it, as being the foundation of it, and so to take hold of the promise in him. Hence faith is still expressed by this its object, Christ, it being called "faith on Christ." Thus Philip directs the eunuch in Acts 8:35, "Believe on the Lord Jesus."

The promise is but the casket, and Christ the jewel in it; the promise but the field, and Christ the pearl hid in it, and to be chiefly looked at. The promises are the means by which you believe, not the things on which you are to rest. And so, although you are to look at forgiveness as held forth in the promise, yet you are to believe on Christ in that promise to obtain this forgiveness. So Acts 26:18, it is said of believers by Christ himself, "that they may obtain forgiveness of sins, by faith which is on me."

And to clear it farther, we must conceive that the promises of forgiveness are not as the pardons of a prince, which merely contain an expression of his royal word for pardoning, so as we in seeking of it do rest upon, and have to do only with his word and seal, which we have to show for it. But

God's promises of pardon are made in his Son, and are as if a prince should offer to pardon a traitor upon marriage with his child, whom in and with that pardon he offers in such a relation; so as all that would have pardon, must seek out for his child, and thus it is in the matter of believing. The reason of which is, because Christ is the grand promise, in whom, "all the promises are yes and amen," 2 Corinthians 1:20, and therefore he is called the Covenant, Isaiah 49:8. So that, as it were folly for any man to think that he has an interest in an heiress's lands, because he has got the writings of her estate into his hands, whereas the interest in the lands goes with her person, and with the relation of marriage to her, otherwise, without a title to herself, all the writings will be fetched out of his hands again; so is it with all the promises: they hang all upon Christ, and without him there is no interest to be had in them. "He that has the Son has life," 1 John 5:12, because life is by God's appointment only in him, 1 John 5:11. All the promises are as copyhold land, which when you would interest yourselves in, you inquire upon what lord it holds, and you take it up of him, as well as get the evidences and deeds for it into your hands; the lord of it will be acknowledged for such in passing his right into your hands.

Now this is the tenure of all the promises: they all hold on Christ, in whom they are yes and amen, and you must take them up of him. Thus the apostles preached forgiveness to men, Acts 13:38, "Be it known that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins." And as they preached, so we are to believe, as the apostle speaks, 1 Corinthians 15:11. And without this, to rest on the bare promise, or to look to the benefit promised, without eyeing Christ, is not an evangelical, but a Jewish faith, even such as the formalists among the Jews had, who without the Messiah closed with promises, and rested in types to cleanse them, without looking unto Christ the end of them, and as propounded to their faith in them. This is to go to God without a mediator, and to make the promises of the gospel to be as the promises of the law, Nehushtan in 2 Kings 18:4, (as Hezekiah said of the brazen serpent), a piece of brass, vain and ineffectual; like the waters of Bethesda, they heal not, they cleanse not, until this "angel of the covenant" come down to your faith in them. Therefore at a sacrament, or when you meet with any promise, get Christ first down by faith, and then let your faith propound what it would have, and you may have what you will of him.

There are three sorts of promises, and in the applying of all these, it is Christ that your faith is to meet with.

There are absolute promises, made to no conditions; as when Christ is said to "come to save sinners." Now in these it is plain, that Christ is the naked object of them; so that if you apply not him, you apply nothing, for the only thing held forth in them is Christ.

There are inviting promises; as that before mentioned, "Come to me, you that are weary." The promise is not to weariness, but to coming to Christ; they are bidden "Come to him," if they will have rest.

There are assuring promises; as those made to such and such qualifications of sanctification. But still what is it that is promised in them, which the heart should only eye? It is Christ, in whom the soul rests and has comfort in, and not in its grace; so that the sight of a man's grace is but a backdoor to let faith in at, to converse with Christ, whom the soul loves. Even as at the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine are but outward signs to bring Christ and the heart together, and then faith lets the outward elements go, and closes, and treats immediately with Christ, unto whom

these let the soul in; so grace is a sign inward, and while men make use of it only as of a bare sign to let them in unto Christ, and their rejoicing is not in it, but in Christ, their confidence being pitched upon him, and not upon their grace; while men take this course, there is and will be no danger at all in making such use of signs. And I see not, but that God might as well appoint his own work of the new creation within, to be as a sign and help to communion with Christ by faith, as he did those outward elements, the works of his first creation; especially, seeing in nature the effect is a sign of the cause. Neither is it more derogatory to free grace, or to Christ's honor, for God to make such effects signs of our union with him, than it was to make outward signs of his presence.

01.04. Section Two :: Chapter One

Section Two :: Chapter One

CHRIST, THE OBJECT AND SUPPORT OF FAITH FOR JUSTIFICATION, IN HIS DEATH

How not Christ's person simply, but Christ as dying, is the object of faith as justifying.

Who shall condemn? Christ has died.—Romans 8:34

To come now to all these four particulars of or about Christ, as the object of faith here mentioned; and to show both how Christ in each is the object of faith as justifying; and what support or encouragement the faith of a believer may fetch from each of them in point of justification, which is the argument of the main body of this discourse.

First, Christ as dying is the object of justifying faith, "Who shall condemn? Christ has died."

For the explanation of which, I will:

Give a direction or two.

Show how an encouragement, or matter of triumph, may from hence be fetched.

(1.) The first direction is this, that in seeking forgiveness or justification in the promises, as Christ is to be principally in the eye of your faith, so it must be Christ as crucified, Christ as dying, as here he is made. It was the serpent as lift up, and so looked at, that healed them. Now this direction I give to prevent a mistake, which souls that are about to believe do often run into. For when they hear that the person of Christ is the main object of faith, they thus conceive of it, that when one comes first to believe, he should look only upon the personal excellencies of grace and glory which are in Jesus Christ, which follow upon the hypostatical union; and so have his heart allured in unto Christ by them only, and close with him under those apprehensions alone. But although it be true, that there is that radical disposition in the faith of every believer, which if it were drawn forth to view Christ in his mere personal excellencies, abstractly considered, would close with Christ for them alone, as seeing such a beauty and suitableness in them; yet the first view which a humble soul always does, and is to take of him, is of his being a Saviour, made sin, and a curse, and obeying to the death for sinners. He takes up Christ in his first sight of him, under the "likeness of sinful flesh," Romans 8:3, for so the gospel first represents him, though it holds forth his personal excellencies also; and in that representation it is that he is made a fit object for a sinner's faith to trust and rest upon for salvation; which in part distinguishes a sinner's faith while here on earth, towards Christ, from that vision or sight which angels and the souls of men have in heaven of him.

Faith here views him not only as glorious at God's right hand (though so also), but as crucified, as made sin, and a curse, and so rests upon him for pardon; but in heaven we shall "see him as he is," and be made like unto him. Take Christ in his personal excellencies simply considered, and so with them propounded as a head to us, and he might have been a fit object for angels and men even without sin to have closed further; and what an addition to their happiness would they have

thought it, to have him for their husband! But yet so considered, he should have been and rather is the object of love, than of faith or affiance. It is therefore Christ that is thus excellent in his person, yet farther considered as clothed with his garments of blood, and the qualifications of a mediator and reconciler; it is this that makes him so desirable by sinners, and a fit object for their faith, which looks out for justification, to prey and seize upon, though they take in the consideration of all his other excellencies to allure their hearts to him, and confirm their choice of him.

Yes I say farther, that consider faith as justifying, that is, in that act of it which justifies a sinner; and so Christ, taken only or mainly in his personal excellencies, cannot properly be called the object of it. But the formalis ratio, the proper respect or consideration that makes Christ the object of faith as justifying, must necessarily be that in Christ, which does indeed justify a sinner; which is, his obedience unto death. For the act and object of every habit or faculty are always suited, and similar each to other; and therefore Christ's justifying must necessarily be the object of faith justifying. It is true, that there is nothing in Christ with which some answerable act of faith in us does not close; and from the differing considerations under which faith looks at Christ, have those several acts of faith various denominations: as faith that is carried forth to Christ and his personal excellencies may be called uniting faith; and faith that goes forth to Christ for strength of grace to subdue sin may, answerably to its object, be called sanctifying faith; and faith as it goes forth to Christ, as dying for justification, may be called justifying faith. For faith in that act looks at what in Christ does justify a sinner; and therefore Christ considered as dying and rising does in this respect become the most pleasing and grateful object to a soul that is humbled; for this makes Christ suitable to him as he is a sinner, under which consideration he reflects upon himself, when he is first humbled. And therefore thus to represent Christ to believers under the law, was the main scope of all the sacrifices and types therein. "All things being purged with blood, and without blood there being no remission," Hebrews 9:22.

Thus did the apostles also in their sermons and so Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, seemed by the matter of his sermon to have "known nothing but Christ, and him as crucified," 1 Corinthians 2:2, as Christ above all, so Christ as crucified above all in Christ, as suiting their condition best, whom he endeavored to draw on to faith on him. Thus, in his Epistle to the Galatians, he calls his preaching among them "the preaching of faith," Galatians 3:2. And what was the main scope of it, but the picturing out (as the word is) of "Christ crucified before their eyes"? Galatians 3:1. So he preached him, and so they received him, and so they "began in the spirit," Galatians 3:3. And thus also do the seals of the promises (the sacraments) present Christ to a believer's eye; as they hold forth Christ (as was in the former direction observed), so Christ, as crucified; their scope being to "show forth his death until he come," 1 Corinthians 11:26, the bread signifying Christ's body broken in the sufferings of it; and the cup signifying the sufferings of his soul, and the pouring of it forth unto death.

And hence likewise, as faith itself is called "faith on Christ," as was before observed, so it is called "faith on his blood," Romans 3:25, because Christ, as shedding his blood for the remission of sins, is the object of it. So the words there are, "whom God has ordained to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." And look how God has ordained and set forth Christ in the promise: under that picture of him does faith at first close with him. And one reason similar to the former may be grounded on the Romans 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ." And as I showed before, in the reason

of the former direction, that all promises hold of his person, as being heir of all the promises; so the special tenure upon which forgiveness of sins does hold of him is by purchase, and by the redemption that is in him. So that, as the promise of forgiveness refers to his person, so also to this redemption that is in him. Thus, both in Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins," his person gives us title to all the promises, and his blood shows the tenure they hold on; a purchase, and a full price, ■ντ■λυτρον and adequate price, 1 Timothy 2:6. And as sin is the strength of the law, and of the threatenings thereof, so Christ's satisfaction is the strength of all the promises in the gospel. In a word, a humbled soul is to have recourse to that Christ who is now alive and glorified in heaven, yet to him as once crucified and made sin. He is to go to Christ now glorified, as the person from whom he is to receive forgiveness, but further to him as crucified; as through whom, considered in that condition he then was in, he is to receive all.

01.05. Section Two :: Chapter Two

Section Two :: Chapter Two

What in Christ's death, faith seeking justification, is especially to eye and look at.

(2.) Now then a second direction for faith towards Christ as dying, is, faith is principally and mainly to look unto the end, meaning, and intent of God and Christ in his sufferings, and not simply at the tragic story of his death and sufferings. It is the heart and mind and intent of Christ in suffering, which faith chiefly eyes, and which draws the heart on to rest on Christ crucified. When a believer sees that Christ's aim in suffering for poor sinners agrees and answers to the aim and desires of his heart, and that that was the end of it, that sinners might have forgiveness, and that Christ's heart was as full in it, to procure it, as the sinner's heart can be to desire it; this draws his heart in to Christ, to rest upon him. And without this, the contemplation and meditation of the story of his sufferings, and of the greatness of them, will be altogether unprofitable. And yet all, or the chief use which the papists and many carnal protestants make of Christ's sufferings, is to meditate upon, and set out to themselves the grievousness of them, so to move their hearts to a relenting, and compassion to him, and indignation against the Jews for their crucifying of him, with an admiring of his noble and heroic love herein; and if they can but get their hearts thus affected, they judge and account this to be grace; when as it is no more than what the like tragic story of some great and noble personage, full of heroic virtues and ingenuity, yet inhumanely and ungratefully used, will work, and uses ordinarily to work in ingenuous spirits, who read or hear of it. Yes, and this often, though if it be but in the way of a fiction which, when it reaches no higher, is so far from being faith, that it is but a carnal and fleshly devotion, springing from fancy, which is pleased with such a story, and the principles of ingenuity stirred towards one who is of a noble spirit, and yet abused. Such stories use to stir up a principle of humanity in men unto a compassionate love; which Christ himself at his suffering found fault with, as being not spiritual, nor raised enough, in those women who went weeping to see the Messiah so handled. "Weep not for me," Luke 23:28, says he. That is, weep not so much for this, thus to see me unworthily handled by those for whom I die.

And therefore, accordingly as these stirrings are but fruits of the flesh, so human inventions, as crucifixes, and lively representations of the story of Christ's passion unto the sight of fancy, do exceedingly provoke men to such devotional meditations and affections; but they work a bare historical faith only, a historical remembrance, and a historical love, as I may so call them. And no other than such does the reading of the story of it in the word work in many, who yet are against such crucifixes. But saving, justifying faith chiefly minds, and is most taken up with the main scope and drift of all Christ's sufferings; for it is that in them which answers to its own aim and purpose, which is, to obtain forgiveness of sins in Christ crucified.

As God looks principally at the meaning of the Spirit in prayer, Romans 8:27, so does faith look principally to the meaning of Christ in his sufferings. As in all other truths a believer is said to have the mind of Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:16, so especially he minds what was the mind and heart of

Christ in all his sufferings. And therefore you may observe, that the drift of all the apostles' epistles, is to show the intent of Christ's sufferings; how he was therein set forth to be "a propitiation for sin;" to "bear our sins upon the tree;" to "make our peace...he was made sin, that we might be made righteousness of God in him." As in like manner the scope of the evangelists is to set forth the story of them, for that is necessary to be known also. And thus did that evangelical prophet Isaiah chiefly set forth the intent of Christ's sufferings for justification, Isaiah 53:1-12, throughout the chapter, as David before had done the story of his passion, Psalms 22:1-31. And thus to show the use and purpose of his sufferings, was the scope of all the apostles' sermons, holding forth the intent of Christ's passion to be the justification and salvation of sinners. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Timothy 1:15; and they still set forth what the plot was, at which God by an ancient design aimed at in the sufferings of Christ, which was an end higher than men or angels thought on, when he was put to death. And thus faith takes it up and looks at it. And upon this does Peter (in his sermon, Acts 2:1-47) pitch their faith, where having set forth the heinousness of their sin in murdering "the Lord of life," then to raise up their hearts again (that so seeing God's end in it, they might be drawn to believe). He tells them, that "all this was done by the determinate counsel of God," Acts 2:23, and that for a farther end than they imagined, even for the remission of sins through his name, as in the closure of that sermon he shows. It was not the malice of the Jews, the falseness of Judas, the fearfulness of Pilate, or the iniquity of the times he fell into, that wrought his death, so much as God his father complotting with Christ himself, and aiming at a higher end than they did.

There was a farther matter in it; it was the execution of an ancient contrivement and agreement, whereby God made Christ "sin," and laid our sins upon him. God "was in Christ, not imputing our sins to us, but making him sin," 2 Corinthians 5:19. Which covenant Christ came, at his time, into the world to fulfill. "Sacrifice and burnt offering thou wouldst not have," Hebrews 10:5. "Lo, I come to do your will," and that will was "to take away sins," Hebrews 10:4; Hebrews 10:10; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 10:14-16. These words Christ spoke when he took our nature and when he came into the world, clothed with infirmities like unto us sinners. "God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh," Romans 8:3. Mark that phrase "for sin," $\pi\epsilon\rho$ is there put for propter, as John 10:33, $\text{o } \pi\epsilon\rho \text{ } \kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron \text{ } \rho\gamma\omicron\upsilon$, "not for a good work." That is, not because of a good work, or for a good work's sake. So here, for sin, that is, because of sin. Sin was the occasion of his taking the likeness of sinful flesh. What, to increase it? No, but to condemn it, as it follows; that is, to cast and overthrow it in its power and plea against us, that instead of sin's condemning us, he might condemn sin, and that we might have "the righteousness of the law,"

Romans 8:4. This phrase "for sin" is like unto that in Romans 6:10, "he died unto sin," that is, for sin's cause; for so the opposition that follows evinces, "In that he lives, he lives unto God," that is, for God and his glory. So he died merely for sin, that sin might have its course in justice, and for its sake suffered death, so putting to silence the clamour of it.

The death of Christ was the greatest and strangest design that ever God undertook and acted, and therefore surely had an end proportionable unto it. God, that "wills not the death of a sinner," would not for any inferior end will the death of his Son, whom he loved more than all creatures besides. It must necessarily be some great matter for which God should contrive the death of his

Son, so holy, so innocent, and separate from sinners. Neither could it be any other matter, than to destroy that which he most hated, and that was sin and to set forth that which he most delighted in, and that was mercy. So Romans 3:25-26. And accordingly (Christ demeaned himself in it, not at all looking at the Jews, or their malice, but at his Father's command and intent in it. And therefore when he was to arise to go unto that place where he should be taken, and carried to slaughter, "As the father gave me commandment," says he, "So do I; arise, let us go hence," John 14:31. And when Judas went out at Christ's own provocation of him, "What thou do, do quickly," says he, "the Son of man goes as it was determined;" he looked to his Father's purpose in it. When he went out to be taken, it is said, "Jesus knowing all things that should befall him, went forth," John 18:4. And when he was in his agony in the garden, whom does he deal with but his Father? "Father," he says, "if it be possible, let this cup pass;" and God made his passion of so great necessity, that it was even impossible that that cup should pass. Indeed, had Christ stood in his own stead, it had been an easy request, yes, justice to grant it; and so he tells Peter, that he could command millions of angels to his rescue; but he merely submits unto his Father, "Not my will, but your will be done," for God had laid upon him the iniquities of us all, Isaiah 53:1-12.

Let our faith therefore look mainly to this design and plot of God, and of Christ in his suffering to satisfy for our sins, and to justify us sinners. When we consider him as born flesh and blood, and laid in a manger, think we further that his meaning was to "condemn sin in our flesh," Romans 8:4.

So when we read of him fulfilling all, or any part of righteousness, take we his mind in addition to be, that the "law might be fulfilled in us," as it follows there, who were then represented in him, and so the fulfilling of it is accounted ours. Behold we him in his lifetime, as John the Baptist did, even as "the Lamb of God, bearing and taking away the sins of the world;" and when upon the cross, let our faith behold the iniquities of us all met in him. "Surely he has borne our sorrows, bearing our sins in his body on the tree, and thereby once offered to bear the sins of many," Hebrews 9:28. This intent of Christ in all that he did and suffered, is that welcome news, and the very spirit of the gospel, which faith preys and seizes on.

01.06. Section Two :: Chapter Three

Section Two :: Chapter Three

What Support or Matter of Triumph Christ's Death Affords to Faith for Justification

Now, having thus directed your faith to the right object, Christ, and Christ as dying; let us secondly see what matter of support and encouragement faith may fetch from Christ's death for justification. And surely that which has long ago satisfied God himself for the sins of many thousand souls now in heaven, may very well serve to satisfy the heart and conscience of any sinner now upon earth, in any doubts in respect of the guilt of any sins that can arise. We see that the apostle here, after that large discourse of justification by Christ's righteousness, in the former part of this Epistle to the Romans, and having showed how every way it abounds, Romans 5:1-21, he now in Romans 8:1-39 does as it were sit down like a man over-convinced, as Romans 8:31, "What then shall we say to these things?" He speaks as one satisfied, and even astonished with abundance of evidence; having nothing to say, but only to admire God and Christ in this work; and therefore presently throws down the gauntlet, and challenges a dispute in this point with all comers.

Let conscience and carnal reason, law and sin, hell and devils, bring in all their strength. "Who is he shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "Who shall condemn?" Paul dares to answer them all, and carry it with these few words, "It is God that justifies, it is Christ that died." And (as in Romans 8:37) "we are more than conquerors in all these." It was this that brought in the prodigal, that in his "father's house there was bread enough." And so likewise he (whoever he was) who was the author of Psalms 130:1-8, when his soul was in deep distress by reason of his sins, Psalms 130:1-2, yet this was it that settled his heart to wait upon God, that there was "plenteous redemption with him." Christ's redemption is not merely ■ντ■λυτρον, a price or ransom equivalent, or making due satisfaction according to the just demerit of sin, but it is "plenteous redemption." There is an abundance of "the gift of righteousness," Romans 5:17 and "unsearchable riches of Christ," Ephesians 3:8. Yes, 1 Timothy 1:14, "the grace of our Lord," that is of Christ, ■περπελε■νασε, we translate it "was abundant," but the word reaches farther, "it was overfull, redundant, more than enough." And yet (says Paul, 1 Timothy 1:13), I had sins enough to pardon, as one would think, that might exhaust it, "I was a blasphemer." But I found so much grace in Christ, even more than I knew what to do with.

I shall not insist so largely on this first head of Christ's dying, as upon those three following, because it is the main subject of another discourse, which through God's grace, I intend to publish though in another method. Only for a taste, to instance in some few particulars, showing how Christ's satisfaction may be opposed and set against the guilt of a poor sinner's offences. What is there that can be said to aggravate sin in the general, or any man's particular sins, that may not be answered out of this, "Christ has died" and something be considered in it, which the conscience may oppose thereto? So that whatever evil, which according to the rules of spiritual reason, (which the righteous law proceeds by, and contains as the foundation of its righteousness in condemning or aggravating sin), a man's conscience may suggest to be in sin. Oppositely hereunto, may a

man's faith, according to the like rules of true spiritual reason, show a more transcendent goodness to have been in Christ's death, which the gospel reveals, and so many oppose the one to the other, and have as good reason to show why sin should not condemn, from Christ's death, as conscience can have, that the law may condemn.

(1.) As first, is sin the transgression of the law? Christ dying, the lawmaker, was subjected to the law; and will not that make amends? Is sin the debasement of God's glory, manifested in his word and works? Christ's dying was the debasement and emptying of the brightness of his glory in the highest measure, who was God personally manifested in the flesh. The one of them is but as the darkening the shine or luster of the sun upon a wall, but the other is as the obscuring of the sun itself. Sin's highest evil lies in offending God, but Christ's righteousness is (oppositely) the righteousness of God himself, or Jehovah made our righteousness. So that God in our sin is considered but as the object against whom; but God in this our righteousness, is the subject from whom and in whom this righteousness comes and is seated. And so his Godhead answerably gives a higher worth to it, by how much the alliance which the subject has to an action of its own, that proceeds from it, is nearer than that which an object has, against which the action is committed.

(2.) Or secondly, what peculiar aggravations or circumstances are there in your sins, to weigh you down, with which some circumstances in Christ's obedience and death may not be paralleled, to lift you up again?

As first, is it the greatness of your sin in the substance of the fact committed? Has there been lewdness in your wickedness, as the prophet speaks? Consider what guilt, of how heinous crimes, God suffered to be laid to Christ's charge by profane men, when he was made an offering for sin. He died as a traitor to his prince, and a blasphemous of God in the highest kind of blasphemy, as making himself equal with God; an impostor, a seducer, yes, a devil, yes, a prince of devils, than whom a murderer was esteemed more worthy to live. Which imputations, though by men unjustly charged on him, yet by God were so ordered as just, in respect of his bearing our sins. For him who was holiness itself to be made the greatest of sinners, yes, to be "made sin," and the worst of sins, and accordingly to suffer from God and men, what greater satisfaction for the taking of sins away can be desired or imagined?

Or secondly, do you aggravate your sins by the naughtiness of your heart in sinning, and say that the inward carriage thereof has been much worse than the outward? Look into the heart of Jesus Christ dying, and behold him struggling with his Father's wrath, you will find the sufferings of his soul more than those of his body, and in them to lie the soul of his sufferings.

Thirdly, may your sin be aggravated, in that you did commit it with so great delight and greediness, and poured out your heart unto it? Consider that Christ offered himself more willingly than ever you did sin. "Lo, I come," says he in Psalms 40:8, "I delight to do your will," and "how am I straightened until it be accomplished!" Luke 12:50. And though to show how great an evil and misery it was in itself, he showed an averseness to it; yet as it was his Father's will for our salvation, he heartily embraced and drank of that cup unto the bottom.

Fourthly, did you sin with much deliberation, when you might have avoided it? There was in this circumstance in Christ's sufferings to answer that that he knew all he was to suffer, and yet yielded

up himself, John 18:4.

Fifthly, have you sinned presumptuously, and made a covenant with death and hell? Christ in like manner offered up himself by a covenant and complot with his Father so to do.

Sixthly, are there any special circumstances of time and place that aggravate your sins?

As first, that so great a person in the church should scandalize the name of God in sinning. Why, how great a person was Christ? Even equal with God the Father and yet how greatly humbled, even to the death; his offices of King, Priest, and Prophet being debased with him. How great a name had he! Hebrews 1:4, which notwithstanding was dishonored more than ever any man's.

Or secondly, that you sinned at such a time or in such a company, which sometimes serve to make a sin the more heinous. Consider how God contrived to have the shame and affliction of his Son's death aggravated by all these circumstances. It was of deaths the most accursed, at a time most solemn, in a place most infamous, with company most wretched.

Thus might we find out that in Christ's suffering and satisfaction made, that would fitly answer to anything in our sins, and so thereby we should be the more relieved. And though the whole body of his sufferings do stand and answer for the whole bulk of our sinnings, yet the consideration of such particulars will much conduce to the satisfying of a humbled and dejected soul, about the particulars of its sinnings.

Therefore (to conclude) get your hearts and consciences distinctly and particularly satisfied in the all-sufficiency of worth and merit which is in the satisfaction that Christ has made. As it is a fault and defect in humiliation, that men content themselves with a general apprehension and notion that they are sinners, and so never become thoroughly humbled. So it is a defect in their faith, that they content themselves with a superficial and general conceit that Christ died for sinners, their hearts not being particularly satisfied about the transcendent all-sufficiency of his death. And thence it is, that in time of temptation, when their abounding sinfulness comes distinctly to be discovered to them, and charged upon them, they are then amazed and their faith nonplussed, as not seeing that in Christ which might answer to all that sinfulness. But as God saw that in Christ's death which satisfied him, so you should endeavor by faith to see that worth in it which may satisfy God, and then your faith will sit down as satisfied also. If a man were to dispute for his life some hard and difficult controversy, wherein are many great and strong objections to be taken away, he would be sure to view, and study, and ponder all that might be said on that other part which he were to hold, in way of answer to them, and to get such a clear and convincing light as might make the truth of his position apparent and manifest through those clouds of objections that hang in the way.

Now you will all be thus called one day to dispute for your souls, sooner or later, and therefore such skill you should endeavor to get in Christ's righteousness, how in its fullness and perfection it answers to all your sinfulness; that your hearts may be able to oppose it against all that may be said of any particular, in or about your sins; that in all the conflicts of your spirits, you may see that in it which would clear your whole score; and that if God would but be pleased to impute it to you, you might say, I dare presently come to an account with him, and cut scores with his law and justice.

Thus much of the first thing made the object of faith, namely, Christ as dying.

01.07. Section Three :: Chapter One

Section Three :: Chapter One

FAITH SUPPORTED BY CHRIST'S

RESURRECTION

Christ's resurrection supports faith two ways: 1. By being an evidence of our justification; 2. By having an influence into our justification. The necessity of Christ's resurrection, for the procuring our justification.

...Yes rather, that is risen again.—Romans 8:34

The next thing to be looked at in Christ, as he is the object of justifying faith, and from whence our faith may seek and fetch support and comfort in the matter of justification, is Christ's resurrection: upon which we see here, the apostle puts a rather, "Yes rather, that is risen again." There must therefore be some special thing in the resurrection of Christ, which it contributes to our faith and justification, for which it should have a rather put upon it, and that comparatively to his death. Now to show wherein this should lie, consider how the resurrection of Christ serves to a double use and end, in the matter of justification.

First, as an evidence to our faith, that God is fully satisfied by Christ's death; his resurrection may give us full assurance of it.

Secondly, it had, and has an influence into our justification itself; yes, and as great an influence as his death had. In both these respects it deserves a rather to be put upon it, and Paul had them both in his eye, when he wrote these words. So as first, if you ask an account of his faith and a reason of his so triumphant assurance, he alleges his resurrection to confirm it, "Christ is risen." Or, secondly, if you would have a reason of the thing, how it comes to pass that we who are believers cannot be condemned; "Christ is risen," says he. He alleges it as a cause that has such an influence into justification itself, as it makes all sure about it.

By way of evidence. Although Christ's obedience in his life and his death past do alone afford the whole matter of our justification, and make up the sum of that price paid for us (as has been shown). So as faith may see a fullness of worth and merit therein, to discharge the debt; yet faith has a comfortable sign and evidence to confirm itself in the belief of this, from Christ's resurrection after his death. It may fully satisfy our faith, that God himself is satisfied, and that he reckons the debt as paid. So that our faith may boldly come to God, and call for the bond in, as having Christ's resurrection to show for it, that the debt is discharged. And hence the apostle cries victory over sin, hell, and death, upon occasion of, and as the coronis and conclusion of that, his large discourse about Christ's resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:55-57, "O death, where is your sting?" that is sin, and the power of it; for so it follows, "the sting of death is sin;" and "O grave, where is your victory? Thanks be to God who has given us victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord," namely, as risen again; for of his resurrection, and of that chiefly, had he spoken throughout that chapter.

But surely this is not all, that it should only argue our justification by way of evidence. This alone would not have deserved such a rather to be put upon it, if Christ's resurrection had not had some farther real causal influence into justification itself, and been more than simply an evidence of it to our apprehensions. Therefore, secondly, in justification, although the materiale, or matter of it, be wholly the obedience and death of Christ. Yet the act of pronouncing us righteous by that his obedience (which is the formale of justification), does depend upon Christ's resurrection. Ordinarily there has been no more expressed concerning this dependence, than that the resurrection of Christ justifies by working actual faith, to lay hold upon what Christ has done in his life and death, which is called the applying of it, of which more anon. But that speech of Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:17, seems to import more, "If Christ be not risen again, you are yet in your sins, and your faith is in vain." That is, although you could suppose faith to be wrought in you upon the merit of Christ's dying, yet it would be in vain if Christ were not risen again; for your title to justification itself would be void, "you were yet in your sins." Which is said, because his resurrection was it, whereby sins (though satisfied for in his death) were taken off and they acquitted from them; which I take to be the meaning also of that, Romans 4:25, "He was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justification." When the apostle says, "for our sins he was delivered," he means his laying down that which was the price for them, a satisfaction for them, which his death was. And in that sense, "he died for our sins," that is, his death stands instead of our death and so satisfies for sin. But yet still that upon which the act of God's justifying us, and his discharge given us from our sins, and whereby he reckons us justified, that depends upon his resurrection. "He rose again for our justification." Note that justification there imports the act of imputation, and reckoning us just, which he had spoken of in the verses immediately foregoing, Romans 4:22-24.

In a word, to the full discharge of a debt, and freeing the debtor, two things are requisite: 1. The payment of the debt; 2. The tearing or cancelling of the bond, or receiving an acquittance for the freeing of the debtor. Now the payment was wrought by Christ's death, and the acquittance to free from the death was at, and by, his resurrection.

01.08. Section Three :: Chapter Two

Section Three :: Chapter Two

For the explanation of both these is shown, how Christ sustained a double relation: first, of a surety given, for us; secondly, of a common person in our stead. The difference of these two, and the usefulness of these two considerations, for the explaining all the rest that follows, in this whole discourse.

Now the better to explicate both these, you must consider how that Christ, in almost all that he did for us (as the phrase is here, and is to be annexed to each particular) did stand in a double relation for us unto God.

Of a surety, bound to pay the debt for us, and to save our souls.

Of a common person, or as an attorney at law in our stead.

And both these, as they have a distinct and differing consideration in themselves, so those several considerations of them will conduce to the understanding of those two things fore-mentioned, as ways and arguments to show how the resurrection of Christ may support our faith, both by way of evidence that the debt is paid, and by way of influence that we are thereby acquitted, and cannot be condemned. The notion of his being risen, who is our surety, clears the first, and that of his rising as a common person, illustrates the other. And I shall here a little to a greater extent insist upon the explication of these two relations, because their consideration will be of use through all the rest that follows, to illustrate thereby the influence that his ascension, and sitting at God's right hand, have into our justification. And so I shall carry them along throughout this discourse.

A surety is one that undertakes and is bound to do a thing for another, as to pay a debt for him, or to bring him safe to such or such a place, or the like; so as when he has discharged what he undertook and was bound for, then the party for whom he undertook is discharged also.

A common person with or for another he goes for is one who represents, personates, and acts the part of another, by the allowance and warrant of the law; so as what he does, as such a common person and in the name of the other that other whom he personates is by the law reckoned to do; and in like manner, what is done to him, as being in the other's stead and room, is reckoned as done to the other. Thus, by our law, an attorney appears for another, and money received by him is reckoned as received by him whom it is due unto. Thus the giving possession of an estate, a re-entry made and possession taken of land, if done by and to a man who is his lawful attorney, it stands as good in law unto a man, as if in his own person it had been done.

So ambassadors for princes represent their masters—what is done to them is reckoned as done to the prince and what they do, according to their commission, is all one as if the prince, whose person they represent had done it himself. In like manner also, the marriages of princes are transacted and solemnized by proxy, as a common person representing his lord, and in his name is married to a princess in her father's court. And the laws of men authorize it, and the marriage is

as good as if both princes themselves had been present, and had performed all the rites of it. And thus to be a common person is more than simply to be a surety for another, it is a farther thing; and therefore these two relations are to be distinctly considered, though they seem to be somewhat of a like nature. Thus an attorney is a different thing from a surety. A surety undertakes to pay a debt for another, or the like; but a common person serves to perform any common act, which by the law is reckoned and virtually imputed to the other, and is to stand as the other's act, and is as valid as if he had done it. So as the good and benefit which is the consequent of such an act, shall accrue to him whom he personated, and for whom he stood as a common person. Adam was not a surety for all mankind; he undertook not for them in the sense fore-mentioned, but he was a common person representing all mankind; so as what he should do was to be accounted as if they had done it.

Now the better to express and make sure our justification in and by Christ, according to all sorts of laws (the equity of all which God usually draws up into his dispensations), God did ordain Christ both to be a surety for us, and also a common person representing us and in our stead. That as Christ took all other relations for us, as of a Husband, Head, Father, Brother, King, Priest, Captain, that so the fullness of his love might be set forth to us, in that what is defective in any one of these relations, is supplied and expressed by the other. Even thus did God ordain Christ to take and sustain both these relations, of a surety and a common person, in all he did for us, thereby to make our justification by him the more full and legal and justify, as I may so speak, our justification itself or his justifying of us, by all sorts of legal considerations whatever, that hold commonly among men in like case. And that which the one of these relations or considerations might not reach to make good, then the other might supply; what fell short in the one the other might make up; and so we might be most legally and formally justified, and made sure never to be condemned.

01.09. Section Three :: Chapter Three

Section Three :: Chapter Three

The first head: The evidence of justification which Christ's resurrection affords to faith, explained by two things: 1. By showing how Christ was made a Surety for us. 2. How his resurrection as a Surety holds forth this evidence.

Concerning the first of those two heads at first propounded, namely, the evidence which Christ's resurrection affords unto our faith in point of non-condemnation, I have two things to handle in this chapter to make this out: first, how Christ was made a Surety for us, and what manner of Surety he did become; secondly, what the consideration hereof will contribute to that evidence which faith has from Christ's resurrection.

(1.) For the first, Christ was appointed by God (and himself also undertook) to be our Surety. This you have in Hebrews 7:22, "He was made Surety of a better testament" or covenant, namely, of the new. The Hebrew word for covenant the Septuagint still translated Διαθηκη, testament: the word in the Hebrew being of a large signification, and comprehending both a covenant and testament; and so in the New Testament it is used promiscuously for either; and indeed this "new covenant of grace" is both. Of this covenant Christ is the γυμος, the plighter of his troth for it, the Surety, the Promiser, the Undertaker. The verb this comes of is γυω, promittere, which comes from εν γυοις, in manibus, striking hands, or giving one's hand, as a sign of a covenant; and so to bargain with, or make up a covenant. Proverbs 22:26, "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts," which whole verse the Septuagint reads, "Give not yourself εις εγγην, to suretyship," the same word that is here used by the apostle. It was the manner both of the Jews and Romans also, to make covenants by striking of hands. And in testaments, the heir and executor shook hands, or the executor gave his hand to fulfill it. And the word γυσασθαι is used, not only in promising to pay a debt for another, but also in becoming a pledge for another, for to undergo death or a capital punishment in another's room, as in that famous story of friends, namely, Euephenus and Eucritus: Eucritus did ξωσεν γυσασθαι,* willingly become a surety for Euephenus, when condemned to die by Dionysius the tyrant. This very word is used by Polyænus,* the historian of that fact. Now such a Surety every way did Christ become unto God for us, both to pay the debt, by undergoing death in our stead, and so to satisfy God; and then as the Heir, to execute his will and testament. He became a Surety of the whole covenant, and every condition in it, take it in the largest sense; and this of all, both on God's part, and on ours. For us he undertook to God to work all our works, and undergo all our punishments; to pay our debts for us, and to work in us all that God required should be done by us, in the covenant of grace. And thus to be a surety is much more than simply to be an intercessor or mediator (as Pareus well observes). God did (as it were) say to Christ, What they owe me, I require it all at your hands; and Christ assented, and from everlasting struck hands with God, to do all for us that God could require, and undertook it under the penalty that lay upon us to have undergone.

Yes, Christ became such a Surety in this for us, as is not to be found among men. On earth, sureties are wont to enter into one and the same bond with the creditors, † so as the creditor may seize on which of the two he will, whether on the debtor or on the surety, and so (as usually) on the debtor first, for him we call the principal. But in this covenant God would have Christ's single bond; and hence Christ is not only called the Surety of the covenant for us, but "The Covenant," Isaiah 49:8, and elsewhere. God making the covenant of grace primarily with him, and with him as for us, thereby his single bond alone was taken for all, that so God might be sure of satisfaction: therefore he laid all upon Christ, protesting that he would not deal with us, nor so much as expect any payment from us, such was his grace. So Psalms 89:19, where the mercies of the covenant made between Christ and God, under the type of God's covenant with David, are set forth, "You spoke in vision to your holy One, and said, 'I have laid help on one who is mighty.'" As if God had said, I know that these will fail me, and break, and never be able to satisfy me; but you are a mighty and substantial person, able to pay me, and I will look for my debt of you. And to confirm this, than which nothing can give stronger consolation, or more advances God's free grace, when God went about the reconciling the world in and by Christ, and dealt with Christ about it, the manner of it is expressed to have been, that God took off our sins from us, and discharged us, as it were, meaning never to call us to an account for them, unless Christ should not satisfy him, and laid them all on Christ, so as he would require an account of them all from him first, and let him look to it; and this he did to make the covenant sure. Thus in 2 Corinthians 5:19, it is said (the apostle speaking of God's transaction of this business with Christ) that "God was in Christ," namely, from everlasting, "reconciling the world" (of elect believers) "to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and made him sin who knew no sin." Observe, that as he laid our sins on Christ, so further he discharged us in his compact between Christ and himself, "not imputing their trespasses to them." So then, all laid upon Christ, and he was to look to it, or else his soul was to have gone for it. This is not the manner of other creditors: they use to charge the debt on both the surety and the debtor; but in this covenant (of grace, namely) Christ's single bond is entered; he alone is "The Covenant," so as God will have naught to say to us, until Christ fails him. He has engaged himself first to require satisfactions at Christ's hands, who is our Surety.

(2.) Now then to make use of this notion, for the clearing of the point in hand. It might afford us matter of unspeakable comfort, only to hear of Christ's having been arrested by God for our debt, and cast into prison, and his bond sued, and an execution or judgment served on him, as the phrases are in Isaiah 53:8. For thereby we should have seen how God had begun with our Surety, as minded to let us alone, and that it lay on him to discharge the debt, who was so able to do it. And thereby we might also see how he was "made sin for us," and therefore we might very well have quieted our hearts from fearing any arrests, or for God's coming upon us, until we should hear that our surety were not sufficiently able to pay the debt, as you have heard he is.

But yet our hearts would still be inquisitive (for all that) to hear whether indeed he has perfectly satisfied God or no; and would be extremely solicitous to know whether he has satisfactorily performed what he undertook, and how he got clear of that engagement, and of being "made sin for us." And therefore the apostle comforts believers with this: that Christ shall the next time appear without sin. "Unto them that look for him he shall appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation," Hebrews 9:28. One would think it no great matter of comfort to us to hear that Christ should appear without sin; for who would imagine that it could be otherwise with "The Holy One,"

"The Lord of Glory"? There is no wonder in that. Ay, but, says the apostle, your very salvation is interested in this, as nearly as is possible. It is well for you that Christ is now without sin; for he having as your Surety undertook to satisfy for sin, and having accordingly been once made sin when on earth, and arrested for it by God at his death; in that now he is clear of that engagement—which could be no way but by satisfaction, which he undertook—this does plainly evince it, and ascertain you, that you shall never be condemned for it; for by the law, if the surety has discharged the debt, the debtor is then free. And therefore no news would or could be more welcome to sinners, than to have a certain and infallible evidence given, that their Surety were well come off, and had quitted all, to satisfaction.

Now then to evidence this serves his resurrection; "Christ is risen." Nothing so sure. Therefore certainly the debt is discharged, and he has paid it to the full, and so is now without our sin, and fully got clear of it. For God having once arrested Christ, and cast him into prison, and begun a trial against him, and had him to judgment, he could not come forth until he had paid the very utmost farthing. And there is the greatest reason for it, to ascertain us, that can be. For he was under those bonds and bolts, which if it had "been possible," would have "detained" him in the grave, as Acts 2:24. The strength of sin, and God's wrath, and the curse against sin (you shall die the death) did as cords hold him, as the Psalmist's phrase is. Other debtors may possibly break their prisons, but Christ could not have broken through this, for the wrath of the all-powerful God was this prison, from which there was no escaping, no bail; nothing would be taken to let him go out but full satisfaction. And therefore to hear that Christ is risen, and so is come out of prison, is an evidence that God is satisfied, and that Christ is discharged by God himself; and so is now "without sin," walking abroad again at liberty. And therefore the apostle proclaims a mighty victory, obtained by Christ's resurrection, over death, the grave, the strength of sin, the law, 1 Corinthians 15:55-56, and cries out, "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord," 1 Corinthians 15:57. You may now rest secure indeed: "Christ is risen; who therefore shall condemn?"

01.10. Section Three :: Chapter Four

Section Three :: Chapter Four

The second head propounded, the influence

Christ's resurrection has into justification.

Two branches of the demonstration of this:

First, that Christ was a common person, representing us in all he was, or did, or suffered, handled at large; more especially a common person in his resurrection.

Now secondly, to come to that other head propounded, the influence Christ's resurrection has into our justification. The demonstration or making out of which depends on two things put together;

The first, how Christ was appointed by God, and himself acted the part of a common person, representing us in what he did, and more particularly in his resurrection. Of this in this chapter.

The second is, how from that consideration arises, not only an evidence to our faith, but a real influence into our justification and non-condemnation. So as, "Who shall condemn?" because "Christ is risen again," as a common person, representing us therein.

(1.) For the first of these, to illustrate and prove it in the general, that instance of Adam serves most fitly, and is indeed made use of in the Scripture to that end. Adam, as you all know, was reckoned as a common public person, not standing singly or alone for himself, but as representing all mankind to come of him. So as by a just law, what he did was reckoned to his posterity whom he represented. And what was by that law threatened, or done to him for what he did, is threatened against his posterity also. Now this man was herein a lively type of our Lord Christ, as you have it, "who was the type of him who was to come," Romans 5:14. Unto which purpose, the titles which the apostle gives these two, Christ and Adam in 1 Corinthians 15:47, are exceeding observable. He calls Adam "the first man," and Christ our Lord, "the second man;" and both for that very purpose and respect which we have in hand. For, first, he speaks of them as if there had never been any more men in the world, nor were ever to be for time to come, except these two. And why? but because these two between them had all the rest of the sons of men hanging at their girdle; because they were both common persons, that had the rest in like (though opposite) considerations included and involved in them. Adam had all the sons of men, born into this world, included in himself, who are therefore called "earthly men," 1 Corinthians 15:48, in a conformity to him "the earthly man," 1 Corinthians 15:47 and Christ the second man had all his elect—who are "the first born," and whose "names are written in heaven," and therefore, in the same verse, are oppositely called "heavenly men"—included in him. You see how he sums up the number of all men in two, and reckons but two men in all; these two, in God's account, standing for all the rest. And farther observe, that because Adam was in this his being a common person unto us, the shadow and the lively type of Christ, who was to come after him; that therefore he is called "the first man" of these two, and Christ "the second man," as typified out by him.

Now if you ask wherein Christ was a common person, representing us, and standing in our stead; I answer, if in anything, then in all those conditions and states wherein he was, in what he did, or befell him, while here on earth especially. For he had no other end to come down into this world, but to sustain our persons, and to act our parts, and to have what was to have been done to us acted upon him.

[1.] Thus, first, in their two several conditions, qualifications, and states, they both were common persons. That is, look what state or condition the one or the other was made in, is by a just law to be put upon those whom they represented. So the apostle reasons from it in 1 Corinthians 15:48, "as is the earthly man" (namely, the first man, Adam), "such are the earthly," namely, to be earthly men as well as he; because he who is a common person representing them, was in his condition but an earthly man. And oppositely, by the same law, it follows, "as is the heavenly man" (namely, the second man, Christ), "such are and must be the heavenly," who pertain to him, because he also is a common person, ordained to personate them; and Adam, who came after him, was therein but his type.

[2.] And as thus, in this place to the Corinthians, the apostle argues Christ to be a common person in respect of his condition and state, by an argument of parallels taken from his type, Adam; so secondly in Romans 5, he argues Christ to have been a common person, in his actions which he did on earth: and this also from the similitude of Adam, whom, Romans 5:14, he therein makes to have been Christ's type. And he speaks of Adam there as a common person, both in respect of what he did, namely, his sin; and also in respect of what befell him for his sin, namely, death and condemnation. And because he was in all these not to be considered as a single man, but as one that was all men, by way of representation. Hence, both what he did, they are said to do in him; and what condemnation or death was deserved by his sin, fell upon them all, by this law of his being a public person for them.

First, for what he did. He sinned, you know, and, Romans 5:12, all are said to have sinned, namely, in his sin yes, and according to those words in the Greek, **■v ■**,* which are added there, you may render that sentence (and the original bears it, and it is also varied in the margin) thus, "in whom all have sinned," namely, in Adam, as in a public person. Their act was included in his, because their persons were included in his.

Secondly, for what befell him for sin, that befell them also by the same law of his being a person representing them. Hence in Romans 5:12, death is said to "pass upon all men," namely, for this, that Adam's sin was considered as theirs, as it there follows. It is said to pass, even as a sentence of death passes upon a condemned malefactor. And in Romans 5:18, judgment is said to "come by that one man's offence, upon all men, to condemnation." Now in Genesis 2:17, the threatening was spoken only to Adam, as but one man, "In the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die." And in Genesis 3:19 that sentence seems only to pass upon him alone, "Unto dust you shall return." Yet in threatening Adam, God threatened us all; and in sentencing Adam to death, he sentenced us also. The curse reaches us too; "death passed upon all men" then, and therefore by a just law "death reigns over all," as in Romans 5:14; Romans 5:17 because Adam was in all this a common person representing us, and so in our stead; and so all this concerns us as truly and as nearly as it did him. I say by a just law; for indeed the Scripture, upon the equity of this rule, pronounces a statute out against all men that they should die, Hebrews 9:27. Statutum est, it is

appointed by a statute law that all should die. Now if you search for this statute, when and where enacted, you will find that the original record and roll is that in Genesis 3:19, spoken only of Adam, but holding true of us, "to dust you shall return."

(3.) Just thus the matter stands in the point of our justification and salvation between Christ and elect believers; for Adam was herein his type. Christ was considered and appointed of God as a common person, both in what he did and in what was done to him. So as by the same law, what he did for us is reckoned or imputed to us, as if we ourselves had done it; and what was done to him, tending to our justification and salvation, is reckoned as done to us. Thus when Christ died, he died as a common person, and God reckons that we died also. When Christ arose, he rose as our head, and as a common person, and so then God accounts that we rose also with him. And by virtue of that communion which we had with him in all those actions of his, it is that now when we are born again, we do all rise both from the guilt of sin and from the power of it, even as by virtue of the like communion we had with (or being one in) Adam, we come to be made sinful, when we begin first to exist as men and to be first born.

Thus in his death he was considered as a common person, and God reckoned us dying then, and would have us reckon so also. So in Romans 6:10, the apostle speaking of Christ says, "In that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he lives, he lives unto God." Then in Romans 6:11, speaking of us he says, "Likewise reckon you yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The meaning whereof is plainly this, that whereas regenerate men are for the present in the reality but imperfectly mortified and dead to sin, as considered in themselves, and in respect of the work of it, as wrought in them; yet that being considered in Christ as their head, and a common person representing them, they may λογίζεσθε, they may truly, by a way of faith, reason or "reckon" themselves wholly dead, in and through Jesus Christ our Lord, in that once he died perfectly unto sin, as a common person representing them. So as what yet is wanting in the work of mortification, in their sense and experience of it, they may supply by faith, from the consideration of Christ their head, even themselves to have died when he died. The apostle, I say, would have them by reason conclude or infer (for so the word λογίζεσθε signifies, as in Romans 3:28, "Therefore we conclude," it is the same word) from Christ's death, that they are dead; which conclusion cannot be made unless this be one of the propositions in this argument, that we died in Christ when he died. And so though in ourselves we are not yet wholly "dead to sin," nor perfectly "alive to God," yet "through Jesus Christ your Lord and Head" (says he), "reckon yourselves so," "in that he died and now lives," Romans 6:10, and you were included in him. And, indeed, this consideration the apostle suggests unto our faith, both as the greatest encouragement against imperfect mortification begun; that yet we may comfort ourselves by faith, as reckoning ourselves wholly dead in Christ's death, and so may assure ourselves we shall one day be perfectly dead in ourselves by virtue of it. And further, as the strongest argument also and motive unto mortification, to endeavor to attain to the highest degree of it; which therefore he carries along in his discourse throughout that whole chapter. He would have them by faith or spiritual reasoning take in, and apprehend themselves long since dead to sin in Christ, when he died, and so should think it the greatest absurdity in the world to sin, even the least sin, we being dead long since, and that wholly, when Christ our head died: Romans 6:2, "and how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" and, Romans 6:7, "he that is dead is free from sin;" and how then shall we do the least service to it?

Now all this he puts upon Christ's dying, and our dying then with him in Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," even when he was crucified, "that it might be destroyed" one day in us, fully and perfectly. Christ's body representing therein as a public person, the elect, and their body of sin conjunct with them. So as thus by faith they are to reason themselves wholly dead to sin in Christ, and to use it as a reason and motive to stir up themselves not to yield to the least sin. I use this expression of being wholly dead, because if he had spoken merely of that imperfect mortification begun in us, the argument would not have been a perfect motive against the least sins. "We who are dead, how shall we live in sin," or yield unto the least sin? For it might be said, alas! We are but imperfectly dead; and from an imperfect death could but an imperfect argument have been drawn. But the Scripture elsewhere tells us, that "Christ by his death has perfected forever all that are sanctified;" in Hebrews 10:14, so as in his death they may reckon themselves perfectly dead by faith, and perfectly sanctified, though yet the work be not actually and fully perfected.

And all this communion with Christ as a common person, representing them in his death, he there instructs them to be represented and sealed up to them by their baptism in Romans 6:3-4. How, I shall show afterwards.

(4.) Now as this place holds forth Christ as a common person in his death representing us, so other places hold forth the like of his resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 15:20, the apostle argues, that elect believers must and shall rise, because "now Christ is risen from the dead, and is become the first-fruits of them that sleep." See the force of this argument founded upon this notion and consideration, that Christ was a common person representing all the rest; and this strongly presented in that expression of his being "the first-fruits," in allusion to the rite in the Levitical law. All the sheaves in a field being unholy of themselves, there was some one sheaf in the name and room of all the rest (which was called the first-fruit), which was lifted up, and waved before the Lord; and so all the sheaves abroad in the field, by that act done to this one sheaf, were consecrated unto God in Leviticus 23:10, by virtue of that law. The meaning of which rite, the apostle expounding, alleges in Romans 11:16, "If the first-fruits be holy, all the lump is holy also."

Thus, when we were all dead, Christ as the first-fruits rises, and this in our name and stead, and so we all rise with him and in him. And although the saints departed are not, in their own persons, as yet risen (as we all who are now alive are not in our own persons yet dead), yet in the meantime because thus they are risen in Christ, as their first-fruits, hence in the very words following he says, they are but asleep, "He is become the first-fruits of them that sleep," because they remain alive in Christ their head, and shall rise one day, because in him they virtually are already risen. And this in God's account in as true and just a sense as we, though personally alive, are yet all reckoned dead in Adam, because he as a common person, had the sentence of death pronounced on him, by virtue of which we must die; and this by the force of the same law, even of that which we have inculcated, of being a common person representing us. And indeed, so it follows (which argues this to be the apostle's meaning) in 1 Corinthians 15:21, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." His argument lies thus: Adam was the first-fruits of them that died; Christ, of them that rise. Hence therefore, we are elsewhere said (though in respect to another life) to be "risen with Christ," Ephesians 2:5-6, and which is yet more, "to sit together with him in heaven;" because he, as a common person representing us, sits there in our name and stead, as you shall hear when I come to it in the text in the next section.

01.11. Section Three :: Chapter Five

Section Three :: Chapter Five

The second branch: How Christ's representing us as a common person in his resurrection, has an influence into our justification, made forth by two things: (1.) How Christ at his resurrection was justified from our sin; (2.) That we were all then justified in him as a common person.

Now, then, to come to the other branch of the demonstration, namely, how this relation to us as a common person representing us in his resurrection, has a real influence into our justification. And this is the point I drive at, and for the clearing of which that large and general discourse by way of digression in the former chapter was but to make way for.

I shall absolve and dispatch this branch by showing two things:

(1.) That Christ himself was justified, and that at his resurrection.

(2.) That he was justified then as a common person, representing us therein, as well as that he rose as a common person; and so that we were then justified in him and with him; and by this means it is that by that act then done to him, our justification is made irrevocable forever.

(1.) For the explicating of the first: as Christ was in his death made sin for us, and so sustained our persons in his satisfying for sin by his death (which is the matter of our righteousness), so in and upon his resurrection he was justified and acquitted from our sins by God, as having now fully in his death satisfied for them, which I make forth by these three things put together:

[1.] First, in reason, if that Christ were made sin for us, and satisfied for it, there must then some act pass, whereby Christ should be pronounced acquitted of our sins, and fully clear of them, and so be himself formally justified in respect of those sins, for which he undertook to satisfy. For according to the course of all proceedings, if a charge of guilt be formally laid, there must be as formal an act of acquitting, and of giving a quietus est. There is no man but for his own discharge and security would desire it; nor is there any wise man that pays a debt for which he is legally sued, that will not have, upon the payment of it, as legal an acquittance. Paul, when he was cast into prison by a public act of authority, he stood upon it to have a public act of release from the same magistrates, and would not go forth of prison privily, though themselves sent to him so to go out, Acts 16:37. Now God himself did "lay the iniquities of us all" upon Christ, Isaiah 53:6, and "had him to prison and judgment" for them, Isaiah 53:8. There must, therefore, some act passed from God, legally to take them off from him, and declaring him discharged, to deliver him from prison and judgment.

And, de facto, it is evident that there was some such act passed from God for, as we read, that Christ, while he lived, and also in his death, "was made sin," and "did bear the sin of many," as the phrase is, Hebrews 9:28. So we read in the very next words, that "he shall appear the second time

without sin," which must necessarily be spoken in a direct opposition to his having borne our sins, and appearing then with all our sins laid to his charge. He appeared charged with them then, but now he shall appear, as apparently and manifestly to be without those sins, for of our sins it must necessarily be meant, and so to be discharged of them as fully as ever he appeared charged with them. For it is said, "he shall appear without sin;" and therefore to the judgments of all it shall be made manifest, that God who had once charged him with them, has now fully discharged him of them. The apostle speaks of it as of a great alteration made in this respect between Christ while on earth, and Christ as he is to appear the second time, and is now in heaven. And this alteration or discharge must necessarily be made by God, for he is the creditor who followed the suit, and therefore he alone can give the acquittance.

[2.] Now secondly, from hence it will follow that there must be some time when this alteration was first made and discharge given, when Christ from being sin as he was made, should become without sin, through God's acquitting of him; and this say I was at his resurrection. It is not deferred as then to be first done, when he is to appear the second time, though then it appears indeed, but it is really done before; for he comes then to judge others for sin. Now in reason when should this acquittance or justification from our sins be first given to Christ and legally pronounced on him, but when he had paid the last farthing of the debt, and made his satisfaction complete? Which was then done when he began to rise; for his lying in the grave was a part of his humiliation and so of his satisfaction, as generally orthodox divines hold. Now, therefore, when he began to rise, then ended his humiliation; and that was the first moment of his exaltation. His acquittance therefore bears date from thence, even from that very hour.

[3.] Hence thirdly we read, as that Christ was "condemned," so that he was "justified." Thus in 1 Timothy 3:16, God is said to be "manifest in the flesh," and then that this God-man was "justified in the Spirit." That is, whereas God was manifest or appeared in flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, as in Romans 8:1-39, that same God-man was also justified in the Spirit from all those sins, and so "received up to glory," as it follows there. And not to go far, the very words of this my text, "it is God that justifies," are taken out of Isaiah 50:8-9, and as there they are first spoken by Christ of himself, then, when he "gave his back to the smiters," in his death (as in the verses before), and was put to death as a "condemned" man. He comforts himself with this, "He is near that justifies me; who shall condemn?" And when was that done or to be done, but at his resurrection? So the phrase in Timothy imports, if you compare it with another in 1 Peter 3:18, "Being put to death in the flesh, and quickened in (or by) the Spirit." Paul, he says, "justified in the Spirit;" Peter, he says, "quickened in the Spirit;" both mean one and the same thing. By Spirit is meant the power of his Godhead and divine nature, whereby he was at once both raised from the grave, and from under the guilt of sin together. He was at once both quickened, or raised, and justified also. And that by Spirit they mean his divine nature, the opposition in both places evidently implies; for it is opposed to his flesh or human nature.

Now because he was quickened or raised by the power of the Godhead, and at that raising him he was justified also by God, and declared justified by that resurrection, as he had been declared condemned by his death; hence, to be justified is put for his resurrection; for that was his justification, to declaration of all the world, that he was justified from all the sins laid to his charge. And that other place I cited out of Isaiah has the same meaning also; for Christ there comforts himself against the Jews condemning him and putting him to death, with the hopes of God's

justifying of him, when he should have gone through that work. And Christ's meaning there is this, "God will raise me up and acquit me," though you condemn and kill me. In the other prophets you shall find Christ still comforting himself against his condemnation at his death, with the thoughts of his resurrection, which he foresaw as shortly to follow after it; as here, in Isaiah, he comforts himself with these hopes of his being justified after their condemnation of him. For instance in Psalms 16:9, "My flesh shall rest in hope: thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer your Holy One to see corruption." Which words you know Peter, in the Acts, does twice interpret of Christ's resurrection. In like manner here in Isaiah, against his death and condemnation, he comforts himself with the hopes of God's justification of him at his resurrection, "He is near who justifies me (and he shall help me); who shall condemn?"

And further, to confirm and strengthen this notion, because his resurrection was the first moment of this his justification from our sins, therefore it is that God calls it his first begetting of Christ, "This day have I begotten thee," speaking manifestly of his resurrection, Acts 13:33. And the reason of his so calling it is because all the while before he was covered with sin, and "the likeness of sinful flesh;" but now having flung it off, he appears like God's Son indeed, as if newly begotten. And thus also he comes to be the fuller conformity between Christ's justification and ours. For as our justification is at our first being born again, so was Christ's also at this his first glorious begetting. He was under an attainder before; here was the act of restitution first passed. And as at our conversion (which is to us a resurrection) we "pass from death to life," that is from an estate of death and condemnation, unto justification of life. So did Christ also at his resurrection, which to him was a re-begetting pass from an estate of death and guilt laid on him, to an estate of life and glory, and justification from guilt. And so shall he "appear," as the word is in Hebrews 9:28 (as he does now in heaven), "without sin;" for he came to be without sin from that very moment. Thus I have shown how Christ was justified at his resurrection.

(2.) Now then, in the second place, I am to show that this his justification and pronouncing him without sin, thus done at his resurrection, was done to him as the "first-fruits," and as to a common person bearing our persons, and so in our names. From whence will necessarily follow, as the conclusion of all, that the persons of all the elect believers have been justified before God in Christ as their head, at or from the time of his resurrection; and so that act of justification to have been so firmly passed as it cannot be revoked forever. Now this is proved,

First, by the very same reason or respect that he was said to be the "first-fruits of them that sleep," as representing the rest in his resurrection, which I showed at large in the former chapter; upon the same ground he is to be so looked at also in this his justification pronounced upon him at his resurrection, even as the first-fruits also of them that are justified. And so in the same sense, and by the same reason that we are said to be "risen with Christ," in his resurrection; we must also be said to be "justified with him," in this his justification at his resurrection.

And indeed (to enlarge this a little), as there is the same reason and ground for the one that there is for the other, he being a public person in both, so the rule will hold in all other things which God ever does to us or for us, which are common with Christ, and were done to him; that in them all Christ was the first-fruits and they may be said to have been done in us or to us, yes, by us, in him and with him. Yes, whatever God meant to do for us and in us, whatever privilege or benefit he meant to bestow upon us, he did that thing first to Christ and (some way) bestowed the like on him

as a common person, that so it might be by a solemn formal act ratified, and be made sure to be done to us in our persons in due time, having first been done to him representing our persons. And that by this course taken, it might (when done to us) be effected by virtue of what was first done to him. Thus God meaning to sanctify us, he sanctifies Christ first, in him as a common person sanctifying us all; "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through your truth," John 17:19. He sanctifies the human nature of Christ personal, (that is his body) and him first, as a common person representing us, that so we, being virtually and representatively sanctified in him, may be sure to be sanctified afterwards in our own persons, by means of his sanctification.

And so in like manner for our sakes he was "justified in the Spirit;" because we were to be justified, and so to be justified first in him, and with him as a common person. Now this rule holds in all blessings else bestowed; for Paul pronounces of them all that "God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus," Ephesians 1:3, which God did so order that, as he speaks of ordaining salvation to be by faith in Romans 4:16, that all those "blessings might be sure to all the seed." For this formal investiture of estating us into all blessings by such solemn acts done to Christ as our head and representative of us, makes what he intends to bestow sure beforehand, by an irrevocable act and sentence, which has its warrant in all laws of men, as I have shown, and shall anon again urge. And,

Secondly, by the equity of the same law that in Adam we were all condemned, Adam being a type of him in this by the same law, I say we were all justified in Christ when he was justified, else the type was not therein fulfilled. Now the sentence of condemnation was first passed upon Adam alone, yet considered as a common person for us; therefore also this acquittance and justification was then passed towards Christ alone, as a public person for us. Yes, in this his being justified. Christ must much rather be considered as a common person representing us, than Adam was in his condemnation. For Christ in his own person, as he had no sin, so he had no need of any justification from sin, nor should ever have been condemned. And therefore this must be only in a respect unto our sins imputed to him; and if so, then in our stead. And so herein, he was more purely to be considered as a common person for us, than ever Adam was in his being condemned. For Adam, besides his standing as a common person for us, was furthermore condemned in his own person; but Christ in being justified from sin, could only be considered as standing for others. Thus in Romans 5:18, "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so (or in like manner) by the righteousness of that one man Christ, the free gift came upon all men (namely, in Christ) unto justification of life."

He parallels both with a so, only with this difference between Adam's being a common person for us, and so between the ground of our being condemned in him, and Christ his being a common person for us, and our acquittance in him that the "condemnation came upon all" by a necessary, natural covenant, for by such a covenant was Adam appointed a common person for us; but Christ his being appointed thus a common person for us, it was by a "free gift" of grace. And therefore in like manner by a free gift of grace it is that the imputation of that which he did, or was done to him, is reckoned ours. As then "in Adam all died," when he sinned, as the apostle speaks, so in Christ "were all justified," when he was justified. For as in his death Christ was a public person for us, and in all that befell him; so in his resurrection, and in all that was then done to him, and so in this his being then justified. And as when he died, "the just was put to death for the unjust" (as Peter

speaks), so when he arose and was justified, the just that needed no justification was justified for the unjust, who else had been condemned; and so we were then justified with him.

01.12. Section Three :: Chapter Six

Section Three :: Chapter Six

How our faith may raise from hence just matter of triumph about our justification. An explication how we are justified by faith, although justified in Christ at his resurrection.

And hereupon is grounded this triumph of faith here, from Christ's resurrection, "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that is risen." The meaning whereof is, that he was justified at his resurrection (justified in the Spirit and quickened in the Spirit being all one), and "we in him." Yes, and a rather is put upon this, rather than put upon his death. For this act was a solemn discharge from all sin and condemnation; it was a legal acquittance given to Christ for all our sins, and so to us also considered as in him. His death was but the satisfaction and payment; but this is the first act of absolution. Yes, and this is the original act, which is upon record between God and Christ. And our justification and atonement (when we are justified by faith in Christ) is but a copy fetched from this roll, and court sentence then pronounced.

And such a way and course to ratify and make acts good and legal, even to have them done by another representing one's person, is common among men, as those instances I formerly gave do show. An attorney at law receives a debt, or an acquittance for a debt, paid or given for another man, and it is as legal as if the man himself or creditor had done it, and the debtor had received the acquittance himself. Yes, acts of the greatest and highest concernment are often not otherwise transacted, as the marriages of princes are by proxy solemnized, their ambassadors representing their persons, and contracting and marrying their wives in their stead; which acts are thereby made as irrevocable, and irrepeatable, as if themselves had in person done them. And so if we were justified when Christ did rise and was justified, our justification then cannot be reversed, but stands as legal and warrantable as any act that God or man ever ratified or confirmed. And who shall condemn?

Only, for farther explication's sake, lest there be a mistake, let me add this, that it is necessary that we be justified in our own persons by faith, (notwithstanding this former act thus legally passed) whereby we lay hold upon what God did thus before for us in Christ, to the end that God upon our believing may, according to his own rules, justify his justifying of us unto all the world; which until we do believe, he could not do. For according to the revealed rules of his word, which he professes to proceed by at the latter day, there is a curse and a sentence of condemnation pronounced against us, under which we stand until he shall take it off by giving us faith; unto which he has, in the same word, made the promise of justifying us in our own persons, as before he had done in Christ. Yet still notwithstanding, so as although, when we first believe, then only justification is actually and personally applied to us. Yet at Christ's resurrection and in his being then justified, this act and sentence was virtually pronounced upon us; and so does necessarily require and exact at God's hands, the bestowing faith upon us; that so by virtue of this former act passed, we come to be actually justified in our own consciences, and before all the world.

And so our justification, which was but secretly wrought and passed upon us in Christ, is never made void but stands irrevocable; and so ratified, that our personal justification by faith does always infallibly succeed it. And (to illustrate it a little) our condemnation in Adam and this our justification in Christ, do in this hold parallel together, that as in Adam we were all virtually condemned, "in Adam all die." And that legal enough too, for thereupon came out that statute-law, statutum est, "It is appointed" that all should die, and yet we are not actually in our own persons condemned until we are born of him, nor do we personally die until we lay down our flesh. Even so it is in the matter of our justification that it was done virtually in Christ, and afterwards when we believe, is actually passed in and upon ourselves. Now I call this former but a virtual justification, even as by the sentence of condemnation passed upon a malefactor, he is called a dead man; that is, he is so virtually and in law (as we say), though naturally he died not many days after, but in that respect may be still alive. So by Christ's being justified, we are all virtually and in law justified, through a secret yet irrevocable covenant between God and Christ, who only did then "know who were his." And for a confirmation even of this also, that God accounts all the elect justified in his justifying of Christ, we shall not need to go any further than the words of this text, if we do but diligently compare their standing here with that of theirs in that place out of which they are taken, and where we find them first recorded and spoken, namely in Isaiah 50:7-8, "He is near that justifies me; who is he that shall condemn?" Now there (as interpreters agree, and as the context shows), those words are spoken by Christ himself, for in Isaiah 50:5 he speaks of God's "opening his ear" to do his will (the same expression that is used of Christ in Psalms 40:6), and farther says, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair, and I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (all of which you may read in Christ's sufferings in Matthew 26:67 and Matthew 27:26. And he spoke before in Isaiah 50:4, of God's having "given him the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary," which you may read done by Christ in Matthew 11:28.

Now those words were spoken by Christ, to comfort himself against the Jews condemning him, as considering that God would justify him, as at his resurrection you have heard he did. Now mark it, those very words which Isaiah brings in Christ speaking as of himself alone, those very words Paul here boldly applies in the like triumph, to all the elect of Christ, "Who shall condemn? It is God that justifies." And this because Christ is dead, and risen, and acquitted by God. Christ spoke those words as a public person in the name of all his elect, whom he in his death and in his justification represented; and for that very respect Paul speaks the like words over again, of all elect believers, as being as truly and really intended of them, when spoken by Christ, as of himself, and of his own person. "He is near that justifies me; (says Christ) who shall condemn?" namely, me or mine elect, whose persons I sustain. And "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" says Paul. "It is God that justifies; who shall condemn?" for Christ has died and been condemned for them, and Christ was justified from that condemnation, and they in him. And because the justification of himself, which Christ spoke of, as looked for from God, was to be made at his resurrection as has been said, therefore Paul here puts a rather upon his resurrection.

And farther to establish this, as you heard before out of Romans 6:11, that in respect of sanctification we were dead with Christ, even then when he died; so in Colossians 2:13, we are said to be "risen with him," in respect of our justification, which is the thing in hand. The words are, "And you being dead in your sins," namely the guilt of your sins, "and the circumcision of your

flesh," that is in respect of the power of corrupt nature, "has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all your trespasses." See here, the forgiveness of our sins or our justification, is called a "quickening" or a "raising up of us" (as Colossians 2:12 has it), "together with him," in a conformity and relation to that justification from our sins, which at his resurrection he received in our names. His meaning is that he was justified then, and in our names; and so we are now justified through the virtue of that our communion with him therein. For if you mark the connection of the words with what follows, you will find this "forgiving of their trespasses (Colossians 2:13) through their being quickened together with him," not only to have been done when they believed, and so when they had that justification personally first applied to them, of which it is true, the words in Colossians 2:12 are to be understood, but also then to have been done; "when he having (as it follows in Colossians 2:14) blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, nailing it to his cross, and having spoiled principalities and powers," and got the victory, namely in his rising again, "had made a show of them openly" (in his ascending to heaven), "triumphing over them in himself" (as the margin has it); of which words I shall farther speak in the next head. So as then when Christ did this in himself, then were our sins forgiven, then were we acquitted with him and triumphed with him, he doing all this in our stead, representing us.

01.13. Section Three :: Chapter Seven

Section Three :: Chapter Seven

How all this, both the support of our faith and our justification by Christ's resurrection, is sealed up to us in baptism.

The conclusion: How faith may make use of Christ's resurrection in its pleas to God.

And all this our communion with Christ in his resurrection, both in respect of sanctification, which Romans 6 holds forth, and of justification, which this place in the Colossians holds forth, is lively (as both places declare) set out, and sealed up to us, in the sacrament of baptism. Romans 6:3-4, we are said to be "buried with him in baptism," and Colossians 2:12, "buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him." The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism is not simply the blood of Christ as it washes us from sin; but there is a farther representation therein of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, in those baptized being first buried under water, and then rising out of it; and this not in a bare conformity unto Christ, but in a representation of a communion with Christ in that, his death and resurrection. Therefore it is said, "you are buried with him in baptism;" and "wherein you are risen with him." It is not simply said, like as he was buried, and rose, but with him. So as our communion and oneness with him in his resurrection, is represented to us therein, and not only our conformity or likeness unto him therein. And so baptism represents this to us, that Christ having once in himself sustained the persons of all the elect, in his burial and resurrection, that now, upon the party himself who is baptized, is personally, particularly, and apparently reacted the same part again, in his baptism; thereby showing what his communion with Christ before was, in what was then done to Christ; that he then was buried with Christ, and rose with him; and upon that ground is now in this outward sign of baptism, as in a show or representation, both buried and also rises again.

And moreover, hence it is that the "answer of a good conscience," which is made the inward effect of this ordinance of baptism, 1 Peter 3:21, is there also attributed unto Christ's resurrection, as the thing signified and represented in baptism, and as the cause of that answer of a good conscience. "Even baptism," says he, "doth now also save us," as being the ordinance that seals up salvation, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh," or the washing of the outward man; "but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." To open these words: Our consciences are that principle in us which are the seat of the guilt of all the sins of the whole man, unto whose court they all come to accuse us, as unto God's deputy; which conscience is called good or evil, as the state of the man is. If his sin remain unpardoned, then as his estate is damnable, so his conscience is evil. If his sins be forgiven, and his person justified, his conscience is said to be good; conscience having its denomination from the man's state, even as the urine is called good or bad, as the state of the man's body is healthful or unsound whose urine it is. Now in baptism, forgiveness of sins and justification are sealed up to a believer's faith and conscience, under that lively representation of his communion with Christ in his resurrection.

Hence this is made the fruit of baptism that the good conscience of a believer sealed up in baptism has wherewithal from thence to answer all accusations of sin that can or do at any time come in upon him. And all this, as it is here added, "by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ," namely in this respect, that his communion with Christ in his resurrection has been represented in his baptism as a ground of his faith, and of that "answer" unto all accusations. So that indeed the same thing that Paul says by way of triumph and defiance to all accusations, "Who shall condemn? Christ is risen." The very same thing Peter here mentions, though not by way of defiance, yet of a believer's answer and apology, that if sins do come to condemn or accuse, a good conscience is ready to say, "Christ is risen," and I was then "justified in him." There is my answer, which nothing in heaven or hell is able to reply unto. "This is the answer of a good conscience, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Now to crown this second pillar of faith with this coronis or conclusion, by way of application or direction to a believer's faith, how to make use of Christ's resurrection in point of non-condemnation. You heard before, out of Romans 6, that in respect of mortification (as the apostle there reasons), we may be truly said to have been "perfectly dead to all sin" in Christ's "dying unto sin once," and through his representing us therein as dying unto sin, in and with him. So as although we be for the present but imperfectly mortified in ourselves, yet when corruptions arise, the apostle bids us help ourselves against them by faith, "reasoning" ourselves to stand wholly dead to sin, when Christ died. And so to conclude from thence, that we shall one day be fully dead to sin because we then did perfectly die in Christ unto it; which kind of reasoning also God would have us use as a motive (and of all motives that are in the gospel it is the strongest) against any corruption when as it arises. "Shall I that am dead to sin" in Christ and so am freed from it, "shall I live any longer therein?" Romans 6:2. Now as God would have our faith make this use of our communion with Christ in his death, in point of sanctification, just so when guilt of sin arises in your conscience to accuse or threaten condemnation, reason you yourself (as the apostle's word in that other case), or "reckon yourself" (as our translation has it) justified in Christ, in his justification, which was done at his resurrection. Yes, and seeing God would have you use your communion with Christ in his death as an argument to move you to mortify sin, bidding you to reckon yourself dead to sin in Christ. Do you desire him in like manner, to reckon yourself as justified at Christ's resurrection (for the ground of both is the same), and return that as an argument to him to move him to justify you. And this is that answer of a good conscience which Peter speaks of; this is the meaning of Paul's challenge, "Who shall condemn? Christ is risen."

And should your heart object and say, But I know not whether I was one of those that God reckoned justified with Christ when he arose; then go you to God, and ask him boldly, whether he did not do this for you, and whether you were not one of them intended by him. Put God to it and God will (by virtue of Christ's resurrection for you) even himself, answer your faith this question before you are aware. He will not deny it. And to secure you the more, know that however Christ will be sure to look to that for you; so as that you having been then intended,—as, if your heart be drawn to give itself up to Christ, you were, —shall never be condemned.

01.14. Section Four :: Chapter One

Section Four :: Chapter One

FAITH SUPPORTED BY CHRIST'S ASCENSION, AND SITTING AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND

A connection of this third head with the two former; showing how it affords a farther degree of triumph. Two things involved in it:

Christ's ascension;

2. Christ's power and authority in heaven.

Who is he that condemns? It is Christ, who is even at the right hand of God. Romans 8:34

I come next to this third great pillar and support of faith, Christ's being at God's right hand. And to show how the view and consideration hereof may strengthen faith seeking justification and pardon of sin: "Who is he that condemns? Christ is even at God's right hand."

In the opening of which, I shall keep to the begun method, both by showing how justification itself depends upon this, and the evidence thereof to us; both which the apostle had here in his eye, and from both which our faith may derive comfort and assurance. And I mean to keep punctually to the matter of justification only, as in the former.

These two latter that remain here in the text—Christ sitting at God's right hand, and his interceding for us—are brought in here by the apostle, as those which have a redundant force and prevalence in them, for the non-condemnation of the elect; that although the two former abundantly served to secure it, yet these two added to the former, do make the triumph of faith more complete and full, and us "more than conquerors," as it after follows. Nor does this place alone make mention of Christ's "sitting at God's right hand," which I now am first to handle, in this its relation, and influence into our justification, and the assurance of faith about it; but you have it to the same end, use, and purpose, alleged by that other great apostle, 1 Peter 3:18-22. And if the scopes of these two apostles in both places be compared, they are the same. Here the resurrection of Christ, and his sitting at God's right hand, are brought in as the ground of this bold challenge and triumph of faith. And there in Peter is mentioned the answer or plea of a good conscience in a believer justified, which it puts into the court, and opposes against all condemning guilts, (so it is called, 1 Peter 3:12). The apostle alleging the resurrection of Jesus Christ as one ground of it, "the answer of a good conscience, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." And then further to back and strengthen this plea or answer of a good conscience, the apostle puts his ascension and sitting at God's right hand into the bill, as further grounds confirming it.

So it follows, "who is gone to heaven, and is at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him." All which the apostle here expresses in one word (as enough to carry it) that Christ is "even at God's right hand." The soul has sufficient answer against

condemnation in Christ's death and resurrection, full enough though it should stop there; yes therein can faith triumph, though it went no further; for it can show a full satisfaction given in his death, and that accepted by God for us, and Christ acquitted, and we in him. Therefore, faith (you see) comes to a rather there. But then let it go on to consider Jesus sitting at God's right hand, and making intercession for us; and then faith will triumph and insult over all accusers, be more than a conqueror; then it comes not to a rather only, as here, but to a "much more shall we be saved by his life," thus Romans 5:10. And the meaning thereof is, that if his death had power to pay all our debts, and justify us at first, then much more has his life this power. So that his death is but the ground and foundation of our faith herein, and the lowest step of this ladder, but these others are the top and full triumph of faith therein. And our spirits should rise, as the apostle here rises. Faith upon these wings may not only fly above the gunshot of all accusations and condemners, but even clean out of their sight, and so far above all such thoughts and fears, as it may reach to a security that sins are forgotten and shall be remembered no more.

What joy was there in the disciples, when they saw Christ risen! John 20:1-31. Therefore in the primitive times it was used as a voice of joy; and to this day the Grecian Christians so entertain each other, at that time of the year, with these words, "The Lord is risen," your Surety is out of prison, fear not. But (as Christ said in another case, so say I) what will you say, if you see your Surety ascended up to heaven, and that as far "above angels and principalities" (as the apostle speaks in Ephesians 1:1-23) as the heavens are above the earth? Will you not in your faiths and hopes proportionably ascend, and climb up also, and have thoughts of pardon, as far exceeding your ordinary thoughts as the heavens are above the earth? Therefore, first view him as ascending into heaven, before ever he comes to be at God's right hand, and see what matter of triumph that will afford you. For that you must first suppose, before you can see him at God's right hand, and so is necessarily included, though not expressed here. But that place fore-quoted out of 1 Peter 3:1-22 gives us both these two particulars included in it: 1. His ascension (who is gone into heaven); and 2. His power and authority there (is at God's right hand, and has all power and authority subject to him), and prompts both these, as fit matter to be put into a good conscience, its answer and apology why it should not be condemned. And therefore both may here as well come in into faith's triumph, and that as being intended also by the apostle, and included in this one expression. He speaks with the least, to show what cause faith had to triumph, for the least expression of it; his purpose being but to give a hint of faith, or that which comprehensively contains many things in it, which he would have us distinctly to consider for our comfort.

01.15. Section Four :: Chapter Two

Section Four :: Chapter Two

Showing first what evidence for our

justification Christ's ascension into heaven affords unto our faith, upon that first fore-mentioned consideration of his being a Surety for us.

1. First then, to see what triumph his ascending into heaven will add unto our faith in matter of non-condemnation.

(1.) And herein, first, there is not nothing in it to consider what he then did, and what was his last act when he was to take his rise, to fly up to heaven. He "blessed his disciples," and thereby left a blessing upon earth with them, for all his elect, to the end of the world. The true reason and mind of which blessing them was, that he being now to go to execute the eternal office of his priesthood in heaven, (of which God had sworn, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.") As Melchisedec in the type blessed Abraham, and in him all the faithful as in his loins,—therefore the apostle said that "Levi paid tithes unto Melchisedec in Abraham's loins," therefore he was blessed in his loins,— so did Christ begin this new and second part of his priesthood with blessing the apostles, and in them all the elect to the end of the world. This was the last thing that Christ did on earth, yes, this he did while ascending, "he was taken up whilst he did it." So in Luke 24:50-51, and thus solemnly he now did this, to show that the curse was gone, and that sin was gone, and that action speaks thus much, as if Christ himself had said it. O my brethren (for so he styled his disciples after his resurrection), I have been dead, and in dying made a curse for you; now that curse I have fully removed, and my Father has acquitted me and you for it; and now I can be bold to bless you, and pronounce all your sins forgiven, and your persons justified. For that is the intendment and foundation of blessing. "Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven him," and therefore that was the true meaning of his blessing them; which he reserved thus as his last act, to show how by his death he had redeemed them from the curse of the law, and now going to heaven, was able to bless them with all the spiritual blessings that are there, and which heaven can afford, for heavenly they are called in that respect in Ephesians 1:3.

And as in Abraham (blessed by Melchisedec) all the faithful were blessed, so in these apostles all the elect to come are blessed. As when God individually blessed Adam and Eve at the first creation, yet he in them, blessed all that were forever to come of them; so Christ in blessing them, blessed us, and all "that shall believe through their word," to the end of the world. And that they were thus then to be considered as common persons, receiving this blessing for us all, appears by Christ's words then uttered, "I am with you to the end of the world" (i.e., with you and all your successors, both ministers and other believers), Matthew 28:20. And Christ herein did as God did before him. When God had done his work of creation, he "looked upon all he had done, and saw that it was good, and he blessed it." Thus did Jesus Christ, now that he had by that "one offering perfected forever all the elect," he comfortably viewed and pronounces it perfect and them

blessed, and so goes to heaven to keep and enjoy the Sabbath of all there.

(2.) Now secondly, let us see him ascending, and see what comfort that will also afford our faith, towards the persuasion of justification. The apostles stood gazing on him; and so do you lift up your hearts to gaze on him by faith, and view him in that act, as he is passing along into heaven, as leading sin, hell, death, and devil in triumph, at his chariot-wheels. And in that let your faith triumph, in a further evidence of justification. Thus Ephesians 4:8, out of Psalms 68:18, the apostle says, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive" (to which Hebraism the Latin phrase, *vincere victoria*, to win a victory, does answer); then he led captive all our spiritual enemies, that would have captivated us, they being now captivated. Now leading of captives is always after a perfect victory. And therefore, whereas at his death he had conquered them, at his rising scattered them, now at his ascension he leads them captive. And so that Psalm in the type begins, Psalms 68:1, "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; let them flee before him;" so at his resurrection they did. And then he ascends in triumph (as here) in token of victory, "he is ascended up on high," Psalms 68:18. He ascends, as David after his victory, up to Mount Zion (for the celebrating of which that Psalm seems to have been made by David), whereof this was the intended type.

And two *actus triumphales*, triumphing acts there were, here mentioned:

[1.] Leading the captives bound to his chariot-wheels, as the manner of the Roman triumph was when the conqueror went up to the Capitol; and other heathens in David's time, as Achilles led Hector captive, who tied his feet to his chariot-wheels, and dragged him dead round about the walls of Troy, Now thus did Christ then deal with our sins and all other enemies.

[2.] The second act is casting abroad of gifts, "He gave gifts to men." It was the custom at their triumphs to cast new coins (*missilia*) abroad among the multitude, so does Christ throw the greatest gifts for the good of men that ever were given. Therefore, "who shall condemn?" Sins and devils are not only dead, but triumphed over. Compare with this that other place in Colossians 2:15, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in himself." So I read it, and the Greek bears it, and so it is in the margin varied. It is a manifest allusion unto the manner of triumphs after victories among the Romans, even unto two of the most notable parts thereof: the first, of spoiling the enemy upon the place, before they stirred out of the field; and this was done by Christ on the cross. "Having spoiled them" first, as Colossians 2:14 has it. He speaks it of the devils, our enemies and accusers; they had all God's threatenings in his law, and the ceremonial law (the bond for our debt unto the moral law) to show for it. In these lay the power of the devil over us, that he could boldly come to God and accuse us, and sue our bond. And therefore in Hebrews 2:14, he is said to have "the power of death." Now Christ first took away all his power and spoiled him of all his ensigns, weapons, and colors, which he did on the place where the battle was fought, namely, on the cross; and "nailed our bond" thereto, and having paid the debt, left the bond cancelled, before he stirred off the cross.

But then, having thus spoiled these enemies on the cross, he further makes a public triumphal show of them in his own person, which is a second act, as the manner of the Roman emperors was in their great triumphs, to ride through the city in the greatest state, and have all the spoils carried before them, and the kings and nobles whom they had taken they tied to their chariots, and led them as captives. And this did Christ at his ascension (for of his triumphing at his ascension I

take this triumph in this epistle to the Colossians to be understood, and so to be interpreted by that fore-cited in Ephesians 4:1-32), he plainly manifesting by this public open show of them at his ascension that he had spoiled and fully subdued them on the cross. That which has diverted interpreters from thinking this of Colossians 2:1-23 to have been the triumph of his ascension has been this, that the triumph is said to have been made $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\nu\tau\epsilon\ \alpha\nu\tau\omicron\upsilon$, which they interpret "in it," as if it referred to the cross (mentioned Colossians 2:14), as the place of it. When as it may as well be translated "in himself," i.e., "in his own power and strength," noting how he alone did this, which other conquerors do not: they conquer not in themselves, and by themselves, which Christ did. And yet it was the law, that if the Roman emperors or generals themselves took anything in war, they had a peculiar honor to dedicate it in triumph more peculiarly. Now Christ conquered in himself, and therefore triumphed in himself, and himself alone. And thus it became our Redeemer (like another Samson) not only to break sin's bars and fling off hell-gates, and come out of that prison he was in; but as in sign of a trophy, to take them on his back and carry them up the hill, as Samson (the type of him) did the gates of the city to a high hill, himself triumphantly carrying them on his own shoulders.

Now did Christ then, who was your Surety, thus triumph? Then let your faith triumph likewise; for this was not only done by your Surety, but in your stead, seeing this for us here is to be put to each thing mentioned. The apostle calls for this at our hands here. "We are more than conquerors," says he in Romans 8:37.

(3.) Then, thirdly, see him entering into heaven: when he comes first to court after this great undertaking, how does God look on him? Is God satisfied with what he has done? As you know, when a general comes home, there used to be great observing how the king takes his service, as performed according to commission. Christ as a Surety undertook for sinners fully to conquer all our enemies and God bid him look that he did it perfectly, or never see his face more, Hebrews 5:8-9. He was to be "perfect through sufferings," and those sufferings to be such as "to perfect" us also, Hebrews 10:14. Now, behold, your Surety is like a conqueror entered heaven: let that convince you that he has satisfied the debt, and performed his commission to a tittle. God would never have suffered him to come thither else; but as soon as ever his head had peeped into heaven, have sent him down again to perform the rest. But God lets him enter in and he comes boldly and confidently, and God lets him stay there. Therefore be convinced that he has given God full satisfaction.

Christ himself uses this argument, as the strongest that could be brought to "convince the world" that this righteousness (which he had in his doctrine taught them) was the righteousness which men were only to be saved by, the true righteousness of God indeed. John 16:9-10, He "shall convince the world of righteousness," that is, work faith in the hearts of men, to believe and lay hold on my righteousness, as the true righteousness that God has ordained; and this "because (says he) I go to my Father, and you shall see me no more." That is, by this argument and evidence it is and shall be evinced, that I who undertook to satisfy for sin, and to procure a perfect righteousness, have perfectly performed it; and that it is a righteousness which God's justice does accept of, to save sinners by; in that I, after my death, and finishing this work, will ascend up to my Father, into heaven, and keep my standing there, and you shall see me no more. Whereas, if I had not fulfilled all righteousness and perfectly satisfied God, you may be sure there would be no going to heaven for me, nor remaining there. God would send me down again, to do the rest, and you

should certainly see me with shame sent back again. But he said, "I go to heaven, and you shall see me no more."

01.16. Section Four :: Chapter Three

Section Four :: Chapter Three

Showing what evidence also Christ's sitting at God's right hand, having been our Surety, affords to our faith for justification.

Now then, in the next place for his being or sitting at God's right hand, which is the second particular to be spoken of. As soon as Christ was carried into heaven, look, as all the angels fell down and worshipped him, so his Father welcomed him, with the highest grace that ever yet was shown. The words which he then spoke we have recorded in Psalms 110:1-7, "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." You may by the way observe, for the illustration of this, how upon all the several parts of performance of his office, either God is brought in speaking to Christ, or Christ to his Father. Thus when he chose him first to be our Mediator, he takes an oath, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." Again, when Christ came to take upon him our nature, the words he spoke are recorded, "Lo, I come to do your will, a body hast thou fitted me," so Hebrews 10:5 out of Psalms 40. Likewise, when he hung upon the cross, his words unto God are recorded, Psalms 22:1, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In like manner, when he rose again, God's words used then to him are recorded, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Psalms 2:7 (which place is expounded of the resurrection in Acts 13:33). Which is as much as if he had said, You never appeared like my Son until now; for whereas I chose a Son to be glorified with power and majesty, hitherto you have appeared only as "a son of man" (Enosh, sorry man); hitherto you have been made sin, and a curse; not like my Son, but has appeared "in the likeness of sinful flesh," and of "a servant," all besmeared with blood. Therefore this is the first day wherein I make account "I have begotten thee;" even now, when you first begin to appear out of that sinful hue and likeness of sinful flesh: now I own you for my Son indeed. And in him he owned us all thus at his resurrection. And then last of all, when he comes into heaven, the first word God speaks to him is, Son, "sit thou at my right hand;" you have done all my work, and now I will do yours...; (he gives him a Quietus est) rest here, "Sit here, until I make all your enemies your footstool."

And now what say you, are you satisfied yet, that God is satisfied for your sins? What superabundant evidence must this Christ's sitting at God's right hand give to a doubting heart? It argues, first, that Christ, for his part, has perfectly done his work, and that there is no more left for him to do by way of satisfaction: this the word sitting implies. Secondly, it argues that God is as fully satisfied on his part: this his sitting at God's right hand implies.

(1.) For the first; the phrase of sitting does betoken rest, when work is fulfilled and finished. Christ was not to return until he had accomplished his work, Hebrews 10:11. The apostle comparing the force and excellence of Christ's sacrifice, with those of the priests of the old law, says that "those priests stood daily offering of sacrifices, which can never take sins away." Their standing implied that they could never make satisfaction, so as to say, "we have finished it." But Christ (says he in Hebrews 10:12), "after he had offered up one sacrifice forever, sat down." Mark how he opposes

their standing to his sitting down. He sat as one who had done his work. Thus, Hebrews 4:10, "he that is entered into his rest"—speaking of Christ, as I have elsewhere shown—"has ceased from his work, as God from his."

(2.) Secondly this, his being at God's right hand, as strongly argues that God is satisfied. For if God had not been infinitely well pleased with him, he would never have let him come so near him, much less have advanced him so high as his right hand. And therefore, in that place even now cited (Hebrews 10:10-12, compared with the former verses), this is alleged as an evidence that Christ had "forever taken sins away" (which those priests of the law could not do, who therefore often "offered the same sacrifice," as Hebrews 10:11). That "this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God," as thereby showing (and that most manifestly) that he had at that once offered up such a satisfactory sacrifice as had pleased God forever. And thereupon took up his place at God's right hand as an evidence of it, so possessing the highest place in court. This setting him at God's right hand is a token of special and highest favour. So kings, whom they were most pleased with, they did set at their right hands, as Solomon did his mother, in 1 Kings 2:19. And so Christ, the church his queen, Psalms 45:9, and it was a favour which God never after vouchsafed to any, Hebrews 1:13. "To which of all the angels did he say, Sit thou at my right hand?" Therefore in Php 2:9, it is not only said that he "exalted him," but superexaltarit, "he highly exalted him," so as never any was exalted; for he was "made thereby higher than the heavens." Thus much for the first head.

01.17. Section Four :: Chapter Four

Section Four :: Chapter Four

Demonstrates, in the second place, what influence Christ's ascension has in a believer's non-condemnation, upon that second premised consideration, of Christ's being a common person for us. The security that faith may have from thence.

We have thus seen what triumphing evidence and demonstration, both Christ's ascension and sitting at God's right hand, do afford us for this, that Christ being considered as our Surety, has therefore undoubtedly subdued our enemies and sins, and satisfied God. Let us now consider further, what force, efficacy, and influence these two (both his ascending and sitting at God's right hand as a head and common person for us) have in them towards the assured working and accomplishment of the salvation of believers, his elect. And from the consideration of this, which is a second head, our faith may be yet further confirmed and strengthened in its confidence. "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that is at God's right hand." I shall take in (as in the former) both his ascension and sitting at God's right hand.

And first for his ascending consider these two things in it which may uphold our confidence.

(1.) That the great end and purpose of that his ascending, the errand, or the business he ascended for was "to prepare and provide a place for us," and to make way for our coming thither. This he assures his disciples in John 14:2, "In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you." As Joseph was secretly sent before by God's intendment to prepare a place in Egypt for his brethren, whom God's providence meant to bring after him, so more openly does Christ ascend to heaven, professedly declaring that to be his business: "I go to prepare a place for you," and it is my Father's house, says he, where I can provide for you and make you welcome. You heard before, what welcome God gave Christ when he first arrived there, and what he said to him, and Christ said (as it were) again to God: I come not alone, I have much company, many of my brethren and followers to come after (for it was the declared and avowed end of his coming to prepare a place for them), I prayed when I was on earth, "that where I am they might be also," John 17:24. And now I am come hither, my train must come in too, I am not complete without them; if you receive me you must receive them also, and I am come to take up lodgings for them. Thus the Captain of our salvation, being "made perfect through sufferings," and then "crowned with glory and honor," in "bringing of many sons to glory," as Hebrews 2:10, of which company he was Captain, is brought in saying to God. Hebrews 2:13, "Behold I and the children which God has given me," he speaks it when brought to glory. I am their Captain, and they must follow me; where I am they must be. Lo! I am here, and am not to come alone, but to bring to glory all the children which you have given me. They shall be all welcome (says God), there is room enough for them, "many mansions;" so that we need not fear, nor say in our hearts doubting and despairing, "Who shall ascend up to heaven for us," to bring us thither? (as in Romans 10:6). Christ has done it; that is the first thing, but that is not all.

(2.) He entered into heaven in our very names, and so is to be considered in that act as a common person (as well as in his death and resurrection), and so representing us, and also taking possession in our right, and we in him, as a guardian takes possession for heirs under age. Hebrews 6:20, "The forerunner is for us entered" into heaven. "The forerunner for us," that is our forerunner. A forerunner is a forerunner of followers, and of such as stay not long behind, and usually goes before as a harbinger, to provide and take up lodgings for them that are to come, and writes the names of those who are to come over the doors of such and such rooms, that they may not be taken up by any other. And so in Hebrews 12:23, the names of "the first-born" are said to be "written in heaven," or enrolled there. And in 1 Peter 1:4, their places or mansions in heaven are said to be "reserved for them;" they stand empty as it were, yet taken up, so as none shall take them from them, their names and titles to them being entered and superscribed. And so he truly entered, pro nobis, for us, that is in our stead and in our names, as a common person; and therefore the high priest (in the type) entered into the holy of holies, with all the names of the tribes on his breast; even so does Christ with ours, even as a common person in our names, thereby showing that we are likewise to come after him. And this is more than simply to prepare a place, it is to take possession of a place, and give us a right thereto.

So that your faith, through this consideration, may see yourselves as good as in heaven already, for Christ is entered as a common person for you. Justification has two parts: first, acquittance from sin and freedom from condemnation, as here, "Who shall condemn?" and secondly, "justification of life," as it is called in Romans 5:18; that is, which gives title to eternal life. Now dying and rising as a common person for us, procures the first, sets us perfectly enough in that state of freedom from condemnation. But then, this Christ, his entering into heaven as a common person, sets us far above that state of non-condemnation. It places us in heaven with him. You would think yourselves secure enough if you were ascended into heaven. As Heman said of his condition, that he was "free among the dead," Psalms 88:5; that is, he reckoned himself (in his despair) free of the company in hell, as well as if he had been there, thinking his name enrolled among them and his place taken up. So you may "reckon yourselves" (as the word is in Romans 6:1-23) free of the company of heaven, and your places taken up there. So that when you come to die, you shall go to heaven as to your own place, by as true a title, though not of your own, as Judas went to hell, which is called "his own place," as (Acts 1:1-26) the apostle speaks. What a start is this! How far have you left below your pardon of sins and non-condemnation! You are got above. How securely may you say, "Who shall condemn?" Christ has ascended and entered into heaven. This is the first branch of the second head, the influence that Christ's ascension has into our justification and salvation.

01.18. Section Four :: Chapter Five

Section Four :: Chapter Five

Demonstrates in like manner what influence Christ's sitting at God's right hand has into our justification, upon that second consideration of his being a common person. And the security faith may have from thence.

The consideration of his sitting at God's right hand may, in respect of the influence that it must necessarily have into our salvation, yet add more security unto our faith, if we either consider the power and authority of the place itself, and what it is to sit at God's right hand; or secondly, the relation, the person he bears and sustains in his sitting there, even of a common person in our right. And both these being put together will add strength mutually each to other, and unto our faith, both to consider how great a prerogative it is to sit at God's right hand, and what such a one as sits there has power to do. And then that Christ (who is invested with this power, and advanced to it), he possesses it all as our head, and in our right, as a common person representing us. And

(1.) Consider the prerogatives of the place itself, they are two: [1.] Sovereignty of power, and might, and majesty. [2.] Sovereignty of authority and judgment, either of which may secure us from non-condemnation.

[1.] Sovereignty of power and might; this the phrase "sitting at God's right hand" implies in Matthew 26:64, where Christ himself expounded the purport of it. "Hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power." And so, Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 1:22, this is made the privilege of God's "setting him at his right hand." Ephesians 1:20, that "he has put all things under his feet," Ephesians 1:22—a phrase importing the highest sovereignty and power, not used of any creatures, angels, or men; none of them have other things under their feet i.e., in so low a subjection as to be their vassals; especially, not all things. And therefore by that very phrase, "the putting all things under his feet," the apostle argues in Hebrews 2:1-18 that that man of whom David in Psalms 8 (there cited by him) had spoken, was no other but Christ; not Adam, nor the angels, for to neither of these has God subjected all things, Hebrews 2:5, but to Christ only, Hebrews 2:8, who sits in the highest throne of majesty. And to make his seat the easier, has a world of enemies made his footstool, even all his enemies (so Psalms 110:1-7); which is the highest triumph in the world. Now to what end has God committed this power to him, but that himself may be his own executor, and administrator, and perform all the legacies which he made to those whom he died for? As the expression is in Hebrews 9:15-17, that none of his heirs might be wronged. Fairer dealing than this could there ever be, nor greater security given to us. This to have been God's very end of investing Christ with this sovereign power is declared by Christ himself. John 17:2, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And accordingly at his ascension, to comfort his disciples, in the fruit of their ministry. In Matthew 28:18 he says, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth." What holy confidence may this breed in us! He is at God's right hand and we are in his hands, John 10:28. And all his enemies are under his feet, who then can pull us out? Revelation 1:18,

says Christ, "I have the keys of hell and death." The key is still in the Scripture phrase the ensign of power and authority. Now Christ has both the keys of death, the postern gate out of this world and of hell, even of the broad gates of that eternal prison; so as none of his can be fetched out of this world by death, but Christ he must first open the door; much less can any go to hell without his warrant. Yes, Matthew 16:19, he has "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" also, to open to whom he will. By his resurrection, we may see and rest assured that he has the keys of death and hell (for he unlocked the doors, and came out from thence), and by his ascension and sitting at God's right hand, that he has the keys of heaven, whose door he has unlocked and now set open. What need we then fear hell, when Christ our Redeemer has the keys of it?

[2.] Secondly, to sit at God's right hand imports all judgment to be committed to him; for sitting was a posture of judges, a phrase used to note out their authority. So in Proverbs 20:8, "A king that sits on the throne of judgment, scatters the wicked with his eye," and so does Christ his and our enemies. See what Christ says in John 5:21-22, "The Son of man raises up whom he will; for the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son." Now if he who loved us so, and died for us is the Judge himself, then, "Who shall condemn?" Christ sits on God's right hand. This is the very inference that after follows in John 5:24, "He that believes shall not come into condemnation." Christ utters it upon his having said he had all judgment committed to him, in the fore-going, John 5:22, on purpose that he might from that consideration ascertain believers of their non-condemnation. For what need we fear any underofficers, when we have the Judge thus for us?

(2.) But then in the last place, add that second particular mentioned to all these, that Christ sits there as a head, as a common person for us. First as a head: so in Ephesians 1 when the apostle had so hyperbolically set forth his power of being advanced unto God's right hand, Ephesians 1:21, "far above all principalities and powers, and above every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come." And how God "has put all things under his feet," he adds, "and has given him to be head over all things to the church." Observe now, he is said to sit there over all things, not in his own pure personal right simply, as it is his inheritance, as he is the Son of God (as in Hebrews 1:3-5, it is affirmed of him), but he sits thus over all as a head to the church. That same over all things comes in there, between his being a head, and to the church, on purpose to show that he is set over all, in relation to his church. So that we see that our relation is involved, and our right included, in this exaltation of his and so put into his commission, for this prerogative is there said to be given him. He sits not simply as a Son, but as a head, and he sits not as a head without a body; and therefore must have his members up to him. Wherefore in the next verse it is added, "which is his body, yes, his fullness;" so as Christ is not complete without all his members, and would leave heaven if anyone were wanting. It were a lame, maimed body, if it wanted but a toe. Christ is our element,* and he being ascended, we are sparks that fly upwards to him. He took our flesh, and carried it into heaven, and left us his Spirit on earth, and both as pawns and earnestes that we should follow.

Nay, further yet, he is not only said to sit as our head, but we are also said "to sit together with him." That is made the upshot of all in the next chapter, Ephesians 2:6. So that as we arose with him, he being considered as a common person and ascended with him; as was said, so yet further we "sit together with him in the highest heavens" (as there), in supercælestibus, "in his exalted estate above the heavens," as is the meaning of that phrase. Not that Christ being at God's right

hand (if taken for that sublimity of power) is communicable to us; that is Christ's prerogative only. So Hebrews 1:5, "To which of all the angels did he ever say, Sit thou at my right hand?"

Yet so as his sitting in heaven, as it is indefinitely expressed, is understood to be as in our right and stead, and as a common person, and so is to assure us of our sitting there with him, in our proportion. So in Revelation 3:21, it is expressly rendered as the mind and intendment of it, "Him that overcomes, I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also am set down with my Father in his throne." There is a proportion observed, though with an inequality; we sit on Christ's throne, but he only on his Father's throne. That is, Christ only sits at God's right hand, but we on Christ's right hand, and so the church is said to be at Christ's "right hand," in Psalms 45:9. Yes, further (and it may afford a farther comfort to us in the point in hand), this represents, that at the latter day we shall sit as assessors on his judgment seat, to judge the world with him. So Matthew 19:28, and Luke 22:30, "When the Son of man shall sit in his glory, you shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the tribes of Israel." So as this our sitting with him, it is spoken in respect to judgment, and to giving the sentence of it; not a sentence shall pass without your votes.

So as you may by faith not only look on yourselves as already in heaven, sitting with Christ, as a common person in your right, but you may look upon yourselves as judges also; so that if any sin should arise to accuse or condemn, yet it must be with your votes. And what greater security can you have than this? For you must condemn yourselves, if you be condemned; you may very well say, "Who shall accuse? Who shall condemn?" for you will never pronounce a fatal sentence upon your own selves.

As then Paul triumphed here, so may we; for at the present we sit in heaven with Christ and have all our enemies under our feet. As Joshua made his servants set their feet on the necks of those five kings, so God would have us by faith to do the like to all ours; for one day we shall do it. And if you say, We see it not, I answer, as in Hebrews 2:1-18, the apostle says of Christ himself, "Now we see not yet all things put under him," Hebrews 2:8. Now not under him, for he now sits in heaven, and expects by faith, when his enemies shall be made his footstool, as Hebrews 10:12-13; "but we see" for the present "Jesus crowned with glory and honor," Hebrews 2:9. And so we may be sure that the thing is as good as done; and we may, in seeing him thus crowned, see ourselves sitting with him and quietly wait and expect, as Christ himself does, until all be accomplished, and our salvation finished and fully perfected.

His intercession now remains only to be spoken of, which yet will afford further considerations to strengthen our faith. His sitting at God's right hand notes out his power over all, from God. But his intercession, all power and favour with God for us, so as to effect our salvation for us, with God's highest contentment and good will, and all yet further to secure us. "Who shall condemn?"

01.19. Section Five :: Chapter One

Section Five :: Chapter One

THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH FROM CHRIST'S INTERCESSION

A connection of this with the former; and how this adds a further support. Two things out of the text propounded to be handled: First, the concurrency of influence that Christ's intercession has into our salvation. Secondly, the security that faith may have therefrom for our justification.

Who also makes intercession for us.—Romans 8:34

We have seen Christ sitting at God's right hand as a judge and king, having all authority of saving or condemning in his own hands; and having all power in heaven and earth to give eternal life to them that believe, and the confidence that this gives us.

Let us now come to his intercession, and the influence which it has into our justification and salvation; which as it strikes the last stroke to make all sure, so as great a stroke as any of the former. Therefore, as you have heard that there was an all-sufficiency in his death—"Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died"—rather in his resurrection—"yes rather, is risen again"—a much rather, that he lives and is at God's right hand, Romans 5:10. The apostle rises yet higher to "a saving to the utmost," put upon his intercession in Hebrews 7:25, "Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost, seeing he ever lives to make intercession." So that if you could suppose there were anything which none of all the former three could do or effect for us, yet his intercession could do it to the utmost, for itself is the uttermost and highest. If money would purchase our salvation, his death has done it, which he laid down as a price and an equivalent ransom (as it is in 1 Timothy 2:6). If power and authority would effect it, his sitting at God's right hand, invested with all power in heaven and earth, shall be put forth to the utmost to effect it. If favor and entreaties added to all these (which often does as much as any of those other) were needful, he will use the utmost of this also, and forever make intercession. So that if love, money, or power (any of them, or all of them) will save us, we shall be sure to be saved, "saved to the utmost," all manner of ways, by all manner of means; saved over and over.

For the clearing of this last general head, the intercession of Christ, and the influence and security it has into our faith and justification, I shall handle two things, and both proper to the text.

First, show how unto all those other fore-mentioned acts of Christ for us, this of intercession also is to be added by him for the effecting our salvation, and the securing our hearts therein. This that particle also in the text calls for, "Who also makes intercession for us."

Then secondly, to show the security that faith may assume and fetch from this intercession of Christ, or his praying for us in heaven; "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that makes intercession for us."

01.20. Section Five :: Chapter Two

Section Five :: Chapter Two

The first head explained by two things: First, intercession one part of Christ's priesthood, and the most excellent part of it.

1. Towards the explanation of the first of these, two things are to be done.

(1.) First, to show how great, and necessary, and how excellent a part of Christ's priesthood his intercession and praying for us in heaven is.

(2.) Secondly, to show the peculiar influence that intercession has into our salvation, and so the reasons for which God ordained this work of intercession for us, and that in heaven, to be added to all the former.

(1.) For the first I will proceed therein by degrees.

[1.] It is one part of his priesthood. You must know that Christ is not entered into heaven simply as a "forerunner" (which has been explained) to take up places for you, but as a priest also: "made a priest, after the order of Melchisedec," which is more than simply a forerunner. Yes, his sitting at God's right hand is not only as a king armed with power and authority to save us, but he sits there as a priest too: Thus, Hebrews 8:1, "We have such a High Priest, who is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

In the old Levitical priesthood, the high priest's office had two parts, both which concurred to make them high priests.

First, Oblation or offering the sacrifice.

Secondly, presentation of it in the holy of holies, with prayer and intercession unto God, to accept it for the sins of the people. The one was done without, the other within the holy of holies. This you see in many places, especially Leviticus 16:11; Leviticus 16:15-16, where you have the law about the high priest's entering into the holy of holies. He was not to come into the holy place until first he had offered a sacrifice for himself and the people, Leviticus 16:11; Leviticus 16:15, and this without. Then secondly, when he had killed it, he was to enter with the blood of it into the holy of holies, and sprinkle the mercy-seat therein with it, Leviticus 16:14; Leviticus 16:17, and to go with incense, and cause a cloud to arise over the mercy-seat. And this you have also in Hebrews 13:11, it is said that the blood of those beasts that were burnt without the camp was brought into the sanctuary by the high priest. And in that Leviticus 16 you shall find the atonement made as well by the blood, when brought into the holy place in Leviticus 16:16, as by the killing of the beast in Leviticus 16:11. Both these were acts of the high priesthood for atonement.

And this was done in a type and priestly office of Christ, and the parts thereof. So in Hebrews 9:23, he calls all those transactions under the ceremonial law, "the patterns of things heavenly;" instancing in this part of Christ's office. Hebrews 9:24, "For Christ," says he, "is not entered into

the holy places made with hands," as that was, "which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us." Now, then, in answer to this type, there are two distinct parts of Christ's priesthood.

First, the "offering himself a sacrifice" up to death, as in Hebrews 9:26, which answers to the killing of the sacrifice without the holy of holies; for answerably he was crucified without the city, Hebrews 13:12.

Secondly, he carried this his blood into the holy of holies, namely, the heavens in Hebrews 9:12, where he appears in Hebrews 9:24, and there also prays in the force of that blood. And the type of those prayers was that cloud of incense made by the high priest; so it is expressly interpreted in Revelation 8:3. The angel Christ is said to have had "much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints." Which incense is his own prayers in heaven, which he continually puts up when the saints pray on earth, and so perfumes all their prayers, and procures all blessings for them.

Both these parts of his priesthood the apostle John mentions in 1 John 2:2, whereas he calls Jesus Christ a "propitiation for our sins" (that is, an oblation or sacrifice offered up for us); so likewise he calls him our advocate, both going to make up this his office. And indeed, this latter of intercession and bringing his blood into the holy of holies (or heaven) is but the same action continued. That blood which he offered with tears and strong cries on the cross, where he likewise interceded, the same blood he continues virtually to offer up with prayers in the heavens, and makes atonement by both, only with this difference: on earth, though he interceded, yet he more eminently offered up himself; in heaven, he more eminently intercedes, and does but present that offering.

[2.] Secondly, this was so necessary a part of his priesthood, that without it he had not been a complete priest. Thus in Hebrews 8:4, "If he were on earth he should not be a priest;" that is, if he should have abode on earth he should not have been a complete priest. Paul says not, that if he had offered that his sacrifice on earth, he had not been a priest, for that was necessary; but that if he had stayed still on earth, after he had offered it, he had not been a priest, that is, a perfect priest. For he had then left his office imperfect, and had done it but by halves, seeing this other part of it (the work of intercession) lay still upon him to be acted in heaven. Thus the high priest, his type, if he had only offered sacrifice without the holy of holies, had not been a perfect high priest; for to enter into the holy of holies, and to act the part of a priest there, was the proper, peculiar work of the high priest as such. Which shows, that Christ had not been a high priest if he had not gone to heaven, and priested it there too, as I may so speak, as well as upon earth. Yes, if Christ had not gone to heaven and were not now become a priest there, then the Levitical priesthood were still in force, and should share the honor with him, and the high priest must continue still to go into the holy of holies.

To this purpose you may observe, that so long as Christ was on earth, though risen, the types of the law held in force, and were not to give way, until all the truth signified by their ministry was fully accomplished. And so, not until Christ was gone into heaven as a priest and there had begun to do all that which the high priest had done in the holy of holies, and as his type fore-signified. And this is plainly the meaning of what follows (in that Hebrews 8:4) as the reason or demonstration why that Christ should not have been a priest, if he had not gone to heaven, not only as a king, but as a priest too, as he had affirmed. Hebrews 8:4, "Seeing," says he, "that there are priests upon earth

that do offer gifts according to the law." The force of the reason lies thus: there are already priests, and that of a tribe he was not of, that offer gifts on earth, before he came into the world. And, therefore, if that had been all his priesthood, to be a priest on earth, they would plead possession before him, having been priests before him. And then he further backs his reason by this: that "those priests served" (as it follows in Hebrews 8:5), "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." And therefore, it is only a real priesthood in heaven which must put them out of place, and until such a priesthood comes, they must serve still for the truth, which these serve to shadow out, is not until then fulfilled. This you have also in Hebrews 9:8. The "first tabernacle" was to stand until a priest went into heaven, and did act that office there; so that, if Christ will be a priest alone, he must become a priest interceding in heaven or else high priests must come up again, and share that office with him, and so he should as good as fall from his office, and lose all that he had done.

[3.] Yes, thirdly, this part of his priesthood is of the two the more eminent, yes the top, the height of his priesthood. And this is held forth to us in the types of both those two orders of priesthood that were before him and figures of him, both that of Aaron and Melchisedec:

First, this was typified out in that Levitical priesthood of Aaron and his fellows. The highest service of that office was the going into the holy of holies and making an atonement there; yes, this was the height of the high priest's honor that he did this alone, and did constitute the difference between him, as he was high priest, and other priests. For they killed and offered the sacrifices without as well as he, every ordinary priest did that; but none but the high priest was to approach the holy of holies with blood, and this but once a year. Thus in Hebrews 9:6-7, "the priests," namely those inferior priests, "went always," that is daily, morning and evening, "into the first tabernacle," or court of priests, which was without the holy of holies, "accomplishing the service of God," namely that offering of the daily sacrifice; "but into the second," namely the holy of holies, "went the high priests alone every year." So then, this was that high and transcendent prerogative of that high priest then, and which indeed made him high priest; and answerably the height of our high priest's office,—although he alone also could offer a satisfactory sacrifice, as the apostle shows in Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-39. Yet it comparatively lay in this that he entered into the heavens by his blood, and is set down on the majesty on high, and in the virtue of his sacrifice there does intercede. I know but one place that calls him the "Great High Priest" (higher before than Aaron), and that is in Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 4:16. And then it is in this respect that he is "passed into the heavens," as it follows there.

Secondly, the excellency of this part of his priesthood was likewise typified out by Melchisedec's priesthood, which the apostle argues to have been much more excellent than that of Aaron's, inasmuch as Levi, Aaron's father, paid tithes to this Melchisedec in Abraham's loins. Now Melchisedec was his type, not so much in respect of his oblation, or offering of sacrifice (that work which Christ performed on earth), but in respect of that work which he ever performs in heaven. Therefore that same clause forever still comes in, in the quotation and mention of Melchisedec's priesthood in that Epistle; because in respect of that his continual intercession in heaven, Melchisedec was properly Christ's type. And accordingly you may observe in Psalms 110:4, when is it that speech comes in, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec;" but then, when God had him sitting at his right hand? Psalms 110:1. So that, as the transcendent excellency of Christ's priesthood was typified out by Melchisedec's rather than Aaron's, as being the better

priesthood of the two, so this, the most excellent part thereof, was typified out thereby, namely, that which Christ forever acts in heaven.

And, thirdly, to confirm this, you shall find this to be made the top notion of this Epistle to the Hebrews, and the scope of it chiefly, to discourse of Christ's eternal priesthood in heaven, and to show how therein Melchisedec was a type of him. This is not only expressed both in Hebrews 7:21, where this same forever is applied to his intercession and Hebrews 7:25, but more expressly in Hebrews 8:1, where the apostle puts the emphasis upon this part of his priesthood, saying, that "of the things which we have spoken,"—or which are to be spoken, for the word $\pi\tau\tau\sigma$ λεγομνοις will bear either—"this is," says he, "the sum or argument" of all. The word is κεφλατιον, and signifies as well the head, the chief, the top of all, and above all, as it does the sum of all.

And what is it that he thus professes to be both the main subject and argument of this epistle, and the top and eminent thing in Christ he intends to discourse of? It follows, that "we have such a high priest as is set down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." And of the priestly office he alone discourses both before and after; and in the following verses calls his ministry or office (in respect of this) "a more excellent ministry," Hebrews 8:6, "he being such a priest as was higher than the heavens," as he had set him out in the latter part of the former chapter. And therefore you may observe, how in his preface to this Epistle in Hebrews 1:3, he holds up this to our eye as the argument of the whole saying, "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Yes, to conclude this, all his priesthood would have been ineffectual, if he had not acted the part of a priest in heaven, by intercession there; for by his death he did but begin the execution of his office, and in heaven he ends it. And if he had not fulfilled his office in both, the work of our salvation had not been fully perfected; it was therefore as necessary as oblation itself. Not but that his death was a perfect oblation; it was perfect for an oblation, to which as such nothing can be added. There needed no more, nor any other price to be paid for us; "by that one offering, he perfects us forever," as in Hebrews 10:14, and became himself perfect thereby, Hebrews 5:9. And in Hebrews 9:12, "By his own blood he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Mark how before he entered by his blood into heaven, he had fully obtained a redemption, and that eternal that is forever sufficient; which done, he became through his intercession in heaven an applying cause of eternal salvation, as Hebrews 5:10-11 has it. So that as in his death he paid the full sum of all he owed, unto which payment nothing can be added, no not by himself, though he would come and die again. It was made at that once as perfect, that is for an oblation, as ever he could make. But yet still by God's ordination there remained another further action of another kind that was to be added to this of oblation, and that is intercession, or praying for us in heaven. Otherwise our salvation by his death was not perfected; for if his priesthood be imperfect, our salvation then must necessarily be so. The presenting of that his sacrifice in heaven, was the consummation of his priesthood, and the performance of that part there, the perfection of it.

01.21. Section Five :: Chapter Three

Section Five :: Chapter Three

The second; the special peculiar influence that intercession has into our salvation and justification, and the reasons why God appointed it to be added to the former.

To come now more particularly to show that proper and special influence that intercession has into our salvation, and what it adds to the oblation of Christ's death, though in its kind perfect, in order to the effecting our salvation; and to show the more inward reasons why God ordained—for upon his ordination alone this is to be put—this work of intercession in heaven to be joined with his death. And both these I shall put promiscuously together; for in laying down the reasons why God thus ordered our salvation to be brought about by it, that influence also which intercession has into our salvation, will together therewith appear.

The reasons either respect (1.) God himself, who will have us so saved as himself may be most glorified; or (2.) respect us and our salvation; God ordering all the links of this golden chain of the causes of our salvation, as should make our salvation most sure and steadfast, (as David in his last song speaks, 2 Samuel 23:5). Or (3.) respect Christ himself, whose glory is to be held up, and throughout continued as the author and finisher of our salvation, beginner and ender of our faith and justification.

(1.) The first sort of reasons respect God himself.

[1.] In general, God will be dealt with like himself, in and throughout the whole way of our salvation, from first to last, and carry it all along as a superior wronged, and so keep a distance between himself and sinners; who still are to come to him by a priest, and a mediator (as Hebrews 7:25 has it) upon whose mediation and intercession "forever," as there, at least until the day of judgment, their salvation does depend. And therefore though Christ, in his dispensation of all to us downward, does carry it as a king, as one having all power to justify and condemn (as has been shown); yet upward towards God, he carries it as a priest, who must still intercede to do all that which he has power to do as a king. Therefore after that God had set him up as "King upon his holy hill," Psalms 2:6, namely in heaven, and so had committed all power in heaven and earth to him. Then he must yet "ask" all that he would have done, "Ask of me, and I will give thee..." Psalms 2:8, says God to him. For though he be a king, yet he is God's king, "I have set my king," and by asking him, God will be acknowledged to be above him. But more of this hereafter. But

[2.] More particularly, God has two attributes which he would have most eminently appear in their highest glory by Christ's effecting our salvation, namely, justice and free grace. And therefore has so ordered the bringing about of our salvation, as that Christ must apply himself in a more especial manner unto each of these, by way of satisfaction to the one, of entreaty to the other. Justice will be known to be justice, and dealt with upon its own terms; and grace will be acknowledged to be free grace, throughout the accomplishment of our salvation. You have both these joined in Romans 3:24; Romans 3:26, "Being justified freely through his grace, by the redemption that is in

Christ Jesus; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes." Here is highest justice and the freest grace both met to save us, and both ordained by God to be "declared" and "set forth," as Romans 3:25-26 have it.

I said before, that God justifies and saves us through free grace, so absolutely freely, as if his justice had had no satisfaction. Now therefore our salvation depending and being carried on, even in the application of it, by a continuation of grace in a free way, notwithstanding satisfaction unto justice. Therefore this free grace must be sought to, and treated with like itself, and applied upon in all, and the sovereignty and freeness of it acknowledged in all, even as well as God's justice had the honor to be satisfied by a price paid upon it, that so the severity of it might appear and be held forth in our salvation. Thus God having two attributes eminently to be dealt with, his justice and his free grace. It was meet that there should be two eminent actions of Christ's priesthood, wherein he should apply himself to each according to their kind, and as the nature and glory of each does require. Accordingly in his death he deals with justice, by laying down a sufficient price. And in his intercession, he entreats free grace and thus both come to be alike acknowledged. In Hebrews 4:16, we are encouraged to "come boldly to the throne of grace," because "we have a high priest entered into the heavens." Observe how it is called a throne of grace, which our high priest now in heaven officiates at; so called because his priesthood there deals with free grace chiefly, it is a throne of grace, and so to be sued unto; therefore he treats with God by way of intercession.

Of this throne of grace in heaven, the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was the type. And as there the high priest was to bring the blood and mercy-seat together, he was to sprinkle the blood upon it, so Christ. And as the high priest was to go into the holy of holies by blood, so with incense also, (that is prayer), to show that heaven is not opened by mere justice, or bringing only a price in hand for it, but by grace also, and that must be entreated. And therefore when the priest was within that holy place, he was to make a cloud over the mercy-seat, which cloud of incense is prayer, whereof incense was the type, in Revelation 8:3. And thence it is, that Christ has as much work of it still in heaven as ever, though of another kind. He dealt with justice here below, to satisfy it, and here got money enough to pay the debt; but in heaven he deals with mercy. Therefore all the grace he bestows on us, he is said first to receive it, even now when in heaven. In Acts 2:33, it is said of him, after his going to heaven and that he was exalted, that he "received the promise of the Spirit," which in John 14:16, he told them he would "pray for." And this is part of the meaning of that in Psalms 68:18, "He ascended up on high, and received gifts for men," says the Psalmist. The apostle renders it in Ephesians 4:1-32, "gave," but you see it was by "receiving" them first, as fruits of his intercession and asking after his ascending. He is said both to give, as being all of his own purchase, and as having power as a king also both to do and bestow all he does. And yet further he is said to receive all that he gives, because as a priest he intercedes for it, and asks it. Free grace requires this. This is the first thing.

Yes secondly, justice itself might stand a little upon it, though there was enough in Christ his death to satisfy it; yet having been wronged, it stood thus far upon it, as those to whom a debt is due use to do, namely, to have the money brought home to God's dwelling-house, and laid down there. God is resolved not to stoop one bit unto man, no nor to Christ his surety. Justice will not only be satisfied, and have a sufficient ransom collected and paid, as at Christ's death, but he must come and bring his bags up to heaven. Justice will be paid it upon the mercy-seat; for so in the type the blood was to be carried into the holy of holies, and sprinkled upon the mercy-seat. And therefore

his resurrection and ascension were but as the breaking through all enemies, and subduing them, to the end to bring this price or satisfaction to the mercy-seat; and so God having his money by him, might not want wherewithal to pardon sinners. So as the blood of Christ is current money, not only on earth, but in heaven too, whither all is brought, which is for our comfort, that all the treasure which should satisfy God is safely conveyed thither, and our surety with it.

(2.) The second sort of reasons why God ordained Christ's intercession to be joined to his death are taken from what was the best way to effect and make sure our salvation, and secure our hearts therein; and these reasons will show the peculiar influence that intercession has into our salvation, and therein as in the former.

[1.] First in general, God would have our salvation made sure, and us saved all manner of ways, over and over. First, by ransom and price, (as captives are redeemed) which was done by his death, which of itself was enough. For it is said in Hebrews 10:1-39 to "perfect us forever." Secondly, by power and rescue; so in his resurrection, and ascension, and sitting at God's right hand, which also was sufficient. Then, thirdly, again by intercession, a way of favour and entreaty; and this likewise would have been enough, but God would have all ways concur in it, whereof notwithstanding not one could fail; a threefold cord, whereof each twine were strong enough, but all together must of necessity hold.

[2.] Secondly, the whole application of his remedy, both in justifying and saving of us first and last, has a special dependence upon this his intercession. This all divines on all sides do attribute unto it, while they put this difference between the influence of his death, and that of his intercession into our salvation: calling his death medium impetrationis that is, the means of procurement or obtaining it for us; but his intercession medium applicationis, the means of applying all unto us. Christ purchased salvation by the one, but possessed us of it by the other.

Some have attributed the application of justification to his resurrection; but it is much more proper to ascribe it to his intercession, (and what causal influence his resurrection has into our justification, has been afore in the third section declared). But that his eternal priesthood in heaven, and the work of its intercession, is the applying cause of our eternal salvation, in all the parts of it first and last seems to me to be the result of the connection of Hebrews 5:8-10. For having spoken of his obedience and sufferings unto death, Hebrews 5:8, and how he thereby was made perfect, Hebrews 5:9, he says, "and being" thus first "made perfect, he became the author" or applying cause, ἄριστος, "of eternal salvation, unto all them that obey him." And this by his being becomes an eternal priest in heaven, after he was thus perfected by sufferings; for so it follows in Hebrews 5:10, "called of God a high priest, after the order of Melchisedec." And Melchisedec's priesthood was principally the type of his priesthood in heaven, as was before declared.

One leading instance to show that his intercession was to be the applying cause of salvation was given by Christ while he was on earth, thereby manifesting what much more was to be done by him in heaven, through his intercession there. When he was on the cross and as then offering that great sacrifice for sin, he at that time also joined prayers for the justification of those that crucified him: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." So, fulfilling that in Isaiah 53:12, "He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." And the efficacy of that prayer then put up was the cause of the conversion of those three thousand in Acts 2:23, whom the apostle had expressly charged with the crucifying of Christ, "whom you by wicked hands have

taken, crucified, and slain." These were the first-fruits of his intercession, whose prayers still do reap and bring in the rest of the crop, which in all ages is to grow up unto God on earth.

[3.] And more particularly, as the whole application in general, so our justification, in the whole progress of it, depends upon Christ's intercession. As,

First, our first actual or initial justification, which is given us at our first conversion, depends upon Christ's intercession. Therefore in the fore-mentioned prayer on the cross, the thing he prayed for was forgiveness, "Father, forgive them." You heard before that Christ's death affords the matter of our justification, as being that which is imputed, the ransom, the price, the thing itself that satisfies. And that his resurrection was the original act of God's justifying us in Christ. We were virtually justified then in Christ his being justified, as in a common person.

But besides all this, there is a personal or an actual justification to be bestowed upon us that is an accounting and bestowing it upon us in our own persons, which is done when we believe, and it is called (Romans 5:1) a being "justified by faith," and (Romans 5:10) "received the atonement." Now this depends on Christ's intercession and it was typified out by Moses his sprinkling the people with blood, mentioned in Hebrews 9:19, which thing Jesus Christ as a Mediator and Priest does now from heaven. For in Hebrews 12:24, it is said, "You are come to heaven, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," and as it is next subjoined, "to the blood of sprinkling." He shed his blood on the cross on earth, but he sprinkles it now as a priest from heaven. For it is upon Mount Zion, to which (he had said first in the former verse) you are come; and so to Christ as a mediator standing on that mount, and sprinkling from thence his blood. And so therein there is an allusion unto Moses, Christ's type, who sprinkled the people with the blood of that ceremonial covenant, the type of the covenant of grace.

Now, in 1 Peter 1:2, "The sprinkling of his blood," as it is there made the more proper work of Christ himself, in distinction from the other persons, and therefore was done by Moses, who was his type, so is it also put for our first justification. And this sprinkling, as it is there mentioned, is from the virtue of his intercession. And therefore in that place of the Hebrews fore-cited, he attributes an intercession unto it, as the phrase that follows "which speaks better things," does imply, of which more hereafter. Yet concerning this first head, let me add this by way of caution (which I shall presently have occasion to observe) that though this our first justification is to be ascribed to his intercession, yet more eminently intercession is ordained for the accomplishing our salvation, and this other more rarely in the Scripture attributed thereunto.

Secondly, the continuation of our justification depends upon it. And as his intercession is the virtual continuation of his sacrifice, so is it the continuing cause of our justification; which though it be an act done once, as fully as ever, yet is it done over every moment, for it is continued by acts of free grace, and so renewed actually every moment. There is a "standing in grace" by Christ, spoken of in Romans 5:2, as well as a first "access by Christ," and that standing in grace, and continuing in it, is afterwards in Romans 5:10, attributed to his life, that is as it is interpreted in Hebrews 7:25, his "living ever to intercede." We owe our standing in grace every moment to his sitting in heaven and interceding every moment. There is no fresh act of justification goes forth, but there is a fresh act of intercession. And as though God created the world once for all, yet every moment he is said to create, every new act of providence being a new creation. So likewise to justify continually, through his continuing out free grace to justify as at first, and this Christ does by continuing his

intercession; he continues "a priest forever," and so we continue to be justified forever.

Thirdly, there is hereby a full security given us of justification to be continued forever. The danger either must lie in old sins coming into remembrance, or else from sins newly to be committed. Now first, God hereby takes order that no old sins shall come up into remembrance, to trouble his thought; as in the old law, after the priest's going into the holy of holies, their sins are said yet to have done in Hebrews 10:3. And to that end it was that he placed Christ as his remembrancer for us, so near him to take up his thoughts so with his obedience, that our sins might not come into mind. Not that God needed this help to put himself in mind, but only for a formality sake, that things being thus really carried between God and Christ for us, according to a way suiting with our apprehensions, our faith might be strengthened against all suppositions, and fears of after reviving our guilts.

Look therefore as God ordained the rainbow in the heavens, that when he looked on it, he might remember his covenant, never to destroy the world again by water; so he has set Christ as the rainbow about his throne. And look as the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are appointed on earth to "show forth Christ's death," as a remembrancer to us; so is Christ himself appointed in heaven to show forth his death really as a remembrancer thereof to his Father; and indeed, the one is correspondent to the other. Only the papists have perverted the use of the Lord's Supper, by making it on earth a commemorative sacrifice to God, when as it is but a remembrancer thereof to men. And besides their priests therein do take upon themselves this very office of presenting this sacrifice to God, which is proper only to Christ in heaven. But God, when he would make sure not to be tempted to remember our sins any more, nor trouble himself with them, has set his Christ by him to put him in mind of his so pleasing an offering. So the high priest going into the holy of holies was for a memorial, and therein the type of Christ. And this is plainly and expressly made the use of this execution of his priestly office in heaven in Hebrews 8, where the apostle having discoursed of that part of his office, as the chief thing he aimed at in this epistle in Hebrews 8:1; and of the necessity of it in Hebrews 8:3-5; and excellency of it in this respect in Hebrews 8:6. He then shows how from thence the new covenant of pardon came to be sure and steadfast that God "will remember our sins no more," Hebrews 8:12, which he there brings in as the proper use of this doctrine, and of this part of his priesthood.

Secondly, as by reason of intercession God remembers not old sins, so likewise he is not provoked by new. For though God, when he justifies us, should forgive all old sins past forever, so as never to remember them more, yet new ones would break forth, and he could not but take notice of them. And so long as sin continues, there is need of a continuing intercession. Therefore for the securing us in this, it is said in Romans 5:10 that "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Where we see that his death is in some more special manner said to procure reconciliation at first for sins of unregeneracy, and to bring us to Christ; but then his life and intercession, or living to intercede, is said to keep God and us friends, that we may never fall out more. What Christ did on earth, does more especially procure reconciliation for sins which we do in the state of nature; so as notwithstanding them, God resolves to turn us from that state and draw us to Christ. But sins which we commit after conversion, though pardoned also by his death, yet the pardon of them is more especially attributed to his life and intercession, as a daily preservative, a continual plaster (as some call it) to heal such sins.

So that it would seem that God out of his eternal love does bring us to Christ, and draws us to him through the beholding the reconciliation wrought by his death, and so gives us at first conversion unto Christ. And we being brought to him, he sprinkles us with his blood; and then God says to him, Now do you look to them, that they and I fall out no more. And to that end Christ takes our cause in hand by that eternal priesthood of his, and from that time begins more especially to intercede for us. And thus sins after the state of grace may be said more eminently to be taken away by that part of his priesthood which he now in heaven performs.

That place also in 1 John 2:1-2 seems to make this the great end of intercession, "If any man sin" (that is, if any of the company of believers, to whom alone he wrote), "we have an advocate with the Father;" so as intercession principally serves for sins to come, or committed after grace received. Thus also in his prayer in John 17:20, which was left as a pattern of his intercession in heaven, he prays for his elect as believers, "I pray for them that shall believe through their word." Not but that sins after conversion are taken away by his death and sins before it by his intercession also, for Christ interceded for those who crucified him, and by virtue of that intercession, those three thousand were converted (as was observed). But the meaning only is that yet more eminently the work of reconciliation for sins before conversion is attributed to his death, and for sins after conversion to his intercession. Even as the persons of the Trinity, though they have all a like hand in all the work of our salvation, yet we see that one part is attributed more to one person, and another to another.

(3.) A third sort of reasons why God ordained this work of intercession to accomplish our salvation by, does respect Christ himself, whose honor and glory and the perpetuation of it in our hearts, God had as well in his eye in the ordering all the workings of our salvation, as much as his own, "that all might honor the Son as well as the Father," as Christ himself speaks. Now, therefore, for the maintaining and upholding his glory, and the comings in thereof, did God ordain, after all that he had done for us here below, this work of intercession in heaven to be added to all the rest, for the perfecting of our salvation. As,

First, it became him, and was for his honor, that none of his offices should be vacant or lie idle, and he want employment in them. All offices have work to accompany them, and all work has honor, as its reward to arise out of it. And therefore when he had done all that was to be done on earth, as appertaining unto the merit of our salvation, he appoints this full and perpetual work in heaven, for the applying and possessing us of salvation. And that as a priest, by praying and interceding in the merit of that one oblation of himself, God would have Christ never to be out of office, nor out of work. And this very reason is more than intimated in Hebrews 7:24. "This man, because he continues ever, has an unchangeable priesthood," (or, as Hebrews 7:21 expounds it) forever. And the work of his priesthood is interpreted in Hebrews 7:25, to be "ever to make intercession." The meaning is, that God would not have him continue to be a priest in title only, or in respect only of a service past. And so to have only the honor of priesthood perpetuated to him out of the remembrance of what he once had done, as great generals have, even in time of peace, the glory of some great battle fought, continued to them in their titles, or rewards forever. But God would have him have, as the renown of the old, so a perpetual spring of honor by new work, and employment in that office which he is continually doing, so to preserve the verdure of his glory ever fresh and green, and therefore ordained a continual work for him. And the sum of the apostle's reasoning is this, that seeing himself was to be forever, so should his work and priesthood be, that

so his honor might be forever. So Hebrews 7:28 concludes it, "consecrated or perfected for evermore."

Secondly, for the same reason also, it became him that the whole work of our salvation, first and last, and every part of it, every step and degree of accomplishment of it, should be so ordered as he should continue still to have as great and continual a hand in every part, even to the laying of the top stone thereof, as he had in laying the first foundation and corner stone thereof. And this you have expressed in Hebrews 12:2, "Looking to Jesus the beginner and perfecter of our faith." Two things had been said of him, as two causes of two effects; and we must look to him in both. [1.] He is to be looked at as dying, "enduring the cross," as there he is set forth. [2.] As "sitting at God's right hand and interceding," as that whole Epistle had represented him. We are to look at these two as causes of a double effect, to look at his dying as that which is the "beginning of our faith," (so according to the Greek, and the margin of our translation), and at his sitting at God's right hand as an intercessor, for the "finishing of our faith" thereby, and so of our final salvation. For as Christ's work began in his life and death, which is put for all his obedience here below, so our first believing (as was said) begins by virtue of his death at first. And as his work ends in his intercession, and sitting at God's right hand, so answerably is our faith and salvation perfected by it, that thus he might be left out in nothing, but be "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, to whom be glory forever." So that we are to look upon our Mediator Christ, as doing as much work for us in heaven at this instant, as ever he did on earth; here suffering, but there praying and presenting his sufferings. All his work was not done, when he had done here; that work here was indeed the harder piece of the two, yet soon dispatched. But his work in heaven, though sweeter far, yet lies on his hands forever; therefore let us leave out none of these in our believing on him.

01.22. Section Five :: Chapter Four

Section Five :: Chapter Four

The second head: the great security the consideration of Christ's intercession affords to faith for our justification, showed, 1. By way of evidence; by two things.

And so I come (as in the former I have done) to show what strong grounds of security and triumph our faith may raise from this last act,

namely Christ's intercession for us in the point of justification; "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that intercedes." And was the second general propounded and therein to proceed also according to the method taken up in the former.

What assurance by way of evidence this does afford unto faith of non-condemnation.

What powerful efficacy and influence this must be of that Christ intercedes.

First, to handle it by way of evidence. That Christ intercedes is a strong evidence to our faith by two demonstrations.

(1.) From the very intent and scope of the work of intercession itself, and what it is ordained by God to effect.

(2.) From the end of Jesus Christ himself, who lives in heaven on purpose to intercede for us. Our salvation it is both finis operis, the end of the work, and finis ipsius operantis, in some respect the end of Christ himself, the Interceder; and both these do lay the greatest engagement that can be upon Christ, to accomplish our salvation through his intercession.

(1.) For the work itself. Intercession, you have seen, is a part of the office of Christ's priesthood, as well as his dying and offering himself. Now all the works of Christ are and must be perfect in their kind (even as God's are, of which says Moses in Deuteronomy 32:4, "His work is perfect"), for otherwise he should not be a perfect priest. Now the perfection of every work lies in order to its end for which it is ordained; so as that work is perfect that attains to such an end as it is ordained for, and that imperfect which does not.

Now the immediate direct end of Christ's intercession is the actual salvation of believers elect, and persons whom he died for. The end of his death is adoptio juris, purchasing a right unto salvation; but of intercession, procuratio ipsius salutis, the very saving us actually, and putting us in possession of heaven. To this purpose, observe how the Scripture speaks concerning Christ's death in Hebrews 9:12, "He entered into heaven, having obtained redemption," or found redemption, that is, by way of right, by procuring full title to it. But of his intercession it says in Hebrews 7:25, that by it "Christ is able to save to the utmost them that come unto God by him." That is actually to save and put them in possession of happiness; that is made the end and scope of intercession there and that phrase (ἐν τῷ παντελεστάτῳ) to the utmost, notes out a saving indeed, a doing it not by halves, but wholly, and thoroughly, and completely; ἐν τῷ παντελεστάτῳ is to

save altogether, to give our salvation its last act and complement, that is the true force of the phrase, even to effect it to the last of it, all that is to be done about it. Thus also Romans 5:9-10, "We are justified by his death, but saved (namely, completely) by his life;" that is his living to intercede. So that the very salvation of believers is it that is the work, the $\tau\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ of Christ's intercession.

Now what security does this afford? For to be saved is more than to be justified; for it is the actual possessing us of heaven. So then do but grant that Christ's intercession is as perfect a work in its kind as Christ's death is in its kind, and you must necessarily be saved. The perfection of Christ's death, and the work thereof, wherein lay it (as on Christ's part to be performed) but in this, that he should lay down a ransom sufficient to purchase salvation for such and such persons as God would save? And so the perfection of it lies in the worth and sufficiency of it, to that end it was ordained for. It being a perfect sacrifice in itself, able to purchase eternal redemption for us, and to make us salvable against all sins and the demerits of them, and to give us right to heaven; and had it wanted a grain of this, it had then been imperfect.

Now then, answerably for intercession, the comfort of our souls is that the proper work that lies upon Christ therein is the complete saving those very persons, and the possessing them of heaven. This is the $\tau\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$, the proper work thereof. To outvie the demerits of our sins was the perfection of his death, but to save our souls is the end and perfection of his intercession. Our sins are the object of the one, and our souls of the other. To that end was intercession added to his death, that we might not have a right to heaven in vain, of which we might be dispossessed. Now therefore, upon this ground, if Christ should fail of our souls' salvation, yes, but of any one degree of glory (purchased by his death to any soul) which that soul should want, this work of his would then want and fall short so much of its perfection. That place in Hebrews 7:1-28, says not only that Christ will do his utmost to save, but save to the utmost.

You may say, my infidelity and obstinacy may hinder it, though Christ does what in him lies.

Well, but intercession undertakes the work absolutely; for Christ prays not conditionally in heaven, "If men shall believe," as we do here on earth; not for propositions only, but for persons. And therefore he prays to cure that very infidelity. Now, as if a physician undertakes to cure a madman (if he knows what he does), he considers the madness of his patient and how he will tear off what is applied, and refuse all physic. He therefore resolves to deal with him accordingly, and so to order him as he shall not hinder that help which he is about to afford him, and so upon those terms he undertakes the cure: even so does Christ, when by intercession he undertakes to save us sinners. He considers us what we are, and how it is with us, what unbelief is in us, yet undertakes the matter; and so to save us is the scope and end of this his work, which if he should not accomplish, he after all this should not be a perfect priest.

It was the fault that God found with the old priesthood, that it "made nothing perfect," Hebrews 7:19. And therefore in Hebrews 7:12, the "law was changed," and the "priesthood was changed" together with it, as there you have it. Now in like manner Christ's priesthood should be imperfect, if it made not the elect perfect, and then God must yet seek for another covenant, and a more perfect priest; for this would be found faulty, as the other was. So then our comfort is, if Christ approve himself to be a perfect priest, we who come to God by him must be perfectly saved. It is in this office of his priesthood, and all the parts of it, as in his kingly office. The work of his kingly

office is to subdue all enemies, to the last man, even fully to do the thing; and not only to have power, and to go about to do it, so as if there should be any one enemy left unsubdued, then Christ should not be a perfect king. The same holds in his priestly office also; he should not be a perfect priest, if but one soul of the elect, or those he intercedes for, were left unsaved. And this is indeed the top and highest consideration for our comfort in this argument, that intercession leaves us not until it has actually and completely saved us; and this is it that makes the apostle put a further thing upon intercession here in the text, than upon that other, his "sitting at God's right hand." So as we are in this respect as sure of attaining unto the utmost glory of our salvation, as Christ to have the full honor of his priesthood. A man saved is more than justified; and Christ cannot reckon his work, nor himself a perfect priest, until we are saved. "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that intercedes."

(2.) Besides the consideration of the nature and scope of this work itself, which Christ, upon his honor of acquitting himself as a perfect priest, has undertaken, there is in the second place a farther consideration that argues him engaged by a stronger obligation, even the loss of his own honor, his office, and all, if he should not effect salvation for those that come to God by him; so much does it concern him to effect it. Of all the works that ever he did, he is most engaged in this. It will not only be the loss of a business which concerns him and of so much work, but himself must be lost in it too and the reason is that he intercedes as a Surety. He was not only a "surety on earth" in dying and so was to look to do that work thoroughly, and to be sure to lay down a price sufficient, or else himself had gone for it. He pawned in that work, not only his honor, but even his life and soul to effect it, or lose himself in it; but he is a surety now also in heaven, by interceding. This you may find to be the scope of Hebrews, by observing the coherence of Hebrews 7:22 (wherein he is called a "surety") with Hebrews 7:23-25 that title and appellation is there given him, in relation unto this part of his office especially. And although it holds true of all parts of his office whatsoever, yet the coherence carries it, that that mention there of his being a surety does in a more special manner refer unto his intercession, as appears both by the words before and after. In the words before (Hebrews 7:21), the apostle speaks of this his "priesthood, which is forever," and then subjoins (Hebrews 7:22), "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." And then after also he discoursed of and instanced in his intercession, and his continuing a priest forever in that work, so in Hebrews 7:23-25, "Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost, seeing he ever lives to make intercession." Yes, he is therefore engaged to save to the utmost, because even in interceding (for which he is said there to live) he is a surety.

He was a surety on earth, and is a surety still in heaven; only with this double difference, which arises first from the different things which he undertook for them, while on earth and for which now he undertakes in heaven. That on earth he was a surety to pay a price so sufficient as should satisfy God's justice; which having paid, he was discharged (in that respect, and so far) of that obligation, and his bond for that was cancelled. But so as still he remains a surety, bound in another obligation as great, even for the bringing to salvation those whom he died for; for their persons remained still unsaved, though the debt was then paid; and until they be saved, he is not quit of this suretyship and engagement. And secondly, these two suretyships do differ also by the differing pawns which he was engaged to forfeit, by failing in each of these works: for the payment of our debt, his soul itself lay at the stake, which he offered up for sin; but for the saving of the persons all his honor in heaven lies at stake. He lives to intercede. He possesses heaven upon

these terms and it is one end of his life; so that as he must have sunk under God's wrath, if he had not paid the debt, his soul standing in our souls' stead, so he must yet quit heaven, and give over living there, if he brings us not thither. It is true, he intercedes not as a common person (which relation in all other fore-mentioned acts he still bore; thus in his death he was both a common person and a surety representing us, so as we died in him. So likewise in his resurrection we arose with him, and in his ascension we ascended, but yet he intercedes not under that relation, namely, not as a common person), for we must not, cannot be said to intercede in him, for this last work lay not upon us to do. He does it wholly for us indeed, but not in our stead or as that which we should have done, though on our behalf; for it being the last, the crown of all his works of mediation, is therefore proper to him as Mediator, and his sole work as such.

Thus in like manner the first work of incarnation and answerably the last of intercession, in neither of these was Christ a common person representing others, though a common Saviour of others in these. For the one was the foundation of all, the other the accomplishment of all, and so it is proper only to himself as mediator. But although he intercedes not as it common person, as representing us in what we were to have done for ourselves, yet so as that other relation of a surety is continued still in that work. He stands engaged therein as an undertaker for us and so as a surety intercedes: such as Judah was for Benjamin in Genesis 43:9, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shall thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever." So says Christ for us. And therefore sponsio, or undertaking for us, is by divines made a great part of this part of his office. Now the consideration of this may the more secure us, for the more peculiarly and solely it is his work, the more his honor lies at stake, and the more he will set himself to effect it. Yes and being by way of suretyship, it concerns him yet more nearly, for he has engaged, and if he should fail, might even lose that honor which he has now in heaven.

01.23. Section Five :: Chapter Five

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The prevalency of Christ's intercession, and the powerful influence it has into our salvation, demonstrated, first, from the greatness of Christ, and his favour with God.

Thus we have heard what matter of support to our faith, by way of evidence, this must necessarily afford that Christ intercedes. Let us consider now what further assurance will arise to our faith, from the influence which Christ's intercession must necessarily have, to effect and carry on our salvation to an assured issue. The work of intercession being effectually to procure our salvation, and to continue the pardon of our sins, and hold us in favor with God, therefore the influence and energy it has herein must necessarily lie in that potency and prevalence which this intercession of Christ has with God, to obtain anything at his hands for us, and so to continue his favor towards us. Now, to raise up our apprehensions how potent and prevalent this intercession of Christ must necessarily be, let us consider both the Person interceding, namely Christ; and the Person with whom Christ intercedes for this favor, which is God. The one the Son, the other the Father and so the greatness of Christ with God, and the graciousness of God to Christ, together with the oneness of wills and unity of affections in them both, so that Christ will be sure to ask nothing which his Father will deny, and his Father will not deny anything which he shall ask.

(1.) Now first, for the greatness of Christ the Intercessor, that is his greatness with God the Father. This is often urged in this epistle to the Hebrews, to persuade confidence in us, in this very point in hand; thus in Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 4:16, "Seeing we have a great high priest, let us come boldly." And while great and priest are thus joined together, the more comfort and boldness we may have, the greater he is, for he is a priest in relation to his dealing with God for our pardon. As he is a priest, he deals in nothing else; and the greater the person is who uses his interest herein, the better, the sooner he will prevail. And he is there said to be great, because great with God in prevailing with him; and indeed so great, as it is impossible but he should prevail. It was the greatness of his person which did and does put such an influence into his death that it was, as you heard, a price more than enough to satisfy justice, even to overflowing. And therefore, "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died." And the greatness of his person must necessarily have as much influence to make intercession prevalent. In a matter of intercession, the person that intercedes prevails more than any other consideration whatsoever. We see what great friends do procure oftentimes with but a word speaking, even that which money, no, nor anything could have obtained. Now Christ must necessarily be great with God in many respects.

[1.] First, in respect of the nearness of his alliance to him. He is the natural Son of God, God of God, and therefore certain to prevail with him. This is diligently still put in, almost in all places, where this part of his priesthood (his intercession) is mentioned, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. So in Hebrews 4:14, "We have a great high priest entered into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." So in Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 7:28 compared, the apostle having said in Hebrews 7:25, that "he is able to save to the utmost, seeing he ever lives to make intercession," he does devolve this ability

of his to save (ultimately) upon his being the Son. Thus in Hebrews 7:28, in the end of that discourse, this is made as the basis of all: "The law (says he) makes men high priests which have infirmity," which infirmity or disability of theirs is mentioned in opposition unto what he had just before spoken of the great ability of this our high priest in his interceding, Hebrews 7:25, in those words, "He is able to save to the utmost." Those priests whom the ceremonial law made, Aaron and his sons, are unable to save, they have infirmity. Now what is it in him that makes this difference, and him so able above what they were? "The word of the oath makes the Son (says he), who is perfected (as you have it in the Greek and margin) for evermore." He mentions this his sonship principally in relation to his intercession, which there he had discoursed of. Intercession is a carrying on our salvation in a way of grace and favour, as his death was by way of satisfaction.

And answerably it may be observed in the Scripture, that as the all-sufficiency of the satisfaction of his death is still put upon his being God, and so upon the greatness of his person considered in respect of his nature or essence, namely his Godhead; so in like manner, that the prevalency of his intercession is founded upon the nearness of his relation unto God, his alliance to him and the being his Son. Thus for the first. When redemption is spoken of, the sufficiency of the price is eminently put upon his God-head, "the blood of God." Thus also in Hebrews 9:1-28, where when he had (Hebrews 9:12) shown how Christ had purchased and obtained a "perfect redemption," he then argues the sufficiency of it from his Godhead in Hebrews 9:13-14, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself?"

The eternal Spirit is his Godhead. Thus answerably, when he speaks of the prevailing of his intercession in heaven, he puts it upon his sonship, "Jesus the Son." He mentions the nearness of the relation of his person to God, as being that which draws with it that great respect, and favour, and grace, he being by this great with God, as great in himself. All matters of intercession are carried, we know, by way of favor. And therefore look how prevalent in a way of merit his being God makes his death in its kind, no less prevalent does his being the Son of God make his intercession in its kind, namely in a way of obtaining grace and mercy; yes, so prevalent of itself it is that we might build upon it alone, even as much as upon his death. And indeed, Christ intercedes not only in the virtue and strength of his satisfaction, though in that also, and of his obedience to his Father but also in the strength of his relation as a Son who pleads his own grace and interest in God, as he is his Son, which is a consideration that does always actually exist and abide.

Whereas his obedience, though perfect, was but once offered up and its existence is but virtual; but he continues a Son forever, not virtually only, but actually. And therefore it is added in Hebrews 7:28, that the "gospel ordained the Son, perfected forever." The meaning whereof is that he is not only a priest, perfected in the time past by that perfect offering once made, but in that he is the Son, he remains a perfect priest forever, for time to come; whom therefore no imperfection in his office, no failing or missing of his suits can befall. So as if it could be supposed that his obedience, because past so long ago, might be forgotten; yet never this, that he is a Son. That forever abides and of itself were enough to prevail. And how effectual must the intercession of such a Son be, who is so great a Son of so great a Father, equal with him and the express image of his person? Never any Son so like, and in so peculiarly a transcendent manner a Son, as the relation of sonship among men is but a shadow of it! Christ is one with his Father, as he often

speaks; and therefore, if his Father should deny him anything, he should then cease to be one with him, he must then "deny himself," which God can never do. He is in this respect "the Beloved," as he is called in Ephesians 1:6, as on whom (originally and primarily) all the beams of God's love do fall. Solomon (the type of Christ) was "the beloved of God," 2 Samuel 12:24, and had his name from thence (namely) Jedidiah, that is "beloved of the Lord." And to show how beloved he was, God, when he came first into his kingdom, bid him "ask what he should give him," 1 Kings 3:5. Now the like God says to Christ, when come first to his kingdom also in Psalms 2:8, "Ask of me, and I will give thee," namely, when "he had set him as King on his holy hill," Psalms 2:6. And of him he says, "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him." God bids us therefore and upon that respect to hear him; and that speech was but the echo of his own heart, in that he himself is so well pleased with him for this that he is his Son, as he himself will hear him in everything. Yes, and is so pleased with him, as that although Christ had never died nor obeyed the law, yet simply because he is his Son, he has so full an acquiescency of all desires in him, and complacency of delights, that he could deny him nothing. How prevalent then must Christ's intercession must be, though there were nothing else to be considered!

And that God had indeed this as one main consideration upon which he made him a priest thus to intercede, those words do testify in Hebrews 5:5-6, he that said unto him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." As he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." These latter words are not only a paraphrase (as some think) merely to show that he that said, "Christ was his Son," said also, "he was a priest;" but it is to show the foundation of his call to that office. The great consideration that fitted him for it was that he was God's Son; especially that fitted him for that part of his priesthood which was to remain "forever," of which that Psalms 110:1-7 and the Epistle to the Hebrews do especially speak. Neither is the meaning of the fore-cited place only to show that in that he was God's Son, it was his birthright to be a priest, so as if God would have any priest at all it must be he, and so upon that consideration, he that said to him, "Thou art my Son," said, "Thou art a priest." And that being his right, he therefore called him to it because he was his Son, for according to the law of nature, the eldest of the family was to be priest; and so Christ, even as God-man, being the "first-born of every creature," and the natural first begotten Son of God, had right to be the prime leader of that great chorus in that eternal worship in heaven. That (I say) is not all the meaning of those words, nor all that God considered in it, when he thus ordained him to be a priest, but he had a further and more peculiar respect unto this especial part of his priesthood, his intercession (as that clause forever imports). As for which, he being his natural Son so nearly allied to him, would transcendently fit him, and give such an omnipotent prevalency and effectualness to his requests, that he would be the most absolute perfect priest forever in this respect that could be.

That as God himself is perfect and his power irresistible, so his priesthood through this relation might be perfect also, and his requests undeniable. Thus did God order it to strengthen our faith. And that indeed, God did consider this relation of his to him to this very end is evident by that of the Psalms 2:1-12, out of which that saying, "Thou art my Son," is cited. Psalms 2:7-8, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," and what follows? "Ask of me, and I will give thee..." He connects both these together, namely intercession, that part of his priestly office of asking, with his sonship. For that is it which moves God to grant all that he asks. God loves Christ as he loves himself, and therefore can deny him nothing, as he cannot deny himself. And so, by the way, this

clears the ground of the apostle's quoting those words of Psalms 2:1-12 in Hebrews 5:1-14, as a proof of Christ's call to the priesthood, which interpreters have been troubled how to make out. For (as you have seen) that speech, "Thou art my Son, ask..." is all one as if he had said, "Thou art a priest." And so was as fit and full a place to prove his being a priest in the Holy Ghost's intent, as is that other quoted with it out of Psalms 110:1-7, though uttered in more express words, "Thou art a priest forever." Both speeches come to one in both places, the Holy Ghost especially aiming in both at that part of his priesthood in heaven, his intercession. In the one speaking of him after he is set upon God's hill as king (so Psalms 2:6); and in the other, after he is set down at God's right hand (so Psalms 110:1-2). Yes, and this his favor with his Father and intercession alone, might have procured pardon for us sinners, but that God's will was to have justice satisfied.

[2.] And secondly, he intercedes not only as a Son (and in that respect a priest perfect enough forever), but also as a Son who has been obedient to his Father, and has done at his request, and for his sake, the greatest service for him, and the most willingly that ever was done. And you all know how much former services done do always forward suits. In Hebrews 5:8-10, it is said that "though he were a Son, yet he learned obedience," and thereby "became perfect." The apostle had said in the verses before that in respect of his being his Son, God had called him to this office, as one that was thereby sufficiently qualified to be a priest that might prevail. And yet in these verses he further adds that though he was a Son and in that respect a priest perfect enough, yet he was to be obedient also, and thereby yet to become, in a further respect, a perfect high priest also, even in respect of service done and obedience performed. And so shows that he comes to have a further perfection and power of prevailing in his priestly office added to that relation of sonship spoken of in Hebrews 5:1-14. And therefore it follows that he being thus become perfect, namely through his obedience, "he became author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, called of God a high priest forever." That therefore which makes him yet more potent, that he may be sure to prevail, is his obedience and service done; and this alone also were enough to carry anything. And both these considerations, of his sonship and obedience, as giving an efficacy to his intercession, you have also in that, Hebrews 7:26-28, he had spoken of the power of intercession. Hebrews 7:24-25, how he was "able to save to the utmost;" and then, in the following verse, he shows the ground of it, first in his fore-past "obedience," in Hebrews 7:26.

First, active, "for such a high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled." And such a priest he was, and therefore able thus to save by his intercession. For such a one who was holy, harmless, and no guile found in his mouth, what requests come out of such lips must necessarily be accepted.

Then, secondly, he mentions his passive obedience in Hebrews 7:27, "He offered up himself once," and thereby made so full a satisfaction, as he needed not to do it but once. And in the strength of both these he intercedes, for to that purpose does the mention of both these there come in. And then he adds that other which we before insisted on, that he is the Son, which follows in the next words in Hebrews 7:28. And accordingly you shall find Christ himself urging this his obedience, as the foundation of all those his suits and requests for us that follow after. So in that last prayer in John 17:1-26 (which is, as it were, a pattern or instance of his intercession for us in heaven), "I have glorified you on earth, I have finished the work you gave me," John 17:4. And whereas two things may be distinctly considered, in that his obedience.

First, the worth of it, as a price in the valuation of justice itself; secondly, the desert of favour and grace with God, which such an obedience and service done for his sake, might in a way of kindness expect to find at his hands. You may for your comfort consider, that besides what the worth of it as a price, which I shall urge in the next chapter, might exact of justice itself between two strangers (as we use to say), he having well paid for all that he asks; he has moreover, deserved thus much grace and favour with his Father, in that this obedience was done for his sake and at his request; and this it calls for even in way of remuneration and requital, as of one kindness with the like. That therefore his Father should hear him in all the requests that ever he should make, yes so transcendent was the obedience which he did to his Father, in giving himself to death at his request (and it was done at God's sole entreaty, "Lo! I come to do your will"), as he can never out-ask the merit of this his service. And which may yet further encourage us herein, he has nothing at all left to ask for himself simply, for he has need of nothing. So that all his favour remains entire, for to be laid forth for sinners, and employed for them. And then add this thereto, that all he can ask for them is less, yes far less than the service which he has done to God comes to; our lives, and pardon, and salvation, these are not enough, they are too small a requital. So that besides his natural grace and interest which he has with his Father, as he is his Son, which can never be lessened, this his acquired favor by his obedience must necessarily make him prevail, seeing it can never be acquitted to the full. Some divines put so much efficacy in this that they say, Christ's very being in heaven, who once did this service, and so putting God in mind of it by his very presence, is all that intercession that the Scripture speaks of; so sufficient they think this alone to be.

01.24. Section Five :: Chapter Six

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Secondly, the prevalency of Christ's intercession demonstrated from the righteousness of the cause he pleads even in justice; how forcible the cry of his blood is, himself appearing to intercede with it.

Besides favor and grace in all these respects, he can and does plead justice and righteousness, and is able so to carry it; so you have it in 1 John 2:1-2, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." An advocate has place only in a cause of justice, and this Christ's advocateship is executed by pleading his own satisfaction. So it follows, "who is a propitiation for our sins;" and can plead his own righteousness so far that justice itself shall be fain to save the worst of sinners. He can turn justice itself for them, and handle matters so as justice shall be as forward to save them as any other attribute. So that if God be said to be "righteous in forgiving us our sins, if we do but confess them" (as in 1 John 1:9), then much more when "Jesus Christ the righteous" shall intercede for the pardon of them, as he adds in 1 John 2:1, and this if he will be just. The worst case he will make a good one, not with coloring it over as cunning lawyers do, or extenuating things; but with pleading that righteousness, which being put into the opposite balance, shall cast it for you, be there never so many sins weighed against it. Yes, and he will be just in it too and carry all by mere righteousness and equity.

In the explication of this branch, my purpose is not to insist upon the demonstration of that all-sufficient fullness that is in Christ's satisfaction, such as may in justice procure our pardon and salvation (because it will more fitly belong to another discourse), but I shall absolve this point in hand by two things which are proper to this head of intercession.

[1.] First, by showing how that there is even in respect to God's justice a powerful voice of intercession attributed unto Christ's blood, and how prevalent that must necessarily be in the ears of the righteous God.

[2.] Secondly, especially when Christ himself shall join with that cry and intercession of his blood, himself in heaven appearing and interceding in the strength of it.

[1.] For the first, the apostle in Hebrews 12:24, does ascribe a voice, an appeal, an intercession unto the blood of Christ in heaven. "The blood of sprinkling" (says he) "speaks better things than the blood of Abel." He makes Christ's very blood an advocate to speak for us, though Christ himself were silent, as he says in another case, "Abel, though dead, yet speaks," Hebrews 11:4. Many other things are said to cry in Scripture (and I might show how the cry of all other things do meet in this), but blood has the loudest cry of all things else, in the ears of the Lord of Hosts, the Judge of all the world, as he is in Hebrews 12:23. Neither has any cry the ear of God's justice more than that of blood. "The voice of your brother's blood," says God to Cain, "cries unto me from the ground," Genesis 4:10. Now in that speech of the apostle fore-cited, is the allusion made unto the blood of Abel and the cry thereof. And he illustrates the cry of Christ's blood for us, by the cry

of that blood of Abel against Cain, it "speaks better things than the blood of Abel." And his scope therein is by an antithesis, or way of opposition, to show that Christ's blood calls for greater good things to be bestowed on us for whom it was shed, than Abel's blood did for evil things, and vengeance against Cain, by whom it was shed. For look how loud the blood of one innocent cries for justice against another that murdered him; so loud will the blood of one righteous, who by the appointment and permission of a supreme judge has been condemned for another, cry for his release and non-condemnation, for whom he died. And the more righteous he was, who laid down his life for another, the louder still is that cry, for it is made in the strength of all that worth which was in him, whose blood was shed. Now to set forth the power of this cry of Christ's blood with justice, let us compare it with that cry of Abel's blood in these two things, wherein it will be found infinitely to exceed it in force and loudness.

First, even the blood of the wickedest man on earth, if innocently shed, does cry and has a power with justice against him who murdered him. Had Abel murdered Cain, Cain's blood would have cried and called upon God's justice against Abel. But Abel's blood (there is an emphasis in that), Abel's, who was a saint and the first martyr in God's calendar, and so his blood cries according to the worth that was in him. Now "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and the blood of one of them cries louder than the blood of all mankind besides. Now from this I argue, if the blood of a saint cries so, what must the blood of the King of saints (as Christ is called in Revelation 15:3), then do? If the blood of one member of Christ's body, what will then the blood of the head, far more worth than that whole body? How does it fill heaven and earth with outcries, until the promised intent of its shedding be accomplished! And (as the antithesis carries it) look how the blood of Abel cried for the ruin and condemnation of his brother Cain; so does Christ's blood on the contrary for our pardon and non-condemnation; and so much louder, by how much his blood was of more worth than Abel's was. This was the "blood of God;" so Acts 20:28, "Who therefore shall condemn?" But,

Secondly, Christ's blood has in its cry here a further advantage of Abel's blood attributed to it. For that cried but from earth, "from the ground," where it lay shed and that but for an answerable earthly punishment on Cain, as he was a man upon the earth. But Christ's blood is carried up to heaven; for as the high priest carried the blood of the sacrifices into the holy of holies, so has Christ virtually carried his blood into heaven, Hebrews 9:12. And this is intimated in this place also, as by the coherence will appear. For all the other particulars (of which this is one), whereto he says the saints are come, they are all in heaven. "You are come (says he, Hebrews 12:22) to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." All which things are in heaven, neither names he any other than such; and then adds, "and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks." As a thing both speaking in heaven, and besprinkled from heaven, yes wherewith heaven is all besprinkled, as the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was, because sinners are to come thither. This blood therefore cries from heaven, it is next unto God who sits judge there, it cries in his very ears; whereas the cry of blood from the ground is further off, and so though the cry thereof may come up to heaven, yet the blood itself comes not up thither, as Christ already is. Abel's blood cried for vengeance to come down from heaven, but Christ's blood cries us up into heaven; like to that voice, Revelation 11:12, "Come up hither." So in John 17:24, "Where I am, let them be" for whom this blood was shed.

But though this speaking, this voice and intercession, be attributed to his blood, yet it is but in a metaphorical and improper (though real) sense; as also that this blood is in heaven, is spoken though in a real yet not a proper sense. Some divines of all sides, both popish and protestant, would make the whole work of intercession to be only metaphorical. It is true indeed, the voice and intercession of his blood apart considered, is but metaphorical (I grant), and yet real. Such a voice as those groans are that are attributed to the whole creation in Romans 8:22. But intercession as an act of Christ himself, joined with this voice of his blood, is most properly and truly such.

[2.] Therefore, in the second place, add to this Christ's own intercession also, which was the second thing propounded, that Christ by his own prayers seconds this cry of his blood. That not only the blood of Christ does cry, but that Christ himself being alive does join with it. How forcible and prevalent must all this be supposed to be! The blood of a man slain does cry, though the man remain dead, even as of Abel it is said (though to another purpose), that "being dead he yet speaks," Hebrews

But Christ lives and appears, *Virit et in cælum cælorum venit*. He follows the suit, pursues the hue and cry of his blood himself. His being alive, puts a life into his death. It is not in this as it was in that other, the first Adam's sin and disobedience. Adam, although he himself had been annihilated when he died, yet he having set the stock of our nature going in propagation of children, his sin would have defiled and condemned them to the end of the world, and the force of it to condemn is neither furthered nor lessened by his subsisting and being, or his not being; it receives no assistance from his personal life, one way or other. And the reason is, because his sin condemns us in a natural and necessary way; but the death of Christ and his blood shed, these saving us in a way of grace and favour unto Christ himself and for his sake, that very being alive of Christ, that shed this blood, adds an infinite acceptance to it with God, and moves him the more to hear the cry of it, and to regard it. In a matter of favour to be done for the sake of another man, or in a suit or matter of justice that concerns another who is interested in it, that man's being in *viris*, his being alive, puts a life into the cause. If David would have respect to Jonathan (when dead) in his children, he would much more if himself had been alive. God made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to remember their seed after them; and why? They are alive, and were to live forever; and though dead, shall rise again. So Christ reasons from it in Matthew 22:32, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God is the God of the living (says he), and not of the dead," and so "though Abraham be ignorant of his children" (as the prophet speaks) and should not intercede for them, yet because Abraham's soul lives, and is not extinct (as the Sadducees thought), but shall live again at the resurrection, therefore God remembers and respects his covenant with them; for he is a God of the living, and so his covenant holds with them while they live. The old covenant of the first Testament ran in the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—"the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"—but this new covenant runs in the name of Christ, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," so Ephesians 1:3. And so he becomes our God and our Father in him. And God being thus our Father, because Christ's Father, and Christ (in whose name the covenant runs) being alive, and God by covenant the God of a living, not of a dead Christ, this therefore works effectually with him to respect his blood and hear the cry of it. And this, though Christ were absent, much more then when he is present also and on purpose "appears in the presence of God for us," as it is in Hebrews 9:24. He is alive and so able to follow his own suit, and will be sure to see to it, and to second the cry of his blood, if it should not be heard.

To illustrate this by the help of the former comparison begun. If as Abel's blood cries, so also it proves that Abel's soul lives to cry that both his cause cries and himself lives to follow it. So that the cry of Abel's blood is seconded with the cry of Abel's soul that lives, how doubly forcible must this necessarily be? And thus indeed you have it in Revelation 6:9, where it is said that "The souls of them which were slain for the testimony which they held, cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not avenge our blood?'" Yes, see that not only their blood cries, but their souls live, and live to cry. And it is not spoken metaphorically of their souls, but what is truly done by them now in heaven, it being mentioned to show how and by what God was moved to bring vengeance on the heathenish empire of Rome that had shed their blood.

Now not only Christ's soul (as theirs) lives to cry, but his whole person; for he is risen again, and lives to intercede forever. In Revelation 1:18, Christ appearing to John, when he would speak but one speech that should move all in him, he says but this, "I am he that lives, and was dead," and died for you. And whose heart does it not move to read it with faith? And does it not move his Father, think you, who was the chief cause and motioner of his death, to think, my Son that was dead and died at my request for sinners is now alive again, and lives to intercede, and lives to "see the travail of his soul" fulfilled and satisfied? God pronounces this upon it in that Isaiah 53:11, "By his knowledge (or faith in him) shall he justify many;" even as many as he died for. "Who then shall condemn? Christ that was dead is alive, and lives to intercede."

01.25. Section Five :: Chapter Seven

Section Five :: Chapter Seven

Thirdly, the prevalency of Christ's intercession, and of his grace with his Father, demonstrated from the greatness and absoluteness of his power to do whatever he asks.

[3.] A third demonstration both of Christ's greatness with God and his power to prevail for us is taken from this, that God has put all power into his hand, to do whatever he will, has made him his king to do what pleases him either in heaven, earth, or hell; yes, to do all that God himself ever means to do, or all that God desires to do. And certainly if his Father has been so gracious to him as to bestow so high and absolute a sovereignty on him, as to accomplish and effect whatever he means to do, surely his purpose was never to deny Christ any request that he should after this make; he would never have advanced the human nature to that absoluteness else. Those two great monarchs made great grants and generosity, the one to Esther, the other to Herodias's daughter; but yet they were limited only to the half of their kingdoms, so in Mark 6:22 and Esther 5:6, and the royal power in their kingdoms they meant still to retain and reserve wholly to themselves. But God having placed Christ on his throne, bids him ask even to the whole of his kingdom, for God has made him a King, sitting on his throne with him, not to share halves, but to have all power in heaven and earth, "he has committed all judgment to the Son," to save and condemn whomever he will; and so far as the kingdom of God goes or is extended, he may do anything. So in John 5:21, "As the Father raises up the dead, so the Son quickens whom he will; for as the Father has life in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself," John 5:26. And has in like manner "given authority to execute judgment also, as the Son of man" (namely, of himself) in John 5:27; as he said, "he had given him to have life in himself," John 5:26, not dependently, as we have, but independently so to execute judgment also, John 5:27. So that Christ's will is as free, and himself as absolute a monarch and king of himself, as God himself is. He indeed has it not à seipso, but in seipso; not à seipso originally, but from his Father; but in seipso, independently.

Now then, if he who is king and may and does of himself command all that is done, as absolutely as God himself does, I speak in respect of the execution of things downward, by second causes. If he, over and above to honor his Father, will ask all that himself has power to do, what will not be done? Qui rogat, et imperare potest; he that can and does command whatever he would have done, and it is straight done, if he shall ask and entreat, what will not be done? As a king who sues for peace, backed with a potent army which is able to win what he entreats for, must necessarily treat more effectually, so does Christ sue for everything with power to effect it. Remember that he is said here in the text, first to be at God's right hand, and there to intercede. He treats the salvation of sinners as a mighty prince treats the giving up some town to him, which lies seated under a castle of his which commands that town. He stands treating with the governor, having his ordnance ready for the battery, and to bring all into subjection, as in 2 Corinthians 10:4. And this is a consideration that God himself took, in that

Psalms 2:1-12, when he made him that promise, "Ask, and I will give thee," why he made so large a grant. He had said before, Psalms 2:6, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," which made him, one would think, past asking and above the condition of an intercessor. Now God says of him, "He is my King," not in respect of his commanding God (that were blasphemy to think), but it is spoken in respect of commanding all below him. God having set him in his throne, to do as much as he himself would, or means to have done, says, he is my King, to rule all, not so much under me as for me, and in my stead, yet absolutely, and in himself; "the Father judges no man."

Now when the Father had first made and constituted him thus great a King, then he bids him ask, to whom he had first given this absolute power to command. We may without blasphemy, say of this God-man that God has not only not the heart, as being his Father, but not the power to cross anything he does. Thus fast has he God unto him. Only he who in respect of this his power is to be honored as the Father, as in John 5:23, yet to honor his Father, who gave this power originally to him as mediator, he is to ask for that which of himself he yet can do. And therefore, says God, Though you are a King (so Psalms 2:6), and all my kingdom, even "the utmost ends of the earth," are "your inheritance" by a natural right, now that you are my Son (as Psalms 2:8); yet because you are my King, of my appointing, and "I have set thee" on the throne (as the word is in Psalms 2:6), and "thou art my Son, and I have begotten thee," therefore acknowledge my grant in all, "ask of me, and I will give thee the utmost ends of the earth for your inheritance." I cannot deny you, but I would have you ask; and therefore Christ asks. Yet still further remember, that he asks who can command the thing to be done; and yet, as he must ask before the thing be done, so if he ask it must necessarily be granted. These are the terms between this Father and this Son, who, in a word, had not been so great a Father if he had not had a Son thus great, that he could not deny what this Son would have done. It is for his own honor to have such a Son. So John 5:23, "That they might honor the Son as they honor the Father," therefore "all judgment is committed to him." Now, then, if he who has so much power will join the force of entreaty with a Father that so loves him; if he who is the word of his Father, that commands, creates, and upholds all, as in Hebrews 1:1-14, "He spoke, and it was done;" if he will become a word to his Father and speak a word for us, and ask all that he means to do, how forcible will such words be!

Therefore, observe Christ's manner of praying, John 17:1-26 (which prayer is a platform of intercession in heaven), John 17:24, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be where I am." He prays like a king, who is in joint commission with God. If God puts that honor upon our prayers, that we are said "to have power with God," as Jacob in Hosea 12:3, that if God be never so angry, yet by "taking hold of his strength," we hold his hands, as in Isaiah 27:5. That God cries out to Moses, like a man whose hands are held, "Let me alone," in Exodus 32:10. Yes that he accounts it as a command and a mandamus, so he styles it, Isaiah 45:11, "command ye me," so unable is he to go against it; then, how much more does Jesus Christ's intercession bind God's hands, and command all in heaven and earth! Therefore in Zechariah 1:12 you have Christ, "the Angel of the covenant," brought in interceding with the Father for his church; and he speaks abruptly as one full of complaints, and in an expostulating way, "O Lord of Hosts, how long will thou not be merciful to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah?" And in Zechariah 1:13, Zechariah says, that he observed that "the Lord answered the Angel with good words and comfortable." God was fain to give him good words (as we use to say), that is, words that might pacify him, as words of comfort to us, so good words in respect to the Angel's complaint. And you may observe, how in

the answer God returns upon it (which he bid Zechariah write), God excuses it, as it were to Christ that his church had been so long and so hardly dealt with. As if beyond his intention, he lays the fault on the instruments, "I was but a little displeased, but they helped forward the affliction," Zechariah 1:15. This is spoken and carried after the manner of men, to show how tender God is of displeasing Christ our Intercessor, that when Christ has as it were, been a long while silent, and let God alone, and his people have been ill dealt with, he on the sudden in the end intercedes and complains of it. And it is not only instantly redressed, but excused for times past, with "good words, and comfortable words." Christ's Father will not displease him, nor go against him in anything.

Now that you may see a reason of this, and have all cavils and exceptions taken away, that may arise against this, and how that there is an impossibility that it should be otherwise, know that this Father and this Son, though two persons, have yet but one will between them, and but one power between them (though the Son, ad extra, outwardly executes all). John 10:30, "My Father and I are one;" that is, have but one and the same power to save you, and one mind and will. So also, John 5:19, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do; and whatever he does, the same the Father does also." They conspire in one, have one power, one will; and then it is no matter though God commit all power to the Son, and that the Son, though he has all power, must ask all of the Father, for to be sure whatever he asks, the Father has not power to deny, for they have but one will and power.

They are one, so as if God deny him, he must deny himself, which the apostle tells us he cannot do in 2 Timothy 2:13. And so in the same sense that God is said not to have power to deny himself, in the same sense it may be said, he has not power to deny Christ what he asks. Therefore God might well make him an absolute King, and betrust him with all power. And Christ might well oblige himself, notwithstanding this power, to ask all that he means to do, for they have but one will and one power, so as our salvation is made sure by this on all hands. "I come not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me; and his will is, that I shall lose none of all those whom he has given me," John 6:38-39. And therefore, "who shall condemn? It is Christ that intercedes." As who shall resist God's will? (as the apostle speaks) so who shall resist or gainsay Christ's intercession? God himself cannot, no more than he can gainsay or deny himself.

01.26. Section Five :: Chapter Eight

Section Five :: Chapter Eight

The potency and prevalency of Christ's intercession, demonstrated from the graciousness of the person with whom he intercedes, considered first as he is the Father of Christ himself.

(2.) We have seen the greatness of the person interceding, and many considerations from thence, which may persuade us of his prevailing for us. Let us now in the next place consider the graciousness of the person with whom he intercedes, which the Scripture, for our comfort herein, does distinctly set before us, to the end that in this great matter our joy and security may every way be full. Thus in that, 1 John 2:1, when for the comfort and support of believers, against the evil of the greatest sins that can befall them after conversion, the apostle minds them of Christ's intercession in those words, "If any man sin, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous;" mentioning therein the power and prevalency of such an advocate, through his own righteousness. But yet, over and above all this, the more fully to assure us of his good success herein for us, he also adds, "An advocate with the Father." He insinuates and suggests the relation and gracious disposition of him upon whose supreme will our case ultimately depends, "the Father," as affording a new comfort and encouragement, even as great as does the righteousness and power of the person interceding. He says not, "with God" only, as elsewhere, but "with the Father." And that his words might afford the more full matter of confidence, and be the more comprehensive, and take in all, he expresses not this relation of God limitedly, as confined to his Fatherhood, either unto Christ only or us alone.

He says not only, "an advocate with his Father," though that would have given much assurance, or "with your Father," though that might afford much boldness. But indefinitely he says, "with the Father," as intending to take in both; to ascertain us of the prevailing efficacy of Christ's intercession from both. You have both these elsewhere more distinctly, and on purpose, and together mentioned in John 20:17, "I go to my Father, and your Father," says Christ there. And it was spoken after that all his disciples had before forsaken him, and Peter denied him, when Christ himself could send them the greatest cordial that his heart could utter, and wrap up the strongest sublimation of comforts in one pill. What was it? Go, tell them (says he) not so much that I have satisfied for sin, overcome death, or am risen, but that "I ascend." For in that which Christ does for us being ascended, lies the height, the top of our comfort. And whereas he might have said (and it had been matter of unspeakable comfort) I ascend to heaven, and so, where I am you shall be also. Yet he chooses rather to say, "I ascend to the Father," for that indeed contained the foundation, spring, and cause of their comfort, even that relation of God's, his Fatherhood, with which Christ was to deal after his ascending for them. And because when, before his death, he had spoken of his going to his Father, their hearts had been troubled in John 14:28; they thinking it was for his own preferment only (as Christ's speech there implies they did) therefore he here distinctly adds, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." He had in elect spoken as much before, in the words foregoing, "Go, tell my brethren," but that was only implicitly;

therefore more plainly and explicitly he says it, for their further comfort, "I go to my Father and your Father."

And consider that Christ being now newly risen and having as yet not seen his disciples, and being now to send a message, his first message, a gospel of good tidings to them, and that in a brief sentence, by a woman. He chooses out this as the first word to be spoken from him now, when he was come out of the other world, at their first hearsay of his return, he utters forth at once, the bottom, the depth, of all comfort, the sum of all joy, than which the gospel knows no greater, nor can go higher. So as if Christ should intend now at this day to send good news from heaven to any of you, it would be but this, I am here an advocate, interceding with my Father and your Father. All is spoken in that. Even he could not speak more comfort, who is the God of comfort. Now, therefore, let us apart consider these two relations, which afford each of them their proper comfort and assurance; both that Christ is ascended and intercedes with his own Father, and also with our Father; and therefore, how prevailing must this intercession be!

First, Christ intercedes with his Father, who neither will nor can deny him anything. To confirm this, you have a double testimony, and of two of the greatest witnesses in heaven: both a testimony of Christ's own, while he was on earth, and God's own word also declared since Christ came to heaven. The former, in John 11:1-57, while Christ was here on earth and had not as then fully performed that great service which he was to finish; which since he having done, it must necessarily ingratiate him the more with God his Father. When Lazarus was now four days dead, Martha, to move Christ to pity her, first tells him that if he had been there before her brother died, that then he had not died; and then (as having spoken too little) she adds, yes, you can, if you please, remedy it yet. "But I know" (says she in John 11:22) "that even now" (though he be so long dead), "whatever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it you." Here was her confidence in Christ's intercession, though this were a greater work than ever yet Christ had done any. And Christ seeing her faith in this, he confirms her speech when he came to raise him, and takes a solemn occasion to declare that God had never denied him any request that he had ever put up to him, first thanking God particularly that he had heard him in this in John 11:41, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." He had (it seems) prayed for the thing at her entreaty, and now before the thing was done, he (being assured his prayer was heard) gives thanks, so confident was he of his being heard. And then, secondly, shows upon what this his confidence at this time was grounded, his constant experience that God had never denied him any request; for it follows in John 11:42, "And I know that thou hearest me always," and therefore was so bold as to express my confidence in this before the thing was done, "but because of them who stood by, I said it." As if he had said, though I gave this public thanks for being heard only in this one miracle, and at no time the like so publicly; yet this is no new thing, but thus it has been always hitherto in all the miracles I have wrought, and requests I have put up, which made me so to give thanks beforehand; and this is not the first time that God has heard me thus, which I speak, that they might believe. Thus he was never denied on earth from the first to the last. For this was one of his greatest miracles and reserved unto the last, even a few days before his crucifying.

And now he has performed the service designed him and is come to heaven, let us, secondly, hear God himself speak, what he means to do for him. You heard before, when he came first to heaven, what God said to him and how he welcomed him with a "Sit thou on my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." And before Christ opened his mouth to speak a word, by way

of any request to God, which was the office that he was now to execute, God himself prevented him and added, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee," Psalms 2:8. He speaks it at Christ's first coming up to heaven, when he had his "King on his holy hill," as in Psalms 2:6. Christ was now glorified, which was as a new begetting to him, "Today have I begotten thee." And this is as if he had said, I know you will ask me now for all that you have died for: and this I promise you beforehand, before you speak a word, or make any request unto me, you shall ask nothing but it shall be granted; and this I speak once for all as a boon and a grace granted you upon your birthday, as the solemnest celebration of it; for such was his resurrection, and ascension, and sitting at God's right hand, "This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee."

So full of joy was his Father's heart that he had his Son in heaven with him, whom he had begotten from everlasting, and ordained to this glory, who was lately dead, and in a manner lost, and therefore now (as it were) newly begotten. God's heart was so full that he could not hold from expressing it in the largest favors and grants. And whereas kings upon their own birthdays use to grant such favors to their favorites, so Herod on his birthday, to the daughter of Herodias, promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask, Matthew 14:7. God himself having no birthday, not being of himself capable of it, yet having a Son who had, he honors him with that grace upon that day. And if Queen Esther (a subject, yes, a slave, in her original condition) was so prevalent for the Jews, her people and nation, when their case was desperate and when there was an irrevocable decree past, and that not to be altered, for their ruin and destruction, then what will not Christ, so great a Son, even equal with his Father, prevail for with his Father for his brethren? Be their case for the time past never so desperate, be there never so many threatenings gone out against them, never so many precedents and examples of men condemned before for the like sins, and in the like case, yet Christ can prevail against them all.

01.27. Section Five :: Chapter Nine

Section Five :: Chapter Nine

The potency of Christ's intercession demonstrated, in that he intercedes with God, who is our Father. How God's heart is as much inclined to hear Christ for us as Christ's is to intercede.

Secondly, Christ is an advocate for us with our Father. You may perhaps

think there is little in that, but Christ puts much upon it; yes, so much as if that God would however grant all that Christ himself means to ask, whether Christ asked it or not. This you have expressly in John 16:26-27, "At that day (says Christ) you shall ask in my name, and I say not to you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loves you." To open this place, where he says "at that day." The day he means through this whole chapter, is that time when the Holy Ghost should be shed upon them; for throughout his discourse he still speaks of the fruits of his ascension and of giving the Comforter, which was done upon his ascending, and was the first fruits of his priestly office in heaven. Thus Peter informs us in Acts 2:33, "He being (says he) exalted by the right hand of God, and having received" (namely, by asking, "Ask, and I will give thee") "of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear." Now of that time when he shall be in heaven, he says, "I say not that I will pray for you;" which is not meant that Christ prays not for us in heaven, but rather those very words are the highest intimation that he would and does pray for us that can be.

When men would most strongly intimate their purpose of a kindness they mean to do for one, they used to say, I do not say that I love you, or that I will do this or that for you; which is as much as to say, I will surely do it, and do it to purpose. But Christ's scope here is, as in the highest manner to promise them that he would pray for them; so in addition, further to tell them of their more abundant assurance and security, that besides their having the benefit of their prayers, God himself so loves them of himself, that indeed that alone were enough to obtain anything at his hands, which they shall but ask in his name; so as he needs not pray for them, and yet he will too. But now in case that he himself prays for them, and they themselves in his name, and both unto a Father who of himself loves them, and who has purposed to grant all, before either he or they should ask; what hope must there need be then of a good success! This is both the meaning of this place and a great truth to be considered on by us, to the purpose in hand. That it is the meaning of the place, the manner of Christ's speech implies, "I say not that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you." It is such a speech as Christ used upon a clean contrary occasion in John 5:45, "Do not think (says he) that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you, even Moses." He there threatens the obstinate and accursed Pharisees with condemnation. Never stand thinking that it is I (says he) who am your only enemy and accuser, that will procure your condemnation, and so prosecute the matter against you merely for my own interest, no, I shall not need to do it; though I should not accuse you, your own "Moses in whom you trust," he is enough to condemn you, he will do your errand sufficiently, you would be sure to be damned by his words and sayings; I shall not need to trouble myself to come in and enter my

action against you too, Moses and his law would follow the suit, and be enough to condemn you to hell. So as this speech does not imply that Christ will not at all accuse them; no, he means to bring in his action against them too, for he after says, "if he had not spoken to them, they had had no sin," and therefore he meant to bring the greatest accusation of all.

Now, in an opposite (though parallel) speech here, to comfort his disciples, he says, "I say not that I will pray for you," that God may save you, I who yourselves shall see will die for you, I say not that I will pray for you, not I. But though I speak this to insinuate in the highest manner that I will, for if I spend my blood for you, will I not spend my breath for you? Yet the truth is, that the case so stands, that but for God's own ordination I should not need to do it, "for the Father himself loves you;" that is, the Father of his own motion and proper good will, taken up of himself towards you, and not wrought in him by me, does love you, and bears so much love to you, as he can deny you nothing, for he is "your Father" as well as mine. How much more then shall you be saved when I shall strike in too, and use all my interest in him for you? Christ on purpose uses this speech, so to dash out of their hearts that conceit which harbors in many of ours, who look upon God in the matter of salvation as one who is hardly entreated to come off to save sinners, and with whom Christ, through the backwardness of his heart, has so much ado. And we are apt to think that when he does come off to pardon, he does it only and merely at Christ's entreaty and for his sake, having otherwise no innate motion in himself sufficient to incline his heart to it. But that it is in this transaction by Christ with him, as a favorite procures a pardon for a traitor, whose person the king cares not for, only at his favorite's suit and request he grants it, which else he would never have done. You are deceived, says Christ, it is otherwise; my Father's heart is as much towards you, and for your salvation, as mine is; himself, of himself, loves you. And the truth is, that God took up as vast a love unto us of himself at first as ever he has borne us since, and all that Christ does for us is but the expression of that love which was taken up originally in God's own heart. Thus we find that out of that love he gave Christ for us.

So in John 3:16, "God so loved the world (of elect), that he gave his only begotten Son to die." Yes, Christ's death was but a means to commend or set forth that love of his unto us. So in Romans 5:10, it was God also that did himself give the persons unto Christ, and underhand set him on work to mediate for them. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself:" He only used Christ as his instrument to bring it honorably about. All the blessings he means to give us he first purposed and intended in himself (so Ephesians 1:3; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:9; Ephesians 1:11, compared) "out of the good pleasure of his will." Yet in Christ (as it is added there) as the means through which he would convey them; yes, Christ adds not one drop of love to God's heart, only draws it out; he broaches it, and makes it flow forth, whose current had otherwise been stopped. The truth is, that God suborned Christ to beg them on our behalf for an honorable way of carrying it, as also to make us prize this favour the more; so as his heart is as ready to give all to us, as Christ's is to ask and this out of his pure love to us.

The intercession therefore of Christ must necessarily speed, when God's heart is thus of itself prepared to us. In Isaiah 53:10 it is said, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." If our salvation be in Christ's hand, it is in a good hand; but if it be the pleasure of the Lord too, it must necessarily prosper. It is said of our hearts and prayers, that "he prepares the heart, and hears the prayer;" much more therefore, when his own heart is prepared to grant the suit, will he easily hear it. When one has a mind to do a thing, then the least hint procures it of him. So a father having a

mind to spare his child, he will take any excuse, any one's mediation, even of a servant, a stranger, or an enemy, rather than of none.

Now, when Christ shall speak for us, and speak God's own heart, how prevalent must those words need be! David's soul, "longing to go forth unto Absalom," in 2 Samuel 13:39, whom notwithstanding, for the honor of a father and a king's state policy, and to satisfy the world, he had banished the court for his treason. When Joab perceived it, that "the king's heart was towards Absalom," in 2 Samuel 14:1, and that the king only needed one to speak a good word for him, he suborns a woman, a stranger (no matter whom, for it had been all one for speeding), with a made tale to come to the king. And you know how easily it took and prevailed with him, and how glad the king's heart was of that occasion; even so acceptable it was to him, that Joab could not have done him a greater kindness, and that Joab knew well enough. Thus it is with God's heart towards us, Christ assures us of it, and you may believe him in this case. For Christ might have took all the honor to himself, and made us beholden to himself alone for all God's kindness to us; but he deals plainly, and tells us that his Father is as ready as himself, and this he does for his Father's honor and our comfort. And therefore it is that in John 17:1-26, in that this prayer so often cited in this discourse, he pleads our election, "Yours they were, and thou gavest them me," John 17:6. You commended them unto me, and bids me pray for them, and I do but commend the same to you again. In the high priest's breastplate, when he went into the holy of holies, were set twelve stones on which were written the names of the twelve tribes, the mystery of which is this: Christ bears us and our names in his heart when he goes to God; and moreover, we are God's jewels, precious in his own account and choice. So God calls them in Malachi 3:17, "Made precious to him out of his love," Isaiah 43:4. So that God loves us as jewels chosen by him, but much more when he beholds us set and presented unto him in the breastplate of Christ's heart and prayer.

To conclude therefore, we have now made both ends of this text to meet, God's love and Christ's intercession. The apostle began with that, "Who shall accuse? It is God that justifies;" and he being for us, "who can be against us?" The Father himself loves us, as he is our Father. And then he ends with this, "Christ intercedes," namely with our Father and his Father, "who then shall condemn?" Who or what can possibly condemn, all these things being for us, the least of which were alone enough to save us?

Let us now look round about and take a full view and prospect at once, of all those particulars that Christ has done and does for us, and their several and joint influence which they have into our salvation.

In that Christ died, it assures us of a perfect price paid for, and a right to eternal life thereby acquired.

In that he rose again as a common person, this assures us yet further that there is a formal, legal, and irrevocable act of justification of us passed and enrolled in that court of heaven between Christ and God; and that in his being then justified, we were also justified in him, so that thereby our justification is made past recalling.

Christ's ascension into heaven is a further act of his taking possession of heaven for us, he then formally entering upon that our right in our stead; and so is a further confirmation of our salvation to us. But still we in our won persons are not yet saved, this being but done to us as we are

representatively in Christ as our head.

Therefore he sits at God's right hand, which imports his being armed and invested with "all power in heaven and earth, to give and apply eternal life to us."

And last of all there remains intercession, to finish and complete our salvation; to do the thing, even to save us. And as Christ's death and resurrection were to procure our justification, so his sitting at God's right hand and intercession are to procure salvation; and by faith we may see it done, and behold our souls not only sitting in heaven, as in Christ a common person sitting there in our right, as an evidence that we shall come thither; but also through Christ's intercession begun, we may see ourselves actually possessed of heaven. And there I will leave all you that are believers by faith possessed of it, and solacing your souls in it, and do you fear condemnation if you can.

01.28. Section Five :: Chapter Ten

Section Five :: Chapter Ten

The use of all; containing some encouragements for weak believers, from Christ's intercession out of Hebrews 7:25.

Now, for a conclusion of this discourse, I will add a brief use of encouragement; and this suited to the lowest faith of the weakest believer, who cannot put forth any act of assurance, and is likewise discouraged from coming in unto Christ. And I shall confine myself only unto what those most comfortable words, as any in the book of God do hold forth, which the apostle has uttered concerning Christ's intercession, the point in hand "Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost those that come to God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them,"—words which I have had the most recourse unto in this doctrinal part of any other, as most tending to the clearing of many things about intercession. And which I would also commend to and leave with poor believers, to have recourse unto for their comfort, as a sufficient abundance of consolation unto their souls, and as a catholicon or universal cordial against all faintings and misgivings of spirit whatsoever.

In the words observe, 1. A definition of faith by the lowest acts of it, for the comfort of weak Christians. 2. Encouragements unto such a faith, opposite to all misgivings and discouragements whatsoever.

A definition of faith; and such as will suit the weakest believer. It is a coming unto God by Christ for salvation.

(1.) It is a coming to be saved. Let not the want of assurance that God will save you, or that Christ is yours, discourage you, if you have but a heart to come to God by Christ to be saved, though you know not whether he will yet save you or not. Remember that the believers of the New Testament are here described to be comers to God by Christ; such as go out of themselves, and rest in nothing in themselves, do come unto God through Christ for salvation, though with trembling.

(2.) It is a coming unto God. For he is the ultimate object of our faith, and the person with whom we have to do in believing, and from whom we are to receive salvation, if ever we obtain it.

(3.) It is a coming unto God by Christ; which phrase is used in this Epistle, in an allusion to the worshippers of the Old Testament, who, when they had sinned were directed to go to God by a priest, who with a sacrifice made an atonement for them. Now Christ is the great and true high priest, "by whom we have access to the Father," Ephesians 2:18. The word is προσαγωγῆν, a leading by the hand. Do you not know how to appear before God, or to come to him? Come first to Christ, and he will take you by the hand, and go along with you, and lead you to his Father.

(4.) It is a coming unto God by Christ for salvation. Many a poor soul is apt to think that in coming to God by faith, it must not aim at itself, or its own salvation. Yes it may, for that is here made the errand or business which faith has with God in coming to him or which it comes for; and this is

secretly couched in these words, for the apostle, speaking of the very aim of the heart in coming, he therefore on purpose mentions Christ's ability to save: "he is able to save."

Secondly, here are many encouragements to such a faith as is not yet grown up unto assurance of salvation.

(1.) Here is the most suitable object propounded unto it, namely Christ as interceding, which work of intercession because it remains for Christ as yet to do for a soul that is to be saved, and which he is every day doing for us; therefore it is more peculiarly fitted unto a recumbent faith. For, when such a soul comes and casts itself upon Christ, that thing in Christ which must necessarily most suit that kind of act is that which is yet to be done by Christ for that soul. Now for that soul to come to Christ to die for it, and offer up himself a sacrifice (as sinners did use to come to the high priest to sacrifice for them), this was bootless, for (as it is in Hebrews 7:27) he has at "once done that" already. And as for what is already past and done, such a believer's faith is oftentimes exceedingly puzzled what manner of act to put forth towards Christ about. As (for example) when it is about to come unto God, and it hears of an election of some unto salvation from all eternity made by him; because this is an act already passed by God, the soul knows it to be in vain to cast itself upon God for election or to come unto him to elect and choose itself. And so, in like manner, when the soul looks upon Christ's death, because it is done and past, it knows not how to take it in believing, when it wants assurance that Christ died for it, though it should come to Christ to be saved by virtue of his death.

But there is this one work that remains still to be done by him for us, and which he is daily doing, and that is interceding; for he lives ever to intercede or to pray for us, in the strength and merit of that his sacrifice once offered up. This therefore is more directly and peculiarly fitted unto a faith of recumbency, or of coming unto Christ; the proper act of such a faith (as it is distinguished from faith of assurance) being a casting one's self upon Christ for something it would have done or wrought for one. Hence intercession becomes a fit object for the aim and errand of such a faith in this its coming to Christ, as also "to be saved" is; it being a thing yet to be wrought and accomplished for me by Christ, is therefore a fit mark for such a faith to level at in its coming to Christ. Those acts of God and Christ which are past, faith of assurance does more easily comply with: such a faith takes in with comfort that Christ has died for me, and risen again, and does now intercede for me, and so I shall certainly be saved; but so cannot this weak faith do. Come therefore unto Christ, as to save you through his death past, and by the merit of it, so for the present, and for the time to come, to take your cause in hand, and to intercede for you. It is a great relief unto such a faith (as cannot put forth acts of assurance, that what has been done by Christ has been done for it), that God has left Christ this work yet to do for us. So as the intercession of Christ may afford matter to such a faith to throw itself upon Christ, to perform it for us, and it may set work to do it.

(2.) Now if such a soul ask, but will Christ, upon my coming to him for salvation, be set to work to intercede for me, and undertake my cause?

I answer it out of those words, "He lives to intercede for them who come to God by him." He lives on purpose to perform this work; it is the end of his living, the business of his life. And as he received a commandment to die, and it was the end of his life on earth, so he has received a command to intercede, and to be a common high priest for all that come to God by him. God has

appointed him to this work by an oath, "He swore, and would not repent, Thou shall be a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec," and this is the end of his life in heaven. That as in the old law the high priest (Christ's type in this) "ought to offer up the sacrifice" of every one that came unto God by him (as in Hebrews 5:5), in like manner Christ; for it is his calling, as you have it in Hebrews 5:6. Otherwise, as that woman said to Philip, when she came to him for justice, and he put her off, Then cease (says she) to be a king. So if Christ should deny any such soul to take its cause in hand, he must then cease to be a priest. He lives to intercede; he is a priest called by God, as was Aaron, Hebrews 5:6. Wherefore he ought to do it, in that it is his office.

(3.) And if your soul yet fears the difficulty of its own particular case, in respect of the greatness of your sins, and the circumstances thereof, or any consideration whatsoever, which to your view does make your salvation a hard suit to obtain; the apostle therefore further adds, "He is able to save to the utmost," whatever your cause be, and this through this his intercession. That same word, "to the utmost," is a good word, and well put in for our comfort. Consider it therefore, for it is a reaching word, and extends itself so far, that you cannot look beyond it.

Let your soul be set upon the highest mount that ever any creature was yet set upon, and that is enlarged to take in and view the most spacious prospect both of sin and misery, and difficulties of being saved that ever yet any poor humbled soul did cast within itself. Yes, join to these all the objections and hindrances of your salvation that the heart of man can suppose or invent against itself. Lift up your eyes and look to the utmost you can see, and Christ by his intercession is able to save you beyond the horizon and furthest compass of your thoughts, even "to the utmost" and worst case the heart of man can suppose. It is not your having lain long in sin, long under terrors and despairs, or having sinned often after many enlightenings, that can hinder you from being saved by Christ. Do but remember this same word, "to the utmost," and then put in what exceptions you will or can, lay all the bars in your way that are imaginable; yet know that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against thee."

(4.) Again, consider but what it is that Christ, who has by his death done enough to save you, does yet further for you in heaven. If you thought you had all the saints in heaven and earth jointly concurring in promoting your salvation, and competitors unto God in instant and incessant requests and prayers to save you, how would you be encouraged? Shall I tell you? One word out of Christ's mouth (who is the King of saints) will do more than all in heaven and earth can do; and what is there then which we may not hope to obtain through his intercession?

And would you know whether he has undertaken your cause, and begun to intercede for you? In a word, has he put his Spirit into your heart, and set your own heart on work to make incessant intercessions for yourself "with groans unutterable" (as the apostle has it in Romans 8:1-39)? This is the echo of Christ's intercession for you in heaven.

(5.) And lastly, if such a soul shall further object, but will he not give over suing for me? May I not be cast out of his prayers through my unbelief? Let it here be considered that he lives "ever" to intercede; and therefore, if he once undertake your cause, and gets you into his prayers, he will never leave you out, night nor day. He intercedes ever, until he has accomplished and finished your salvation. Men have been cast out of good and holy men's prayers, as Saul out of Samuel's, and the people of Israel out of Jeremiah's, but never out of Christ's prayers; the "smoke of his incense ascends forever," and he will intercede to the utmost, until he has saved you to the

utmost. He will never give over, but will lie in the dust for you, or he will perfect and procure your salvation.

Only while I am thus raising up your faith to him upon the work of his intercession for us, let me speak a word to you for him, so to stir up your love to him, upon the consideration of this his intercession also. You see you have the whole life of Christ, first and last, both here and in heaven, laid out for you. He had not come to earth but for you, he had no other business here. "Unto us a Son is born." And to be sure, he had not died but for you. "For us a Son was given;" and when he rose, it was "for your justification." And now he is gone to heaven, he lives but to intercede for you. He makes your salvation his constant calling. O therefore, let us live wholly unto him, for he has and does live wholly unto us. You have his whole time among you; and if he were your servant, you could desire no more. There was much of your time lost before you began to live to him; but there has been no moment of his time which he has not lived to, and improved for you. Nor are you able ever to live for him but only in this life, for hereafter you shall live with him, and be glorified of him. I conclude all with that of the apostle, "The love of Christ it should constrain us," because we cannot but "judge" this to be the most equal, that "they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again," and (out of the text I also add) "sits at God's right hand;" yes, and there "lives forever to make intercession for us."

02.0.1. The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth

The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth by Thomas Goodwin The text of this module was taken from a PDF created by Monergism ©For more free books like this, and other theological literature, please visit www.monergism.com The gracious disposition and tender affection of Christ in his human nature now in glory, unto his members under all sorts of infirmities, either of sin or misery.

02.02.0.2. Introduction

Introduction

Having set forth our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in all those great and most solemn actions of his—his obedience unto death, his resurrection, ascension into heaven, his sitting at God's right hand, and intercession for us, which of all the other has been more largely insisted on—I shall now annex (as next in order, and homogeneal thereunto) this discourse that follows, which lays open the heart of Christ, as now he is in heaven, sitting at God's right hand and interceding for us; how it is affected and graciously disposed towards sinners on earth that do come to him; how willing to receive them; how ready to entertain them; how tender to pity them in all their infirmities, both sins and miseries. The scope and use whereof will be this, to hearten and encourage believers to come more boldly unto the throne of grace, unto such a Saviour and High Priest, when they shall know how sweetly and tenderly his heart, though he is now in his glory, is inclined towards them; and so to remove that great stone of stumbling which we meet with (and yet lies unseen) in the thoughts of men in the way to faith, that Christ being now absent, and further exalted to so high and infinite a distance of glory, as to "sit at God's right hand," they therefore cannot tell how to come to treat with him about their salvation so freely, and with that hopefulness to obtain, as those poor sinners did, who were here on earth with him. Had our lot been, think they, but to have conversed with him in the days of his flesh, as Mary, and Peter, and his other disciples did here below, we could have thought to have been bold with him, and to have had anything at his hands. For they beheld him before them a man like unto themselves, and he was full of meekness and gentleness, he being then himself made sin, and sensible of all sorts of miseries; but now he is gone into a far country, and has put on glory and immortality, and how his heart may be altered thereby we know not. The drift of this discourse is therefore to ascertain poor souls, that his heart, in respect of pity and compassion, remains the same it was on earth; that he intercedes there with the same heart he did here below; and that he is as meek, as gentle, as easy to be entreated, as tender in his bowels; so that they may deal with him as fairly about the great matter of their salvation, and as hopefully, and upon as easy terms to obtain it of him, as they might if they had been on earth with him, and be as familiar with him in all their needs—than which nothing can be more for the comfort and encouragement of those who have given over all other lives but that of faith, and whose souls pursue after strong and entire communion with their Saviour Christ.

Now the demonstrations that may help our faith in this I reduce to two heads: the first more extrinsic and outward; the second more intrinsic and inward: the one showing that it is so; the other, the reasons and grounds why it must be so.

I. First, for those extrinsic demonstrations (as I call them), they are taken from several passages and carriages of his, in all those several conditions of his; namely, at his last farewell before his death, his resurrection, ascension, and how he is sitting at God's right hand. I shall lead you through all the same heads which I have gone over in the former treatise (though to another purpose), and take such observations from his speeches and carriages, in all those states he went

through, as shall tend directly to persuade our hearts of the point in hand, namely this, that now he is in heaven, his heart remains as graciously inclined to sinners that come to him, as ever on earth. And for a ground or introduction to these first sort of demonstrations, I shall take this Scripture that follows; as for those other, another Scripture, as proper to that part of this discourse. When Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own, he loved them to the end; (or) forever.—John 13:1.

02.1. Demonstrations from Christ's Last Farewell to His Disciples

Demonstrations from Christ's Last Farewell to His Disciples

I. It was long before that Christ did break his mind to his disciples that he was to leave them, and to go away to heaven from them, for, John 16:4, he says, he had forborne "to tell it them from the beginning." But when he begins to acquaint them with it, he then at once leaves them an abundance of his heart, and that not only how it stood towards them, and what it was at the present, but what it would be when he should be in his glory. Let us, to this end, but briefly peruse his last carriage, and his sermon at his last supper which he did eat with them, as it is on purpose penned and recorded by the evangelist John; and we shall find this to be the drift of those long discourses of Christ's, from John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26; John 18:1-40. I will not make a comment on them, but only briefly take up such short observations as do more specially hold forth this thing in hand.

These words which I have prefixed as the text, are the preface unto all of his discourse that follows (namely, unto that washing of his disciples' feet, and his succeeding sermon), which accordingly do show the argument and sum of all. The preface is this: "Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he was come from God and went to God, he then washed his disciples' feet." Now this preface was prefixed by the evangelist, on purpose to set open a window into Christ's heart, to show what it was then at his departure, and so further to give a light into, and put a gloss and interpretation upon all that follows. The scope whereof is to show what his affections would be to them in heaven: he tells us what Christ's thoughts were then, and what was his heart amidst those thoughts, both which occasioned all that succeeds.

(1.) He premises what was in Christ's thoughts and his meditation. He began deeply to consider, both that he was to depart out of this world, "Jesus knew," says the text (that is, was then thinking of it), "that he should depart unto the Father," and how that then he should shortly be installed into that glory which was due unto him; so it follows, John 13:3, "Jesus knowing" (that is, was then actually taking into his mind) "that the Father had given all things into his hands," that is, that all power in heaven and earth was his, so soon as he should set footing in heaven; then in the midst of these thoughts he tells us, he went and washed his disciples' feet, after he had first considered where he was to go, and there what he was to be.

(2.) But, secondly, what was Christ's heart most upon, in the midst of all these elevated meditations? Not upon his own glory so much, though it is told us that he considered that, thereby the more to set out his love unto us, but upon these thoughts his heart ran out in love towards, and was set upon, "his own:" "having loved his own," says John 13:1, his own, a word denoting the greatest nearness, dearness, and intimateness founded upon propriety.¹ The elect are Christ's own, a piece of himself, not, as goods, John 1:11 : "he came unto his own, and his own received

him not;" the word shows that he reckons them his own, but as goods, not as persons, but he calls these here, his own by a nearer propriety, that is, his own children, his own members, his own wife, his own flesh; and he considers, that though he was to go out of the world, yet they were to be in the world, and therefore it is on purpose added, "which were in the world," that is, to remain in this world. He had others of his own who were in that world unto which he was going, even "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:23), whom as yet he had never seen. One would think, that when he was meditating upon his going out of this world, his heart should be all upon Abraham, his Isaacs, and his Jacobs, whom he was going to; no, he takes more care for his own, who were to remain here in this world, a world wherein there is much evil (as himself says, John 17:15), both of sin and misery, and with which themselves, while in it, could not but be defiled and vexed. This is it which draws out his bowels towards them, even at that time when his heart was full of the thoughts of his own glory: "having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." Which is spoken to show the constancy of his love, and what it would be when Christ should be in his glory. "To the end," that is, to the perfection of it, says Chrysostom; having begun to love them, he will perfect and consummate his love to them. And "to the end," that is, forever. So in the Greek it is sometimes used, and so by the evangelist the phrase is here used in a suitableness to the Scripture phrase, Psalms 103:9, "He will not always chide, nor reserve anger forever," so we translate it; but in the original, "He reserves not anger unto the end." So that the scope of this speech is to show how Christ's heart and love would be towards them even forever, when he should be gone unto his Father, as well as it was to show how it had been here on earth, they being his own; and he having loved them, he alters, he changes not, and therefore will love them forever.

(3.) And then thirdly, to testify thus much by a real testimony, what his love would be, when in heaven, to them, the evangelist shows, that when he was in the midst of all those great thoughts of his approaching glory, and of the sovereign estate which he was to be in, he then took water and a towel, and washed his disciples' feet. This to have been his scope will appear, if you observe but the coherence in the second verse, it is said, that "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands," then (John 13:4) "he riseth from supper, and lays aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself;" (John 13:5) after that, "he poured water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet," where it is evident that the evangelist's scope is to hold forth this unto us, that then when Christ's thoughts were full of his glory, and when he took in the consideration of it unto the utmost, even then, and upon that occasion, and in the midst of those thoughts, he washed his disciples' feet. And what was Christ's meaning in this, but that, whereas when he should be in heaven, he could not make such outward visible demonstrations of his heart, by doing such mean services for them; therefore by doing this in the midst of such thoughts of his glory, he would show what he could be content (as it were) to do for them, when he should be in full possession of it? So great is his love unto them. There is another expression of Christ's like unto this, in Luke 12:36-37, which confirms this to be his meaning here, and to be his very heart in heaven. At Luke 12:36, he compares himself to a bridegroom, who is to go to heaven unto a wedding-feast; who has servants on earth that stand all that while here below, as without, waiting for him; at which, because they wait so long, they may think much, Christ adds, "Verily I say unto you, that when the bridegroom returns" (refreshed with wine and gladness) "he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." The meaning is not as if that Christ served at the latter day, or now in heaven, those that sit down there; but only it is an

abundant expression in words, as here in a real instance, to set forth the overflowing love that is in his heart, and the transcendent happiness that we shall then enjoy, even beyond what can be expected by us; he utters himself therefore by an unwonted thing not heard of, that the Lord should serve his servants, and wait on them that waited for him. And it is to show his heart to them, and what he could be contented to do for them. So that you see what his heart was before he went to heaven, even amidst the thoughts of all his glory; and you see what it is after he has been in heaven, and greated with all his glory, even content to wash poor sinners' feet, and to serve them that come to him and wait for him.

(4.) Now, fourthly, what was the mystery of this his washing their feet? It was, as to give them an example of mutual love and humility, so to signify his washing away their sins; thus, John 13:8; John 13:10, himself interprets it. It is true indeed, that, now he is in heaven, he cannot come to wash the feet of their bodies, but he would signify thus much thereby, that those sinners that will come to him when in his glory, he will wash away all their sins; "He loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle," etc., Ephesians 5:25-27.

This specimen or declaration of his mind, we have from this his carriage, at this his last farewell. Let us next take a survey of the drift of that long sermon which he made at that his farewell, and we shall find the main scope of it to be further to assure his disciples of what his heart would be unto them; and that will make a second demonstration.

It was too long a work to insist upon each particular. But certainly, no loving husband ever endeavored more to satisfy the heart of his spouse during his absence, than Christ does his disciples' hearts, and in them all believers. For take that along, once for all, that what Christ said unto them, he says unto us, as in John 17:20 that speech implies, "I pray not for them only, but for those also that shall believe through their word." And as what he prayed for them was for all believers also, so, what he then spoke was unto them.

(1.) First, he lets them see what his heart would be unto them, and how mindful of them when in heaven, by that business which he professed he went there to perform for them; concerning which, observe first, that he lovingly acquaints them with it beforehand what it is, which argued care and tenderness, as from a husband unto a wife it does. And also, how plain-heartedly does he speak, as one that would not hide anything from them! "I tell you the truth of it" (says he), "it is expedient for you that I go away," John 16:7. And secondly, he tells them, it is wholly for them and their happiness, "I go to send you a comforter," while you are in this world, and "to prepare a place for you," John 14:2, when you shall go out of this world. "There are many mansions in my Father's house," and I go to take them up for you, and to keep your places for you till you come. And there again, how openly and candidly does he speak to them! "If it had been otherwise," says he, "I would have told you." You may believe me; I would not deceive you for all the glory in that place to which I am going. Whom would not this openness and nakedness of heart persuade? But then, thirdly, the business itself being such as is so much for us and our happiness, how much more does that argue it. And indeed, Christ himself does fetch from there an argument of the continuance of his love to them. So John 14:3, "If I go to prepare a place for you,"—if that be my errand, then doubt not of my love when I am there, all the glory of the place shall never make me forget my business. When he was on earth, he forgot none of the business for which he came into

the world; "Shall I not do my Father's business?" said he when he was a child; Luke 2:49; yes, and he did it to the utmost, by fulfilling all righteousness. Surely therefore he will not forget any of that business which he is to do in heaven, it being the more pleasant work by far. And (as I showed in the former discourse, out of Hebrews 6:20) "He is entered as a forerunner," a harbinger, to take up places there for us; and if he could forget us, yet our names are all written in heaven round about him, and are continually before his eyes written there, not only by God's election, so Hebrews 12:22-24 "Ye are come to mount Zion, and to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, and to the blood of sprinkling," etc., but Christ himself scores them up anew with his blood, over every mansion there, which he takes up for any. Yes, he carries their names written in his heart, as the high priest did the names of the ten tribes on his breast, when he entered into the holy of holies. He sits in heaven to see to it, that none other should take their rooms over their heads, as we say. And therefore, 1 Peter 1:4, salvation is said to be "reserved in heaven for them," that is, kept on purpose for them by Jesus Christ. The evil angels had places there once, but they were disposed of unto others over their heads, as the land of Canaan was from the Canaanites; the reason of which was, because they had not a Christ there to intercede for them as we have.

(2.) Then, secondly, to manifest his mindfulness of them, and of all other believers, when he would be in his glory, he tells them that when he has dispatched that business for them, and made heaven ready for them, and all the elect that are to come, that then he means to come again to them. So John 14:3, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again," which is a mere expression of love, for he if he had pleased, he might have ordered it to have sent for them to him; but he means to come for them himself, and this when he is warm (as we speak) and in the height and midst of his glory in heaven; yet he will for a time leave it to come again unto his spouse. And what is it for? [1.] To see her, "I will see you again," and your heart shall rejoice. [2.] To fetch her, so John 14:3, "I will come again and receive you to myself." He condescends to the very laws of bridegrooms, for notwithstanding all his greatness, no lover shall put him down in any expression of true love. It is the manner of bridegrooms, when they have made all ready in their father's house, then to come themselves and fetch their brides, and not to send for them by others, because it is a time of love. Love descends better than ascends, and so does the love of Christ, who indeed is love itself, and therefore comes down to us himself; "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (says Christ), "that so where I am, you may be also." That last part of his speech gives the reason of it, and also divulges his entire affection. It is as if he had said, 'The truth is, I cannot live without you, I shall never be quiet until I have you where I am, that so we may never part again; that is the reason of it. Heaven shall not hold me, nor my Father's company, if I have not you with me, my heart is so set upon you; and if I have any glory, you shall have part of it.' So John 14:19, "Because I live, you shall live also." It is a reason, and it is half an oath besides, As I live is God's oath; Because I live, says Christ. He pawns his life upon it, and desires to live upon no other terms, "He shall live to see his seed," Isaiah 53:10. And yet farther, the more to express the workings and longings of his heart after them all that while, he tells them it shall not be long neither before he does come again to them. So John 16:16, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me" says he. Not seeing him does not refer to that small space of absence while dead and in the grave, but of that after his last ascending, forty days after his resurrection, when he should go away, not to be seen on earth again until the day of judgment; and yet from that ascension but "a little while," says he, "and you shall see me again," namely, at

the day of judgment. It is said, Hebrews 10:37, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "As little as little may be." Though long for the time in itself, yet as little while as may be in respect of his desire, without the least delaying to come. He will stay not a moment longer, than till he has dispatched all our business there for us. And then the doubling of the phrase, "Coming he will come," implies vehemency of desire to come, and that his mind is always upon it, he is still coming, he can hardly be kept away. Thus the Hebrew phrase likewise signifies an urgency, vehemency, and intenseness of some act, as "expecting I have expected," "desiring I have desired," so coming he will come. And as not content with these expressions of desire, he adds over and above all these, "and will not tarry;" and all to signify the infinite ardency of his mind towards his elect below, and to have all his elect in heaven about him. He will not stay a minute longer than necessary, he tarries only until he has throughout all ages by his intercession prepared every room for each saint, that he may entertain them all at once together, and have them all about him.

(3.) Thirdly, what his heart would be towards them in his absence he expresses by the careful provision he makes, and the order he takes for their comfort in his absence, John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans" (so the word is), I will not leave you like fatherless and friendless children, at sixes and sevens. My Father and I have but only one friend, who lies in the bosom of us both, and proceeds from us both, the Holy Ghost, and in the meantime I will send him to you, doing herein as a loving husband used to do in his absence, even commit his wife to the dearest friend he has; so does Christ, John 14:16, "I will pray the Father," says he, "and he shall give you another Comforter." And John 16:7, he says, "I will send him to you." Who:

First, shall be a better Comforter unto you than I am to be in this kind of dispensation, which while I am on earth I am bound up towards you in. So in that John 16:7 he intimates, "It is expedient," says he, "that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come," who, by reason of his office, will comfort you better than I should do with my bodily presence. And this Spirit, as he is the "earnest of heaven," as the apostle speaks, so he is the greatest token and pledge of Christ's love that ever was, and such a one as "the world cannot receive." And yet,

Secondly, all the comfort he shall speak to you all that while will be but from the expression of my heart towards you; for as he comes not of himself, but I must send him, John 16:7, so "he will speak nothing of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak," John 16:13. And John 16:14 he says, "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." 'Him, therefore, I shall send on purpose to be in my room and to execute my place to you, my bride, spouse, and he shall tell you, if you will listen to him, and not grieve him, nothing but stories of my love. So it is there, "He shall glorify me," namely, to you; for I am in myself already glorified in heaven. All his speech in your hearts will be to advance me, and to increase my worth and love unto you, and it will be his delight to do it. And he can come from heaven in an instant when he will, and bring you fresh tidings of my mind, and tell you the thoughts I last had of you, even at that very minute when I am thinking of them, what they are at the very time wherein he tells you them.' And therefore in that 1 Corinthians 2:12 by "having the Spirit," we are said to "have the mind of Christ," 1 Corinthians 2:16; for he dwells in Christ's heart, and also ours, and lifts up from one hand to the other what Christ's thoughts are to us, and what our prayers and faith are to Christ.

'So that you shall have my heart as surely and as speedily as if I were with you; and he will continually be breaking your hearts, either with my love to you, or yours to me, or both; and if either, you may be sure of my love thereby. And whereas, says he, 'you have the Spirit now in your hearts', so, John 14:17 "he now dwells in you;" yet after my ascension "he shall be," in a further measure, "in you," (as it follows there.) And at that day, John 14:20, "you shall know" (namely, by his dictate) "that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." He will tell you, when I am in heaven, that there is as true a conjunction between me and you, and as true a dearness of affection in me towards you, as is between my Father and me, and that it is as impossible to break this knot, and to take off my heart from you, as my Father's from me, or mine from my Father.' And then,

Thirdly, you shall be sure that what he says of my love to you is true, for "he is the Spirit of truth," John 16:13, as also John 14:16-17, which Christ speaks of him as he is a Comforter. And as you believe me when I tell you of my Father, because I come from him, so you may believe him in all that he says of me and of my love to you, for he comes from me.

Aye, but might they say, Will not he also leave us for a time, as you have done? 'No,' says Christ, John 14:16, "The Father shall give you another Comforter, and he shall abide with you forever." Christ speaks it in opposition to himself. He himself had been a comforter unto them, but he was now to be absent; but not so the Spirit. "He shall be with you forever;" and as he is now "with you," so he "shall be in you," John 14:17. In the fourth place, if this be not enough to assure them how his heart would be affected towards them, he assures them he will give them daily experience of it. Do but try me, says he, when I am gone, and that by sending me word upon all occasions what you would have me to do for you, and I have left my Spirit to be your secretary and the inditer of all your petitions. "Hitherto you have asked nothing (that is, little) in my name"—he blames them that they have asked him no more to do for them—"but now ask, and you shall receive." And if otherwise you will not believe, yet you shall believe your own eyes; ask, and you shall see yourselves answered presently. Believe, and so believe me, says he, "for the works' sake," John 14:11. He speaks it of the works he would do for them in answer to their prayers when he was gone, which should be as so many epistles of his heart returned in answer unto theirs; for it follows, John 14:12, "He that believeth on me shall do greater works than I, because I go to my Father," so that it is evident he speaks of the works done after his ascension. And how were they to get and procure them to be done? By prayer; so it follows, John 14:13, "And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do." He speaks it of the time when he is gone. And again he says in John 14:14, "If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." Let me but hear from you, be it every week, every day, every hour, you shall be sure of an answer. "Open your mouths wide, and I will fill them." (Psalms 81:10) And those your prayers shall be as continual tokens both of your hearts towards me, and my answers shall be the like of mine to you. And because Christ bids them direct (their letters) their prayers, to the Father, only to send them in his name, as John 16:23, and so they might perhaps not so clearly know and discern that his heart was in the answer to them, but his Father's hand only, therefore he adds twice in John 14, "I will do it, I will do it." He speaks like one as forward to do for them, as his Father is, or should be, and as desirous to have them know and take notice of his hand in it. And it is as if he had said, Though you ask the Father in my name, yet all comes through my hands, and I will do it;—there must be my hand to the warrant for everything that is done, and my heart shall not be wanting. In the fifth place, yet further

to evidence his love, he not only bids them thus pray to him and in his name upon all occasions, but he assures them that he himself will pray for them. And observe the manner of his telling them this; it is in the most insinuating, persuasive expressions to convey his heart unto them that men use to utter when they would intimate the deepest care and purpose to do a thing. John 16:26, "At that day (namely, after his ascension) ye shall ask," says he, "and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you;" no, not I. I mentioned it before; I will but add this illustration to it. It is such a speech as men use when they would express the greatest reason that another has to rest confident and assured of their love, "I do not love you, no, not I." It is expressing a thing by its contrary, by which it is most emphasized. As when we say of a man that has the greatest good turn done him that can be, you are shrewdly hurt. It is such an expression as Paul used to the Corinthians, I converted your souls when you thought not of it; "I caught you with guile; forgive me this wrong." (2 Corinthians 12:16). So, says Christ here, "I say not that I will pray for you," when the truth is, that it is the chiefest work that he does in heaven. "He lives ever to intercede;" Hebrews 7:25—as he ever lives, so to intercede ever, and never to hold his peace till sinners are saved. But the work of Christ in heaven is a subject which deserves, and will take up, a distinct and large discourse; I will therefore speak no more of it now, neither will I mention any more particulars out of this his sermon. Read over those three chapters (John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33), for in them you have the longest sermon of his that is recorded; and he stood the longest upon this theme of any other, because, indeed, his heart was more in it than in any point that he ever preached on.

Only, if any object and say, He spoke all this to his disciples to quiet and pacify them, and so, more in respect to their trouble, than otherwise he would have spoken. In the sixth place, read but the next chapter (John 17:1-26), and you shall see that he presently goes apart and alone to his Father, and speaks over all again unto him that which he had said unto them. He says as much behind their backs of them as he had said before their faces to them. Read it, and you will find that he was the same absent as when present with them. He was, therefore, not only hearty in what he had said, but his heart was full of it. That chapter, you know, contains a prayer put up just before his suffering, and there he makes his will and his last request, for in such a style it runs, "Father, I will," John 17:24, which will he is gone to see executed in heaven. And Arminius said true in that, this prayer is left us by Christ as a summary of his intercession for us in heaven. He spoke as he meant to do in heaven, and as one that had done his work, and was now come to demand his wages; "I have finished thy work," says he, John 17:4. And whereas he speaks a word or two for himself (in the first five verses), he speaks five times as many for them, for all the rest of the chapter is a prayer for them. He uses all kind of arguments to move his Father for his children. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," says he, and to save them is thy work, which remains to be done for me by thee; and "they are thine, and thou gavest them me," and I commend to thee but thine own. "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine." He insinuates that he of himself had not added a man, but uses all his interest only for those that the Father had given him. And what a motive is this? And he professes he will not open his mouth for a man more: "I pray not for the world," says he, I will not open my lips for any one son of perdition; but I employ all my blood, my prayers, and my whole interest with thee but for those thyself hast given me. And, says he, though thou hast given me a personal glory, which I had before the world was, yet there is another glory which I account of almost as much, and that is, in their being saved. "I am glorified in them," says he, (John 17:10) "and they are my joy," (John 17:13) and therefore I must have

them "with me wherever I am," (John 17:24). 'Thou hast set my heart upon them, and hast loved them thyself as thou hast loved me, and thou hast ordained them to be one in us, even as we are one, and therefore I cannot live long asunder from them; I have thy company, but I must have theirs too; "I will that they be where I am," (John 17:24). If I have any glory, they must have part of it. So it follows in the forenamed verse, "That they may behold the glory which thou hast given me." He speaks all this as if he had been then in heaven, and in possession of all that glory; and, therefore, it is an expression of his heart in heaven, which you have very good ground to build upon.

02.2. Demonstrations from Passages and Expressions after His Resurrection

Demonstrations from Passages and Expressions after His Resurrection

These demonstrations have been taken from his carriage and sermon before his death, even at his first breaking of his mind unto his disciples concerning his departure from them. Let us now take a view of our Saviour in his behavior after his resurrection; whence a further indicium of his heart, how it would stand towards sinners when he should be in heaven, may be taken, and his love demonstrated. For his resurrection was the first step unto his glory, and indeed an entrance into it; when he laid down his body, he laid down all earthly weakness, and passions of flesh and blood. "It was sown," as ours is, "in weakness;" but with raising of it up again, he took on him the dispositions and qualifications of an immortal and glorious body, "it was raised in power." And "the days of his flesh," or frail estate, as the author to the Hebrews by way of distinction speaks, were past and over at his resurrection; and the garment of his body was new dyed, and endowed with new qualities; and thereby it was made of a stuff fit to bear and sustain heaven's glory; and therefore, what now his heart upon his first rising shall appear to be towards us, will be a certain demonstration, what it will continue to be in heaven. And to illustrate this the more, consider, that if ever there were a trial taken, whether his love to sinners would continue or not, it was then at his resurrection; for all his disciples (especially Peter) had carried themselves the most unworthily towards him, in that interim, that could be; and this then when he was performing the greatest act of love towards them, namely, dying for them, that ever was shown by any. And by the way, so God often orders it, that when he is in hand with the greatest mercies for us, and bringing about our greatest good, then we are most of all sinning against him; which he does, to magnify his love the more. You know how they all forsook him, and in the midst of his agony in the garden, in which he desired their company merely for a relief unto his saddened spirit, they slept, and lay like so many blocks utterly senseless of his griefs, which had they any friendly sympathy of, they could never have done; "Could you not watch with me one hour?" Then you know how foully Peter denied him with oaths and curses; and after that, when he was laid in the grave, they are giving up all their faith in him; "We trusted it should have been he," say two of them, "that should have redeemed Israel." They question whether he was the Messiah or not, Luke 24:21.

Now when Christ came first out of the other world, from the dead, clothed with that heart and body which he was to wear in heaven, what message sends he first to them? We would all think, that as they would not know him in his sufferings, so he would now be as strange to them in his glory; or at least, his first words shall be to berate them for their faithlessness and falsehood. But here is no such matter; for John 20:17, his first word concerning them is, "Go tell my brethren." You read elsewhere, how that it is made a great point of love and condescending in Christ so to entitle them; Hebrews 2:11, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren;" surely his brethren had been ashamed of him. Now for him to call them so when he was first entering into his glory, argues the more of the love in him towards them. He carries it as Joseph did in the height of his advancement, when

he first broke his mind to his brethren; "I am Joseph your brother," says he, Genesis 45:4. So Christ says here, 'tell them you have seen Jesus their brother; I own them as brethren still.' This was his first compellation; but what was the message that he would first have delivered unto them? "That I," says he, "ascend to my Father, and your Father." A more friendly speech by far, and arguing infinite more love than that of Joseph's did (though that was full of bowels), for Joseph after he had told them he was their brother, adds, "whom you sold into Egypt;" he minds them of their unkindness; but not so Christ, not a word of that; he minds them not of what they had done against him. Poor sinners, who are full of the thoughts of their own sins, know not how they shall be able at the latter day to look Christ in the face when they shall first meet with him. But they may relieve their spirits against their care and fear, by Christ's carriage now towards his disciples, who had so sinned against him. Be not afraid, "your sins will he remember no more." Yea further, you may observe that he minds them, not so much of what he had been doing for them. He says not, 'tell them I have been dying for them,' or, 'that they little think what I have suffered for them;' not a word of that either; but still his heart and his care is upon doing more: he looks not backward to what is passed, but forgets his sufferings, as "a woman her travail, for joy that a man-child is born." Having now dispatched that great work on earth for them, he hastens to heaven as fast as he can to do another. And though he knew he had business yet to do upon earth, that would hold him forty days longer, yet to show that his heart was longing, and eagerly desirous to be at work for them in heaven, he speaks in the present tense, and tells them, "I ascend;" and he expresses his joy to be, not only that he goes to "his Father," but also that he goes to "their Father," to be an advocate with him for them, of which I spoke before. And is indeed Jesus our brother alive? And does he call us brethren? And does he talk thus lovingly of us? Whose heart would not this overcome? But this was but a message sent his disciples, before he met them; let us next observe his carriage and speech at his meeting together. When he came first amongst them, this was his salutation, "Peace be to you," John 20:19, which he reiterates in John 20:21; and it is all one with that former speech of his used in that his parting sermon, "My peace I leave with you." After this he "breathes on them," and conveys the Holy Ghost in a further measure into them, so to give an evidence of what he would do yet more plentifully in heaven; and that the mystery of his breathing on them was to show that this was the utmost expression of his heart, to give them the Spirit, and that it came from the very bottom of it (as a man's breath does), as well as that the Holy Ghost proceeds from him, as well as from the Father, which was also the meaning of it. And to what end does he give them the Spirit? Not for themselves alone, but that they by the gift and assistance of that Spirit might forgive men's sins by converting them to him. "Whose sins soever ye remit,"—namely, by your ministry—"they are remitted to them." His mind, you see, is still upon sinners, and his care for the conversion of their souls. And therefore in another evangelist, namely, Mark, his last words recorded are these: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature; and he that believeth shall be saved," Mark 16:15. And in Luke 24:46-47, his last words on earth there recorded are, "Thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise... that repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations," and adds, "beginning at Jerusalem," where he had been but a few days before crucified. Of all places, one would have thought he would have excepted that, and have charged them to pass by it; but he bids them begin there. Let them have the first-fruit and benefit by my death, that were the actors in it. And, to that end, he also says, "Behold I send you the promise of my Father," Luke 24:49. Another time he appears to two of them, and then indeed he berates them, saying, "O ye fools, and slow of heart!"

but for what is it, but only because they would not believe on him; for no other sin, not for that they had forsaken him; so it follows, "O ye fools, and slow of heart to believe," Luke 24:25, and this because he is glad when we believe, as in John 11:16. And after that he appears to all the eleven, and upbraids them, the text says, but with what? With their "unbelief and hardness of heart;" still because they believed not, Mark 16:14. No sin of theirs troubled him but their unbelief, which shows how his heart stands in that he desires nothing more than to have men believe in him; and this now when he is glorified. Afterwards he meets with Thomas, and scarce chides him for his gross unbelief, only tells him, it was well that, "having seen, he believed;" but pronounces them more "blessed, who though they have not seen, yet believe;" and so he is reprov'd, John 20:29. Another time he shows himself to his disciples, and particularly deals with Peter, but yet tells him not a word of his sins, nor of his forsaking of him, but only goes about to draw from him a testimony of his love to himself; "Peter" (says he), "lovest thou me?" Christ loves to hear that note; full well do those words sound in his ears, when you tell him you love him, though he knows it already; as Peter tells him, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest I love thee," John 21:15, and this Christ puts on him three times. And what was Christ's aim in drawing this acknowledgment of love from Peter to him, that if he loved him as he professed, and would always show it, then to "feed his lambs"? This is the great testimony that he would have Peter to show his love in, when he [Christ] should be in heaven; and this is the last charge he gives him [Peter]. Which, how great a testimony is it, to show how his own heart was affected, and what his greatest care was upon! His heart runs altogether upon his lambs, upon souls to be converted. He had said before, "Sheep I have," John 10:16, "which are not of this fold, them I must bring in," and he left his apostles to do it; but this here was a more moving and affectionate expression, for sheep can shift for themselves, but poor little lambs cannot. Therefore Christ says unto Peter, "Feed my lambs," even as John, to express the more love unto those he writes to and calls them "my little children." And to what end does the evangelist record these things of him after his resurrection? One of the evangelists that recorded them informs us. In John 20:30, it is said that "Jesus did many other signs," namely, after his resurrection; for in the midst of the story of those things done after his resurrection he speaks it, "which are not written in this book," but partly recorded by other evangelists, and partly concealed; "but these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ," that is so you might come to him as to the Messiah, the Saviour of the world; and therefore, the most of the things recorded tend to show Christ's heart and carriage towards sinners, that so we might believe on him, and that "believing we might have life through his name."

02.3. Demonstrations from Passages at and after His Ascension into Heaven.

Demonstrations from Passages at and after His Ascension into Heaven.

Let us view him next in his very ascending: his carriage then also will further assure our hearts of this. Luke 24:50, it is said, "He lifted up his hands and blessed them;" and to put the greater emphasis upon it, and that we might the more observe it, as having some great mystery in it, in Luke 24:51, it is added, "And while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." This benediction Christ reserved to be his last act; and what was the meaning of it, but (as I have before shown) to bless them, as God blessed Adam and Eve, bidding them "increase and multiply," and so blessing all mankind that were to come of them. Thus does Christ, in blessing his disciples, bless all those that shall believe through their word unto the end of the world. I only add this to the illustration of it; this mystery is interpreted by Peter in Acts 3:26, when speaking to the Jews, he says, "Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you," (and how?) "in turning away every one of you from his iniquities," and so forgiving of them; for "blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven." Thus a demonstration at his ascending.

IV. In the next place, let us consider what Christ did when he was come to heaven and exalted there: how abundantly did he there make good all that he had promised in his last sermon!

For, first, he instantly poured out his Spirit, and that "richly" (as the apostle to Titus speaks), and he "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which you now see and hear," says the apostle in his first sermon after the ascension, Acts 2:33. He then received it, and visibly poured him out. So Ephesians 4:8, it is said, "He ascended up on high, and gave gifts unto men...for the work of the ministry" (Ephesians 4:15), "...and for the jointing in of the saints to the increase of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:16), that is, for the converting of elect sinners, and making them saints. And the gifts there mentioned (some of them) remain unto this day, in "pastors and teachers." And this Spirit is still in our preaching and in your hearts, in hearing, in praying, and persuades you of Christ's love to this very day; and is in all these the pledge of the continuance of Christ's love still in heaven unto sinners. All our sermons and your prayers are evidences to you, that Christ's heart is still the same towards sinners that ever it was, for the Spirit that assists in all these comes in his name, and in his stead, and works all by commission from him. And do none of you feel your hearts moved in the preaching of these things, at this and other times? And who is it that moves you? It is the Spirit who speaks in Christ's name from heaven, even as himself is said to "speak from heaven," Hebrews 12:25. And when you pray, it is the Spirit that indites [composes or dictates] your prayers, and that "makes intercession for you" in your own hearts, Romans 8:26, which such intercession of his is but the evidence and echo of Christ's intercession in heaven. The Spirit prays in you, because Christ prays for you. He is an intercessor on earth, because Christ is an intercessor in heaven. As he did take off Christ's words, and used the same that he before had uttered, when he spoke in and to the disciples the words of life, so he takes off of Christ's prayers

also when he prays in us; he takes but the words as it were out of Christ's mouth, or heart rather, and directs our hearts to offer them up to God. He also follows us to the sacrament, and in that glass shows us Christ's face smiling on us, and through his face, his heart; and thus helping of us to a sight of him, we go away rejoicing that we saw our Saviour that day.

Then, secondly, all those works, both of miracles and conversion of sinners, in answer to the apostles' prayers, are a demonstration of this. What a handful had Peter's first sermon after Christ's ascension, when three thousand souls were converted by it! The apostles (as you know) went on to preach forgiveness through Christ, and in his name, and to invite men to him; and what signs and wonders did accompany them, to confirm their preaching! And all were the fruits of Christ's intercession in heaven. So that what he promised (John 14:12), as an evidence of his minding them in heaven, was abundantly fulfilled. They, upon their asking, did "greater works than he;" so in Acts 4:29-30, at the prayers of Peter. And Hebrews 2:3-4, the apostle makes an argument of it, "How shall we escape," says he, "if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles?" Yea, let me add this, take also the New Testament, and all the promises in it, and expressions of Christ's love; it was written all since Christ's being in heaven, by his Spirit, and that by commission from Christ, and therefore all that you find therein you may build on as his very heart; and therein see, that what he once said on earth, he repeals not a word now he is in heaven—his mind continues the same. And the consideration of it here may add a great confirmation to our faith herein.

Thirdly, some of the apostles spoke with him since, even many years after his ascension. Thus John and Paul, of which the last was in heaven with him; they both do give out the same thing of him.

Paul heard not one sermon of Christ's (that he knew of) while on earth, and received the gospel from no man, apostle or other, but by the immediate revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven, as he speaks, Galatians 1:11-12. But he was converted by Christ himself from heaven, by immediate speech and conference of Christ himself with him, and this long after his ascension. And in that one instance Christ abundantly showed his heart and purpose to continue to all sorts of sinners to the end of the world. Thus in two places that great apostle tells us; the first is in 1 Timothy 1:13, "I was a persecutor, a blasphemer," says he, "but I obtained mercy, and the grace of our Lord," namely, Jesus Christ, "was exceeding abundant;" and upon this he declares with open mouth, as it were, from Christ's own self, who spoke to him from heaven, that this is "the faithfulest saying" that ever was uttered, "that Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am chief," says he, 1 Timothy 1:15. And to testify that this was the very scope of Christ in thus converting of Paul himself, and Paul's scope also in that place to Timothy. To show as much, appears by what follows: 1 Timothy 1:16, "For this cause I obtained this mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to all them that should hereafter believe on him unto life everlasting." It is express, you see, to assure all sinners, unto the end of the world, of Christ's heart towards them. This was his drift. "For this very cause..." says Paul. The second place I allege in proof of this, is the story of Paul's conversion, where he diligently inserts the very words that Christ spoke to him from heaven (Acts 26:16-18), which were these, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, ...to send thee to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,

that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me." Brethren, these are Christ's words since he went to heaven, and he tells Paul he appeared unto him to testify thus much. Thus for Paul's conference with him.

Then again, sixty years after his ascension, did the apostle John receive a revelation from him, even when all the apostles were dead, for after all their deaths was that book written, and the Revelation is said to be in a more immediate manner "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1), than any other of the apostles' writings; and you read that Christ made an apparition of himself to him, and said, "I am he that was dead, and am alive for evermore," Revelation 1:18. Now let us but consider Christ's last words, in that his last book, the last that Christ has spoken since he went to heaven, or that he is to utter till the day of judgment; you have them in Revelation 22:16-17, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David. ... And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." They are the latter words I cite this place for. The occasion of these words was this: Christ was now in heaven, and had before promised to come again, and fetch us all to heaven. And in the meantime, mark what an echoing and answering of hearts and of desires there is mutually, between him from heaven and believing sinners from below. Earth calls upon heaven, and heaven calls upon earth, as the prophet speaks. The bride from earth says unto Christ, "Come to me;" and the Spirit in the saints' hearts below says "Come" unto him also; and Christ cries out as loud from heaven, "Come," in answer unto this desire in them; so that heaven and earth ring again of it. "Let him that is athirst come to me; and let him that will come, come, and take of the waters of life freely." (Revelation 22:17) This is Christ speech unto men on earth. They call him to come unto earth, to judgment; and he calls sinners to come up to heaven unto him for mercy. They cannot desire his coming to them, so much as he desires their coming to him. Now what is the meaning of this, that upon their calling upon him to come, he should thus call upon them to come? It is in effect as if he had plainly uttered himself thus: I have a heart to come to you, but I must have all you my elect that are to be on earth, come to me first. You would have me come down to you, but I must stay here till all that the Father has given me come to me; and then you shall be sure quickly to have me with you. Hereby expressing how much his heart now longs after them. This to be his meaning is evident by the words which he adds, Revelation 22:20, "He which testifies these things," namely, Christ, "says, Surely I come quickly." And if we observe how much by the by, as it were, these words of Christ's do come in, it makes them the more remarkable to show his heart in uttering them. This book was intended merely as a prophecy of the times of the gospel until his coming; unto which period of it, when John had brought that prophetic story, he brings in the bride longing for that coming of Christ, "The bride says, Come." And no sooner says she so, but Christ by way of retort does likewise say "Come" unto her also; yes, it puts the more observation upon it, that he had uttered the same words before, Revelation 21:6, but notwithstanding he will repeat them again, and have them to be his last words. All which shows how much his heart was in this part of the gospel, to invite sinners to him; that now when he is to speak but one sentence more, till we hear the sound to judgment, he should especially make choice of these words. Let them therefore forever stick with you, as being worthy to be your last thoughts when you come to die, and when you are going to him. He speaks indeed something else after them; but that which he says afterwards is but to set a seal unto these words, and to the rest of the Scriptures, whereof this is the chief. And further to show that these words were singled out to be his last, and that he meant

to speak no more till the day of judgment, therefore also he adds a curse to him, who should "add to them, or take from them." He adds indeed after that another speech, but it is only to ingeminate [emphasize] his willingness to come quickly, were all his elect but once come in to him, so Revelation 22:20. And all this tends to assure us that this is his heart, and we shall find him of no other mind until his coming again. And that you may yet the more consider them as thus purposely brought in by him as his last words, to make them stick with us, let me add another observation about them, and that is this, that at another time when he was upon earth, he in like manner singled out these very words (I mean the matter of them) as the conclusion of many days' preaching. Thus John 7:37, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." These words were spoken on the "last day of the feast," after which he was to preach no more at that time, and for a good while after, unto them; and he had preached upon all the former days of that feast, as his manner was; and it was "the great day of the feast," when he had the greatest audience; and you see he chooses this for his last sentence of that his last sermon then; and when he would give them something at parting, as a viaticum, which he would have them carry home with them to feed upon above all the rest, these are his words, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink;" which himself interprets to be believing on him, John 7:38, and he stands up to speak this; yea, "he cries," says the text, with open mouth, with utmost vehemence, to the intent that all might hear this above all sayings else. And thus in like manner, at this time also, when he is to speak no more, but to hold his tongue forever till the day of judgment, nor is to write any more Scriptures, he then sends his angel to testify these to be his last words; and this although he had spoken them before. It was therefore assuredly done to show his heart in them. They were his last words then, and they shall be mine in the closure of this discourse, for what can there be added to them?

Part II: The Evil of Affliction and the Evil of Sin For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.—Hebrews 4:15. The only use I shall make of these words is, to be a foundation unto that second part of that head or point of doctrine into which I have made an entrance; which was to demonstrate the gracious inclination and temper of Christ's heart toward sinners, now he is in heaven.

The extrinsic demonstrations of this, which I make the first part of it, are dispatched. And for a groundwork to these more intrinsic demonstrations, which make a second part, I have chosen this text, as that which above any other speaks his heart most, and sets out the frame and workings of it towards sinners; and that so sensibly that it does, as it were, take our hands, and lay them upon Christ's breast, and let us feel how his heart beats and his bowels yearn towards us, even now he is in glory—the very scope of these words being manifestly to encourage believers against all that may discourage them, from the consideration of Christ's heart towards them now in heaven.

To open them, so far as they serve to my present purpose.

First, all that may in any way discourage us he here calls by the name of infirmities, thereby meaning both.

The evil of afflictions, of what sort whatsoever, persecutions, from without.

The evil of sins, which do most of all discourage us, from within.

And that both these are meant:

That under "infirmities" he means persecutions and afflictions is manifest; not only in that the word is often used in that sense, as 2 Corinthians 11:30, and 2 Corinthians 12:5, but also it is plain that the phrase is here so intended, for his scope is to comfort them against what would pull from them their profession, as that foregoing exhortation, "Let us hold fast our profession," implies. Now that which attempted to pull it from them were their persecutions and oppositions from without. It appears also because his argument here of comforting them against these infirmities, is drawn from Christ's example, "In that he was in all things tempted as we are."

Yet secondly, by "infirmities" are meant sins also, for so in the process of this discourse he uses the phrase, and makes them the main object of our high priest's pity; for in the next words, Hebrews 5:2, showing what the qualifications of the high priests under the law were, who were types of our great high priest, he makes this one suitable to this here mentioned, that he was to be one that "could have compassion on the ignorant, and those that were out of the way;" that is, upon sinners, for sins are those ignorances and goings-astray from God; and then adds, "in that himself was clothed with infirmities," that is, with sins. And although it is said here that Christ was without sin in all, yet he was tempted by Satan unto all sorts of sins, even as we are. And that by "infirmities" sins are mainly here intended, is yet more evident from the remedy propounded against them, which they are here encouraged to seek for at the throne of grace, namely, grace and mercy. "Therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find grace and mercy to help in time of need." So it follows in the next words. Grace to help against the power of sin, and mercy against the guilt and punishment of it; both which are the greatest discouragers to come boldly to that throne; and therefore he must necessarily intend those kinds of infirmities chiefly in this his encouragement and comfort given.

Now, secondly, for a support against both these, he lets us understand how feelingly and sensibly affected the heart of Christ is to sinners under all these their infirmities, now he is in heaven, for of him advanced into heaven he here speaks, as appears by Hebrews 4:14. And if the coherence with that verse be observed, we shall see that he brings in this narration of it clearly, by way of preventing an objection which might otherwise arise in all men's thoughts from that high and glorious description which he had given of him in Hebrews 4:14. "We have a great high priest, who is passed into the heavens." He knew we would be apt from this presently to think he may be too great to be an high priest for us to transact our affairs; and that this greatness of his might cause him to forget us, or if he did remember us, and take notice of our miseries, yet, "being passed into the heavens," and so having cast off the frailties of his flesh which he had here, and having clothed his human nature with so great a glory, that therefore he cannot now pity us, as he did when he dwelt among us here below, nor be so feelingly affected and touched with our miseries, as to be tenderly moved to compassionate and commiserate us, so he is not now capable of a feeling of grief, and so not of a fellow-feeling or sympathizing with us; his state and condition now is above all such affections, which affections notwithstanding are they that should put him upon helping us, heartily and cordially. And for him to be exposed to such affections as these, were a weakness, an infirmity in himself, which heaven has cured him of. His power and glory is so great that he cannot be thus touched, even as the angels are not. And he is "advanced far above all principalities and powers," Ephesians 1:21. This the apostle carefully preoccupates; and it is this very objection which he takes away. "We have not a high priest who cannot," etc. Duplex negatio aequipollet a

affirmation; nay, two negatives do not only make an affirmative, but affirm more strongly: they make an affirmation contradictory to a contrary and opposite thought. Now this speech of his is as much as if he should have said, Well, let heaven have made what alteration soever upon his condition, in glorifying his human nature, which be it never so free from fleshly passions, and instead of flesh be made like heaven, let him be never so incapable of impressions from below; yet he retains one tender part and bare place in his heart still unarmed, as it were, even to suffer with you, and to be touched if you be. The word is a deep one. He suffers with you, he is as tender in his bowels to you as ever he was; that he might be moved to pity you. He is willing to suffer, as it were, that one place to be left naked, and to be flesh still, on which he may be wounded with your miseries, that so he might be your merciful high priest. And it may be objected that this were a weakness. The apostle affirms that this is his power, and a perfection and strength of love surely, in him, as the word $\delta\upsilon\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$ imports; that is, that makes him thus able and powerful to take our miseries into his heart, though glorified, and so to be affected with them, as if he suffered with us, and so to relieve us, out of that principle out of which he would relieve himself.

There are two things which this text gives me occasion to take notice of, and apart to handle.

First, more generally, that Christ's heart now in heaven is as graciously affected unto sinners as ever it was on earth.

And, secondly, more particularly, the manner how. Or thus:

That he is touched with a feeling, or sympathizes with us, as the word is.

The way how this comes to pass; even through his having been tempted in all things like unto us. In handling the first, I shall give those intrinsic demonstrations of it that remain; and in handling the other, further open the text. To come therefore first to those intrinsic demonstrations of this doctrine, which I engraft upon these words, and shoot naturally from them, namely, that the heart of Jesus Christ, now he is in heaven, is as graciously inclined to sinners as ever it was on earth.

The first sort of intrinsic demonstrations, drawn from the influence all the three Persons have forever into the heart of the human nature of Christ in heaven.

I. The first sort of demonstrations shall be fetched from all the three Persons, and their several influence they have into Christ's heart in heaven, to incline it towards us.

The first shall be taken from God his Father, who has thus advanced him; and it has two parts: (1.) That God has given a perpetual command to Christ to love sinners; (2.) That therefore his heart continues the same forever.

(1.) For the first, God the Father has given Jesus Christ a special command to love sinners; and has further implanted a merciful, gracious disposition in his heart toward them. This I mention to argue it, because it is that which Christ alleges, John 6:37, as the original ground of this disposition of his, "not to cast out those that come to him." For "it is my Father's will," says he in the following verses, "that I should perform that which I came down from heaven for," John 6:38. And this lies now still upon him, now he is in heaven, as much as ever; for "his will also is," says he, John 6:39-40, "that I should raise them up at the last day," so as it must necessarily continue the same

till then. And compare with this John 10:15-18, where, having discoursed before of his care and love to his sheep, to "give his life" for them, to "know" and own them, and to "bring them into the fold." he concludes at John 10:18, "This commandment have I received from my Father." It is his will, says John 6:1-71, and if a good son knows that a thing is his father's mind and will, it is enough to move him to do it; much more if it be his express command. And in this John 10:1-42, he further says, that it is the command which he had received from the Father. A command is a man's will peremptorily expressed; so as there must be a breach, if it be not fulfilled: and such a command has God given Christ concerning us. Out of both places I observe three things to be the matter of this will and command of God's.

First, that Christ should die for his sheep; in respect to which command, he continued so to love them while here, as to lay down his life for them; so John 10:15; but then he took it up again, and is ascended into heaven. Therefore, those other two things commanded him, do concern him when he is in glory; namely, to "receive all that come to him," which is the second; and the third, to look that he "lose none of those for whom he died," but to "raise them up." And for these his Father's command lies as strictly on him, now he is in heaven, as for dying for them while he was on earth. "This command have I received from my Father, and this is his will." And together with this command, God did put it into his heart, as where he commands he ever uses to do, such an instinct of transcendent love towards them, as shall so strongly incline him to perform it, that he shall need no more commands. He has put such a $\sigma\tau\omicron\rho\gamma\eta$, such an especial love into him, as he has put into the hearts of parents towards their own children, more than to all other men's children which they see besides, although more beautiful and more witty than their own. And both this commandment, and this inclination of love towards them, we have at once expressed, Psalms 40:8, where, giving the reason why he became our Mediator and sacrificed himself, he not only says, "I come to do thy will, O God;" but also, "Thy law is in my bowels." In which speech, both these two are mentioned:

[1.] That command I mentioned is there expressed, for it is called a law. And,

[2.] It was a law wrought into suitable dispositions in his heart; and, therefore, said to be a "law in his heart" or bowels.

You may easily conceive what law it was by the subject of it, his bowels, which are still put for the most tender affections; Colossians 3:12, "Bowels of mercy, [kindness]." It was no other than that law of love, mercy, and pity to poor sinners which God gave him in charge, as he was to be Mediator. It was that special law which lay on him as he was the "second Adam," like that which was given to the first Adam, non concedendi, over and above the moral law, not to eat the forbidden fruit; such a law was this he there speaks of. It was the law of his being a Mediator and a sacrifice, for of that he expressly speaks, Hebrews 8:6-7, over and besides the moral law, which was common to him with us. The word in the original is, "In the midst of my bowels," to show it was deeply engraven; it had its seat in the center, it sat nearest and was most inward in his heart.

Yes, and as that special law of not eating the forbidden fruit was to Adam *præceptum symbolicum*, as divines call it, given over and besides all the ten commandments, to be a trial, a sign or symbol, of his obedience to all the rest, such was this law given unto Christ, the second Adam, so as that God would judge of all his other obedience unto himself by this. Yes, it was laid on him with that earnestness by God, and so commended, ³him, as that if ever Christ would have him to love him,

he should be sure to love us. Thus in that place fore-cited, John 10:17-18, Christ comforts himself with this in his obedience, "Therefore doth my Father love me." It is spoken in relation unto his fulfilling this his command formerly mentioned, and so further imports, as if God should love Christ the better for the love he should show to us, it pleased him so well to see Christ love us. And so it is as if God, when he gave Christ that commandment, John 10:18, had said, Son, as you would have my love continue towards you, let me see your love towards me shown in being kind to these I have given you, "whom I have loved with the same love wherewith I have loved you," as you have it, John 17:23. As God would have us show love unto him by loving his children, so he would have Christ also show his love towards him by loving of us.

(2.) Now, for the second branch of this demonstration, namely, that the love which Christ, when on earth, expressed to be in his heart, and which made him die for sinners upon this command of his Father, that it does certainly continue in his heart still, now that he is in heaven, and that as quick and as tender as ever it was on earth, even as when he was on the cross, and that because of his Father's command. It is evidenced thus, for it being a law written in the midst of his bowels by his Father, it becomes natural to him, and so indelible, and as other moral laws of God written in the heart, they are perpetual. And as in us, when we shall be in heaven, though faith shall fail and hope vanish, yet love shall continue, as the apostle speaks; so does this love in Christ's heart continue also, and suffers no decay, and is shown as much now in receiving sinners and interceding for them, and being pitiful unto them, as then in dying for them. And this love to sinners being so commanded and pressed upon him, as was said, that as he would have his Father love him, he should love them, and so being urged upon all that great love that is between him and his Father, this, as it must necessarily work and boil up a strong love in him unto sinners, so likewise the most constant and never-decaying love that could be. And this is argued from the analogy of that principle upon which Christ urges us to love himself, John 15:10. He moves his disciples to "keep the commandments" he gave them, and uses this argument, "For so shall you abide in my love," and backs it with his own instance, "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Now, therefore, this being the great commandment that God lays on him, to love and die for, and to continue to love and receive, sinners that come to him, and raise them up at the latter day, certainly he continues to keep it most exactly, as being one of the great ties between him and his Father, so to continue in his love to him. Therefore, so long as he continues in his Father's love, and, now he is in heaven and at his right hand, he must necessarily continue in highest favour with him, so long, you may be sure, he continues to observe this. And thus that he should continue still to love us, both love to his Father and love to himself obliges him; we may therefore be sure of him, that he both does it and will do it forever. O what a comfort is it, that as children are mutual pledges and ties of love between man and wife, so that we should be made such between God the Father and the Son! And this demonstration is taken from the influence of the first person of the Trinity, namely, from God the Father.

Then, secondly, this his love is not a forced love, which he strives only to bear towards us, because his Father has commanded him to marry us; but it is his nature, his disposition, which, added to the former, affords a second demonstration of the point in hand, and is drawn from God the Son. This disposition is free and natural to him; he should not be God's Son else, nor take after his heavenly Father, unto whom it is natural to show mercy, but not so to punish, which is his strange work, but mercy pleases him; he is "the Father of mercies," he begets them naturally.

Now, Christ is his own Son, as by way of distinction he is called, and his natural Son; yea, his human nature being united to the second person, is thereby become the natural Son of God, not adopted, as we are. And if he be his natural Son in privileges, then also his Father's properties are natural to him, more natural than to us, who are but his adopted sons. And if we, "as the elect of God," who are but the adopted sons, are exhorted to "put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness," (as Colossians 3:12), then much more must these dispositions need to be found in Christ, the natural Son; and these, not put on by him, but be as natural to him as his Sonship is. "God is love," as John says, and Christ is love covered over with flesh, yea, our flesh. And besides, it is certain that as God has fashioned the hearts of all men, and some of the sons of men unto more mercy and pity naturally than others, and then the Holy Spirit, coming on them to sanctify their natural dispositions, uses to work according to their tempers, even so it is certain that he tempered the heart of Christ, and made it of a softer mold and temper than the tenderness of all men's hearts put together into one, to soften it, would have been of. When he was to assume a human nature, he is brought in saying, "A body hast thou fitted me," Hebrews 10:5; that is, a human nature, fitted, as in other things, so in the temper of it, for the Godhead to work and show his perfections in best. And as he took a human nature on purpose to be a merciful high priest, as Hebrews 2:14, so such a human nature, and of so special a temper and frame as might be more merciful than all men or angels. His human nature was "made without hands;" that is, was not of the ordinary make that other men's hearts are of; though for the matter the same, yet not for the frame of his spirit. It was a heart bespoke for on purpose to be made a vessel, or rather fountain, of mercy, wide and capable enough to be so extended as to take in and give forth to us again all God's manifest mercies; that is, all the mercies God intended to manifest to his elect. And therefore Christ's heart had naturally in the temper of it more pity than all men or angels have, as through which the mercies of the great God were to be dispensed unto us; and this heart of his to be the instrument of them. And then this man, and the heart of this man so framed, being united to God, and being made the natural Son of God, how natural must mercy needs be unto him, and therefore continue in him now lie is in heaven! For though he laid down all infirmities of our nature when he rose again, yet no graces that were in him while he was below; they are in him now as much as ever; and being his nature, for nature we know is constant, therefore still remains. You may observe, that when he was upon earth, minding to persuade sinners to have good thoughts of him, as he used that argument of his Father's command given him; so he also lays open his own disposition, Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, you that are weary and heavy laden,...for I am meek and lowly of heart."

Men are apt to have contrary conceits of Christ, but he tells them his disposition there, by preventing such hard thoughts of him, to allure them unto him the more. We are apt to think that he, being so holy, is therefore of a severe and sour disposition against sinners, and not able to bear them. No, says he; "I am meek," gentleness is my nature and temper. As it was of Moses, who was, as in other things, so in that grace, his type; he was not revenged on Miriam and Aaron, but interceded for them. So, says Christ, injuries and unkindnesses do not so work upon me as to make me irreconcilable; it is my nature to forgive: "I am meek." Yes, but (may we think) he being the Son of God and heir of heaven, and especially being now filled with glory, and sitting at God's right hand, he may now despise the lowliness of us here below; though not out of anger, yet out of that height of his greatness and distance that he is advanced unto, in that we are too mean for him to marry, or be familiar with. He surely has higher thoughts than to regard such poor, low things as

we are. And so though indeed we conceive him meek, and not prejudiced with injuries, yet he may be too high and lofty to condescend so far as to regard, or take to heart, the condition of poor creatures. No, says Christ; "I am lowly" also, willing to bestow my love and favour upon the poorest and meanest. And further, all this is not a semblance of such an affable disposition, nor is it externally put on in the face and outward carriage only, as in many great ones, that will seem gentle and courteous, but there is all this $\nu \tau \alpha \rho \delta$, "in the heart;" it is his temper, his disposition, his nature to be gracious, which nature he can never lay aside. And that his greatness, when he comes to enjoy it in heaven, would not a bit alter his disposition in him, appears by this, that he at the very same time when he uttered these words, took into consideration all his glory to come, and utters both that and his meekness with the same breath. So Matthew 11:27, "All things are delivered to me by my Father;" and presently after all this he says, "Come unto me, all you that are heavy laden,...I am meek and lowly," Matthew 11:28-29.

Look, therefore, what lovely, sweet, and delightful thoughts you use to have of a dear friend, who is of an amiable nature, or of some eminently holy or meek saint, of whom you think with yourselves, I could put my soul into such a man's hands, and can compromise my salvation to him, as I have heard it spoken of some. Or look how we should have been encouraged to have dealt with Moses in matter of forgiveness, who was the meekest man on earth; or treated with Joseph, by what we read of his bowels towards his brethren; or what thoughts we have of the tender hearts of Paul or Timothy unto the souls of men in begetting, and in nurturing, and bringing them up to life, "Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing (says Paul) to impart our own souls to you," 1 Thessalonians 2:8; and this "naturally," as his word is, Php 2:20; even such and infinitely more raised apprehensions should we have of that sweetness and candour that is in Jesus Christ, as being much more natural to him. And therefore the same apostle does make Christ's bowels the pattern of his, "God is my witness, how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ," Php 1:8. This phrase, "in the bowels of Christ," has, according to interpreters, two meanings, and both serve to illustrate that which I intend.

First, "in the bowels of Christ" is taken causally, as if he meant to show that those bowels or compassions were infused into him from Christ, and so longed after them with such kind of bowels as Christ had wrought in him; and if so that Christ put such bowels into him, has he not then in himself much more? Paul had reason to say, "in the bowels of Christ," for (in this sense) I am sure he once had scarce the heart and bowels of a man in him; namely, when he was out of Christ, how furious and lion-like a spirit had he against the saints, and what havoc made he of them, being ready even to pull out their bowels! And how came Paul by such tender bowels now towards them? Who gave him now such tender affections? Even Jesus Christ, it was he that of a lion made him a lamb. If therefore in Paul these bowels were not natural, but the contrary rather were natural to him, and yet they so abounded in him, and that naturally, as himself speaks, how much more must they necessarily abound in Christ, to whom they are native and inbred? Or else, secondly, "in the bowels," is put for instance, "like the bowels," or "after the bowels," according to the analogy of the Hebrew phrase. And so then the meaning was this, like as the bowels of Jesus Christ do yearn after you, so do mine. "Bowels" are a metaphor to signify tender and motherly affections and mercies. So Luke 1:78, "through the tender mercies." In the original it is "the bowels of mercy." Thus Paul, when he would signify how tender his affections were, he instances in the bowels of Jesus Christ (he making Christ his pattern in this in all, "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ").

Now, how desirous was this great apostle to beget men to Christ! He cared not what else he lost, so he might win some. He "counted not his life dear," nay, not his salvation dear, but "wished himself accursed for his brethren," who yet were the greatest enemies Christ then had on earth. How glad was he when any soul came in! How sorry when any fell off! Falling "into a new travail (he knew not how better to express the anxiety of his spirit for the Galatians), till Christ was formed in them." How comforted was he when he heard tidings of the constancy and increase of any of their faith! 1 Thessalonians 3:6-7; and in 1 Thessalonians 3:8 he says, "for now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord." Read all his epistles, and take the character of his spirit this way; and when you have done, look up to Christ's human nature in heaven, and think with yourselves, "Such a man is Christ." Paul warbles out in all these strains of affections but the soundings of Christ's bowels in heaven, in a lower key. They are natural to Christ, they all and infinite more are eminent in him. And this is the second demonstration, taken from his own natural disposition as Son of God.

A third demonstration shall be taken from the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost. If the same Spirit that was upon him, and in him, when he was on earth, does but still rest upon him now he is in heaven, then these dispositions must necessarily still entirely remain in him.

This demonstration is made up of two propositions put together: (1.) That the Holy Ghost dwelling in him concurs to make his heart thus graciously affected to sinners; and (2.) That the same Spirit dwells and continues in and upon him forever in heaven.

(1.) For the first: it was the Spirit who overshadowed his mother, and, in the meanwhile, knit that indissoluble knot between our nature and the second person, and that also knit his heart unto us. It was the Spirit who sanctified him in the womb. It was the Spirit that rested on him above measure, and fitted him with a meek spirit for the works of his mediation; and indeed for this very grace sake of meekness did the Spirit come more especially upon him. Therefore, when he was first solemnly inaugurated into that office, at his baptism (for then he visibly and professedly entered upon the execution of it), the Holy Ghost descended upon him; and how? As a dove; so all the evangelists jointly report it. But why in the shape of a dove? All apparitions that God at any time made of himself, were not so much to show what God is in himself, as how he is affected towards us, and declare what effects he works in us. So here, this shape of a dove resting upon him was to show those special gracious dispositions by which the Holy Ghost fitted Jesus Christ to be a Mediator. A dove, you know, is the most innocent and most meek creature, without gall, without talons, having no fierceness in it, expressing nothing but love and friendship to its mate in all its carriages, and mourning over it in its distresses; and was therefore a fit emblem to express what a frame and temper of spirit the Holy Ghost did upon this his descending on him, fill the heart of Christ with, and this without measure, that as sweetly as doves do converse with doves, sympathizing and mourning over each other, so may we with Christ, for he thus sympathizes with us. And though he had the Spirit before, yet now he was anointed with him, in respect of such effects as these, which pertained to the execution of his office, with a larger measure and more eminently than before. Therefore the evangelist Luke notes upon it (Luke 4:1), "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan." And Peter also puts the like gloss upon it, as appears, Acts 10:37, for speaking there of the baptism of John, he shows how "after that his being baptized, he began to preach," and "how God having anointed him with the Holy Ghost," namely, at that baptism of his, "he went about doing good." And that this was the principal thing signified by this descending of

the Holy Ghost as a dove upon him, even chiefly to note out his meekness, and sympathizing heart with sinners, wrought in him by the Holy Ghost, is evident by two places, where Christ himself puts that very intention on it. The first presently after, in the first sermon that he preached after that his having received the Holy Ghost, where first it is noted, Luke 4:1, that he returned from being baptized, "full of the Spirit," and so was led to be tempted; then in Luke 4:14, it is said that he returned from being tempted, "in the power of that Spirit," and after this is explained by himself, the mystery of his having received the Spirit in the likeness of a dove, and this is the subject matter of the first text which he opened in his first sermon, singled out by him on purpose, by choice, not chance, out of Isaiah, which he read to them (Luke 4:18), "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor," that is, in spirit, the afflicted in conscience for sin; "he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." And when he had read so much as concerned the expressing the compassionate disposition of his Spirit unto sinners, whose misery he sets down by all sorts of outward evils, then he reads no further, but closes the book, as intimating that these were the main effects of his receiving the Spirit. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor;" that is, for this end, or for this very purpose has he given me his Spirit, because I was designed or anointed to this work, and by that Spirit also has he anointed or qualified me with these gifts and dispositions suitable to that work.

Another place that makes the fruit and end of his receiving the Spirit then at his baptism, to be these tender dispositions unto sinners, is that in Matthew 12:18-19, out of another place in Isaiah, "Behold my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgments to the Gentiles." That seems to be a terrible word, but be not afraid of it, for by "judgment" is meant even the doctrine of free grace and of the gospel, that changes and reforms men. As in like manner (according to the Hebrew phrase), in Matthew 12:20, by judgment is meant the work of God's grace on men's hearts, when he says, "He will send forth judgment unto victory," the work of grace being the counterpart of the doctrine of grace. And in preaching this doctrine (which in itself is good tidings) the prophet shows how he should carry it with a spirit, answerable and suitable thereunto, even full of all meekness, stillness, calmness, and modesty, which he expresses by proverbial speeches usual in those times, to express so much by, "He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets," that is, he shall deal with all stillness and meekness, without violence or boisterousness. John had the voice of a crier, he was a man of a severe spirit; but Christ came "piping and dancing," all melodious sweetness was in his ministry and spirit; and, in the course of his ministry, he went so tenderly to work, he was so heedful to broken souls, and had such regard to their discouragements, that it is said he would not "break a bruised reed," that is, he would set his steps with such heed as not to tread on a reed that was broken in the leaf; or he would walk so lightly or softly, that if it lay in his way, though he went over it, yet he would not have further bruised it: nor quenched either by treading out "the smoking flax," which is easily done, or with any rushing motion have raised so much wind as to blow out a wick of a candle, as some translate it, smoking in the socket, which the least stirring of the air puffs out. All this is to express the tenderness of his heart; and this, upon his receiving the Spirit, and especially from the time of his baptizing; for then, you know, those words were together uttered, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" and they are the same words also, which, together with God's giving him the Spirit, are joined in that Isaiah 40, whence these words are

taken, so that he was filled with the Spirit, to that end to raise up in him such sweet affections towards sinners.

(2.) Now, for the second part that goes to make up this demonstration: it is as certain that the same Spirit that was upon Christ, and acted⁴ his spirit here below, does still abide upon him in heaven. It must never be said, the Spirit of the Lord is departed from him, who is the sender and bestower of the Holy Ghost upon us. And if the Spirit once coming upon his members "abide with them forever," as Christ promises, John 14:16, then much more does this Spirit abide upon Christ the Head, from whom we all, since Christ was in heaven, receive that Spirit, and by virtue of which Spirit's dwelling in him, he continues to dwell in us. Therefore, of him it is said, Isaiah 11:2, "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." Yea, and in that story of the Holy Ghost's descending upon him at his baptism, it is not only recorded, that "he descended on him," but over and above it is added, "and abode upon him." Yea, further, to put the greater emphasis upon it, it is twice repeated; so John 1:32, "I saw the Spirit" (says the evangelist) "descending from heaven like a dove;" and he adds this also as a further thing observed by him, "and it abode upon him." And then again, John 1:33, "I knew him not" (says he) "but that he that sent me gave me this token to know him by, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he." And further, as it is intimated there, he "rested on him" to that end, that he might baptize us with the Holy Ghost unto the end of the world: "The same (says he) is he that baptizes with the Holy Ghost." He at first descends as a dove, and then abides as a dove forever upon him; and this dove itself came from heaven first. And therefore, certainly, now that Christ himself is gone to heaven, he abides and sits upon him much more as a dove still there. Moreover, let me add this, that although the Spirit rested on him here without measure in comparison of us, yet it may be safely said, that the Spirit, in respect of his effects in gifts of grace and glory, rests more abundantly on him in heaven, than he did on earth, even in the same sense that at his baptism, as was said, he rested on him in such respects more abundantly than he did before his baptism, during the time of his private life. For as when he came to heaven he was installed king and priest, as it were, anew, in respect of a new execution; so, for the work to be done in heaven, he was anew anointed with this "oil of gladness above his fellows," as Psalms 45:7. Which place is meant of him especially as he is in heaven, at God's right hand, in fullness of joy; as Psalms 16:11, it is also spoken of him, when also it is, that he "goes forth in his majesty to conquer, as Psalms 45:4. And yet, then, "meekness" is not far off, but is made one of his dispositions in his height of glory. So it follows in the fore-cited verse, "In thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness." Therefore Peter says, Acts 2:36, that "that same Jesus whom you (Jews) have crucified," and who was risen and ascended, "God hath made both Lord and Christ:" Lord, that is, has exalted him as King in heaven; and Christ, that is, has also anointed him; and this oil is no other than the Holy Ghost, with whom, the same Peter tells us, he was anointed at his baptism, Acts 10:38. Yea, and because he then at once received the Spirit in the fullest measure that forever he was to receive him, therefore it was that he shed him down on his apostles, and "baptized them with him" (as in Acts 2:1-47).

Now it is a certain rule, that whatsoever we receive from Christ, that he himself first receives in himself for us. And so one reason why this oil ran then so plentifully down on the skirts of this our High Priest, that is, on his members the apostles and saints, and so continues to do unto this day, is because our High Priest and Head himself was then afresh anointed with it. Therefore, Acts 2:33, Peter, giving an account how it came to pass that they were so filled with the Holy Ghost,

says, that Christ "having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, had shed him forth on them;" which receiving is not to be only understood of his bare and single receiving the promise of the Holy Ghost for us, by having power then given him to shed him down upon them, as God had promised, though this is a true meaning of it; but further, that he had received him first as poured forth on himself, and so shed him forth on them, according to that rule, that whatever God does unto us by Christ, he first does it unto Christ. All promises are made and fulfilled unto him first, and so unto us in him; all that he bestows on us he receives in himself. And this may be one reason why (as John 7:39) "the Spirit was not as yet given, because Jesus was not as yet glorified." But now he is in heaven, he is said to "have the seven spirits;" so Revelation 1:4, which book sets him out as he is since he went to heaven. Now those seven spirits are the Holy Ghost, for so it must necessarily be meant, and not of any creature, as appears by Revelation 1:4, where grace and peace are wished "from the seven spirits;" so called, in respect of the various effects of him both in Christ and us, though but one in person. And seven is a number of perfection, and is therefore there mentioned, to show, that now Christ has the Spirit in the utmost measure that the human nature is capable of. And as his knowledge (which is a fruit of the Spirit) since his ascension is enlarged—for before he knew not when the day of judgment should be, but now when he wrote this book of the Revelation he did—so are his bowels (I speak of the human nature) extended; all the mercies that God means to bestow being now actually to run through his hands, and his particular notice, and he to bestow them, not on the Jews only, but on Gentiles also, who were to be converted after he went to heaven. And so he has now a heart adequate to God's own heart, in the utmost extent of showing mercy unto any whom God has intended it unto. And this is the third demonstration, from the Spirit's dwelling in him; wherein you may help your faith, by an experiment of the Holy Ghost his dwelling in your own hearts, and there not only working in you meekness towards others, but pity towards yourselves, to get your souls saved; and to that end, stirring up in you incessant and "unutterable groans" before the throne of grace, for grace and mercy. Now the same Spirit dwelling in Christ's heart in heaven, that does in yours here, and always working in his heart first for you, and then in yours by commission from him; rest assured, therefore, that that Spirit stirs up in him bowels of mercy infinitely larger towards you than you can have unto yourselves.

02.4. A Second Sort of Demonstration of Christ's Heart Toward Sinners

A Second Sort of Demonstration of Christ's Heart Toward Sinners For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.—Hebrews 4:15. A second sort of demonstrations, from several engagements now, lying upon Christ in heaven.

There is a second sort of demonstrations, which may be drawn from many other several engagements continuing and lying upon Christ now he is in heaven, which must necessarily incline his heart towards us as much, yea more, than ever. As:

The continuance of all those near and intimate relations and alliances unto us of all sorts, which no glory of his can make any alteration in, and therefore not in his heart and love, nor a declining any respects and offices of love, which such relations do call for at his hands. All relations that are natural, such as between father and child, husband and wife, brother and brother, look what world they are made for, in that world they forever hold, and can never be dissolved. These fleshly relations, indeed, do cease in that other world, because they were made only for this world; as, "the wife is bound to her husband but so long as he lives," Romans 7:2. But these relations of Christ unto us were made in order to "the world to come," as the Epistle to the Hebrews calls it; and therefore are in their full vigour and strength, and receive their completion therein. Wherefore it is that Christ is said to be "the same today, yesterday, and forever," Hebrews 13:8. To illustrate this by the constant and indissoluble tie of those relations of this world, to which no difference of condition, whether of advancement or abasement, can give any discharge, we see in Joseph, when advanced, how as his relations continued, so his affections remained the same to his poor brethren, who yet had injured him, and also to his father. So Genesis 45:1-28 where in the same speech he mentions both his own greatest dignities and advancement: "God hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt;" so Genesis 45:8, and yet further he forgets not his relations, "I am Joseph, your brother," Genesis 45:4, even the same man still. And his affections appeared also to be the same; for he "wept over them, and could not refrain himself," as you have it, Genesis 45:1-2. And the like he expresses to his father, "Go to my father, and say, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord over all Egypt," Genesis 45:9 (and yet thy son Joseph still).

Take another instance, wherein there was but the relation of being of the same country and alliance, in Esther, when advanced to be queen of an hundred, twenty, and seven provinces; who when she was in the arms of the greatest monarch on earth, and enjoyed highest favour with him, yet then she cries out, "How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people, or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred!" So Esther 8:6. She considered but her relation, and how does it work in her veins by a sympathy of blood! Now much more does this hold good of husband and wife, for they are in a nearer relation yet. Let the wife have been one that was poor and mean, fallen into sickness, and let the husband be as great and glorious as Solomon in all his

royalty, all mankind would cry shame on such a man, if he should not now own his wife, and be a husband in all love and respect to her still. But beyond all these relations, the relation of head and members, as it is most natural, so it obliges most; "No man ever yet hated his own flesh," says the apostle, though diseased and leprous, "but loveth and cherishes it." Ephesians 5:29. And it is the law of nature, that "if one member be honoured, all the members are to rejoice with it," 1 Corinthians 12:26; "and if one member suffer, all the rest are to suffer with it." "Even so is Christ," as 1 Corinthians 12:12. And these relations are they that do move Christ to continue his love unto us. "Jesus knowing that he was to depart out of this world, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end," John 13:1. And the reason thereof is put upon his relation to them: they were "his own," and his own by virtue of all relations whatsoever, his own brethren, his own spouse, his own flesh; and "the very world will love its own," as himself speaks, much more will he himself love his own. "He that provides not for his own family is worse than an infidel," 1 Timothy 5:8. says the apostle. Now though Christ be in heaven, yet his people are his family still; they are retainers to him, though they be on earth, and this as truly as those that stand about his person now he is in his glory. So that speech evidently declares, "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;" Ephesians 3:15. they all together make up but one and the same family to him as their Lord. Christ is the founder, the subject and the most perfect exemplar and pattern to us, of the relations that are found on earth.

(1.) First, he is the founder of all relations and affections that accompany them both in nature and grace. As therefore the Psalmist argues—"Shall he not see who made the eye?"—so do I. Shall not he who put all these affections into parents and brothers, suitable to their relations, shall not he have them much more in himself? Though our father Abraham, being in heaven, "be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, yet, O Lord, thou art our Father, and our Redeemer," Isaiah 63:16. The prophet speaks it of Christ, as appears by Isaiah 63:1-2, and in a prophecy of the Jews' call; and he speaks it of Christ, as supposed in heaven, for he adds, "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory." Isaiah 63:15. There are but two things that should make him to neglect sinners: his holiness, as they are sinners, and his glory, as they are mean and low creatures. Now he there mentions both, to show that notwithstanding either as they are sinners he rejects them not, and as they are base and mean, he despises them not.

(2.) He is the subject of all relations, which no creature is. If a man be a husband, yet not a father or a brother, but Christ is all, no one relation being sufficient to express his love, by which he loves and owns us. And therefore he calls his church both sister and spouse, Song of Solomon 5:1.

(3.) He is the pattern and exemplar of all these our relations, and they all are but the copies of his. Thus, in Ephesians 5, Christ is made the pattern of the relation and love of husbands. "Husbands," says the apostle, "love your wives, as Christ loved his church," so Ephesians 5:25. Indeed, Ephesians 5:31-33, the marriage of Adam, and the very words he then spoke of cleaving to a wife, are made but the types and shadows of Christ's marriage to his church. Herein I speak, says he, "concerning Christ and the church, and this is a great mystery." First, a mystery; that is, this marriage of Adam was ordained hiddenly, to represent and signify Christ's marriage with his church. And secondly, it is a great mystery, because the thing thereby signified is in itself so great, that this is but a shadow of it. And therefore all those relations, and the affections of them, and the effects of those affections, which you see and read to have been in men, are all, and were ordained to be, as all things else in this world are, but shadows of what is in Christ, who alone is

the truth and substance of all similitudes in nature, as well as the ceremonial types.

If therefore, no advancement does or ought to alter such relations in men, then not in Christ. "He is not ashamed to call us brethren," as in Hebrews 2:11. And yet the apostle had just before said of him, Hebrews 2:10, "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour." Indeed, and as when one member suffers the rest are touched with a sympathy, so is it with Christ. Paul persecuted the saints, the members, and "Why persecutest thou me?" Acts 9:4. cries the Head in heaven; the foot was trodden on, but the Head felt it, though "crowned with glory and honour." "We are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone," Ephesians 5:30; and therefore as Esther said, so says Christ, "How can I endure to see the evil that befalls my people?" If a husband has a wife that is mean, and he becomes a king, it were his glory, and not his shame, to advance her; yea, it were his shame to neglect her, especially if, when the betrothal was first made, she was then rich and glorious, and a king's daughter, but since that fallen into poverty and misery. Now, Christ's spouse, though now she be fallen into sin and misery, yet when she was first given to Christ by God the Father, who from all eternity made the match, she was looked upon as all glorious; for in election at first both Christ and we were by God considered in that glory which he means to bring him and us unto at last, that being first in God's intention, which is last in execution. For God at the beginning does look at the end of his works, and at what he means to make them; and so he then, primitively intending to make us thus glorious, as we shall be, he brought and presented us to his Son in that glass of his decrees under that face of glory by which at last he meant to endow us. He showed us to him as appareled with all those jewels of grace and glory which we shall wear in heaven. He did this then, even as he brought Eve unto Adam, whose marriage was in all the type of this; so that as this was the first idea that God took us up in, and that we appeared in before him, so also wherein he presented us then to Christ, and as it were said, such a wife will I give thee; and as such did the second person marry us, and undertook to bring us to that estate. And that God ordained us thus to fall into sin and misery was but to illustrate the story of Christ's love, and thereby to render this our lover and husband the more glorious in his love to us, and to make this primitive condition whereunto God meant again to bring us the more eminently illustrious; and, therefore, we being married unto him, when we were thus glorious in God's first intention, although in his decrees about the execution of this, or the bringing us to this glory, we fall into meanness and misery before we attain to it, yet the marriage still holds.

Christ took us to run the same fortune with us, and that we should do the like with him; and hence it was, that we being fallen into sin, and so our flesh become frail and subject to infirmities, that he therefore "took part of the same," as Hebrews 2:14. And answerably on the other side, he being now advanced to the glory ordained for him, he can never rest till he has restored us to that beauty wherein at first we were presented to him, and till he has purged and "cleansed us, that so he may present us to himself a glorious church," as you have it, Ephesians 5:26-27, even such as in God's first intention we were shown to him to become, having that native and original beauty, and possessing that estate, wherein he looked upon us when he first took liking to us and married us. This is argued there from this very relation of his being our husband, Ephesians 5:25-26; and therefore, though Christ be now in glory, yet let not that discourage you, for he has the heart of a husband towards you, being "betrothed unto you forever in faithfulness and in lovingkindness," as Hosea 2:19, and the idea of that beauty is so imprinted on his heart, which from everlasting was ordained you, that he will never cease to sanctify and to cleanse you till he has restored you to that

beauty which once he took such a liking of. A second engagement. This love of his unto us is yet further increased by what he both did and suffered for us here on earth before he went to heaven. "Having loved his own" so far as to die for them, he will certainly "love them unto the end," John 13:1, even to eternity. We shall find in all sorts of relations, both spiritual and natural, that the having done much for any beloved of us does beget a further care and love towards them; and the like effect those eminent sufferings of Christ for us have certainly produced in him. We may see this in parents, for besides that natural affection planted in mothers towards their children, as they are theirs, the very pains, hard labour, and travail they were at in bringing them forth, increases their affections towards them, and that in a greater degree than fathers bear; and therefore, the eminency of affection is attributed unto that of the mother towards her child, and put upon this, that it is "the son of her womb," Isaiah 49:15. And then the performing of that office and work of nursing them themselves, which yet it is done with much trouble and disquiet, does in experience yet more endear those their children unto them, which they so nurse to an apparent difference of bowels and love, in comparison of that which they put forth to others of their own children which they nursed not; and, therefore, in the same place of Isaiah, as the mother's affection to "the son of her womb," so to her "sucking child" is mentioned as being the highest instance of such love. And as thus in paternal affection, so also in conjugal, in such mutual loves in the pursuing of which there have any difficulties or hardships been encountered; and the more those lovers have suffered the one for the other, the more is the edge of their desires whetted and their love increased, and the party for whom they suffered is thereby rendered the more dear unto them. And it is thus in these natural relations, so also in spiritual. We may see it in holy men, as in Moses, who was a mediator for the Jews, as Christ is for us, Moses therein being but Christ's type and shadow, and therefore I the rather instance in him. He under God had been the deliverer of the people of Israel out of Egypt with the hazard of his own life, and had led them in the wilderness, and given them that good law that was their wisdom in the sight of all the nations, and by his prayers kept off God's wrath from them. And who ever, of all those heroes we read of, did so much for any nation, who yet were continually murmuring at him, and had like once to have stoned him? And yet what he had done for them did so mightily engage his heart, and so immovably point and fix it unto their good, that although God in his wrath against them offered to make of him alone a greater and mightier nation than they were, yet Moses refused that offer, the greatest that ever any son of Adam was tempted with, and still went on to intercede for them, and, among other, used this very argument to God, even the consideration of what he had already done for them, as "with what great might and power he had brought them out of Egypt," thereby to move God to continue his goodness unto them; so Exodus 32:11, and elsewhere. And this overcame God, as you may read in the Exodus 32:14. Yea, so set was Moses his heart upon them, that he not only refused that former offer which God made him, but he made an offer unto God of himself to sacrifice his portion in life for their good: "Rather," says he, "blot me out of the book of life," so Exodus 32:32. And we may observe the like zealous love in holy Paul, towards all those converts of his whom in his epistles he wrote unto; towards whom that which so much endeared his affections was the pains, the cost, the travail, the care, and the sufferings that he had had in bringing them unto Christ. Thus, towards the Galatians how solicitous was he! How afraid to lose his labour on them! "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain:" so he expresses himself, Galatians 4:11 and Galatians 4:19, he utters himself yet more deeply, "My little children (says he), of whom I again travail in birth, until Christ be formed in you." He professes himself content to be in travail

again for them, rather than lose that about which he had been in travail for them once before.

Now from both these examples, whereof the one was Christ's type, and the other the very copy and pattern of Christ's heart, we may raise up our hearts to the persuasion of that love and affection which must necessarily be in the heart of Christ, from that which he has done and suffered for us.

First, for Moses; did Moses ever do that for that people which Christ has done and suffered for you? He acknowledged that he had "not borne that people in his womb;" but Christ bore us all, and we were the "travail of his soul," and for us he endured the birth-throes of death (as Peter calls them in Acts 2:24). And then for Paul, "Was Paul crucified for you?" (says Paul likewise of himself). But Christ was, and he speaks it the more to enhance the love of Christ. Or if Paul had been crucified, would or could it have profited us? No. If therefore Paul was contented to have been in travail again for the Galatians, when he feared their falling away, then how does Christ's heart work much more toward sinners! He having put in so infinite a stock of sufferings for us already, which he is loath to lose, and has so much love to us besides, that if we could suppose that otherwise we could not be saved, he could be content to be in travail again, and to suffer for us afresh. But he needed to do this but once, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaks, so perfect was his priesthood. Be assured then, that his love was not spent or worn out at his death, but increased by it. His love it was that caused him to die, and to "lay down his life for his sheep" John 10:15; and "greater love than this hath no man," John 15:13, said himself before he did it. But now, having died, this must necessarily cause him from his soul to cleave the more unto them. A cause or a person that a man has suffered much for, according to the proportion of his sufferings, is one's love and zeal thereunto; for these do lay a strong engagement upon a man, because otherwise he loses the thanks and the honour of all that is already done and passed by him. "Have you suffered so many things in vain?" says the apostle to the Galatians 3:4, where he makes a motive and an incitement of it, that seeing they had endured so much for Christ, and the profession of him, they would not now lose all for want of doing a little more. And does not the same disposition remain in Christ? Especially seeing the hard work is over and dispatched which he was to do on earth; and that which now remains for him to do in heaven is far more sweet and full of glory, and as the "reaping in joy," of what he had here "sown in tears." If his love was so great, as to hold out the enduring so much; then now when that brunt is over, and his love is become a tried love, will it not continue? If when tried in adversity (and that is the surest and strongest love), and the greatest adversity that ever was; if it then held, will it not still do so in his prosperity much more? Did his heart stick to us and by us in the greatest temptation that ever was; and will his glorious and prosperous estate take it off, or abate his love unto us? Certainly not! "Jesus the same today, yesterday, and forever," Hebrews 13:8. When he was in the midst of his pains, one for whom he was then a-suffering, said unto him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" and could Christ mind him then? As you know he did, telling him, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:42-43. Then surely when Christ came to paradise he would do it much more; and remember him too, by the surest token that ever was, and which he can never forget, namely, the pains which he was then enduring for him. He remembers both them and us still, as the prophet speaks of God. And if he would have us "remember his death till he comes," 1 Corinthians 11:24-26, so to cause our hearts to love him, then certainly himself does it in heaven much more. No question but he remembers us, as he promised to do that good thief,

now he is in his kingdom. And so much for this second engagement. A third engagement is the engagement of an office which still lies upon him, and requires of him all mercifulness and graciousness towards sinners that do come unto him. And therefore while he continues, in that place, and invested with that office, as he forever does, his heart must necessarily continue full of tenderness and bowels. Now that office is the office of his priesthood, which this text mentions as the foundation of our encouragement to "come boldly to the throne of grace, for grace and mercy...seeing we have a great high priest entered into the heavens" Hebrews 4:15-16.

Two things I am to show to make up this demonstration.

First, that this office of high priesthood is an office erected wholly for the showing of grace and mercy. And secondly, that this office does therefore lay upon Christ a duty to be in all his dispensations full of grace and mercy, and therefore his heart remains most certainly suited and framed thereunto. For the first, the office of high priesthood is altogether an office of grace. And I may call it the pardon-office, set up and erected by God in heaven; and Christ he is appointed the lord and master of it. And as his kingly office is an office of power and dominion, and his prophetic office an office of knowledge and wisdom, so his priestly office is an office of grace and mercy. The high priest's office did properly deal in nothing else. If there had not been a mercy-seat in the holy of holies, the high priest had not at all been appointed to have gone into it. It was mercy, and reconciliation, and atonement for sinners that he was to treat about, and so to officiate for at the mercy-seat. He had had otherwise no work, nor anything to do when he should come into the most holy place.

Now this was but a typical allusion unto this office of Christ's in heaven. And therefore the apostle (in the text), when he speaks of this our high priest's being entered into heaven, he makes mention of a throne of grace, and this in answer to that in the type both of the high priest of old, and of the mercy-seat in the holy of holies. And further to confirm this, the apostle goes on to open that very type, and to apply it unto Christ, unto this very purpose which we have now in hand. And this in the very next words to my text, Hebrews 5:1-3, in which he gives a full description of a high priest, and all the properties and essential requirements that were to be in him, together with the eminent and principal end that that office was ordained for. Now the great and essential qualifications there specified, that were to be in a high priest, are mercy and grace, and the ends for which he is there said to be ordained are works of mercy and grace. And besides what the words in their single standing do hold forth to this purpose, observe that they come in to back and confirm that exhortation in the text, wherein he had set forth Christ as a "high priest touched with the feeling of infirmities." And that therefore we should "come with boldness for grace and mercy...for every high priest (says he) taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin" Hebrews 5:1 (One who can have compassion.) So that these words are a confirmation of what he had before said, and do set out Christ the substance, in his grace and mercifulness, under Aaron and his sons the shadows; and all this for the comfort of believers.

Now for the ends for which those high priests were appointed, they speak all nothing but grace and mercy unto sinners; it is said, he was one "ordained for men, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." There is both the finis cuius, the end for whom, and the finis cui, the end for which, he was ordained.

(1.) For whom. He was ordained for men that is, for men's cause, and for their good. Had it not been for the salvation of men, God had never made Christ a priest. So that he is wholly to employ all his interest and power for them for whose cause he was ordained a priest, and that in all things that are between God and them. He is to transact, all things that are to be done by us towards God, or for us with God, he is to take up all our quarrels with God, and to mediate a reconciliation between us and him. He is to procure us all favour from God, and to do all that which God would have done for our salvation. And that he might do this willingly, kindly, and naturally for us, as every high priest was "taken from among men," so was Christ, that he might be a priest of our own kind, and so be more kind unto us, than the nature of an angel could have been. And how much this conduces to his being a merciful high priest, I shall show shortly.

(2.) The end for which every high priest was ordained, shows this: he was to "offer gifts and sacrifices for sins:" sacrifices for sins, to pacify God's wrath against sin, and gifts to procure his favour. You know the apostle, in the foregoing words, had mentioned grace and mercy, and encouraged us to come with boldness unto this high priest for both; and answerably to encourage us the more, he says, the high priest by his office was to offer for both: gifts for to procure all grace, and sacrifices to procure all mercy for us, in respect of our sins. Thus you see the ends which he is ordained for all matter of grace and mercy, and so of encouragement unto men for the obtaining of both, Hebrews 5:1.

(3.) The qualification that was required in a high priest was, that he should be "one that could have compassion," and this is set forth in Hebrews 5:2. He that was high priest was not chosen into that office for his deep wisdom, great power, or exact holiness; but for the mercy and compassion that was in him. That is it which is here made the special, and therefore the only mentioned, property in a high priest as such; and the special essential qualification that was inwardly and internally to constitute him and fit him for that office, as God's appointment did outwardly and externally, as Hebrews 5:4 has it. And the word $\delta\upsilon\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$, "that can" or "is able," imports an inward faculty, a spirit, a disposition, a heart that knows how to be compassionate. And it is the same word that the apostle had before used to express Christ's heart by, even in the words of the text, $\delta\upsilon\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu\sigma\upsilon\mu\pi\alpha\theta\omicron\varsigma\alpha\iota$, that is, "who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And he had also used it of him afore that, in the point of mercy in Hebrews 2:18, $\delta\iota\nu\alpha\tau\alpha\iota$, "he is able" to succor, which is not meant of any external power (which we usually call ability), but of an internal touch in his will; he has a heart able to forgive, and to afford help.

Now, therefore, if this be so essential a property to a high priest as such, then it is in Christ most eminently. And as Christ had not been fit to have been God's king, if he had not had all power and strength in him, which is essential to constitute him a king, so not to have been God's high priest, if he had not had such an heart for mercifulness; yea, and no longer to have been a priest than he should continue to have such a heart. Even as that which internally qualifies a minister for the ministry is his gifts, which if he loses, he is no longer to be in that office; or as reason makes a man a man, which if he loses he becomes a beast; thus no longer should Christ continue to be a priest than he hath a heart that "can have compassion," as this second verse has it. And the word which we translate "to have compassion," is exceedingly emphasized, and the force of it observable; it is in the original $\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\iota\omicron\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota\nu$, and signifies "to have compassion according to every one's measure and proportion." He had said of Christ in the words of my text, that he was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," or that "he had a suffering with us in all our evils;" and this word also here

used imports a suffering. But then, some greatly distressed souls might question thus: Though he pities me, and is affected, yet my misery and sins being great, will he take them in to the full, lay them to heart, to pity me according to the greatness of them? To meet with this thought therefore, and to prevent even this objection about Christ's pity, the apostle sets him out by what was the duty of the high priest, who was his shadow; that he is one that "can have compassion according to the measure of every one's distress;" and one that considers every circumstance in it, and will accordingly afford his pity and help, and if it be great, he has a great fellow-feeling of it, for he is a great high priest. Your misery can never exceed his mercy. The word here used comes from μετρου, a measure, and παθειν, to suffer. And that it is the apostle's scope to hold this forth in this word, is evident by what follows, for he on purpose makes mention of those several degrees, proportions, and ranks of sinners under the old law, who were capable of mercy and compassion, "who can have compassion" (says he) "on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." In the old law you may read of several degrees and kinds of sinners, for which God appointed or measured out differing and proportional sacrifices, Leviticus 4:2; Leviticus 4:5 and another for sins against knowledge, or such as were wittingly committed, Leviticus 6:2-3, compared with Leviticus 6:6.

Now when any sinner came to the high priest to make atonement for him, the priest was wise to consider the kind and proportion of his sin; as whether it were a sin of mere ignorance, or whether it was against knowledge; and accordingly he was to proportion a sacrifice, and to mediate for him. And so he did, "pity him according to measure," or according to reason or discretion, as in the margin it is varied. And therefore the apostle here mentions both the ignorant, those that sin out of mere ignorance, and them that are gone out of the way, namely, by willful and witting iniquity. And so by this property that was to be in the high priest, does he here set forth Christ. As the measure of any man's need and distress is from sin and misery, accordingly is he affected towards him. And as we have sins of several sizes, accordingly has he mercies, and puts forth a mediation proportional; whether they be ignorances, or sins of daily incursion, or else sins more gross and presumptuous. And therefore let neither of them discourage any from coming unto Christ for grace and mercy. So that (for the closure of this) here is both the qualification disposing him for this office, merciful compassionateness; and here are the ends of this office, even to deal mercifully with all sorts of sinners, according to the proportion and measure of their sins and miseries. From each of which do arise these corollaries, which make up the demonstration in hand, as the conclusion: 1. That he is no longer fit for this place, unless he continues to be of a gracious disposition, and one that can have compassion. 2. That he can no longer be faithful in the discharge of this office, according to the ends for which it was appointed, unless he shows all grace and mercy unto them that come unto his throne of grace for it. And that is the second thing which I at first propounded: that this office did lay a duty upon him to have compassion; and it necessarily follows from the former. And answerably to confirm this, we have both these two brought to our hands in one place together, and which is a parallel place to this last interpreted. It is Hebrews 2:17, "That he might be a merciful and a faithful high priest." He is at once here said to be both merciful and faithful; and both are attributed to him, in respect of this high priest's office, "faithful high priest;" and that, as it is to be executed in heaven, after the days of his flesh ended. For the apostle giving the reason of it, and showing what it is that fits him to be such a high priest, adds Hebrews 2:18, "in that himself hath suffered;" so that it relates to the time after his sufferings ended. Now in that he is said to be merciful, this relates to that internal disposition of his heart,

before spoken of, qualifying him for this office; and in that he is said to be faithful, that respects his execution of it; he is faithful in the discharge of the duty which that place lays on him. So then this goes further than the former, for it shows, that to exercise mercy is the duty of his place, and that if he will be faithful, he must be merciful. For faithfulness in any office, imports an exact performance of something appointed by him, who designs one to that office, and that as a duty; and that this is a true description of faithfulness, and also that this faithfulness so described is in Christ, we have at once implied, in that which immediately follows in the beginning of Hebrews 3:2, "Who was" (says the apostle, going on to speak of Christ) "faithful to him that appointed him, as Moses also was faithful in all his house;" we have the same thing as expressly spoken in that fore-quoted place, Hebrews 5:1-14, in the next words to those we even now opened, Hebrews 5:3, "And by reason hereof he ought to offer for sins." He speaks it of Christ's type, the high priest (as the former also he had done), but thereby to show that it is Christ's duty also to mediate for all that come to him, "He ought to do it." Now then, to enforce this consideration for the help of our faith herein: If this office does by God's appointment thus bind him to it, and if it be the duty of his place, then certainly he will perform it most exactly, for else he does not do his duty. And our comfort may be that his faithfulness lies in being merciful; therefore, you see, they are both here joined together. Everyone is to do the proper duty of his place, and exactly to see to that. And therefore the apostle, Romans 12:1-21 exhorting to the discharge of the duties of each office in the church, Romans 12:7, he says, "Let him that hath a ministry," committed to him, "wait on his ministry;" and, among others, if his place of ministration be to "shew mercy," as Romans 12:8 (which was an office in the church, upon which lay the care of the poor and sick) he is to "do it with cheerfulness." And so says Christ of himself, Isaiah 61:1-2, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, to bind up the brokenhearted, to open the prison doors to them that are bound," to visit and relieve them, and "to preach good tidings to the meek." Such kind of souls are they that he has the charge of. He is the great shepherd and bishop of souls, 1 Peter 2:25, and the sick, and the broken, they are his sheep, his charge, his diocese, as Ezekiel 34:16 has it. And to tend such as these, he looks forever upon it as his duty, as his own expression upon the like occasion imports, in John 10:16, "Other sheep I have" (says Christ), "them I must bring." Observe how he puts an I must upon it; looking at it as his duty, strictly laid upon him by his place of being a shepherd. And the proper duty of his place being to show mercy, he does it with cheerfulness, as the apostle speaks. For mercy makes one do what they do with cheerfulness. And Christ, as he is the bishop, so the , the deacon also (for he bears all offices to his church), as of the circumcision, so of the uncircumcision also; so he is called, in Romans 15:8. And these offices of high priest, shepherd, bishop, he has still in heaven; for "he continues a priest forever," Hebrews 7:24.

Now, therefore, to conclude this head: Never fear that Christ's great advancement in heaven should in any way alter his disposition, for this his very advancement engages him the more. For although he is "entered into the heavens," yet consider further that it is here added, to be a high priest there; and so long; fear not, for his place itself will call for mercy from him unto them that treat with him about it. And although in the heavens he is "advanced far above all principalities and powers," yet still his high priesthood goes with him, and accompanies him; for "such an high priest became us, as was higher than the heavens," Hebrews 7:26. And further, though he sits at God's right hand, and on his Father's throne, yet that throne it is a "throne of grace," as the text has it, upon which he sits. And as the mercy-seat in the type was the farthest and highest thing in the holy of holies, so the throne of grace (which is an infinite encouragement unto us) is the highest

seat in heaven. So that if Christ will have and keep the greatest place in heaven, the highest preferment that heaven itself can bestow upon him, it engages him unto grace and mercy. The highest honour there has this attribute of grace annexed to it in its very title, "A throne of grace;" and as Solomon says, "A king's throne is established by righteousness," Proverbs 25:5, it continues firm by it, so is Christ's throne by grace. Grace was both the first founder of his throne, or his raiser to it, and also it is the establisher of it.

First, it is the founder of it; for the reason why God did set him up in that place was, because he had more grace and mercy in his heart than all the creatures had, or could be capable of. All favorites are usually raised for something that is eminent in them, either beauty, pleasantness of wit, state policy, or the like. Now if you ask what moved God to advance Christ to this high throne, it was his grace. So Psalms 45:2, "Grace is poured into thy lips," and so dwells much more in his heart; "therefore God hath blessed thee," so it follows, namely, with all those glories in heaven, which are God's blessings to his Son. And then, secondly, grace is the upholder of his throne; so Psalms 45:4, "In thy majesty...prosper thou," as well "because of meekness" as of "righteousness," and also because of "truth;" that is the word of truth, "the gospel of our salvation," as Paul exegetically expounds it, Ephesians 1:13. These are the pillars and supporters of his throne and majesty. And there are two of them, you see, that are of grace (meekness, and the gospel of our salvation), unto one of justice, or righteousness, and yet that one is for us too. And these establish Christ's throne. So it follows in Psalms 45:6, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," and you know who applies this unto Christ, Hebrews 1:8. Fear not then, when as meekness supports his majesty, and grace his throne, and when as he holds his place by showing these. Thus, much from that office that is laid upon Christ as he is a priest. A fourth engagement, which added to the former may mightily help our faith in this is his own interest, both in that our salvation is the purchase of his blood, and also that his own joy, comfort, happiness, and glory are increased and enlarged by his showing grace and mercy, in pardoning, relieving, and comforting his members here on earth, under all their infirmities. So that, besides the obligation of an office undertaken by him for us, there is the addition of a mighty interest of his own, coincident therewith, to fix his heart unto faithfulness for us, in all that does concern us. We see that advocates and attorneys who plead for others, although that they have no share in the estate for which they plead, no title to, or interest therein, yet when they have undertaken a client's cause (if honest), how diligent will they be to promote and carry it for that their client, simply because it is their office, and the duty of their place; and yet they have but a very small fee given them, in comparison to that estate which often they follow suit about. How much more would their diligence be whetted, if the lands and estates they sue for were their own, or a purchase of theirs for their wives' jointure, or children's portions!

Now such is the pardoning of our sins, the salvation of our souls, and the conforming of our hearts unto Christ; these are the purchase of Christ's blood, and while he is exercised in promoting these, he does good to his own child and spouse, which is in effect a doing good unto himself. Yes, to do these, brings in to himself more comfort and glory than it procures to them. And therefore the apostle, in the beginning of the following chapter (namely, Hebrews 3:1-19), says, that Christ is engaged to faithfulness in the execution of his office, not as a mere servant only, who is trusted by his master, but as an owner, who has an interest of possession in the things committed to his care, and a revenue from these. So Hebrews 3:5, "Moses verily" (says he) "was faithful as a servant in

God's house, but Christ as a Son over his own house," that is, as an heir of all, "whose house (or family) are we," says the apostle, Hebrews 3:6. If a physician for his fee will be faithful, although he be a stranger, much more will he be so if he is father to the patient, so as his own life and comfort are bound up in that of the child's, or when much of his estate and comings in are from the life of the party unto whom he ministers physic. In such a case they shall be sure to want for no care and cost, and to lack no cordials that will comfort them, lack no means that will cure them and keep them healthful, and lack no fit diet that may nourish and strengthen them as the care of that prince of the eunuchs, in the first of Daniel was to have those children committed to his charge, to eat and drink of the best, because that on their looks and good liking his place depended. Now so God has ordered it, even for an everlasting obligation of Christ's heart unto us, that his giving grace, mercy, and comfort to us, is one great part of his glory, and on the revenue of his happiness in heaven, and of his inheritance there.

First, to explain how this may be, consider, that the human nature of Christ in heaven has a double capacity of glory, happiness and delight; one on that mere fellowship and communion with his Father and the other persons, through his personal union with the Godhead. Which joy of his in this fellowship, Christ himself speaks of in Psalms 16:11, as to be enjoyed by him, "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." And this is a constant and settled fullness of pleasure, such as admits not any addition or diminution, but is always one and the same, and absolute and entire in itself; and of itself alone sufficient for the Son of God, and heir of all things to live upon, though he should have had no other comings in of joy and delight from any creature. And this is his natural inheritance. But God has bestowed upon him another capacity of glory, and a revenue of pleasure to come in another way, and answerably another fullness, namely, from his church and spouse, which is his body. Thus Ephesians 1, when the apostle had spoken the highest things of Christ's personal advancement in heaven that could be uttered, as of his "sitting down at God's right hand, far above all principalities and powers," Ephesians 1:20-21. Yet, Ephesians 1:22, he adds this unto all, "and gave him to be a head to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." So that although he of himself personally be so full, the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in him, that he overflows to the filling all things; yet he is pleased to account—and it is so in the reality—his church, and the salvation of it, to be another fullness unto him, super-added unto the former. As Son of God he is complete, and that of himself; but as a head, he yet has another additional fullness of joy from the good and happiness of his members. And as all pleasure is the companion, and the result of action, so this arises unto him, from his exercising acts of grace, and from his continual doing good unto, and for those his members; or as the apostle expresses it, from his filling them with all mercy, grace, comfort, and felicity, himself becoming yet more full, by filling them; and this is his inheritance also, as that other was. So as a double inheritance Christ has to live upon: one personal, and due unto him, as he is the Son of God, the first moment of his incarnation, before he had wrought any one piece of work towards our salvation; another acquired, purchased, and merited by his having performed that great service and obedience; and certainly, besides the glory of his person, there is the glory of his office of mediator, and of headship to his church. And though he is never so full of himself, yet he despises not this part of his revenue that comes in from below. Thus much for explication.

Now, secondly for the confirmation and making up the demonstration in hand. This super-added glory and happiness of Christ is enlarged and increased still, as his members come to have the purchase of his death more and more laid forth upon them; so as when their sins are pardoned, their hearts more sanctified, and their spirits comforted, then comes he to see the fruit of his labour, and is comforted thereby, for he is the more glorified by it, yes, he is much more pleased and rejoiced in this than themselves can be. And this must necessarily keep up in his heart his care and love unto his children here below, to water and refresh them every moment (as Isaiah 27:3). For in thus putting forth acts of grace and favour, and in doing good unto them, he does but good unto himself, which is the surest engagement in the world. And therefore the apostle exhorts men to love their wives upon this ground, that in so doing they love themselves: "So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himself," Ephesians 5:28, so strict and near is that relation. Now, the same holds true of Christ in his loving his church. And therefore in the same place the love of Christ unto his church is held forth as the pattern and exemplar of ours; so Ephesians 5:25, "Even as Christ also loved the church." And so it may well be argued, by comparing the one speech with the other, that Christ in loving his church does but love himself; and then the more love and grace he shows unto the members of his body, the more he shows love unto himself. And accordingly it is further added there, Ephesians 5:27, that he daily "washes and cleanses his church," that is, both from the guilt and power of sin, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle." Observe, it is to himself. So that all that he does for his members is for himself, as truly, yes more fully, than for them; and his share of glory out of theirs is greater than theirs, by how much the glory of the cause is greater than that of the effect. And thus indeed the Scripture speaks of it, as while it calls the saints the "glory of Christ," in 2 Corinthians 8:23. And Christ, in John 17:13; John 17:22-23, says that he is "glorified in them." And Psalms 45, where Christ is set forth as Solomon in all his royalty and majesty; yet, Psalms 45:11, he is said "greatly to desire or delight in the beauty" of his queen, that is, the graces of the saints; and that not with an ordinary delight, but he "greatly desires;" his desire is increased as her beauty is. For that is there brought in as a motive unto her to be more holy and conformed unto him, "to incline her ear, and forsake her father's house," Psalms 45:10. "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." Christ has a beauty that pleases him as well as we have, though of another kind; and therefore ceases not till he has got out every spot and wrinkle out of his spouse's face, as we heard the apostle speak even now, "so to present her glorious unto himself," that is, delightful and pleasing in his eye. And suitably unto this, to confirm us yet more in it, Christ in that sermon which was his solemn farewell before his going to heaven, assures his disciples that his heart would be so far from being weaned from them, that his joy would still be in them, to see them prosper and bring forth fruit in John 15:9-11, where his scope is to assure them of the continuance of his love unto them when he should be gone; so John 15:9-10, "As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue in my love." As if he had said, Fear not you my love, nor the continuance of it in my absence; but look you to do your duty. And to give them assurance of this, he further tells them, that even when he is in heaven, in the greatest fullness of pleasure at God's right hand, yet even then his joy will be in them, and in their well doing; so John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." He speaks just like a father that is taking his leave of his children, and comforting them at his departure, and giving them good counsel to take good courses when he is gone from them, to keep his commandments, and to love one another; so John 15:10; John 15:12, and backs it with

this motive, "so shall my joy remain in you." It is as fathers used to speak, and it will be for your good too, your joy will be also full. To open which words a little, the word remain, used concerning their abiding in his love, and his joy abiding in them, is used in reference to the continuing of both these towards them in heaven. And when Christ says, "that my joy may remain in you," it is as if he had said, that I may even in heaven have cause to rejoice in you when I shall hear and know of you, that you agree and are loving each to other, and keep my commandments. The joy which he there calls his joy, "my joy," is not to be understood objectivè, of their joy in him, as the object of it; but subjectivè, of the joy that should be in himself, and which he should have in them. So Augustine long since interpreted it. Quidnam, says he, est illud gaudium Christi in nobis, nisi quod ille dignatur gaudere de nobis? What is Christ's joy in us, but that which he vouchsafes to have of and for us? And it is evident by this, that otherwise, if it were their joy which he meant in that first sentence, then that other that follows, "and your joy shall be full," were a tautology. He speaks therefore of his joy and theirs, as of two distinct things; and both together were the greatest motives that could be given to encourage and quicken his disciples in obedience. Now, take an estimate of Christ's heart herein, from those two holy apostles Paul and John, who were smaller resemblances of this in Christ. What, next to immediate communion with Christ himself, was the greatest joy they had to live upon in this world, but only the fruit of their ministry, appearing in the graces both of the lives and hearts of such as they had begotten unto Christ?

See how Paul utters himself, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, "What is our hope," says he, "or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Ye are our glory and our joy," 1 Thessalonians 2:20. And in the 3 John 1:3, John says the like, that he greatly rejoiced of that good testimony he had heard of Gaius; for says he, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth," 3 John 1:4. Now what were Paul and John but instruments by whom they believed and were begotten? and not on whom. Neither of these were crucified for them; nor were these children of theirs the travail of their souls. How much more then unto Christ, whose interest in us and our welfare is so infinitely much greater, must his members be his joy and his crown? And to see them to come in to him for grace and mercy, and to walk in truth, rejoices him much more; for he thereby sees of the travail of his soul, and so is satisfied. Certainly what Solomon says of parents, Proverbs 10:1, that "a wise son maketh a glad father," is much more true of Christ. Holiness, and fruitfulness, and comfortableness in our spirits while we are here below, do make glad the heart of Christ, our "everlasting Father." Himself has said it, I beseech you believe him, and carry yourselves accordingly. And if part of his joy arise from hence, that we thrive and do well, then doubt not of the continuance of his affections; for love unto himself will continue them towards us, and readiness to embrace and receive them when they come for grace and mercy.

There is a fifth engagement, which his having our very nature, which he still wears in heaven, and which the end or intention which God had ordained Christ's assuming it, does put upon him forever. For one great end and project of that personal union of our nature unto the Godhead in the second Person forever was that he might be a merciful high priest. So that as his office lays it as a duty upon him, so his becoming a man qualifies him for that office and the performance of it, and so may afford a further demonstration of the point in hand. This we find both to have been an essential requirement in our high priest, to qualify him the better for mercy and bowels; and also one of those great ends which God had in the assumption of our nature.

First, an essential requirement, on purpose to make him the more merciful. So, Hebrews 5:1, the place even now insisted on, when yet this primary qualification I then passed over, and reserved unto this mention, it is said, "Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men," and that to this end, "that so he might be one that can have compassion," namely with a pity that is natural and kindly, such as a man bears to one of his own kind. For otherwise the angels would have made higher and greater high priests than one of our nature; but then they would not have pitied men, as men do their brethren, of the same kind and nature with them. And secondly, this was also God's end and intention in ordaining Christ's assumption of our nature, which that other place before cited, namely Hebrews 2:16-17 holds forth, "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham," that is a human nature and that made of the same stuff that ours is of, and "it behooved him to be made like us in all things, that he might be a merciful high priest," "to the end he might become," or "be made merciful." But was not the Son of God as merciful (may some say) without the taking of our nature, as afterwards, when he had assumed it? Or is his mercy thereby made larger than of itself it should have been, had he not took the human nature on him?

I answer, Yes. He is as merciful, but yet:

[1.] Hereby is held forth an evident demonstration (and the greatest one that could have been given unto men) of the everlasting continuance of God's mercies unto men, by this, that God is for everlasting become a man; and so we thereby assured that he will be merciful unto men, who are of his own nature, and that forever. For as his union with our nature is for everlasting, so thereby is sealed up to us the continuation of these his mercies, to be for everlasting; so that he can and will no more cease to be merciful unto men, than himself can now cease to be a man; which can never be. And this was the end of that assumption.

[2.] But, secondly, that was not all. His taking our nature not only adds unto our faith, but in some way or other adds even to his being merciful. Therefore it is said, "that he might be made merciful." That is, merciful in such a way as otherwise God of himself had never been; namely, even as a man. So this union of both natures, God and man, was projected by God to make up the rarest compound of grace and mercy in the result of it that ever could have been, and thereby was fully fitted and accommodated to the healing and saving of our souls. The greatest of that mercy that was in God, that contributes the stock and treasury of those mercies to be bestowed on us, and unto the greatness of these mercies, nothing is or could be added by the human nature assumed; but rather Christ's manhood had all his largeness of mercy from the Deity. So that, had he not had the mercies of God to enlarge his heart towards us, he could never have held out to have forever been merciful unto us. But then, this human nature assumed, that adds a new way of being merciful. It assimilates all these mercies, and makes them the mercies of a man; it makes them human mercies, and so gives a naturalness and kindness unto them to our capacities. So that God does now in as kindly and as natural a way pity us, who are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, as a man pities a man, thereby to encourage us to come to him, and to be familiar with God, and treat with him for grace and mercy, as a man would do with a man; as knowing that in that man Christ Jesus (whom we believe upon) God dwells, and his mercies work in and through his heart in a human way.

I will no longer insist upon this notion now, because I shall have occasion to touch upon it again, and add unto it under that next third general head, of showing the way how Christ's heart is affected towards sinners. Only take we notice what comfort this may afford unto our faith, that Christ must cease to be a man if he continue not to be merciful; seeing the very plot of his becoming a man was, that he might be merciful unto us, and that in a way so familiar to our apprehensions, as our own hearts give the experience of the like, and which otherwise, as God, he was not capable of. And add but this bold word to it, though a true one, that he may now as soon cease to be God as cease to be a man. The human nature, after he had once assumed it, being raised up to all the natural rights of the Son of God; whereof one (and that now made natural unto him) is to continue forever united. And he may as soon cease to be either as cease to be ready to show mercy. So that not only the scope of Christ's office, but also the intention of his assuming our nature, lays a further engagement upon him, and that more strong than any or than all the former.

02.5. Christ's heart is touched with the feeling, of our infirmities

Christ's heart is touched with the feeling, of our infirmities For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin.—Hebrews 4:15

Some generals to clear how this is to be understood, that Christ's heart is touched with the feeling, of our infirmities, together with the way that our infirmities come to be feelingly let into his heart.

I. Having thus given such full and ample demonstrations of the tenderness and sameness of Christ's heart unto us now he is in heaven, with that which it was while he was here on earth; and those, both extrinsic (in the first part) and intrinsic (in the second); I now come to the last head which I propounded in the opening of these wards, namely, the way and manner of Christ's being affected with pity unto us; both how it is to be understood by us, and also how such affections come to be let into his heart, and therein to work these bowels of compassion unto us. This in the beginning of the second part I propounded to be handled, as being necessary both for the opening and clearing the words of the text, which mainly holds forth this, as also for the clearing of the thing itself, the point in hand. For, as I there showed, these words come in by way of preoccupation or prevention of an objection, as if his state now in heaven were not capable of such affection as should tenderly move him to pity and commiseration, he being now glorified both in soul and body. Which thought, because it was apt to arise in all men's minds, the apostle therefore forestalls it, both by affirming the contrary, "We have not an high priest that cannot be touched," that is, he both can be, or is capable of it, and likewise is touched, notwithstanding all his glory, as also by his annexing the reason of it, or showing the way how it comes to pass, in that "in all points he was tempted like as we are," Hebrews 4:15.

Now in handling and opening these, which is a matter full of difficulty, I shall, with all wariness, proceed to the discovery of what manner of affection in Christ this is, and that by these steps and degrees.

This affection of compassion, or his being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," is not wholly to be understood in a metaphorical or a similitudinary sense, as those speeches used of God in the Old Testament are to be understood, when bowels of compassion are attributed unto him, and his bowels are said to be "rolled together," or as when as it is said of God, that he repented, and was afflicted in all his people's afflictions. All which expressions were of God (as we all know) but merely, after the manner of men; so to convey and represent to our apprehensions, by what affections use to be in parents or friends in such and such cases (what provoke them unto such and such actions), which like effects proceed from God towards us when he sees us in distress. And so they are spoken rather per modum effectus, than affectus, rather by way of like effect, which God produces, than by way of such affection in God's heart, which is not capable of any such passions as these are. Now towards the right understanding of this, the first thing which I affirm is, that barely in such a sense as this, that which is here spoken of Christ, is not to be understood, and my reason for it is grounded upon these two things put together.

First, that this affection of his towards us here spoken of, is manifestly meant of his human nature, and not of his Godhead only, for it is spoken of that nature wherein he once was tempted as we now are. So expressly in the next words, which can be meant of no other than his human nature. And secondly, that those kind of expressions which were used of God before the assumption of our nature, only in a way of metaphor and similitude, "after the manner of men," should in no further or more real and proper sense be spoken of Christ and his human nature now assumed, and when he is a man as truly and properly as we are, I cannot imagine; when I consider and remember that which I last insisted on, that one end of Christ's taking a human nature, was "that he might be a merciful high priest forever," in such a way as, he being God alone, could not have been. I confess I have often wondered at that expression there used, "He took the seed of Abraham, that he might be made a merciful high priest," Hebrews 2:16-17, which at the first reading sounded as if God had been made more merciful by taking our nature. But this solved the wonder, that this assumption added a new way of God's being merciful, by means of which it may now be said, for the comfort and relief of our faith, that God is truly and really merciful, as a man. And the consideration of this contributes this to the clearing of the thing in hand, that whereas God of himself was so blessed and perfect, that his blessedness could not have been touched with the least feeling of our infirmities, neither was he in himself capable of any such affection of pity or compassion: "He is not as a man, that he should pity or repent" 1 Samuel 15:29. He can indeed do that for us in our distress, which a man that pities us uses to do; but the affections and bowels themselves he is not capable of. Hence, therefore, amongst other ends of assuming man's nature, this fell in before God as one, that God might thereby become loving and merciful unto men, as one man is to another. And so, that what before was but improperly spoken, and by way of metaphor and similitude, in the Old Testament, so to convey it to our apprehensions, might now be truly attributed unto him in the reality; that God might be forever said to be compassionate as a man, and to be touched with a feeling of our infirmities as a man. And thus by this happy union of both natures, the language of the Old Testament, uttered only in a figure, becomes verified and fulfilled in the truth of it, as in all other things the shadows of it were in Christ fulfilled. And this is the first step towards the understanding of what is here said of Christ, taken from this comparison with the like attributed unto God himself.

A second and further step to let in our understanding to the apprehension of this, is by the like further comparison to be made with the angels, and those affections of love and pity that are certainly found in them. In comparison of which, these affections in Christ's human nature, though glorified, must necessarily be far more like to ours, even more tender, and more human; for in that Hebrews 2:16, it is expressly said, "He therefore took not the nature of the angels, that he might be a merciful high priest." Part of the intention of those words is to show and give the reason, not only why he took our nature under frail flesh, though that the apostle mentions, Hebrews 2:14, but why a human nature for the substance of it, and not the nature of angels; because in his affections of mercy he would forever come nearer to us, and have such affections, and of the same kind with ours. Whereas, otherwise in other respects, an angel would have been a higher and more glorious high priest than a man.

Now the angels being fellow servants with us, as the angel called himself, Revelation 22:9, they have affections towards us more assimilated unto ours than God has, and so are more capable of such impressions from our miseries than God is. Although they are spirits, yet they partake of

something analogical, or resembling and answering to those affections of pity and grief, which are in us. And indeed, so far as these affections are seated in our souls, and not drenched in the passions of the body, unto which our souls are united, they are the very same kind of affections in us that are in them. Hence the same lusts that are in men are said to be in devils, John 8:44, and therefore the devils also are said to fear and tremble. And so, oppositely, the same affections that are in men, so far as they are spiritual, and the spirit or soul is the seat of them, they must necessarily be found in the good angels. But Christ having a human nature, the same for substance that ours is, consisting both of soul and body, although through glory made spiritual, yet not become a spirit; "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," says Christ of himself, after his resurrection, Luke 24:39. Therefore he must necessarily have affections towards us, yet more like to those of ours than those are which the angels have. So then by these two steps we have gained these two things, that even in Christ's human nature, though glorified, affections of pity and compassion are true and real, and not metaphorically attributed to him as they are unto God; and also more near and like unto ours here than those in the angels are; even affections proper to man's nature, and truly human. And these he should have had, although this human nature had, from the very first assumption of it, been as glorious as it is now in heaven.

But now, thirdly, add this further, that God so ordered it, that before Christ should clothe this his human nature with that glory he has in heaven, and put this glory upon it, he should take it as clothed with all our infirmities, even the very same that does cleave unto us, and should live in this world, as we do, for many years. And during that time God prepared for him all sorts of afflictions and miseries to run through, which we ourselves do here meet with; and all that time he was acquainted with, and inured unto, all the like sorrows that we are; and God left him to that infirmity and tenderness of spirit, to take in all distresses as deeply as any of us (without sin), and to exercise the very same affections under all these distresses that we at any time do find stirring in our hearts. And this God thus ordered, on purpose thereby to fit him and to frame his heart, when he should be in glory, unto such affections as these spoken of in the text. And this both this text suggests to be God's end in it, as also that fore-mentioned place, Hebrews 2:14, "Forasmuch as we," namely, his members, "are partakers of flesh and blood," which phrase does ever note out the frailties of man's nature, as 1 Corinthians 15:50, "he himself took part of the same...that he might be a merciful high priest," Hebrews 2:17. And then the apostle gives this reason for it, Hebrews 2:18, "For in that himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able"—this ability is, as was before interpreted, the having an heart fitted and enabled, out of experience, to pity—and "to succor them that are tempted." The meaning of which is, that it is not the bare taking of a human nature, if glorious from the first, that would thus fully have fitted him to be affectionately pitiful out of experience, though, as was said, the knowledge of our miseries taken in thereby would have made him truly and really affectionate towards us, with affections human and proper to a man, and so much nearer and like ours than what are in the angels themselves, or than are attributed to God, when he is said to pity us; but further, his taking our nature at first clothed with frailties, and living in this world as we, this has forever fitted his heart by experience to be in our very hearts and bosoms; and not only or barely to know the distress, and as a man to be affected with a human affection to one of his kind, but experimentally remembering the like in himself once.

And this likewise the text suggests as the way whereby our distresses are let into his heart the more feelingly, now he is in heaven. "We have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" Hebrews 4:15. And the more to comfort us herein, observe how fully and universally the apostle speaks of Christ's having been tempted here below. First, for the matter of them, or the several sorts of temptations, he says he was tempted **■ατα π■ντα**, "in all points," or things of any kind, by which we are exercised. Secondly, for the manner; he adds that too, **■αθ'■μοι■τητα**, "like as we are." His heart having been just so affected, so wounded, pierced, and distressed, in all such trials as ours use to be, only without sin, God, on purpose, left all his affections to their full tenderness, and quickness of sense of evil. So that Christ took to heart all that befell him as deeply as might be; he slighted no cross, either from God or men, but had and felt the utmost load of it. Yea, his heart was made more tender in all sorts of affections than any of ours, even as it was in love and pity; and this made him "a man of sorrows," as in Isaiah 53:3, and that more than any other man was or shall be.

Now therefore, to explicate the way how our miseries are let into his heart, and come to stir up such kindly affections of pity and compassion in him, it is not hard to conceive from what has now been said, and from what the text does further hint unto us.

(1.) The understanding and knowledge of that human nature has notice and cognizance of all the occurrences that befall his members here. And for this the text is clear; for the apostle speaks this for our encouragement, that "Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" which could not be a relief unto us, if it supposed not this, that he particularly and distinctly knew them; and if not all as well as some, we should want relief in all, as not knowing which he knew, and which not. And the apostle affirms this of his human nature, as was said, for he speaks of that nature that was tempted here below. And therefore, "the Lamb that was slain," and so "the man Christ Jesus" is, Revelation 5:6, said to have "seven eyes," as well as "seven horns," which seven eyes are "the seven spirits sent forth into all the earth." His eyes of providence, through his anointing with the Holy Ghost, are in all corners of the world, and view all the things that are done under the sun. In like manner he is there said to have seven horns for power, as seven eyes for knowledge; and both are defined to be seven, to show the perfection of both, in their extent reaching unto all things. So that, as "all power in heaven and earth" is committed unto him as Son of man, as the Scripture speaks, (Matthew 28:18), so all knowledge is given him of all things done in heaven and earth, and this as Son of man too; his knowledge and power being of equal extent. He is the Sun as well in respect of knowledge as of righteousness, and there is nothing hid from his light and beams, which do pierce the darkest corners of the hearts of the sons of men. He knows the sores, as Solomon expresses it, and distresses of their hearts. Like as a looking-glass made into the form of a round globe, and hung in the midst of a room, takes in all the species of things done or that are therein at once, so does the enlarged understanding of Christ's human nature take in the affairs of this world, which he is appointed to govern, especially the miseries of his members, and this at once.

(2.) His human nature thus knowing all—"I know thy works, thy labour, and thy patience," Revelation 2:2—he together with that has an act of memory, and recalls how himself was once affected, and how distressed while on earth, under the same or the like miseries. For the memory of things here below remains still with him, as with all spirits in either of those two other worlds, heaven or hell. "Son, remember thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and Lazarus evil," says Abraham to the soul of Dives⁵ in hell, Luke 16:25. "Remember me when thou comest into thy

kingdom" Luke 23:42, said the good thief to Christ. And in Revelation 1:18 "I am he," says Christ, "that was dead, and am alive." He remembers his death still and the sufferings of it; and as he remembers it, to put his Father in mind thereof, so he remembers it also, to affect his own heart with what we feel. And his memory presenting the impression of the like now afresh unto him, how it was once with him; hence he comes feelingly and experimentally to know how it is now with us, and so affects himself with that; as Dido⁶ in Virgil—*Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.*—Having experience of the like miseries, though a queen now, I know how to succor those that are therein.

⁵The traditional name, "Dives", is not actually a name, but instead a word for "rich man" in the text of the Latin Bible, the Vulgate.

⁶Dido was, according to ancient Greek and Roman sources, the founder and first Queen of Carthage (in modern-day Tunisia). She is primarily known from the account given by the Roman poet Virgil in his *Aeneid*. As God said to the Israelites when they should be possessed of Canaan their own land, Exodus 23:9, "Ye know the hearts of strangers, seeing ye were strangers," and therefore does command them to pity strangers, and to use them well upon that motive, so may it be said of Christ, that he does know the hearts of his children in misery, seeing himself was once under the like. Or, as the apostle exhorts the Hebrews, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity, as being yourselves in the body," Hebrews 13:3, and so before you die, may come to suffer the like. So Christ, the head of the body, which is the fountain of all sense and feeling in the body, does remember them that are bound and in adversity, having himself been once in the body, and so he experimentally compassionates them. And this is a further thing than the former. We have gained this further, that Christ has not only such affections as are real and proper to a human nature, but such affections as are stirred up in him, from experience of the like by himself once tasted in a frail nature like unto ours and thus much for the way of letting in all our miseries into Christ's heart now, so as to strike and affect it with them. A more particular disquisition, what manner of affection this is; the seat thereof, whether in his spirit or soul only, or the whole human nature.— Some cautions added.

But concerning this affection itself of pity and compassion, fellow-feeling and sympathy, or suffering with (as the text calls it), which is the product, result, or thing produced in his heart by these, there still remains another thing more particularly to be inquired into, namely, what manner of affection this is; for that such an affection is stirred up in him, besides and beyond a bare act of knowledge or remembrance how once it was with himself, is evident by what we find in the text. The apostle says, not only that he remembers how himself was tempted with the like infirmities that we are, though that be necessarily supposed, but that he is struck and touched with the feeling of our infirmities; to the producing of which this act of remembrance does but sub-serve. And he tells us, Christ is able, and his heart is capable of thus being touched. And the word *συμπαθε* *σας* is a deep word, signifying to suffer with us until we are relieved. And this affection, thus stirred up, is it which moves him so cordially to help us.

Now, concerning this affection, as here thus expressed, how far it extends, and how deep it may reach, I think no man in this life can fathom. If *cor regis*, the heart of a king, be inscrutable, as Solomon speaks, the heart of the King of kings now in glory is much more. I will not take upon me to "intrude into things which I have not seen," Colossians 2:18, but shall endeavor to speak safely,

and therefore warily, so far as the light of Scripture and right reason shall warrant my way.

I shall set it forth three ways: 1. Negatively; 2. Positively; 3. Privatively.

Negatively. It is certain that this affection of sympathy or fellow-feeling in Christ is not in all things such a kind of affection as was in him in the days of his flesh, which is clear, by what the apostle speaks of him and of his affections then. Hebrews 5:7, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears, was heard in that which he feared." Where we see his converse and state of life here below, to be called by way of difference and distinction from what is now in heaven, "the days of his flesh:" by flesh, meaning not the substance of the human nature, for he retains that still, but the frail quality of subjection to mortality, or possibility.⁷ So flesh is usually taken, as when all flesh is said to be grass; it is spoken of man's nature, in respect to its being subject to a fading, wearing, and decay, by outward casualties, or inward passions. So in Hebrews 2:14, "Forasmuch as the children," we his brethren, "did partake of flesh and blood," that is, the frailties of man's nature, "he himself also took part of the same." And accordingly the apostle instances in the following words of Hebrews 2:14, as in death, which in the days of his flesh Christ was subject to, so also in such frail passions and affections as did work a suffering in him, and a wearing and wasting of his spirits; such as passionate sorrow, joined with strong cries and tears, both which he mentions, and also fear, in these words, "He was heard in that which he feared." Now these days of his flesh being over and past, for this was only, as says the apostle, in the days of his flesh, hence therefore all such concomitant passionate overflowing of sorrow, fear, are ceased, and he is now no way capable of them, or subjected to them. Yet,

Positively. Why may it not be affirmed that for substance the same kind of affection of pity and compassion, that wrought in his whole man, both body and soul, when he was here, works still in him now he is in heaven? If this position be allayed with those due cautions and considerations which presently I shall annex. For, if for substance the same flesh and blood and animal spirits remain and have their use, for though Christ, in Luke 24:39, mentioned only his having flesh and bones after his resurrection, unto Thomas and the other disciples, because these two alone were to be the object of his touch and feeling; yet blood and spirits are included in that flesh, for it is caro vitalis, living flesh, and therefore has blood and spirits that flow and move in it; then why not the same affections also? And those not stirring only and merely in the soul, but working in the body also, unto which that soul is joined, and so remaining really human affections. The use of blood and spirits is, as to nourish (which end is now ceased) so to affect the heart and bowels by their motion to and fro, when the soul is affected. And why this use of them should not remain (and if not this, we can conceive no other) I know not. Neither why this affection should be only restrained to his spirit or soul, and his corporeal powers not be supposed to communicate and partake in them. That so as he is a true man, and the same man that he was, both in body as well as in soul, for else it had not been a true resurrection, so he has still the very same true human affections in them both; and such as whereof the body is the seat and instrument, as well as the soul. And seeing this whole man, both body and soul, was tempted, and that (as the text says) he is touched with a feeling in that nature which is tempted, it must therefore be in the whole man, both body and soul. Therefore, when as we read of the "wrath of the Lamb," as Revelation 6:16, namely, against his enemies, as here of his pity and compassion towards his friends and members, why should this be attributed only to his deity, which is not capable of wrath, or to his soul and spirit only? And

why may it not be thought he is truly angry as a man, in his whole man, and so with such a wrath as his body is affected with, as well as that he is wrathful in his soul only, seeing he has taken up our whole nature, on purpose to sub-serve his divine nature in all the executions of it?

But now, how far, in our apprehensions of this, we are to cut off the weakness and frailty of such affections as in the days of his flesh was in them, and how exactly to difference those which Christ had here and those which he has in heaven, therein lies the difficulty; and I can speak but little unto it.

Yet, first, this we may lay down as an undoubted maxim, that so far, or in what sense his body itself is made spiritual (as it is called, 1 Corinthians 15:44), so far, and in that sense, all such affections as thus working in his body are made spiritual, and that in an opposition to that fleshly and frail way of their working here. But then, as his body is made spiritual, not spirit (spiritual in respect of power, and likeness to a spirit, not in respect of substance or nature), so these affections of pity and compassion do work not only in his spirit or soul, but in his body too, as their seat and instrument, though in a more spiritual way of working, and more like to that of spirits, than those in a fleshly frail body are. They are not wholly spiritual in this sense, that the soul is the sole subject of them, and that it draws up all such workings into itself, so that that should be the difference between his affections now and in the days of his flesh.

Men are not to conceive as if his body were turned into such a substance as the sun is of, for the soul, as through a case of glass, to shine gloriously in only; but further it is united to the soul, to be acted by it, though immediately, for the soul to produce operations in it. And it is called spiritual, not that it remains not a body, but because it remains not such a body, but is so framed to the soul that both itself and all the operations of all the powers in it are immediately and entirely at the arbitrary imperium and dominion of the soul; and that as the soul is pleased to use it, and to sway it and move it, even as immediately and as nimbly, and without any clog or impediment, as an angel moves itself, or as the soul acts itself. So that this may perhaps be one difference, that these affections, so far as in the body of Christ, do not affect his soul, as here they did, though as then under the command of grace and reason, to keep their motions from being inordinate or sinful; but further, the soul being now too strong for them, does at its own arbitrement raise them, and as entirely and immediately stir them as it does itself.

Hence, secondly, these affections of pity and sympathy so stirred up by himself, though they move his bowels and affect his bodily heart as they did here, yet they do not afflict and perturb him in the least, nor become a burden and a load unto his Spirit, so as to make him sorrowful or heavy, as in this life here his pity unto Lazarus made him, and as his distresses at last, that made him sorrowful unto death. So that as in their rise so in their effect, they utterly differ from what they were here below. And the reason of this is, because his body, and the blood and spirits thereof, the instruments of affecting him, are now altogether impassible, namely, in this sense, that they are not capable of the least alteration tending to any hurt whatever. And so, his body is not subject to any grief, nor his spirits to any waste, decay, or expense. They may and do sub-serve the soul in its affections, as they did while he was here; but this merely by a local motion, moving to and fro in the veins and arteries, to affect the heart and bowels, without the least diminution or impair to themselves, or detriment to him. And thus it comes to pass, that though this blood and spirits do stir up the same affections in his heart and bowels which here they did, yet not as then, with the

least perturbation in himself or inconvenience unto himself. But as in this life he was troubled and grieved "without sin" or inordinacy; so now when he is in heaven he pities and compassionates without the least mixture or tang of disquietment and perturbation, which yet necessarily accompanied his affections while he was here, because of the frailty in which his body and spirits were framed. His perfection destroys not his affections, but only corrects and amends the imperfection of them. *Passiones perfectivas* to be now in him, the best of schoolmen do acknowledge.

Thirdly, all natural affections that have not in them *indecentiam* status, something unbefitting that state and condition of glory wherein Christ now is, both schoolmen and other divines do acknowledge to be in him,

7 *humanæ affectiones quæ naturales sunt, neque cum probro vel peccato conjunctæ, sed omni ex parte rationi subduntur; denique ab iis conditionibus liberantur quæ vel animo, vel corpori aliquo modo officiunt, beatis nequaquam repugnare censendæ sunt.*

Those affections which are natural to man, and have no adhesion of sin or shame unto them, but are wholly governed by reason, and lastly are exempt from such effects as may any way hurt either the soul or the body, there is no ground to think that such affections may not well stand with the state of souls in bliss, [says Justinian upon this place.]

Now if we consider it, Christ his very state in glory is such, as it becomes him to have such human affections of pity and compassion in his whole man, so far as to quicken and provoke, him to our help and succor: not such as to make him a man of sorrows in himself again (that were uncomely, nay, incompatible to him), but such as should make him a man of succors unto us, which is his office. To this end it is to be remembered that Christ in heaven is to be considered, not personally only as in himself made happy in his Father, but further in his relations and in his offices as a head unto us; and in that relation now he sits there, as Ephesians 1:21-22 (and the head is the seat of all the senses for the good of the body), and therefore most sensible of any other part. Wherefore because his members, unto whom he bears this relation, are still under sin and misery, therefore it is no way uncomely for him in that estate to have affections suitable to this his relation. If his state of glory had been wholly ordained for his own personal happiness, then indeed there had been no use of such affections to remain in him; but his relation to us being one part and ingredient of his glory, therefore they are most proper for him, yes, it were uncomely if he had them not. Neither are they a weakness in him, as so considered, but rather part of his strength, as the apostle calls them, *δυναμις*. And although such affections might in one respect be thought an imperfection, yet in another respect, namely, his relation to us and office for us, they are his perfection. As he is our head, which he is as he is a man, it is his glory to be truly and really, even as a man, sensible of all our miseries, yes, it were his imperfection if he were not.

And, fourthly, let me add this for our comfort, that though all such affections as are any way a burden to his spirit, or noxious to his body, be not now compatible to him; and though that passionate frailty and infirmity which did help him here to pity and relieve men in misery, out of a suffering hurtful to himself; though these he cut off, yet in those workings of affections and bowels which he has now, which for substance are the same, there is, instead of that passionate frailty, a greater capaciousness, vastness, and also quickness in his affections now in heaven, so to make up a compensation, and so no less effectually to stir and quicken him to relieve us, than those

former affections did. For it is certain that as his knowledge was enlarged upon his entering into glory, so his human affections of love and pity are enlarged in solidity, strength, and reality, as true conjugal love used to be, though more passionate haply at first. They are not less now, but are only made more spiritual. And as Solomon's heart was as large in bounty and royalty as in knowledge, so Christ's affections of love are as large as his knowledge or his power. They are all of a like extent and measure. So far as God's intention to show mercy does reach (and who knows the end of those riches?) so far does Christ's disposition to bestow it. Ephesians 3:19, "The love of Christ," God-man, "passeth knowledge." It has not lost or been diminished by his going to heaven. Though God in his nature be more merciful than Christ's human nature, yet the act and exercise of Christ's affections is as large as God's purposes and decrees of mercy are. And all those large affections and mercies are become human mercies, the mercies of a man unto men.

Privately. If these affections of Christ's heart be not suffering and afflicting affections, yet we may, by way of privation, express this of them, that there is a less fullness of joy and comfort in Christ's heart, while he sees us in misery and under infirmities, comparatively to what will be when we are presented to him free of them all.

To clear this I must recall, and I shall but recall, that distinction I made (in the fourth demonstration, section 2, part II.) of a double capacity of glory, or a double fullness of joy which Christ is ordained to have: the one natural and so due unto his person as in himself alone considered; the other additional, and arising from the completed happiness and glory of his whole church, by which mystically he is one. So in Ephesians 1:23, although he by reason of his personal fullness is there said to "fill all in all," yet as he is an head in relation to his church as his body, as in the verses before he is spoken of, thus the perfection of this his body's beatitude, it is reciprocally called his fullness; and therefore until he has filled them with all happiness and delivered them from all misery, himself remains under some kind of imperfection and answerably his affections also, which are suited to this his relation, have some want of imperfection in them, while they lie under misery, in comparison of what his heart shall have when they receive this fullness.

We may warrantably say Christ shall be more glad then, and is now, as his children are grown up from under their infirmities, and as they do become more obedient and comfortable in their spirits, so John 15:10-11. I shall add some illustration to this by this similitude (which though it hold not in all things, yet it will hold forth some shadow of it). The spirits of just men departed are said to be perfect, Hebrews 12:1-29, yet because they have bodies unto which they have a relation, and unto which they are ordained to be united, they in this respect may be said to be imperfect, till these bodies be reunited and glorified with them, which will add a further fullness to them. Thus in some analogy it stands between Christ personally and Christ mystically considered. Although Christ in his own person be complete in happiness, yet in relation to his members he is imperfect, and so accordingly has affections suited unto this his relation, which is no derogation from him at all. The Scripture therefore attributes some affections to him which have an imperfection joined with them, and those to be in him until the day of judgment. Thus expectation and desire, which are but imperfect affections in comparison to that joy which is in the full fruition of what was expected or desired, are attributed to him, as he is man, until the day of judgment.

Thus, Hebrews 10:12-13, he is said to sit in heaven, "expecting till his enemies be made his footstool;" the destruction of which enemies will add to the manifestive glory of his kingdom. Now,

as that will add to the fullness of his greatness, so the complete salvation of his members will add to the completeness of his glory. And as the expectation of his enemies' ruin may be said to be an imperfect affection, in comparison of the triumph that one day he shall have over them, so his joy which he now has in his spouse is but imperfect, in comparison of that which shall fill his heart at the great day of marriage. And accordingly, the Scripture calls the accomplishment of these his desires a satisfaction; so Isaiah 53:11, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and he satisfied," which argues desires to be in him, lying under a want of something in the end to be obtained. Only we must take in this further, that Jesus Christ indeed knows and sees the very time when this his fullness, through the exaltation of his members up to himself, shall be completed, and when he shall trample upon the necks of all his and their enemies; he sees their day coming, as the Psalmist has it, which alleviates and detracts something from this imperfection, that he should thus expect or tarry. This scruple satisfied, how his heart can be feelingly touched with our sins (our greatest infirmities), seeing he was tempted without sin.

There remains one great dissatisfaction to be removed, which cannot but of itself arise in every good heart. You told us, may they say, that by infirmities sins were meant, and that the apostle's scope was to encourage us against them also; and they are indeed the greatest discomforts and discouragements of all other. Now, against them this which the apostle here speaks affords us but little, seeing Christ knows not how experimentally to pity us therein, for "he knew no sin." Yes, the apostle himself does here except it, "He was tempted in all things, yet without sin" Hebrews 4:15. It may comfort us, indeed, that Christ does and will pity us in all other infirmities, because he himself was subject to the like, but he never knew what it was to be under sin and vexed with lust, as I am. And how shall I relieve myself against that by what the apostle here speaks of him? I shall endeavor to give some satisfaction and relief in this by these following considerations.

First, the apostle puts it, indeed, that "he was tempted, yet without sin." And it was well for us that he was thus without sin, for he had not been a fit priest to have saved us else. So Hebrews 7:26, "Such an High Priest became us as was separate from sinners, innocent." Yet for your further relief, consider that he came as near in that point as might be. "He was tempted in all things," so says the text, though "without sin" on his part; yet tempted to all sin so far as to be afflicted in those temptations, and to see the misery of those that are tempted, and to know how to pity them in all such temptations. Even as in taking our nature in his birth he came as near as could be, without being tainted with original sin, as, namely, by taking the very same matter to have his body made of that all ours are made of, so in the point of actual sin also, he suffered himself to be tempted as far as might be, so as to keep himself pure. He suffered all experiments to be tried upon him by Satan, even as a man who has taken a strong antidote suffers conclusions to be tried on him by a mountebank. And, indeed, because he was thus tempted by Satan unto sin, therefore it is on purpose added, "yet without sin;" and it is as if he had said sin never stained him, though he was outwardly tempted to it. He was tempted to all sorts of sins by Satan, for those three temptations in the wilderness were the heads of all sorts of temptations, as interpreters upon the gospels do show.

Then, secondly, to fit him to pity us in case of sin, he was vexed with the filth and power of sin in others whom he conversed with, more than any of us with sin in ourselves. His "righteous soul was vexed" with it, as Lot's righteous soul is said to have been with the impure conversation of the Sodomites. He "endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," Hebrews 12:3. "The

reproaches of them that reproached thee," that is, upon his God, "fell upon me," Romans 15:3. It was spoken by the Psalmist of Christ, and so is quoted of him by the apostle; that is, every sin went to his heart. So as in this there is but this difference betwixt him and us, that the regenerate part in us is vexed with sin in ourselves, and that as our own sin, but his heart with sin in others only, yet so as his vexation was the greater by how much his soul was more righteous than ours, which makes it up. Yes, in that he sustained the persons of the elect, the sins which he saw them commit troubled him as if they had been his own. The word here translated temptedis read by some *πεπειραμνον*, that is, vexed.

Yea and thirdly, to help this also, it may be said of Christ while he was here below that in the same sense or manner wherein he "bore our sickness," Matthew 8:17, who yet was never personally tainted with any disease, in the same sense or manner he may be said to have borne our sins. Namely, thus Christ, when he came to an elect child of his that was sick, whom he healed, his manner was first by a sympathy and pity to afflict himself with their sickness, as if it had been his own. Thus at his raising of Lazarus, it is said that he "groaned in spirit," and so by the merit of taking the disease upon himself, through a fellow-feeling of it, he took it off from them, being for them afflicted, as if he himself had been sick. And this seems to be the best interpretation that I have met with of that difficult place in Matthew 8:16-17, where it is said, "he healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, 'Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness.'" Now, in the like way or manner unto this, of bearing our sicknesses, he might bear our sins too; for he being one with us, and to answer for all our sins, therefore when he saw any of his own to sin, he was affected with it, as if it had been his own. And thus is that about the power of sin made up and satisfied. And fourthly, as for the guilt of sin and the temptations from it, he knows more of that than any one of us. He tasted the bitterness of that, in the imputation of it, more deeply than we can, and of the cup of his Father's wrath for it, and so is able experimentally to pity a heart wounded with it, and struggling under such temptations. He knows full well the heart of one in his own sense forsaken by God, seeing himself felt it when he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matthew 27:46.

Uses of all.

Use 1. Thus that which has been said may afford us the strongest consolations and encouragements against our sins of any other consideration whatsoever, and may give us the greatest assurance of their being removed off from us that may be for:

First, Christ himself suffers (as it were), at least is affected under them, as his enemies, which therefore he will be sure to remove for his own quiet sake. His heart would not be quiet, but that he knows they shall be removed. As God says in the prophet, so may Christ say much more, "My bowels are troubled for him, I remember him still," Jeremiah 31:20.

Secondly, there is comfort concerning such infirmities, in that your very sins move him to pity more than to anger. This text is plain for it, for he suffers with us under our infirmities, and by infirmities are meant sins, as well as other miseries, as was proved. While therefore you look on them as infirmities, as God here looks upon them and speaks of them in his own, and as your disease, and complain to Christ of them, and do cry out, "O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Romans 7:24. So, fear not long. Christ takes part with you, and is so far from being provoked against you, as all his anger is turned upon your sin to ruin it. Yes, his pity is increased the more

towards you, even as the heart of a father is to a child that has some loathsome disease, or as one is to a member of his body that has the leprosy, he hates not the member, for it is his flesh, but the disease, and that provokes him to pity the part affected the more. What shall not make for us, when our sins which are both against Christ and us, shall be turned as motives to him to pity us the more? The object of pity is one in misery whom we love; and the greater the misery is, the more is the pity when the party is beloved. Now of all miseries, sin is the greatest and while yourselves look at it as such, Christ will look upon it as such only also in you. And he, loving your persons, and hating only the sin, his hatred shall all fall and that only upon the sin, to free you of it by its ruin and destruction, but his bowels shall be the more drawn out to you; and this as much when you lie under sin as under any other affliction. Therefore fear not, "What shall separate us from Christ's love?" Romans 8:35.

Use 2. Whatever trial, or temptation, or misery we are under, we may comfort ourselves with this that Christ was once under the same, or some one like unto it, which may comfort us in these three differing respects that follow, by considering:

First, that we are thereby but conformed to his example, for he was tempted in all, and this may be no small comfort to us.

Secondly, we may look to that particular instance of Christ's being under the like, as a meriting cause to procure and purchase succor for us under the same now; and so in that respect may yet further comfort ourselves. And,

Thirdly, his having once borne the like, may relieve us in this, that therefore he experimentally knows the misery and distress of such a condition, and so is yet further moved and quickened thereby to help us.

Use 3. As the doctrine delivered is a comfort, so the greatest motive against sin and persuasive unto obedience, to consider that Christ's heart, if it be not afflicted with—and how far it may suffer with us we know not—yet for certain has less joy in us, as we are more or less sinful, or obedient. You know not by sin what blows you give the heart of Christ. If no more but that his joy is the less in you, it should move you, as it used to do those that are ingenuous. And take this as one incentive to obedience, that if he retained the same heart and mind for mercy towards you which he had here on earth, then to answer his love, endeavor to have the same heart towards him on earth which you hope to have in heaven; and as you daily pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" Matthew 6:10.

Use 4. In all miseries and distresses you may be sure to know where to have a friend to help and pity you, even in heaven, Christ; one whose nature, office, interest, relation, all, do engage him to your succor. You will find men, even friends, to be oftentimes unto you unreasonable, and their bowels in many cases shut up towards you. Well, say to them all, if you will not pity me, choose, I know one that will, one in heaven, whose heart is touched with the feeling of all my infirmities, and I will go and bemoan myself to him. Come boldly (says the text), μετ' παρησυχίας, even with open mouth, to lay open your complaints, and you shall find grace and mercy to help in time of need. Men love to see themselves pitied by friends, though they cannot help them; Christ can and will do both.

S. God the Fountain of Salvation for all His Elect

God the Fountain of Salvation for all His Elect by Thomas Goodwin But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-6.

We have already sailed over one sea, that of man's corruption, a dead sea, as I may so call it: and we are now entering into another, a far vaster and deeper, of God's love and free grace; 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us,' &c. In opening of these words, I shall pursue that method which I have used from the beginning.

1. To give you the general scope, parts, and coherence of the words.
2. To give you an exposition. And—
3. Observations upon them.

1. For the main general scope; it is to set out the greatness of that love, mercy, and grace that is in God, as it is the fountain of salvation to all his elect, and this in the chiefest outward fruits and benefits of it ad extra, towards us, in three several degrees thereof. He doth take an advantage in setting of it forth, to take their hearts whom he wrote to.

He had first presented to them a map and a prospect of their sin and misery, in the former verses; how they were 'dead in sins and trespasses,' 'children of wrath,' &c., and this to prepare their hearts. Even as, suppose you would prepare the spirits of men condemned to die to entertain with the highest welcome the grace and mercy of a prince that was resolved to pardon them, you would first set out to them all their wretchedness and demerits to the full, and then emphasize the goodness and graciousness of the prince in his resolutions of grace and favour towards them: so doth he here. A graciousness shewn not only simply in forgiving, pardoning, and pulling them out of that depth of misery, but in raising and advancing them, and setting them up upon the highest pinnacle and top of honour; raising them up from death, and a death in sin, to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, or with Christ Jesus. Such a story as this, were it told but to standers-by, but as that which concerned other men and not themselves, it would wonderfully affect them, and cause them to fall down in admiration of that superexcelling grace in him that should deal so with miserable and unworthy creatures subjected to his wrath. But when the men the story is uttered of are the persons themselves that hear it, and the objects of all this grace, how must this needs transport them!

Now after he had forelaid and inlaid the description of their misery, he sets out the mercy of God in the most taking way.

He first brings it in with a but of some hidden and secret design to remedy all this, that that God whom he had said had elected and predestinated, contrived our salvation according to the counsel of his will, having mercy in him; a but of an admiration and astonishment in himself, of excess and

abundance of grace in God, and reservation of a superabounding happiness intended to them: 'But God,' saith he. And at the second word, he names him that is the subject of all this goodness, and the designer and author of all this happiness to them, to the end they might have him in their eye, even from the first: 'But God.' My brethren, I appeal to you: if you had first only heard the story of your natural condition and the desert of it, from an ambassador sent from heaven, and he had done nothing but laid open to you the woeful, rueful, wretched condition that you are in, with all the punishment God had threatened to inflict and you had deserved; and his last words had been, concluding you under the wrath of the great God, 'children of wrath,' as here; and then should have gone, and further said, 'But God,' and gone no further, and paused there for a while, your thoughts naturally would have meditated nothing but terror, and have thought nothing but that God, that is so displeased with sin, that is so great a God, he will be avenged, he will destroy us, he will do unto us according to his wrath, and our desert. But what follows?

'But God, that is rich in mercy.' Here is a happy turn, a beam of hope breaks out now to poor prisoners of hope. Here is a mine sprung, that neither Adam nor the angels knew; it is a mine of mercy, a rich mine, and an intimation of an engagement of all that riches: for why else should it come in here for the pardon? And this mercy in God—having laid open such a treasure both of disobedience and wrath upon this occasion—he loadeth with as great attributes and epithets. 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy.' And yet God might have been merciful in his nature, and we never the better for it; he might also have been rich in mercy, of long-suffering and patience, and yet destroyed us at last; as in Romans 2:4, you read of the riches of his patience and long-suffering, to them that treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. No, 'God, who is rich in mercy,' and hath 'loved us,' saith he; special mercy joined with, and rooted in special love. And that love is not a new love, newly taken up, but it is a love which he hath borne: 'for the love wherewith he hath loved us,' saith he,—loved us that were thus sinful and thus wretched, and loved us while we were thus sinful and thus wretched, yea, from everlasting; yea, who ordained us, thus sinful, to shew this love and mercy, Ephesians 2:7. And he contents not himself barely to mention this love, but he loads that also with a new epithet, 'great love.' He contents not himself to say, 'God, who is rich in mercy, and hath loved us.' but, 'for the great love wherewith he hath loved us.' So that now, as in respect of mercy there is an expectation of being freed from all this misery; so in respect of this great love there is an expectation raised of as great an advancement, that shall answer the mention of the love of so great a God, and so great a love in him. And when he had thus laid this foundation, both of what riches of mercy is in God's nature and heart, and what great love hath been in the purposes of his heart, in Ephesians 2:4 he goes on further to tell them what this mercy and love hath intended and done for them. And, still to take and affect their hearts the more, whilst he is in the midst of doing of it, he winds in the mention of what they were and had been, he minds them of that 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins;' so Ephesians 2:5. He repeats no more, but he would have them take in all that he had said in Ephesians 2:1-3 : 'when we were dead in sins and trespasses,' 'walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air;' when we were 'children of disobedience,' slaves to the devil, 'children of wrath by nature.' He intermingleth, as I may so say, the sense of their sinfulness and wretchedness in the midst of his discourse of God's graciousness and mercy, that they might be sure to carry that along in their eye, have inlaid thoughts of their wretchedness to affect their hearts with his goodness. And then, lest they should not take in and think soon enough of the mercy of God which he had spoken of

but even now, he darts in another beam of God's love into their hearts under a new name, with a new memento to set it on. 'By grace ye are saved.' and grace addeth yet to both love and mercy. It is not only great love for quantity, it is not only rich mercy, but it is grace also, for the freeness of it, and for the particularness of it unto them, and not to others. And when he had done all this, he comes to shew three degrees of advancement unto these men that were thus miserable and wretched, that God doth and hath bestowed upon them, and will bestow upon them, which they may be sure of, that they shall attain to and arrive at in the end. He then mentioneth, I say, three degrees of benefits.

He tells them, first, that this God, thus rich in mercy, hath quickened them, quickened them when they were dead, and dead in sins and trespasses,—for if you would restore a dead man, you must first put life into him, you must begin there,—quickened them both with a life of justification, they being dead in respect of the guilt of sin, pardoning all their sins out of the riches of his mercy; and quickening them with a new spirit, with a new soul, with the Holy Ghost to dwell within them for ever, the same Spirit that dwells in Jesus Christ, and that quickened him, to quicken them, who was himself a quickening spirit. And quickening them also with a principle of life in holiness, even as the soul dwelling in the body quickeneth it with a life. And, saith he, all this he hath done already for you, here in this world.

But, saith he,—he means not to rest there,—there are two other benefits in the life to come, which are two degrees more. He will raise you up, saith he, at the latter day. And as a pawn and testimony of that, look upon the resurrection of Christ, and he in rising is the first fruits of them that rose, and ye are 'risen in him,' saith he; in Christ ye are risen, when he rose. And he speaks of it as done, because he would shew the certainty and sureness of it. As God raised up Jesus Christ's body, so he will raise up yours; yea, when Jesus Christ rose, ye were reckoned in him: and as God put a glory upon Christ's body when it was risen, so he will do upon yours at the day of judgment. And that is the second degree, that degree of glory the soul shall have when it meets its body, and is raised again at the day of judgment. But then there is a higher degree than this; for when the day of judgment is over, you shall, saith he, be placed in the midst of a sea of glory, and have a full possession of it, as Jesus Christ himself has. He hath placed us, saith he; still to shew the sureness of it, he speaks as if it were done. All that glory, saith he, which Jesus Christ hath, he hath it as representing you; look what place he is in, you shall be in; yea, you are now reckoned to sit there, so as you cannot be frustrated of it; and your life is hid with God in Christ, and when Christ shall appear, who now representeth you in heaven, you shall be possessed of it. And so now you have the general scope or meaning of these words opened to you.

Now then for the coherence and the parts of it.

First, For the coherence. You see, they come in next to that of our sinful state, to that end and purpose to emphasize and to heighten the riches of the glory of the mercy and love of God in Christ, and also of that glory which in Christ God hath ordained unto us.

Now the scope being to emphasise the mercy and grace of God in every way, these are the parts of it:

First, He sets out what in God is the most inward and original cause of all this, which he would have magnified, by three names, mercy, love, grace; to which, if you will, may be added, kindness,

out of ver.7.

Secondly, He ascribes unto all these the most heightening epithets. To mercy he addeth 'riches;' to love he addeth 'greatness;' to grace, 'exceeding riches,' ver.7. 'God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us.' He sets all these out.

Thirdly, By minding us of the condition we were in, when God thus did shew mercy to us. 'Even,' saith he, 'when we were dead in sins.'

Fourthly, To take our hearts the more, he sets it out by the benefits we are advanced to, which are three. We are quickened with Christ; risen with Christ; sit together with Christ in heavenly places. And—

Last of all, That Christ may be magnified, and have a praise in it, as he is God-man, Mediator, as well as God, he saith that all this is done in Christ, and with Christ, as the instrumental cause, and representative head, and meritorious cause of all this. And so now you have the parts of these words.

II. I shall now begin the exposition of them, and run over every one of them severally and apart.

But.—It refers to that God, chap. 1, that had predestinated, &c. Jerome saith that this same but is superfluous, and he would have it blotted out, and thinks it crept into the copy, as it were, unawares. But it is a word which ushereth in a great turn, he having mentioned the state of nature before, and sets an emphasis upon all that follows. And you shall find that upon the like occasion phrases akin to this come in, which we all translate but. Paul having spoken of his own unregenerate condition and the mercy shewn him by God as then, comes in with the like but when he would magnify the mercy shewn him, in 1 Timothy 1:13 : 'I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy.' Likewise, Titus 3:4, you shall find the like but comes in, and upon the very same occasion. He had described our unregenerate estate at the 3d verse, 'We were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But,' saith he, Titus 3:4, 'after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, according to his mercy he saved us,' &c. And it is so far from being superfluous that, like John Baptist, it foreruns the manifestation of the richest grace in God.

It is, first, when it comes in thus, a particle of admiration, wondering at God in it. So in that place of Timothy, 'I was injurious, and a blasphemer; but I obtained mercy.' O wonderful! who would not have made a but at me? 'But,' saith he, 'I obtained mercy.' He ushers it in as with astonishment and admiration, and therefore ends his speech with a doxology, 1 Timothy 1:17, 'Unto the King eternal, &c., be glory for ever, Amen.' So here, being 'dead in sins and trespasses,' and 'children of wrath but God, who is rich in mercy,' &c.

Secondly, It is also a but of opposition to what might have been generally in all men's thoughts and apprehensions; clear contrary to, and beyond what we could think. So in usual speech we use the particle but, when we turn our speech a clear contrary way. It is therefore a door of hope, and it makes to me the greatest in the Scripture. Suppose that, after the Apostle in speaking this, having concluded man's sinful condition, as here, with this, 'children of wrath,' which strikes into all men's souls inconceivable horror, he had mentioned God next, without this but, and there paused, and

made a suspense of speech, and left the rest to our thoughts; how would we have wildered ourselves in fears, and have thought thus with ourselves? —God, that is by nature holy, as we are sinful, can behold no iniquity, and a God so just as in punishing and destroying the sinner he shall infinitely glorify himself; a God so powerful in wrath that he is able to revenge to the uttermost; and so absolute in sovereignty that we are the clay, he is the potter; if therefore for our filth he should throw us to destruction, we could not reply, Why dost thou so? We being so obnoxious, he could destroy us without an excuse. A God withal so all-sufficient and rich in blessedness in himself, when he had destroyed us according to our desert, and his own provocation in himself thereto, could never find any loss or lack of us, or he could have created new creatures. How would all our souls, like Adam's, have melted within us, and meditated terror! But none of all this, but the quite contrary. 'But God, that is rich in mercy,' &c. There is a mine sprung neither Adam nor angels knew of at the first.

It doth tend also to usher in all sorts of opposite things to what he had said before; he had shewn how man is sinful, but God is merciful. Instead of sins and trespasses, he is to speak of mercy; instead of men being sinful, he is to describe God merciful; man by nature sinful, but God by nature merciful. There is an opposition of quickening to death. When we were under the power of Satan, and the devil was our prince, the prince of the power of the air, now to come under Christ, to be quickened with him, and to 'sit with him in heavenly places,' so high, even when children of wrath by nature; but 'by grace,' as opposed to nature, 'we be saved.' All these oppositions of aspect of the words that follow to what went before, this but ushers in.

It also comes in, when what follows exceeds what went before in a way of contrariety, to shew that where sin abounded grace superabounded much more. Man had done thus and thus, and was thus and thus; but God in his work hath put down man clean in his work. 'But God, who is rich in mercy.' And so much now for that particle, but.

God.—It refers to what he had enlarged of God, chap. 1, and anew explicates the sense of it. In the second place here, he holds up God to be, as well he might in this case, the sole author of all that salvation that follows. As in Romans 11:35, 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things,' especially our salvation. In 2 Corinthians 5:18, 'All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself'

He comes in here with God—'but God'—as the subject of all this mercy and love, whom therefore we should carry along with us in our eye to magnify. And 'but God' is a note of specialty. So David, 'Let me fall into the hands of God,'—not man,—'for very great are his mercies,' 1 Chronicles 21:13. As also, the prophet, 'Who is a God like unto thee,'—there is none else would have done it,—'that pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin?' It is only he, being rich in mercy, and having so much mercy in him, and being a God of such mercy, that hath done it. 'I am God, and not man; therefore ye are not consumed.' But God, saith he, being rich in mercy, hence it is ye are saved. And by God, he means likewise the Father, as distinct from Christ. He maketh Jesus Christ the instrumental cause: we are quickened in Christ: but who quickened us? God, saith he; it was his contrivance and doing. He would have us attribute the first and chief unto God; and his meaning is this, as if he had said, Now that I have shewn you that man hath done his part, and done his worst in that sinful condition he was in, you shall see what part God will act. 'But God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy,' &c. As also to shew that it is God alone that doth all in the matter of salvation, which

is his scope in the rest that follows, to reduce the creature to nothing as the Apostle hath it, 'It is not of him that runs, or him that wills, but of God that sheweth mercy.' That as it is in Jeremiah 3:5, thou hast sinned, and yet called me Father, and 'thou hast spoken and done evil things, as thou couldest;' this thou hast done; well, now, I will see what I can do, Jeremiah 3:19, 'Thou shalt call me, My father, and shalt not turn away from me.' So the Apostle here: You were so and so, 'but God,' &c.

God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us.

You see here, he speaks of the causes of our salvation, mercy and love. In opening of this, I shall first give you the distinction between mercy and love.

I begin with love; his shewing mercy is resolved into it. It is a desire to communicate good, the chiefest good, unto the creature; but mercy is to pull the creature out of a depth of misery. The object of God's love is the creature simply considered; the object of mercy is the creature fallen into misery. So that mercy superaddeth this to love, that it respects the creature in misery. Parents, they love their children simply as they are their children; but if they be fallen into misery, then love works in a way of pity; love is turned into mercy. So that now you see, I say, the difference in a word between these two, that mercy respecteth misery, and hath properly misery for its object. You have that notable place for this, in Romans 11:32, 'God hath shut up all together in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' Mercy therefore respecteth those that are thus shut up under unbelief. The second thing that I would hold forth for the opening of these two is this, why mercy and love are here both brought in? It is not mercy only, and one would have thought that had been enough, when he would speak of our salvation, but he also mentioneth love; and why?

1. Because mercy only respecteth misery, as I said before; it goes no further simply as mercy than the relieving those that are in misery out of their misery. And because that we had a treasury and a depth of misery, he therefore mentions a treasury and riches of mercy. There was a treasury of wrath, which we being children of wrath had heaped up; therefore he mentions a treasury of mercy. But, I say, mercy only respecteth pulling out of misery, and would have gone no further, simply as mercy. But now that, as an addition thereto, these persons delivered out of this depth of misery should be advanced to the same state and condition that Jesus Christ in heaven hath, that they should sit together in heavenly places with him; mercy alone would not have carried us thither, if mercy had not been winged with love, if love had not been mingled with and added to it; yea, a munificence of love, yea, a greatness of love. Mercy causeth a king to pardon a traitor; but if he shall take this traitor and advance him to the highest dignity, place him with him in the throne, as it were, this must needs be from love too; this is a superadding in that respect unto mercy.

Obs.—Let me affect your hearts with this consideration, That God hath done more for us infinitely than for the angels: he shews love to them; they are vessels of honour, whom he hath loved and taken up unto glory; hut they are not vessels of mercy: but now in saving of men he brings in both, mercy and love too; 'God, being rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us.'

2. Love is added to mercy here, to shew the extent and the greatness of his shewing mercy; for that dependeth much upon love. If one be merciful only out of a virtue that is in him, or out of a duty, then so far as that virtue will carry him, he will shew mercy. As now, take a merciful man that is rich in mercy,—if we may so express it of men, as the Apostle doth, 'rich in faith,'—that hath a

great deal of tenderness of bowels in him; let him meet with a man in misery, it will draw out his bowels to shew that man mercy, so far as mere mercy, as it is a virtue, will carry him. Mark, for this is a distinct thing to the former; but if it light upon a person whom he loveth, then, besides the virtue or grace of mercy in him, mercy is infinitely more intended, comparatively, to him, than when he shews mercy to him merely out of that grace and virtue; love then boils up mercy. As for example: if a physician that is a merciful man, and heals out of mercy, and takes a great deal of pains with a sick person even out of that grace and virtue, yet if his wife should be sick, or his child whom he loveth, here now mercy would be intended, here mercy would be heightened. Now, saith the Apostle, this is the case of God; he is not simply merciful out of mercy, but he is merciful out of love, loving the persons he shews mercy unto. And therefore in the Scripture he is said to be merciful as a father,—Psalms 103:13, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him,'—yea, as a mother. He is merciful, not singly out of a principle of mercy only, but out of love also, which therefore intendeth, heighteneth mercy, draws it out so much the more, makes it the more active. If God hath riches of mercy, and love hath the command of that treasury, how profuse will love be to those that are in misery! Now, saith he, 'God, who is rich in mercy,' and besides that, he hath 'loved us with a great love.' Yea—

3. For explication, what is the reason, let me add this as a reason why both these are thus joined together here: That the foundation of God's shewing mercy is his love. So, if you mark it, the Apostle lays it: 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy;' but that alone would not have done it, therefore he adds, for the great love wherewith he loved us. And you shall find the like in many other places, as in that Titus 3:4-5, which I quoted before, where having laid open our natural condition, he comes in with the same but that he doth here. 'But the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared; according to his mercy he hath saved us.' For love, I say, is the foundation in God of his shewing mercy. That I may open and explain this to you, for it is a thing of much consideration and help to us:—

Mercy in God and man differs thus: that mercy in man, go take the inward compassion of it, the inward affection in the heart, it always worketh, whether one love the party, or not love him, so that if he be in misery, and it be in a man's power to help him, and it be lawful to help him, there is a pity within a man stirs him, and doth as it were command him to help that man, draws it forth to do it. Homo misericors, semper misericors. And mercy in man, if he shews mercy merely out of mercy, and out of no other affection joined with it, it works equally, is equally compassionate to men in like condition. But mercy in God, you must know, is drawn out, though it be his nature, by his will; he pardoneth whom he will: 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.' Therefore he pardoneth great sinners, when he lets others that are smaller perish. Nay, the compassion itself doth not necessarily work in God, but it depends upon an act of his will, though mercy be his nature. If God had been merciful to no sinner, but had damned all men and angels that had sinned, and had done it with wrath and revenge, yet he had been as merciful as now he is, take his nature. So that our salvation must be resolved into some other principle than simply his being merciful. And therefore, by the way, when we say that mercy is nature in God, the meaning of it is this, that it is suited to him, it is that which he doth with the greatest delight,—as men do actions of nature—wherein he hath no reluctancy. The meaning is not that this mercy works naturally and necessarily, for had not he set his heart to love, had not his will been set upon it, not an angel or a man that sinned had ever had a drop of mercy from him, though he is thus full and thus rich in

mercy. So that though God is rich in mercy, yet there must be love also as the foundation. That which moved him to be merciful to any was his love pitched upon them; and having first pitched his love upon them, then, he seeing them in misery, love stirs up mercy. In that he did resolve to be merciful to any creature, it is not simply an act of his nature, but it doth depend upon his will: though he had in his nature this riches of mercy, yet we had not been saved if it had not been the good pleasure of his will, and that love had been added to all that mercy; all the mercy that is in him would never else have flown forth from him. But—

They both here come in, not only to shew that his love was the cause why he resolved to shew mercy; but that those to whom he meant to shew mercy, his love guides and directs him to it. His love had first singled out certain persons whom he meant to shew mercy to; and love did guide the channel which way mercy should run. And therefore you shall find in Scripture that election obtains it, 'Jacob have I loved,' saith he. And that is the reason why he shews mercy to any, 'that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand,' Romans 9:11. So as indeed divines do make mercy but the remote cause of salvation, but love to be the fundamental. And this is true, whether we hold that he loved men when they were considered in the pure mass of creatures, or in the corrupt mass, as they are considered since; still, I say, love is that that did guide mercy; why mercy should be conveyed to these souls, and not unto others, it was because he loved them, it was from his love first pitched upon them.

I shall now come to some observations, for I see I must reserve that of the riches of this mercy, and the greatness of this love, to which something must be spoken, to another discourse.

First, you see there is a love which he hath shewn us, which, I say, is the ground of all his mercy to us, though he is merciful in his nature. The first observation then that make of it is this:—

Obs. 1.—Let the love of God be the greatest thing in your hearts, the nearest thing to your souls of all else, the greatest thing which in your eye you do pursue. It is the first thing in God laid the foundation of good, and it is the highest thing to be attained to, and to be pursued after by us. Of all things in God, value his love, and seek after that; let, I say, the desires of your souls be pointed unto it. God's love is the greatest thing of all the rest, it is more than all his benefits. The love of Christ was more than his sufferings, and his sufferings were more than his benefits; and the love of God is more than all his gifts, and yet he hath given great things to us, and done great things for us. *Amor est primum donum*; his love is the first gift, as one well saith, in the gift of which all things else are yours. The gift of his Son was a great gift, but it was founded in his love. 'He so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.'

Though we, being sinners, need mercy, that is the next thing we want, and therefore we look to it—Oh, mercy, mercy!—because we apprehend ourselves in misery. But do you look beyond mercy, and look to love, which is a greater thing to you than mercy, raiseth and enlargeth mercy, and when mercy hath done with you, will do more, or as much for you as mercy hath done, and guideth mercy. The reason why mercy ran into your hearts, and washed you with the blood of Christ, is because that love guided the channel. 'To seek after mercy, this self-love and the misery thou art in will make thee do. Oh, but there is somewhat else, saith a good soul; it is the love of God, and the favour of God, that I would see, and it is not self-love that ever will carry a man on to seek that. And what is the reason that this chiefly is the pursuit of a soul spiritualised? One reason among others is this: because grace is always the image of God's heart; now this being the chief

thing in God's heart, and the first thing, and the highest thing, hence therefore the soul seeks that ultimately and chiefly.

Obs. 2.—Secondly, if you ask me what love it is that I would have you prize and value, and what love it is that is here meant; it is everlasting love. 'For the great love wherewith he hath loved us,' saith the Apostle, not wherewith he doth love us. It is everlasting love that is the cause of all the mercies we have. Jeremiah 31:3, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love,'—there you have the phrase too; so the Apostle here, 'wherewith he hath loved us;' this hath reaches as high as to eternity,—'therefore,' saith he, 'with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' Will you know the reason why God calleth you, why he saveth you? It is this, I have loved you with an everlasting love. It is not a love that God doth begin to set upon you then when you are first called; no, it is a love taken up from everlasting. He had a love in him to you before he gave Jesus Christ,—that is, before the consideration of giving Jesus Christ as to die for us. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.' And Jesus Christ had a love in him too; he loved us before he gave himself for us: Galatians 2:20, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me.' And so, before he calleth us, and converteth us, love, you see, this eternal love of God, is the foundation of all; and so the Apostle resolves it here: 'for the great love wherewith he loved us.'

Obs. 3. —Thirdly, give me leave but in a word to express that which I think is a truth,—it is a controversy amongst divines, and some take one part, and some another, and what is here said is to me an evidence of it amongst others, —that in the order of God's decrees, for he speaks here of everlasting love in God, he doth set his love upon the creature; that is first, and in that respect chooseth the creatures whom he meant to make and whom he would set himself to love, not under the consideration of fallen, but in that pure mass as yet not fallen. And his shewing mercy comes in but to shew how much love he meant to shew to such creatures as he had chosen and singled out; and therefore he lets them fall into sin, that so he might be merciful. He resolved to shew so much love to those he had chosen and set himself to love, with so great a love he loved them, that look what way soever would be best to set forth that love, those ways he would take to choose.

Now, thinks he, if I should simply love them, and take them up to heaven, and there give them such and such a glory, this indeed would shew love, and infinite love. But is there anyway else how love may be shewn? Yes, if I permit and suffer these creatures to fall into misery, I shall shew love in a way of mercy to them. So that now our falling into sin, and his giving Christ to die for us, and all these things, they are but to commend that love which he first pitched upon us as we are creatures whom he meant to make so glorious, and whom he meant so to love. Indeed, in Romans 5:8, it is true, the Apostle saith that God commendeth his love towards us, that whilst we were yet enemies Christ died for us. But, if you mark it, he doth not say that he set his love upon us in the consideration of our being enemies; but whilst we were enemies he commended his love towards us; so he did in his decrees order it that he would commend his love towards us by this. But now that consideration which he had of us, or that act pitched first, was an act of love. Only let me give you this with it, that at the first he resolved to shew love in a way of mercy. As he resolved to shew his justice upon wicked men in a way of wrath, so he resolved to shew his love in a way of mercy. And therefore, as in the counsels of God all things are at once, so we must conceive it he resolved, at the same time when he thus set his love upon us, to permit our falling into sin, and so mercy be shewn. But still, if you ask what act it was—whether our election was an act of mercy or an act of love; I answer clearly, as a great divine doth who hath spent much to the clearing of it, it

was an act of love. It was his decree to shew mercy; but this act was not out of mercy, it was out of love, and out of good-will; to manifest which love he was resolved to shew mercy, therefore he lets man fall. Election, I say, is an act of love rather than of mercy. Mark the coherence here, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us.' God being merciful in his nature, having pitched an act of love upon us, when he saw us fall into misery his bowels turned; but he loved us first. That mercy is mentioned first is because it suited our condition; it is not because it was that attribute out of which the act of election proceeded, though in election there was a purpose to shew love in a way of mercy. The observation of a great divine is this: saith he, 'Run over the whole Scripture, and you shall find indeed the calling of a saint is attributed unto mercy. Why? Because God calls him that is fallen into sin, and therefore there is mercy in it: as in 1 Timothy 1:13, "But I obtained mercy;" 1 Peter 2:10; Romans 11:31-32. You shall find likewise,' saith he, 'remission of sins is attributed unto mercy,—I mean the act of remission, and the exercise of it,—in Luke 1:78-79, Matthew 18:33. So likewise regeneration, as here, and in 1 Peter 1:3, and in Titus 3:5. So the actual bestowing of glory, Jude 1:21, &c. There is only one place,' saith he, 'and that is Romans 9:16, which seemeth to make election an act of mercy. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." But the truth is, election is not in the text there; he doth not say, election is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but his business is salvation. "It is not of him that willeth,"—that is, salvation is not,—"but of God that sheweth mercy." And if it be said, 'He hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy,' his answer is this: saith he, that is in election. He grants God decrees to shew love in a way of mercy; and because that is the issue, because that they are saved by a way of mercy, therefore they are called also vessels of mercy. But still that out of which election proceedeth is not simply the attribute of mercy. And he gives this exceeding clear and good instance:—'God,' saith he, 'is omnipotent, yet that God decreed to shew his power is not an act of omnipotency: so God is wise, but to decree to shew forth his wisdom is not simply to be resolved as an act of wisdom. So likewise here, God is merciful, &c.; but the purpose to shew all these attributes forth is resolved into his love.' This must needs be said, which I beseech you to take along with you, that to shew forth riches of mercy was the final cause of his decree, he had that in his aim and in his eye; but it was his will, and it was his love, out of which this proceeded and which he first pitched upon us, that moved him thereunto. And so much now for that point, which I have spoken to but briefly, and perhaps more obscurely. It is, I say, a point of controversy, which I will not enter into, to handle all the particulars of it. A fourth observation which I would make upon these words, which also is of great use to us, is this:—

Obs. 4.—That there is a love in God to us even when we are sinners, when we are in our natural estate, out of which love he calls us, and pulls us out of that condition. It is a strange thing that men should stumble at this. Say they, How can any be children of wrath, children of the curse, and yet be at the same time loved by God? Is there any such thing in all the Scripture? Why, it is here in my very text clearly and plainly: saith the Apostle, 'When we were dead in sins and trespasses, children of wrath, God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us,' namely, when we were thus. The need of reconciling these two hath been the cause of I know not how many errors in the world, and is to this day. What say the Arminians? This is their great argument, you shall find it in that Anti-Synod of Dort: If that God loved men from everlasting, and if God be reconciled to them, what need Christ have died? And the Socinians argue just the same. To give them an answer, if you will, in a word; and then, secondly, to shew how both these may stand

together, that we may be children of wrath, and that yet God love us—

I answer to them, first, thus: Christ died to manifest his love, Titus 3:4. We were thus and thus 'hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared,' then he saved us, 'according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration.' So that now, for the appearing and manifestation of that love it was that he gave Jesus Christ to die; for the appearance and manifestation of that love to the soul it is that he calleth him. And therefore you have that in Romans 5:8, 'God hereby commended his love towards us, that whilst we were sinners Christ died.' It is an express scripture for this. It was not that he did then begin to love us, or doth begin to love us when we are called, but that love which he had taken up in his heart to us was so great, that giving Christ, and all else, is but to commend it, to set it out. So that if you ask, Why did Christ die, and why did God all this, if he loved us already? I answer, He doth it that his love may appear, he doth it to commend his love. I have often said it that Christ died but to remove obstacles; but the radical love, out of which God did give Christ, was pitched before.

Now, is it not an ordinary thing for a father that his child shall be a child of wrath to him, whilst he goes on in such a course,—that is, consider him as he is in that course, according to his fatherly wisdom he can proceed no otherwise with him but in wrath,—yet all that while so to love him as to set all ways on work to bring him in? Did not David deal so with Absalom? In 2 Samuel 13:1-39, when Absalom was ran from him, and entered into a rebellion against him, he, as he was a wise king, could do no otherwise in that condition but proceed against him as a rebel, unless he came in and submitted himself. But what doth David do? He suborneth a woman, at least Joab doth, and David was well pleased with it, for Joab saw the king's heart was towards him; but suppose David himself suborned Joab to do what he did, that he might have a fair come-of, and manifest his love to his son. If David had done so—why, God himself did so. We were fallen into that condition that we were children of wrath, but yet there was a love to us that lay hid in his heart all the while, and he goes and suborneth Jesus Christ, if I may so speak; and Christ comes but to remove all the obstacles that lay in the way of justice, that he might be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. If we will have another answer, How can we be children of wrath, and yet God love us? I ask again, How was Jesus Christ a curse when he hung upon the cross, and yet at the same time to be loved with the greatest love? According to such rules as God will proceed by at the latter day, if men remain in their natural condition, they are children of wrath but according to what his everlasting purposes are, even these children of wrath he loves, and hath loved.

I will give you a distinction which will salve all, and it is a good one. There is amor benevolentiae and amor amicitiae. While men remain in their natural estate, and are children of wrath, he may bear towards them amor benevolentiae—a love of good-will; but whilst they remain in their natural condition, he hath not amor amicitiae to them—a love of friendship, in which he doth communicate himself to them. But, I say, he may have a love of good-will, which yet is the foundation of the other, and will in time cause the other to break forth. And what is the reason that he hath not a love of complacency, nor a love of mutual friendship, and that we are not said to be reconciled to God till we do believe? Because it is not fit for God upon those terms to communicate himself to us, to open his heart, and to unbosom himself; but when the time comes, that love of good-will which he beareth to us will break forth into a love of friendship, and he will take us into covenant with himself, and then the kindness and love of God towards man appeareth, as the text saith, Titus 3:4.

Obs. 5.—Fifthly, I make this observation from hence likewise: That God in his love pitcheth upon persons. 'For the great love wherewith he loved us,' saith he. God doth not pitch upon propositions only; as to say, I will love him who believeth, and save him, as those of the Arminian opinion hold; no, he pitcheth upon persons. And Christ died not for propositions only, but for persons; he knows his sheep by their names: Jeremiah 31:3, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love;' and, Romans 11:7, 'The election hath obtained it, and the rest were hardened.' My brethren, God loved us distinctly, and he loved us nakedly; let me express it so in a word:—

He loved our persons distinctly; that is, singling out and designing whom. Not only so many, —I will love so many of mankind as shall fill up the places of the angels that fell, as some have imagined,—but he sees who they are distinctly. The Lord knows who are his; the text is express: 'Jacob have I loved,'—he names him,—'and Esau have I hated.' 'Rejoice not,' saith Christ, 'that the spirits are made subject unto you, but that your names are written in heaven.' In Exodus 33:19, where God saith, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,' he speaks it upon occasion of having peculiar mercy to Moses; and therefore the Apostle pertinently quotes it in Romans 9:15, for election of persons.

And, secondly, he loved us nakedly; he loved us, not ours. It was not for our faith, nor for anything in us; 'not of works,' saith the Apostle; no, nor of faith neither. No, he pitcheth upon naked persons; he loves you, not yours. Therefore here is the reason that his love never fails, because it is pitched upon the person, simply as such. I will love such a one, let his condition be what it will be; if he fall into sin, I will fetch sin out of him again, that I may delight in him. The covenant of grace is a covenant of persons, and God gives the person of Christ to us, and the person of the Holy Ghost to us; he chooseth our persons nakedly and simply as such.

Obs. 6.— Lastly, All the attributes in God are subjected to his love, and that is the great prevailing attribute that sways all. You see in the text that it sways mercy; for the reason that God is merciful to one man and not to another is, because he first loved this man and not the other. It is love, I say, that is the prevailing attribute; and what way love goes, all attributes else go, mercy and power, &c. And therefore it is observable that when in the first chapter, ver. 19, he had begun to speak of that power that wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead, and said that the same power worketh in us; in this chapter, where he comes to state the application of his comparison, he should according to the common course have said, God, being great in power, hath quickened us, and raised us up together with Christ. No, he mentioneth mercy and love, rather than power. Why? Because power is at love's beck in this. So that here our salvation lies, that God pitcheth an everlasting love upon men; and when he hath thus loved them, if they fall into misery, he is merciful, and love sets that on work; if there be a difficulty, then love sets power on work: and so, look which way love goes, an attributes else go; and if you have love, you have all things else in God, they are all swallowed up in love. And therefore it is observable, that God in a peculiar manner is said to be love, 1 John 4:8.

I know not that the like is said of any other attribute; and the reason is this: because that to one that he doth love, he is nothing else but love; for mercy, and power, and justice, and wisdom, and all, they all work together in a way of subordination to love, that when a man looks upon all these attributes, they all appear in love, that God is nothing but love to that man. If I look upon his wisdom, it appears to me set on work by love, to exalt and magnify his love. If I look upon his

power, it is all swallowed up in love, in respect of his manifestation of it to me; for I take it, when he saith in that place of John that God is love, he speaks not essentially of that attribute, but of the manifestation of it. And so much now for the opening of this, why mercy and love are here joined, and why that love is made the foundation of his shewing mercy, with such observations as arise out of it. There are two things yet behind, which are the glory of all the rest in this text, and that is, that this mercy that is in God, set on work by love, it is a rich mercy; and that this love wherewith he did from everlasting love us, and that is the foundation of all, it is a great love. 'God, that is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us.' But I must refer that to the next discourse.

S. He Emptied Himself

He Emptied Himself by Thomas Goodwin

It is adorably true indeed that the Eternal Son made Himself of no reputation. Yes; but He did far more than that. He did infinitely far more than that. For our salvation, HE EMPTIED HIMSELF. That is to say, the Eternal Son despoiled and depleted Himself of all His divine power and heavenly glory, and was made flesh, and was made sin, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. His greatness He for us abas'd, For us His glory vail'd; In human likeness dwelt on earth, His majesty conceal'd.

What all that divine power and heavenly glory was which the Eternal Son possessed before He emptied Himself neither the tongue nor the pen even of an inspired apostle can ever attain to tell. But there were some things that the Eternal Son performed in the service of His Father before He emptied Himself: some things that come perhaps somewhat more within the range of revelation and within the scope of the human mind. As thus

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made...For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth: visible and invisible, all things were created by Him, and for Him, and by Him all things consist.' But wonderful and glorious as all that is, at the same time it had been better that the Son of God had never created this world of ours at all unless He was prepared to do far more for our world than merely to create it and to sustain it in its created existence. For, whatever any of His Father's other worlds might need and might receive at the Son's almighty hands over and above their first creation and their continual preservation, it was divinely foreseen from eternity-nay, the apostle is bold enough to say that it was divinely foreordained from eternity-that sin should enter this world of ours, and with sin, and as its wages, both death and hell. And thus it was that before the foundations of this world of ours were ever laid, the Eternal Father had already committed it to His Eternal Son that, for our salvation from sin and death and hell, He must, in the fulness of time, empty Himself and take upon Himself the form of a servant, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And thus it was that when the fulness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And thus it came about that He who had created this world of ours descended into it, and made Himself one of His own earthly creatures, and lived all His appointed time on earth in all the emptiness and limitation and dependence and subjection that was involved in His great work which he had undertaken to perform for His Father. For it is wholly true and it is wholly due to Him that it should be told us concerning our Saviour that He made Himself of no reputation. The whole heavens and the whole earth had all resounded with His great reputation as soon as He had finished the formation of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them. On the seventh day of creation the Son of God ended His great work which He had created and made, and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. And on that first Sabbath day

all the morning stars sang together before Him, and all the sons of God shouted for joy in His presence. But when the predestinated time for the Son's humiliation and for our salvation came He arose and descended down from His Father's house and left all His heavenly renown and reputation behind Him. And then, as the great prologue has it, He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. How His own received Him, and what entertainment He had at their hands, we read with unspeakable shame and pain on every page of the four Gospels. At the same time all that was no surprise to Him; neither did the reception that He received on this earth take Him at all unawares. From the beginning he had foreseen it all, and had prepared Himself for it all. 'Lo, I come. In the volume of the book it is all written of Me.' He means that such things as these were written of Him: such awful things as these: 'I am a worm, and no man. I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn. They shoot out the lip, they shake the head.' The Son of God foresaw Himself as in a glass in that awful twenty-second Psalm. Again, this was written, and He had often read it: 'He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him.' And again, He foresaw that all this also would be written concerning Him, and He had often in anticipation read it.

'Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and put it on His head. And they put on Him a purple robe, and bowed the knee, and said, Hail! King of the Jews. And they smote Him in His face with their hands.' Yes, indeed: the Eternal Son, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, made Himself of no reputation! And that one word, of no reputation, makes us sinful men to stop and think. For, how we all live and labour for a reputation! How we are all puffed up with our reputation when it comes to us! And how we are all cast down when our reputation departs from us. But how different from all that was our Divine Lord. O reputation-loving men! in all your ambitions remember your Divine Redeemer. And determine to follow Him henceforth in all His footsteps of self-humiliation. And, like Him, always seek the praise and the reputation that come from God and from a good conscience alone. But to proceed. Such was His self-depletion that, Divine Sovereign and Divine Lawgiver as He was, He took upon Him the form of a servant, and became obedient to all men in all things. And to begin with, He became obedient to Joseph and Mary in all things and at all times. At twelve years old He went down from His first Passover and was subject to them. And that was so because He humbled Himself to come under the law of a true and proper human childhood. Year after year, he lived under the fifth commandment of the Decalogue like any other dutiful son in the house of Israel. So much was this the case, that if you go back and enter Mary's humble home you will see her first-born son making Himself subject to her, and to His brothers and sisters, in everything. He learned obedience by the things that He suffered every day at all their hands. And if you go back and enter Joseph's toilsome workshop you will see Him who had made all things in heaven and on earth now making Himself obedient in cutting and planing wood, and in all joining and mortising work, like any other obedient apprentice in the workshops of Nazareth. 'St Joseph was dead, and Jesus had succeeded to His foster-father's modest business.' As Dr. Newman has it: 'Our Divine Lord was found of no reputation in this world, whether on the score of rank or of education. It seems almost irreverent to speak of His temporal employment; but it is profitable to remind ourselves that the Son of God Himself was a sort of smith, and made ploughs and cattle yokes.' Yes, and all the time He never once hinted at what He might have spoken out but for His absolute and ever-silent humility. He never once said to his fellow-workmen what He had found written concerning Himself

in the prophet Isaiah: He so hid all these amazing things in His wholly self-emptied and utterly humble heart. 'He hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. His own hands hath made all these things.' Not that His human hands, born of Mary, had made all these things. No. But without His Divine Hands, begotten of God, not one of all these things had ever been made. Such and so great was His self-emptiness and His submissiveness and His obedience toward all His earthly tutors and governors. And much more was He submissive and obedient in all things toward His Father in heaven. For, never once, as a child, or as a growing youth, or as a grown-up man, never once was He disobedient to the letter or to the spirit of any part of His Father's holy law; never once in thought or word or deed. Never once did His conscience make Him a coward. Never once, for a moment, night nor day, did He lose the light of His Father's countenance. No, never once, from Nazareth to Gethsemane. 'This is My well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him.'

'Wherefore God hath also highly exalted Him.' His God and Father had seen all that from His Son's first undertaking of all that down to His finishing of all that. His God and Father had kept in His bottle every tear that His Son the Man of Sorrows had shed during the whole of His sojourn in this world of sorrows. Not one sigh of His, not one sob, not one heavenward breath of secret self-surrendering prayer had escaped His Father's ever-open ear. 'And He shall be mine,' said His Father, 'in that day when I make up My jewels.' And it was so, and it now is so, and it shall for ever be so. For all the Divine Son's self-emptiness is for ever at an end now. 'Father, the hour is come. Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. Glorify Thou Me with the glory I had with Thee before the world was, and before I emptied Myself and was made flesh.' And it was so. 'Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and hath set Him again at His own right hand, far above all principality and power and every name that is named. As it was in the beginning, as it is now, and as it shall for ever be, world without end.' And all that to the glory of God the Father. All that to His glory who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to death, even the death of the cross.

Yes, my believing brethren, yes. God's great love accounts for it all. God's everlasting love explains it all. God is love, and that is the true explanation and the sufficient key to it all. Given that God is love, and that God's Eternal Son is God with His Father, and is ever in His Father's bosom given all that, and all the rest follows as by a Divine necessity. Yes, my loving brethren, you have the true secret and the full explanation of the self-emptying and the humiliation of the cross in your own loving hearts. All you who are born of God, all you who truly love God and one another, all you who greatly love and are greatly loved-in all that you possess in your own bosoms the true explanation and the true key to the whole mystery of redemption, the explanation and the key to that love which passes all explanation and every key. And, after the glory of God, it is to kindle ever afresh the life of a true brotherly love in our hearts that this apostle so carries our hearts captive to the astounding love of Christ toward us. It is to banish for ever from among us all envy of one another, all jealousy of one another, all suspicion of one another, and all strife as to who shall be counted the greatest. It is to make all self-seeking and all vain-glory to be for ever impossible among all Christian men. It is to make us to look not at our own things alone, but every man to look on the honour, and the prosperity, and the whole happiness of other men also. It is on the ground of the amazing and all-conquering love of Christ that the apostle reasons with us, and says to us:

'If there be therefore any consolation in Christ: if any comfort of love: if any fellowship of the Spirit: if any bowels and mercies: be ye like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife and vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless: the sons of God without rebuke.' In one word, and in a word beyond which even an inspired apostle cannot go: 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who emptied Himself and humbled Himself even to the death of the cross.'

(Taken from The Spiritual Life. A sermon of Thomas Goodwin.)

S. The Greatness of God's Love to His Elect

The Greatness of God's Love to His Elect by Thomas Goodwin [see previous article before reading this one]

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Ephesians 2:4-66. The Apostle in the former verses having given a full and exact description of man's misery by nature and in the state of nature, both by reason of sin and the wrath of God that is due thereunto, begins here to set out the greatness of that love and that mercy in God which is the cause and the fountain of our salvation. And he sets it out, as I shewed you the last discourse, when I ran over the series of all these three verses, in the most taking and most advantageous way, and in the greatest truth. I shall not repeat what I then delivered.

I came to the exposition of the words, and what I shall now say will be some little addition, as I go along, to what then was said. But God.—Besides what I said of this particle but in the last discourse, I only add this, indeed as the main thing, that it serveth to usher in, not only a great turn, the greatest turn that ever was,—it doth not only usher in the notice of a remedy to misery, that there is balm in Gilead that may be had, because that God is merciful, and that is his nature, and that therefore he may be merciful to us, and so that there is hope concerning this thing,—but it ushers in and gives the intimation of a forelaid intention in God, of a contrivement and design beforehand taken up and set upon, whereby God had beforehand preceded all the mischief and all the danger that was like to arise from the misery and sin which the elect were fallen into. He had laid such a design as all this misery and sinfulness that the elect ones had fallen into should be so far from undoing them, that it shall but serve to set out that love the more; and so the words that follow do evidently shew. 'But God, for the love wherewith he loved us;' he hath loved us and chosen us out of love from everlasting, and hath shewed it in this, by triumphing over all that misery, that even 'while we were dead in sins and trespasses, he hath quickened us,' &c. And it is a love not only which mercy and pity stirs up, after he had seen us thus miserable; but it is a love that having been so great, and so long borne to us, and first pitched on us, that it stirred up mercy and bowels to us in this misery; for so, if you mark it, the words run: 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy,'—there is his nature—'for his great love wherewith he loved us.' And not only so, but this love being seated in a nature infinitely rich in grace and mercy, had conspired with mercy, and contrived the depth of misery, to extend that riches. On them so great a love had set itself, even to this end, as in the 7th verse, 'that in ages to come he might shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace, in kindness and love to us.' And thus also in Titus 3:1-15, that but even now mentioned ushers in, upon the like occasion, the like reserve or design beforehand laid, to glorify love and goodness. But when the kindness of God and love to man appeared; namely, when that love, taken up by him long before this sinfulness he spake of in the verses before, hath lain hid as it were in ambushment, letting you march on in sinful ways under Satan's banners; that in the end appears and precedes all that misery, and rescues you out of it. There is, I say, a kind of

ambushment, if I may so express it, a waylaying of all that sin and misery the elect fell into. And how many such butts of mercy, lying in wait to deliver and save us out of great and strong evils, did we meet with in our lives? And this but here, of this great salvation, is the great seal and ratification, or Ante signamus, of all the rest. To this purpose you may observe that oftentimes in the New Testament, when mention is made of God's ordaining us unto salvation, this phrase is used, he did it 'from the beginning.' So it is in 2 Thessalonians 2:13: 'God,' saith he, 'hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation;' that is, he had beforehand, even from the beginning, set his love upon you, so that all that sinful estate you have since run into should be no prejudice nor damage to you. And it comes in here, as if that a company of men, whom a king or a prince loveth, or children whom a father's heart is set upon, are permitted and let alone to run into the highest rebellion, to do as evil as they could, as the phrase is, Jeremiah 3:5, so that by the law they are dead men, men undone, men of death and condemnation, there is no hope for them: but—but that the king, as he is merciful in his nature, and so apt to pardon any, so besides he hath had his heart set upon it, and it is but his design, to shew his princely grace the more in pardoning them and advancing them to higher dignities upon it. But God.—And God cometh in also here, besides what I mentioned in the last discourse, to shew that all salvation is from him, he is the sole author and founder of it; as in Romans 9:16, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy:' so here, 'But God, that is rich in mercy.'

I came in the next place, for the opening of the words, to shew you the difference between mercy, and love, and grace; for you have all those three in these three first verses. Love is a desire to communicate good unto us, simply considered as we are creatures; but mercy respecteth us as we are fallen into sin and misery, as we are dead in sins and trespasses. And then that of grace, as I shall open in its due place, adds but this, a freeness unto both. Love and mercy freely bestowed, that is called grace in either.

Also, for explication's sake, I shewed you why the Apostle doth not content himself to name mercy only, or love only, as the cause of our salvation, but that he addeth love to mercy. I gave you two reasons for it, in a word. If he had named mercy only, that respecting misery, it might be thought that that would but relieve us out of misery. But because he mentioneth not only a deliverance out of the misery we lay in by nature, which mercy doth, but the highest advancement besides, to sit together with Christ in heavenly places; therefore he mentioneth love. It comes in likewise, in the second place, to intend and make mercy the greater; for when mercy cometh out of love, and not simply out of a virtue of mercy, if a father be of a merciful disposition, he will pity any one out of a virtue of mercy in him, but he will pity his son out of love.

Then again, for the further explication and understanding of this, I told you, that of the two, the main and the primary cause is love; for so, if you observe it, the text implies. 'God, being rich in mercy,' saith he, 'for his great love:' it is resolved into love. To explain this— In the first place, you may observe here, that God's being merciful is mentioned but as his nature and disposition, which may be wrought upon; but love comes in, as having passed an act of his will, set upon us. For, my brethren, had God had never so much mercy in his nature, never so much goodness and lovingness as he hath, yet if it had not been a full act of love, through his will pitched upon us, we had never been the better. Our salvation doth not only depend upon mercy, but upon love; and not only upon the love of his nature, but upon an act of love, a love set upon us with his will and heart. It is not an indefinite disposition of mercy in him, as it is said of the kings of Israel that they were

merciful kings; but that which our salvation depends upon—through upon that also—is this, that an act of love hath determined this, mercy, engaged this mercy.

I shewed you likewise that it is rather an act of love than of mercy. That first act of election is indeed to shew mercy, but not so properly out of mercy.

Then, thirdly, love is said to be the cause for this reason also, because that love is it which directs mercy to the persons; love singles out the persons, and so they become vessels of mercy. The next thing I explained and observed in the last discourse was, the circumstance of time here. He doth not say, God that doth love us, as he that began to love us when he first called us, or loveth us now he hath called us; but, God that hath loved us. I gave you a like scripture for it, in Jeremiah 31:3, 'I loved thee with an everlasting love;' which, I told you, hath two things principally in it, and both are intended here in this 'hath loved us,' which is a love before conversion, and causeth conversion. 1. For the time 'for the beginning of it, it is a love from everlasting; and, 2. It is a love continued all the while, from everlasting, even till the time of one's calling. The last thing I came to in the last discourse is this, us; 'hath loved us.' He hath not only put forth an act or purpose of love at random, indefinitely, that he would love some of us, or that he would love mankind, but us determinatively. As it was not merely the natural disposition of love and mercy in God that was the cause of our salvation, but an act of his will put forth; so is it not an act of mere velleity, or an indefinite act, that he would save some, but it is us; he resolved upon the persons whom he would save, he resolved upon them distinctly and nakedly: loved them distinctly, by name; and nakedly, that is, loved their persons, without the consideration of any qualification whatsoever. And so now I have done the explanation of these words in a plain and brief manner. I reserved two things to be handled, which I shall now despatch. The one is, the greatness of this love; and the other is, the riches of this mercy.

I made observations from the words thus explained in the last discourse. There is only one observation which I shall at this time handle, and that is this:—

Obs. —That the foundation of our salvation is an act of love, it is out of love; 'for the love,' saith he, 'wherewith he loved us.' I shewed it in the last discourse, in distinction from mercy; that it was rather an act of love (the original act) than of mercy, which I will not now prosecute. My brethren, election is an act of love. I mention this because it is fundamental to what shall afterwards follow. The Apostle in the former chapter had expressed election to be an act of God's will; 'being predestinated according to the counsel of his will,' saith he, ver. 11. And he calls it also an act of God's good pleasure; 'according to his good pleasure that he purposed in himself;' so ver. 5, 9. But to take their hearts the more, when he comes to make application to them of the misery they lay in, he terms it now an act of love. To make it an act of his will and good pleasure was but a more general thing; for by his will he worketh all things, his will is pitched upon everything; and that it is an act of his good pleasure, imports rather the sovereignty and majesty of God, out of which he did it, and aiming at himself therein: but love is a condescending virtue. When a king will speak as a king, he saith it is his pleasure, and he makes it an act of his will; but when he calls it love, his majesty comes down then. Love doth import not so much the sovereignty of God in it, though it was joined with an act of sovereignty, aiming at his own glory; but it imports especially a respecting us in it; for amare is to communicate good things for the sake of him we love rather than our own. Now I find that election is especially expressed unto us by love, indeed the one is put for

the other usually in the Scripture, both in the Old Testament and in the New.

Take the Old Testament. When he would say he had chosen Jacob and refused Esau, how doth he express it? 'Jacob have I loved,' saith he. So in Romans 9:13; it is quoted out of Malachi 1:2. And afterwards, when he cometh to speak of the choice of the people of Israel and of their fathers, both Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in Deuteronomy 10:14-15, how doth he express it? 'Behold,' saith he, 'the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's; the earth also, with all that therein is.' He had choice enough: 'Only,' saith he, 'the Lord had a delight in thy fathers, to love them; and he chose their seed after them.' That is, as the Septuagint there hath it, 'He chose to love them.' Mark it, he expresseth his choice, and sets it out by those sweet words, love, yea, and a delight to love them; a love unto their persons, and a delight in that love. So you shall find that love and choice go together; as Psalms 47:4, and Psalms 78:68: He chose the tribe of Judah, the inhabitants of Mount Sion, which he loved. And thus in the New Testament also, when our Lord and Saviour Christ, who was elected by his Father as he was Mediator, as we are, as you have it in 1 Peter 1:20, where it is said that he was 'foreordained before the foundation of the world;' how doth Christ himself express it? In John 17:24, speaking of the glory given him, (therefore he speaks of predestination,) he saith, 'Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world;' that is, thou gavest me this glory by a choice, by an election; and you see he expresseth it by love. And, Romans 11:28, they are beloved according to election. You shall therefore not only find election called the counsel of God, and the purpose of God, and the will of God; but grace joined to it, purpose and grace both put together. So in 2 Timothy 1:9, 'He hath saved us, and called us, according to his own purpose and grace, before the world began.' And you have a more express place for it in Romans 11:5, where it is called the 'election of grace,' or love, for grace there is taken for free love; the soul, the spirit of election lies in that act; and therefore we are said to be chosen in Christ, which is all one and to say we are loved in Christ; for to love is to choose. And so now I have despatched that observation, which is previous to what I am to deliver afterwards.

Now I come to those two things which I said I reserved in the last discourse to be now handled; for there is nothing remaining to be spoken to in this ver. 4, but, first, to shew you the greatness of this love; and, secondly, the riches of this mercy: two of the greatest subjects, if one would handle them as subjects,—that is, in the whole compass of all that might be said of them,—that the whole book of God affords. Now where is it that I must begin? The truth is, riches of mercy offers itself first in the words; but we must give the prerogative to the greatness of love, because, as you heard before, it is the foundation of mercy. 'Riches of mercy' are brought in here as subserving his love, commanded and disposed of by his love; for the reason why God lays forth riches of mercy to these and these persons, is because he loveth them. So then that stock, or that treasury of love, which the will of God was pleased to set apart first for his elect and children, and lay up in his own heart, this is that which I am first to speak unto; you see it is in the text. And let me say this of it: we can never search enough into this; we may pry too much into the wisdom and counsels of God, to seek a reason of his doings, but we can never pry enough into the love of God. It is a sea of honey, as one calls it, and if in wading into it, we be swallowed up of it and drowned therein, it is no matter. And let me likewise profess this about it, that of all subjects else, it is of that nature as cannot be set out by discourse or in a rational way. It is part of the meaning, I think, of that of the Apostle in Ephesians 3:19, where he calleth it a love that passeth knowledge; that is, the human way of knowledge by way of reason and discourse, whereby we infer and gather one thing out of

another in a rational way, and so come to the knowledge of them. But it is more fully the meaning of that in Romans 5:5, 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.' He doth not say, the love of God which he hath told us of, and spoken so great things of in the Scriptures,—and indeed you shall upon search find the Scripture to speak little of it,—but he saith, 'the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts.' So as he doth not speak of a love which a man's understanding, by collecting one thing out of another, or by laying one thing to another,—as reason, yea, spiritual reason, in other things useth to proceed,—and so may argue to be great: but the way to apprehend it is, by its being shed abroad, and the report and taste of it the Holy Ghost makes. As the seat of God's love is his own heart, his will, so the receptacle thereof is not so much the understanding as the heart of a Christian. The conscience of a man is the proper receptacle of Christ's blood, when it sprinkleth it from evil works; but the heart of a man is the seat of God's love, to be shed abroad there. And to this purpose be addeth, 'by the Holy Ghost,' as being solely and immediately his work; for he in one moment can speak more to the poorest man, of the lowest and meanest understanding, of the greatness of God's love than all that the Scripture says of it, or than all that all the divines in the world out of Scripture can say of it. The truth is, all discourses of God's love are in themselves dull and flat, compared with what representations and impressions thereof the Holy Ghost makes. As, take an excellent song, when the notes are written on paper, what a dull thing is it compared to what the music itself is? My brethren, so is it here. Therefore still you shall meet with such expressions as these in the Scripture: Come, see, and taste how good the Lord is: and, if ye have tasted how good the Lord is, &c.; for the greatness of God's love is only known that way.

Now to shape out a little the subject I am to speak unto; for it is a great point, and would swell into many sermons if I should speak all that which in a discursive way may be said of it. Neither do I purpose now to say all that may affect your hearts and take you with this love. No, the thing that I must keep to is this, to speak of that love borne to us before calling, before quickening, as it is the cause of our salvation; I say, of the greatness of it in that respect, which is proper to what the text here saith, and confine myself merely to such things as are held forth within the compass of these three verses. The first whereof is this: It is great in respect of the subject and source of it. It is God that loveth us, and it is called 'his love.' For if you mark it, there is that little particle in the text, 'but God,' saith he; he puts an emphasis upon that; and likewise, 'his love,' saith he, 'wherewith he loved us.

Secondly, The greatness of it may be set forth by what may be taken from the persons mentioned here upon whom this love is pitched—us; and that either simply considered in our persons nakedly; or else, secondly, in the condition that we were in, that we were dead in sins and trespasses: 'even,' saith he, 'when we were dead in sins and trespasses;' that though he did not make choice first of us when we were dead in sins and trespasses, yet he ordered in his decrees that that should be our condition, to shew forth the more love. The Apostle puts an emphasis upon it, both upon us, not others, and upon us in that condition, dead in sins and trespasses.

Thirdly, From what those words will afford, 'the love wherewith he loved us,' which to me holds forth these three things: Here is first an act of love: 'loved us.' Here is the time, and that is the time past: 'hath loved us.' And here is, thirdly, an intimation of a special kind of love: 'his love wherewith he loved us.' He contents not himself to say, 'for his love,' or, 'for that he loved us.' but you see he doubles it, 'for his love wherewith he loved us.'

Fourthly, and the greatest of all shewn before calling, is in giving Christ. The Scripture runs most upon that, and indeed instanceth in almost nothing else, for that is enough. But you will say, this is not in the text. Yes, it runs all along, through every verse mentioned. For he saith, we are quickened with Christ, and in Christ, who therefore out of that love was given unto death for us, as chap. 1:19. And we are raised up together with him, and we sit together in heavenly places in him.

Lastly, Here are the fruits of this love, which, you see, are quickening, raising up with Christ, sitting together in heavenly places in him. And these, I say, are the particulars which I shall confine myself unto, as those which the text suggesteth.

Let us begin first with the subject, and rise, and original of this love.—He loved. ‘But God, for his great love wherewith he loved us.’ My brethren, all that I say of this is but this, that if God will fall in love, and is pleased and delighted to set his love on creatures, how great must that love be! And whomsoever’s lot it falls to, they shall have enough of it. God that is infinite hath an infinite love in his heart to bestow, and whoever it be that his will is pleased to cast that love upon, of whom it will be said, ‘he hath loved us,’ it must be a great, yea, an infinite love. The fountain of love in God being, as was said, his goodness; for it is in all rational creatures, that which makes them love is a goodness of disposition in them; the fountain of love, as was said, is goodness, and so far as any are good, so far are they apt and prone to love others; and according to the proportion of the goodness, so will the love be also, and accordingly the greatness of love in any.

Now God, he is so good, as he only is said to be good. ‘There is none good but God,’ Matthew 19:17; that is, with such a transcendency of goodness; and therefore answerably thereunto, God is said to be love, so 1 John 4:8. As none is good, so there is none that loves but he—that is, in comparison of him. The goodness and kindness in God, yea, and all the goodness that is in him, (as ver. 7,) moved him to love somebody besides himself, that he might communicate his goodness to them. And so his will resolved to love such and such persons, for he would not communicate his goodness to those whom he did not love; rational, wise men will be sure to love those whom they do communicate much to, and so did God. He also resolving to communicate all his goodness to some, resolves also to love them first, and his love shall be proportionable to his intent of the communication of his goodness, and that to the greatness of that goodness in him. He meant to communicate his goodness to the creature to the utmost; for if he will do it, he will do it as God, or he will not do it at all, he will shew himself to be the chiefest good; why then he will love them to the utmost, and love them like the great God too.

There is this difference between God’s loving and ours: we must see a goodness in the creature that we love, to draw out love from us; but all the love that is in him, he had it in his own power to set it where he would, Exodus 33:19, ‘I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.’ We can but love so far as our love is drawn out; our will doth not intend love to the height, unless it runs out in some natural way; but so can God say, I will have such and such, and I will bear such and so great an affection to them. And when he doth so, his will shall not only cause him to communicate all his goodness to them, but cause him also to do it with the highest love, with rejoicing over them, with delighting to love. So you have the phrase in that place of Deuteronomy 10:15. Men may, and do, do good to others, beyond the extent of their love, for other ends. A man’s will may cause him to communicate good to others beyond what the proportion of love is in his heart. But it is not so in God: as is his goodness, so is his love; therefore God is good to Israel, and he loveth Israel; it is all

one, as in Psalms 73:1. In one word, then, will you go and take the source and the original of love in God, the genealogy of it, and so by that the proportion of it?

First, His goodness putteth him upon communicating himself, and then he loveth those proportionably unto whom he communicateth himself; and so he sets himself to love, singles out the persons. This you have in ver. 7, 'In his kindness towards us.' Titus 3:4-5, when he shews the causes of our salvation, as he doth here, he begins first with the same word used in ver. 7, a goodness, a sweetness, a pleasantness of nature in God, an heroic disposition of being good unto others, from whence ariseth a philanthropeia, a love to mankind; which, though there it be expressed indefinitely, yet as here and elsewhere, he pitcheth upon particular persons. Or, to give perhaps a more clear place for it, Exodus 33:19; when God there would express his heart to Moses, and intimate to him that he loved him, and how dearly he valued him,—and therefore this Moses his choice is mentioned as an instance of the grace of election, in Romans 9:1-33,—what saith God to him? 'I will make all my goodness pass before thee.' So he begins to him; his scope was to shew what love he did bear unto Moses, by the effect of it, and that proportioned to its original in God, and he would have his heart taken with it; how doth he begin? I have, saith he, all goodness in me, and I mean to communicate it unto thee. And what follows? 'I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.' He pitcheth upon persons, as in Moses' instance appears, and love upon those persons. And those, saith he, whom thus I resolve to be gracious unto, they shall have all this goodness; I have cast out of my goodness, my love and grace on thee, and therefore 'I will cause all my goodness to pass before thee.'

He that hath my love, he hath all my goodness; and the source of all is that his goodness, and the manifestation of it. Now as love thus ariseth from goodness, and the desire of communicating of it; so mercy ariseth from love: for what follows? 'I will be merciful unto whom I will be merciful.' First he says, 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.' There it is taken for favour and acceptation freely; and if they be fallen into misery, 'I will be merciful,' my mercy shall do as great wonders as my love. In Ephesians 3:18, he prays that they 'may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.' And what follows? 'And be filled with all the fulness of God.' Why? For whoever God hath pitched this love upon, all the fulness that is in God is coming upon that soul; for it is the love of the great God, it is a love proportionable to his goodness; they have and shall have all his goodness, all his fulness. To cause us therefore to set a value on this: of all dispositions, good nature, as we call it, and love, in whomsoever it is, is the best, and God himself values it most as in himself; he takes more unkindly the despising of his love than he doth the slighting of his wisdom. And love, in whomsoever it is, is the most predominant of all dispositions; whatsoever is good and whatsoever is excellent in any, love hath the command of it; and so it hath in God. All his goodness, the whole train of it must pass before Moses, because God had loved him, and resolved to be gracious to him. So that now, look how great the great God is, so great his love must needs be; for, as I may so speak with reverence, it commandeth all in this great God. In John 10:29, saith Christ, My sheep, no man shall pluck them out of my hand; for, saith he, it is the will of my Father that gave them me that they shall be saved; and he is greater than all. He hath set such a love upon them that all the greatness in this great God is interested in it. It hath commanded and set on work all in God; it hath set on work all the persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to bear several offices in our salvation. It hath set on work all attributes, mercy, justice, power, wisdom, wrath itself to fall upon

our Lord and Saviour Christ, his only Son. Why? Because love is the most predominant, wherever it is it commandeth all; and that which commandeth all that is in God, must needs be great. In other dispositions, he shews forth but one or two attributes: if he throw men into hell, he shews his justice and the power of his wrath; but where he loveth, he draweth forth all. The poets themselves said, that amor Deum gubernat, that love governed God. And, as Nazianzen well speaks, this love of God, this dulcis tyrannus, —this sweet tyrant,—did overcome him when he was upon the cross. There were no cords could have held him to the whipping-post but those of love; no nails have fastened him to the cross but those of love. And hence—to confirm this notion more to you, that love is the predominant thing that commandeth all—you shall find that God is every attribute of his; he is his own wisdom, his own justice, his own power, &c. Yet you have him peculiarly called love. It is not said anywhere of God, that I know of, that he is wisdom, or justice, or power, &c. Christ indeed is called the wisdom and power of God, that is, manifestatively, as he is Mediator. It is true, indeed, all God's attributes are himself; but yet love in a more peculiar manner carries the title of him. 'God is love,' saith he, in 1 John 4:8; and he saith it again, 1 John 4:16.

Let us expound the words a little, because we are now upon them. 'Beloved,' saith he, 1 John 4:7, 'love is of God.' He is the fountain of it, and if the fountain will love, if he that is love itself will love, how great will that love be! We use to argue thus, that God is therefore the highest good because whatsoever is good in any creature is eminently found in him. Truly thus doth the Apostle argue. Love, saith he, is of God. All the love that is in all creatures, in all angels and men, that is in the heart of Christ himself, it is all of God, he is the fountain of it; therefore whosoever hath his love, his love from whom all love is, it must needs be a great and an infinite love. As the Apostle saith, ye need not be written to, to love one another, ye are taught of God so to do. It is nature in you, so it is nature in God.

Now what follows in the next words? 'Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God.' It is such a phrase as this: if you be ignorant of what is the greatest excellency of any one, you do not know him; the man is thus and thus, this is his character, and his chiefest character, if you do not know that, you do not know the man. So saith he of God, 'God is love,' and there is no man that doth know him, but he finds so much love in him towards him, that he must needs love others; and he that doth not love, knows him not, for love is his genius. And as to love one another is the great commandment that Jesus Christ gave us; so for God to love us is the greatest and most eminent disposition in the great God. Will you have a definition of God? Why, saith the Apostle, 'God is love.' and he contents not himself to have said it once, but he saith it again, ver. 16. Now then, great must needs that love be which is his love. Mark that emphasis: 'for his great love wherewith he loved us.'

It is great also in this, respect, as in God,—for still I am arguing from its being in him as he is the subject of it,— because there is no other origin of his love, besides that of his goodness mentioned, but his love; his own love and goodness is a source to itself. All love in us is of God, but all love in himself must needs be much more of himself; this argues it great, wherever he pitcheth it. For if he loved us for anything in us, it is too narrow: for the truth is, so he loves all creatures; so far as there is any goodness in them, so far he loves them; but that he should love his saints thus, it would be too narrow, too scanty a love. He loved Adam but thus, plainly; it was but a providential love wherewith he loved Adam, take him in that first estate. God saw all that was in the creatures to be good, and he loved them; so he saw that which was in Adam to be good,

and that was the cause he loved him. But when love in the great God is the predominant thing, that which commandeth all in God, when this shall be a fountain to itself, then it will overflow, it knoweth no bounds, nothing is so diffusive. It is a saying of Bernard, and it is an exceeding good one: 'That God,' saith he, 'loveth his children, he hath it not elsewhere, from anything out of himself; but it is himself from whence that love riseth, his own love is the spring of his own love, and so is the measure of the extent of it, and that knows no measure. And therefore he must needs love strongly, saith he, when he is not said so much to have love, as that he is love. And therefore this love, which is the fountain of love itself, how great must it be!'

Again, the end of his love is but to shew love; it is the great end of it, and so large as his end is, so large must his love be, and his desire to love. *Appetitus finis est infinitus*;—What a man loveth for an end, he loveth infinitely. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace,' saith ver. 7, that is, of his free love; there is his end. As he hath no reason why he loveth but because he willeth, so he hath no higher end to love but because he will love, and because he doth love, and because he will shew love. If so great a love will make itself its end, how unsatisfied will that love be! And so much for the subject of it.

I will only add this. Do but only take a scantling of it by the love that is in the Mediator, Jesus Christ, who is God-man. 'That ye may know,' saith the Apostle, 'the breadth and length, the depth and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.' What need I stand to set out that love to you? It drew him from heaven to the womb, and from the womb to the cross; and it kept him upon the cross when any great spirit in the world would have been provoked to have come down; it was his love that held him there. But now that love that was in the heart of the man Christ Jesus, and as he was Mediator, is less than God's love. 'My Father,' saith he—and he speaks as Mediator—'is greater than I,' and so also is his Father's love greater than his, And yet if there were infinite worlds made of creatures loving they would not have so much love in them as was in the heart of that man Christ Jesus. 'All love is of God,' so John saith; and the truth is, all the love that Christ had was of God; he spake to his heart to love us. 'Thine they were,' saith he, 'and thou gavest them me.' And therefore he loved them. Great therefore must this love be, because it is the love of God; it is 'his love.'

I should also add under this head, that is it is great in itself, because it is the love of the great God, so therefore it is greatly endeared to us. For love, be it never so small, is always heightened by the greatness of the person that loves us. The greatness of the person doth not heighten mercy, it shews a nobleness in him indeed, as for a king to be merciful; but for a king to love, this is a heightening, and endearing of it to us, for *majestas* and *amor* do seldom convenire,—majesty and love seldom meet,—because it is a coming down, a debasing of majesty. But I shall not speak much to this head, because I am not to speak things that may endear the love of God to you, but as it is the cause of salvation. Only I will give you that scripture in a word: *Psalms 113:6*, 'He humbleth himself, to behold the things that are in heaven and in earth.' Why is God said to humble himself in this? Is it a stooping and condescending in God to take all things into his omniscient knowledge, and to guide and govern the world? Truly he were not God, if he should not do it; if any creature should escape, any motion of a fly should escape the knowledge of the great God, he were not God; yet he calls it a humbling, a condescending. O my brethren, what is it then for him to condescend to love! The second thing in the text here by which the greatness of this love is set out to us is the persons whom he loveth; 'us,' saith he. And this setteth out the greatness of his love to

us, by way of endearment, which therefore I shall more briefly pass over. He loveth us, not others; that is clearly the Apostle's scope. 'We were by nature children of wrath, as well as others; but God, who is rich in mercy, loved us,' not others; and out of that love he hath quickened us.' Others are not quickened; the whole world lies in wickedness, but we know we are of God; and a few are quickened, it was because he loved us; a special love, that argues greatness too. To set out the greatness of it in this respect, and to endear it to you:— In the first place, the great God, when he meant to love, he did not go and say, I will love somebody, or I will love indefinitely; no, but he pitched upon the persons. That way of the Arminians doth exceedingly detract from the love of God, viz., to make him a lover of mankind, and that that is the thing out of the consideration whereof he give his Son; and that he loves them in common, and loves them indefinitely; and if they believe so, God will then shew love to them. God might delight himself in heaven, though men had never been saved; he might there have upbraided them with their unthankfulness. No, God goes another way, he directly sets up the very persons whom he meant to love, and he lays forth all the contrivances of his love, having them distinctly in his eye; as a father that lays out portions for every one of his children by name, legally and distinctly, hath them in his eye; so doth God. 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.' That same on whom implies that it is not indefinite. I will only give you that observation, upon comparing two places that are both known, and I will bring them both together by paralleling of them. Saith Christ, in John 13:18, 'I know whom I have chosen.' The parallel place directly to it is in 2 Timothy 2:19, 'God knoweth who are his;' that is, distinctly knoweth them, he had them in his eye, viewed them, and under the viewing of the persons, on them he would bestow all, did lay the whole plot, all the contrivements of that salvation he intended. Which he did to endear his love the more, having the persons to whom in his eye; he did not do it indefinitely, that he would love mankind, and love some in an indefinite way. Dare any man say, that he did not know the man Christ Jesus, and pitch particularly upon that man that was in the womb of the virgin? Did he only say, I will have a mediator somewhere out of mankind, fall as it will? No, he did ordain that man; so Acts 17:31. And he was foreordained. saith 1 Peter 1:20; that very man that is now in heaven, that individual nature, and no other. And so he did do with the members likewise: for there is the same reason of both. But then, secondly, as his love is thus set out to us, that it was not indefinitely pitched, but as having all the persons in his eye and having them all in view; so by this also, that he hath not pitched it upon everybody. This is distinct from the former; for an indefinite is not knowing whom he pitched it upon. Now as he knew whom he pitched upon, so he hath pitched but upon some, not on every one. He might have pitched upon all, but the text saith otherwise; us, not others. So then here is another thing that sets forth this love, it is a special love, and that greateneth it also. My brethren, if God would love, it was fit he should be free. It is a strange thing that you will not allow God that which kings and princes have the prerogative of, and you will allow it them. They will have favourites whom they will love, and will not love others; and yet men will not allow God that liberty, but he must either love all mankind, or he must be cruel and unjust. The specialness of his love greateneth it, endeareth it to us. You shall find almost all along the Bible, that when God would express his love, he doth it with a speciality to his own elect, which he illustrates by the contrary done to others. In 1 Thessalonians 5:9, he is not content to say, he hath 'appointed us to obtain salvation,' but he illustrateth it by its contrary; he 'hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation.' Not to wrath, for it might have been our lot, for he hath appointed others to it. In Isaiah 41:9, 'Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee.' And he doth not content himself to say so only, for if he had said no more, it implies

only that he had taken them out of the heap of others that lay before him; but he adds, 'I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away;' that is, I have not dealt with thee as I have done with others. And you shall find frequently in the Scripture, when he mentioneth his choice of some persons, he holdeth up likewise on purpose his refusing of others. When he speaks of Jacob, and would express his love and set it out to himward, he saith, 'Jacob have I loved;' that might have been enough for Jacob, but he sets it out with a foil, 'Esau have I hated.' And in Psalms 78:67, when he speaks of an election out of the tribes, he contents not himself to say he chose Judah, but he puts in the rejection, the preterition at least, of Joseph. 'He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Sion which he loved.' So among the disciples; how doth Christ set out his love to them? John 6:70, 'Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?' and, John 13:18, 'I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen;' and, chap. 15:19, 'I have chosen you out of the world;' and, John 17:9, 'I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me,' &c.

I will give you but one eminent place, which indeed concerns us in these times. In 2 Thessalonians 2:11, speaking of the times of Popery, and the apostasy thereunto, he saith, 'God shall send among them strong delusion, that they should believe that lie,' that great lie of Popery; and among other things why he mentions this, what use doth he improve this to, his hardening the Popish and apostate world that would not receive the truth in the love thereof 'That they all might be damned,' 2 Thessalonians 2:12. But that, in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, to set out his love to his elect: 'But we are bound always to give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,' though he hath done, and will do thus with others. The thing I quote it for is this, that he setteth off, enhanceth the greatness of God's love to them, in regard of the specialness of it, that he hath not dealt with them, as with others: thanks be given to God always for you.

Now this concerns us, for we live in the times of Popery; the Christian world began to warp towards it then, and we and our forefathers have lived in the height and ruff of it. Now what saith Revelation 13:8? —it is a parallel place, —'All that dwell upon the earth shall worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb.' You see the reason why many men now are set against Popery, and embrace the truth in the love thereof, and are savingly kept from believing that great lie; and that these parts of Europe fell off from Antichrist. It is because God hath here multitudes of men 'whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb.'

Now that God doth thus set his love upon some and not on others, of purpose to set off his love and make it greater, I will give you a place for it: Deuteronomy 10:14, 'Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that is therein. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers, to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.' If I would choose, saith God, I have choice enough, I have the heaven of heavens, I could have filled all those with creatures; and there were angels that fell, I might have chosen those, and fixed them as stars, never to have fallen; but I let multitudes of them tumble down to hell. And I had all the earth also, and all the nations thereof, before me; but, to shew my love in a special manner, I have chosen you above all the people of the world. So that, I say, the greatness of his love is set off by the specialness of it, Therefore he doth call the people of God upon all such occasions to consider, the one with the other, that their love of God maybe greatened also. Romans 11:22, 'Behold, to them severity, to thee goodness.' He would have them

to eye both at once; why hath he shewn severity to others? That his goodness to thee might the more appear. He calls them to behold it; behold, saith he, to them severity, and to thee goodness; the one setteth off the other. And I might shew you that God hath shewn his special love, not only in choosing you out of all the rest of mankind, and angels, and the like, whom he refused and threw down to hell, but out of all creatures possible, or which he could have made. Believe it, brethren, there came up before him, in his idea, infinite millions of worlds; all that his power could make were as makeable as we were, and he chose us out of all that he could make, and not only out of all that he did make, or did decree to make. And let me say this: the greatness of his love, in respect of the specialty of it, is mightily enhanced to us, the elect, in the latter ages of the world, in this respect, that God had all the great heroes of all ages that are past before him, the great worthies of the world, all the wise, gallant, brave men in Rome and Greece, and in all nations, in all the ages before,—he might have filled up thy room in heaven with some of those; there were men enough amongst them that might have had places in heaven, and thou mightest have been let alone. No, all these could not win away his love from thee that livest in this age; he passed over all them, suffered them to walk in their own ways; they are perished, they are gone; and, as the phrase is in 1 Peter 1:5, he hath reserved heaven for thee. The love of God to thee, I say, is not only magnified by those out of whom he hath chosen thee in this age, but in all ages past; and when all mankind shall meet together, it will infinitely greaten the love of God to that remnant whom he hath chosen out of all the rest of the world. It is special love that makes his love great love.

Obs.—I will give you this observation, which I find in the Scripture. He calls his church his love; so Song of Solomon 5:2. And he himself terms himself by the name of the lover; so Romans 8:37, and Revelation 1:5. It is his title, and became his style. The church is his love, so as he hath no love but the church, it is not scattered to other objects; therefore, Romans 11:1-36, they are said to be ‘beloved according to election,’ even as they are said to be ‘called according to his purpose.’ It is by way of distinction, noting out a specialty of love that accompanies election. And then, if you add to this, in the third place, the fewness of those upon whom this love is pitched, it doth exceedingly greaten it; for the fewer that all the love of the great God is pitched upon, the greater the love is. And this, in the coherence, though not in express words, we find in the text; for the rest, whom these ‘us’ were called out of, were the world, the world lying in wickedness: ‘among whom we had our conversation, according to the course of this world.’ When God hath betaken himself to a few, to love them, oh, how will he love them! He will be sure to lose none of those, because they are so few. When a great rich man shall have but one heir, or a few in his will, to divide his goods amongst; so when God, that is rich in mercy, and hath great love, shall have but a few to enjoy it, how will his heart be intended more in love! Isaiah 10:2, ‘Though Israel be as the sand of the sea,’—he speaks of election,—‘yet but a remnant shall be saved.’ And yet let me add this, in the fourth place, that he loveth every one whom he hath chosen as if he loved none else; lest any of his children should be jealous of it, he doth so dexterously manage his love that every one may say, None is loved as I am. As he said, I am the greatest of sinners; so may every one of his children say, I am the greatest of beloved ones. So loving is God to those he chooseth, that all sort of natures speak this of him, be they of what condition soever.

There is also this to be added to this head, the condition wherein we were when we were called, even when we were ‘dead in sins and trespasses.’ But I will reserve that till it comes in order in the

text. And so much now for that second head here in the text, which doth illustrate the greatness of the love of God,—us, and not others.

I come now to the third, which contains divers particulars in these words, for his great love wherewith he loved us. There is—

1. Acts of love mentioned. There is—
2. The time when he loved us , viz., before calling. And then—
3. There is a special kind of love; ‘ his love wherewith he loved us.’ To begin with the first—

There are two great acts of love which God hath shewn to us. The one was that from everlasting; the other, when he gave Jesus Christ. I will not speak of the latter now, because it comes in afterwards at ver. 5. But let us take in that act of love in God which here certainly the Apostle hath a more special recourse to, —that is, his electing love, which is eminently the love which this same hath loved us referreth to, and which is the foundation of all the rest, and let me in a word or two shew you the greatness of this.

First, Let me say this of it, that take it as it was an act in God, it can never be expressed what it was nor how great it was. And therefore God himself, as I may so speak with reverence, is fain to manifest that love which he took up in his own heart, by degrees and by effects. The Scripture itself doth not know how to give you the greatness of that love which God did pitch upon us from everlasting, but it is still fain to do it by the effects. In 1 John 4:9, when he had said before that God is love, and therefore he hath thus greatly loved us, he is fain to fall upon speaking of the effects of this love: ‘In this was manifested,’ saith he, ‘the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.’ And, ver. 10, ‘Herein is love,’—it is manifested in this, —‘not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.’ And after he had spoken of his love, what saith he? Ver. 12, ‘No man hath seen God at any time;’ the meaning whereof, I think, is clearly this, as if he had said, I am fain to tell you this love of God which I am discoursing of, merely as it is manifested in the effects; for if you would have me speak of it as it is in the fountain, it is not to be expressed, for no man hath seen God at any time; he is not able to know what love is in the heart of God but at the second-hand. It may be illustrated by the gift of his Son, by making of us happy and glorious in heaven, by his communication of himself to us there; but what, and how great it is, can never be expressed. And I will give you the reason why I interpret it thus, because in Exodus 33:19, &c., when God hath spoken of his love to Moses, and said, ‘I will be gracious to those to whom I will be gracious;’ he adds, ‘No man can see God, and live;’ for you cannot see into this love, as it is in him. And let me likewise say this second thing of it: That that love which God did first take up, in the first act of it, it was as great as all acts transient for ever can express or utter to eternity; it is great love therefore. I say, all the ways and acts That God doth to eternity are but mere expressions of that love which he at first took up. Christ and heaven, and whatever else God shews you of love and mercy in this world, or in the world to come, they all lay in the womb of that first act, of that love he took up, ‘wherewith he loved us.’

God was not drawn on to love us, as a man is, who first begins to love one, and to set his heart upon him, and then his heart being engaged, he is drawn on beyond what he thought, and is enticed to do thus and thus beyond what he first intended. No, God is not as man herein, but as

'known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world,' so is all his love that he meant to bestow. And he took up love enough at first, as he should be expressing of all sort of ways that he hath taken to do it, unto eternity. For there is no new thing to God; if there should be any one thought or degree of love rise up in his heart afterwards, which was not there at first, there should be some new thing in God. And the reason is clear by this too, that he doth love out of his own love, therefore his love at the very first dash, when he first begin to love us, was as perfect as it will be when we are in heaven. When Adam fell, God was not then drawn out to give his Son; no, we are not so to conceive it, God had all before him from everlasting. And this, I say, is easily manifested; for the first act of his love was the womb of his giving Christ; 'God so loved the world that he gave his Son.' Therefore the Scripture makes all the grace that ever we shall have to be given us at the very first, when God first loved us, 2 Timothy 1:9, 'According to the grace of God, which was given us before the world began.' And in Romans 11:29, speaking of election, as he had done all along the chapter before, he saith, 'the gifts of God are without repentance.' He gave all in the first act, when he first chose us, and never repenteth of it. Election, I say, is expressed to us by all that God means to bestow upon us actually to eternity, for ever and ever, which he 'hath prepared for them that love him,' so the phrase is, 1 Corinthians 2:9. And, 1 Corinthians 12:12, 'We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God;' that is, given us when he first set his heart upon us. My brethren, when God first began to love you, he gave you all that he ever meant to give you in the lump, and eternity of time is that in which he is retailing of it out. 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.' And then all the goodness that he means to communicate to them unto whom he is thus gracious, is a-passing before them even unto eternity. First, the giving of his Son, he came first in the train; and then the giving of his Spirit; and then grace and glory: and whatever variation of glory there is that is to come, it is all but the passing on of the train, it is all but the communicating of that goodness of his which he did ordain the first time he thought on thee to love thee.

There is an emphatical word in the text, this word *pollhn agaphn*, great love,—as your great critics observe, and so the Septuagint constantly useth it,—which doth not signify that God loves us often, or that his love is reiterated, but that he loves us with one entire love. The Arminians would make the love of God incomplete, and never complete till one comes to die; but it is not a matter of that nature, it is not as sanctification, that admits degrees in us, but it is of the nature of those things that consist in indivisibili. I will give you that place for it, Psalms 138:8, 'The Lord,' saith he, 'will perfect that which concerneth me.' What God did intend to David from everlasting at once, he is perfecting of it in him. There is, saith he, a great deal of mercy yet to come, God hath not half done with me, he will perfect that which concerns me, and he is perfecting of it to everlasting; for so it follows: 'Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever.' God hath set up, as I may so speak, an idea in his own heart, what a brave creature he will make thee, and how he will love thee, and all that ever he doth or will do, it is but a perfecting of that idea, and of that love wherewith he loved thee from everlasting. The mercies of God are said to be many, you read often of them in the plural; but his love is said to be but one, because he loved us with one entire act, even from eternity.

Yes, he took up so much love at the first, that his wisdom and all in him is set on work to study and contrive ways how to commend that love. And therefore that word in Titus 3:4, which we translate 'kindness,' as it signifies *benignitatem*, so it signifies an heroic study, as it were, in God, all sort of ways to deserve well of mankind. It was so great that he knew not how to express it enough; for

do but consider a little with yourselves. He began to love Adam upon the terms of a providential love, but that was not good enough, he must have those of mankind he loves to heaven. He was not content with direct ways of loving, —that is, to love them in their head Jesus Christ, as he loveth the angels, and so no more ado,—but to shew the more love, lets them fall into sin, become enemies to him, and then sends his Son. And, my brethren, the truth is, this cost Jesus Christ dear, merely that God might shew forth the more love; for we might not have been sinners; and though sinners, yet we might have been saved without any satisfaction. But it was a digression of love, as I may truly call it, it was an excursion of love, that as man being sinful sought out many inventions, so God being loving, he sought out a world of inventions for to shew his love. Now, do but think with yourselves, that the very first thought of love that God hid towards you, the very first glance of love he took up, should be so much, as that all sorts of ways that his wisdom can invent, and that in an eternity of time too, should be little enough to express and retail that love which thus in the lump he took up. My brethren, this must certainly be a great love. And I will add but this to it: that his love was so greedy, —mark what I say unto thee—when he first began to love thee, that the next and main thing that he thought of, that he had in his eye, as I may speak, in order and degree, though all was but one act, was that happiness he meant to give thee in heaven. He doth as it were overleap, so greedy was his love, all the means between; they come in, as I may say, in a second thought. If, I say, they do allow an intention of the end before the means, if God intended the end before the means, he intended that happiness which thou shalt have first. Therefore observe what the Scripture speaks; though it saith that God ordained us to believe, and ordained us unto sanctification, yet ordinarily it expresseth it thus—he hath ordained us unto life. And the place is emphatical, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, ‘God hath from the beginning ordained you to salvation;’ mark, he joins you and salvation together, and then comes in the means, ‘through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.’ But, I say, his eye was so intent upon thy good, that look what is thy chiefest good. what he means to make thee in heaven, that he pitcheth first upon. And so much now for that act.

Let us next consider the time. ‘He loved us;’—this carries us to the time past. So that if you ask me when this love did begin, the truth is, if I may so speak with reverence, he loved thee ever since he hath been God. Jeremiah 31:3, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love;’ and unto everlasting there can be nothing added. God is from everlasting, and his love is from everlasting. He may be said to have loved thee ever since he loved himself, or ever since he loved his Son in whom he chose thee. As he was God from the beginning, and as Christ was the Word of life from the beginning, John 1:1; so he hath ordained thee unto salvation from the beginning, 2 Thessalonians 2:13. And the school-men do rightly say in this, that the liberty of God’s will doth not lie as man’s doth, that it was a while suspended, no, not for a moment. There was never an actual suspension, for then there were an imperfection; only there was *libertas potentialis*, he might have cast it otherwise; but there never was any time in which there was in his heart a vacuity of love to thee, or unto any one whom he loveth. How infinitely doth this endear the love of God to thee, and make it great! If one have loved you from his infancy, that no sooner he began to have a thought of love, or to love himself, but he loved you, and pitched his heart upon you, how great will you account his love! John makes a great matter of it, 1 John 4:10: Herein is love, speaking of the love of God, that we loved not God, but he loved us first. We did not begin, but he began; and when did he begin? Even from eternity, when he loved himself, and loved his Son. And as he hath loved you from eternity, that is the first thing considerable in it, so let me add, in the second place, which this

hath loved doth also evidently import,—comparing it with ver. 7, ‘that in ages to come,’ and here ‘hath,’ that is, from everlasting to everlasting,—he hath continued to love his children with a reiterated love. That act of love which he hath first pitched, he hath every moment renewed actually in his own mind. He doth but think over and over again thoughts of love to thee, amongst the rest of his elect, unto eternity. Saith the Psalmist, and it is Christ that speaks that psalm, who knew the love of his Father, and knew his heart, Psalms 40:5, ‘How many are thy thoughts towards us, O God!’ Many indeed, for they have been from everlasting, therefore they cannot be numbered. And not only that first act, that first thought he had, but the whole lump of that love is still renewed every moment, and shall be unto eternity. I could give you a multitude of places. He is therefore said to have us in his eye, and to write us upon the palms of his hands, &c.

And, lastly, it is to everlasting, which though it be not in this verse, yet we meet with it in ver. 7, ‘that in ages to come.’ As he loved us from everlasting, from the beginning, as it is in that 2 Thessalonians 2:13, so he loveth us unto the end, John 13:1.

S. The Riches of God's Love to his Elect

The Riches of God's Love to his Elect By Thomas Goodwin But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.—Ver. 4 - Joshua The scope of the Apostle in these words, as I have told you, is to magnify these three attributes in God—his love, mercy, grace, towards us; and these as they are the causes of our salvation. In opening of these words, I have, 1. Shewn you the difference between love and mercy.

2. Shewn you why that the Apostle, when he would speak of the causes of our salvation, contented not himself to have said that God is rich in mercy, but that he addeth 'for the great love wherewith he loved us.'

3. Shewn you likewise that a great love, and an act of love, or a purpose of love, taken up towards us, is the foundation of his shewing mercy to us; and that act of love is especially that taken up from everlasting, which he took up to us before we were, and therefore preceded the misery we were fallen into; for he had engaged himself to us by so great a love, which stirred up his mercy. The next thing I came to was this, the greatness of this love. I did profess not to handle this argument in the vastness of it,—which by the grace of God might arise to a volume, if it should be so handled,—but so far forth as the text doth give foundation to anything about it, so far I professed to handle it, because I would explain the text.

First, therefore, we considered the subject of this love, who it is that loved us. It is God, whose love therefore is as great as himself; and if God will be in love, how deep, how great will that love be! What a love will they possess with whom God professeth himself to be in love! Love, it is of all attributes the most commanding; it commandeth all in a man, and it commandeth all in God.

Secondly, we considered that this God, though of a loving nature and disposition, yet he took up an act of love. 'He loved,' saith the text.

There are two sorts of acts of love which God hath put forth towards us:

1. That immanent act, as it is called; that is, which is in God himself only, abideth in himself, in his own heart, that first act from eternity, which is the foundation of all; and this the Apostle here mainly intended in this 4th verse. But,

2. There are transient acts of love, which are the fruits of that first, which in the text here, as afterwards I shall shew you, are mainly these three:

(1.) Giving Jesus Christ to be a head for us, and to die for us; that is couched in these words, 'He hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together with him;' which importeth both him to be a head for us and him to have died for us, as a fruit of this love.

(2.) The act of calling us to himself, which is expressed in these words: 'Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us.'

(3.) The glorifying of us hereafter, we being already 'set in heavenly places in Christ,' as an engagement of all that glory we shall have hereafter.

These three transient acts I must handle in their order, as I open the fifth and sixth verses; therefore now, in this fourth verse, I shall only speak of that immanent act in God, 'the love wherewith he loved us.' And concerning that, two things, 1. The greatness of that love in itself. And, 2. In respect of the time when this love began; for he speaks in the time past, 'he loved us.'

First, For the greatness of this act of love taken up towards us. It is so great, as all the acts of love, all the manifestations of love, the transient acts of love, the fruits of love, that God shews and manifesteth to eternity, they are not all enough to express that love which he took up in the first act, when he began to love us, and all serve but to commend and manifest that love. And then,

Secondly, For the time. If you ask when he first began to love,—which also sets out the greatness of it,—it was from everlasting. This word in the text, 'hath loved us,' or, 'he loved us,' reacheth to eternity; so in Jeremiah 31:3. And then for the continuance of it ever since; he hath continued it every moment. Though we were children of wrath, and dead in sins and trespasses, yet he all that while, since the first time he began to love us, hath continued to love us with the same love; he hath reiterated the same thoughts again and again. And for this great love, wherewith he loved us from everlasting, and wherewith he hath continued to love us ever since, from everlasting, as we may so speak; 'for this great love,' saith he, 'he hath quickened us.'

I also opened in the last discourse the greatness of this love from the persons, 'us.' Us, saith he, not others. We were children of wrath as well as others, but 'for the great love wherewith he loved us,' and not others, for he hath not quickened all, but he quickeneth all that he loveth,—he hath 'quickened us together with Christ.' He loved us, not ours, nor for anything in us. He loved us, not indefinitely,—that is, 'I will love some of mankind,'—but he hath loved us distinctly, fixing his attention upon those persons he fixed his love upon, and laying forth all the mercies and all the fruits of love upon them, eyeing their persons.

There was likewise, I told you, another thing which sets out the greatness of this love, and that is the condition of our persons, 'dead in sins and trespasses,' and that follows in the fifth verse. But as I said then, I going over these words in a way of exposition, and not handling them as a subject, will not insist on everything in that artificial method, as if I were to write a tract upon it.

There is but one thing more, and it is a great thing, and I confess I did not observe it a long while in the text, but still took the words to have run thus, 'for the great love wherewith he loved us;' but I find it is, 'for his great love wherewith he hath loved us.' There is a great emphasis in that word his. He saith not simply, as he might have done, because that God greatly loved us, or, because of a great love he bore us; but he doubles it, 'for the great love wherewith he loved us;' and not only so, but, 'for his great love wherewith he loved us.' My brethren, there is a love proper to God, which is a differing kind of love from that in all the creatures; his love, as the text hath it here. As his goodness is another kind of goodness than what is in the creatures, so is his love. There is none that hath tasted of this love of his but say that it is a differing love from the love of all the creatures; and the difference is found more by tasting and by feeling of it than it is by setting of it forth; as it is

in wines, 'Thy love is better than wine, and thy loving-kindness is better than life:' both of which are better discerned by taste and feeling than set out by any expression. Indeed, God doth compare his love to what is in the creature, to set it out to us, because we apprehend it by such comparisons; as when he saith, 'Like as a father pitieth,' or loveth, 'his children, so the Lord loveth them that fear him.' And, 'If a mother forget her child,' &c. But yet, notwithstanding, 'the love wherewith he loved us' is of another kind from all these. In 1 John 3:1, 'Behold,' saith the Apostle, 'what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!'—he speaks in respect of one fruit of it,—such a love, for the kind of it, as no man, no creature, could bestow upon us. In Hosea 11:9, where, giving the reason why that he loving his people they are not destroyed, he saith, 'I am God, and not man.' It is spoken in respect of his love clearly, for it comes in there upon a conflict with himself; when he had been provoked beyond the bounds and measure of pardon, yet when he comes to punish, he finds his love not to be as the love of a man. 'My heart is turned within me,' saith he, ver. 8, 'my repentings are rolled together: I will not return to destroy; for I am God, and not man.' My love is of another extent, of another kind, than the love of man. And so when he speaks of mercy, in Isaiah 55:8-9, 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.' It is his love, so saith the text here.

Now to speak a little of this, for it lies in the way in the text,

First, His love; it is a love for nothing in us. The love that one creature bears to another is still for something in them; but the love of God, if it be his love, a love that is proper unto him, must needs be free: and that not only for this reason, which is usually given, and is a true one too, because that his love is from everlasting, and nothing in the creature in time can be the cause of what is in God from everlasting; but for this reason likewise, because that only God can be moved by what is in himself, he can love no otherwise but from himself. The creatures love because things are lovely, and there must be motives to draw out that love that is in them; but when God loves, he loves as from his own heart. There is nothing in us, no, not in Christ, that should move God to love us; though indeed to bestow those things that God bestows upon us, so Christ is the moving cause. 'Jacob have I loved,' saith he, and that before he had done any good or evil. So that, as no evil in him did put God off from loving him, so no good did move God to love him. In 2 Timothy 1:9, there is one little particle that I establish this upon, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.' Mark: 'according to his own purpose,' which is the thing I fix your attention upon in that place; that is, as the Apostle explains it, Ephesians 1:9, 'which he purposed in himself,' or 'from himself'—a purpose merely taken up in or from himself. And therefore you shall find the phrase in Scripture to run, that as he loves us out of his own purpose, so for his own sake. 'Not for your sakes do I this, but for my own name's sake.' My brethren, there was a love which God did bear to man in innocency, the terms of which were such as, in a way of justice between the Creator and the creature, it became God, if he made him holy as he did in innocency, to bestow upon him. But because that this was a love that seemed to have a kind of justice in it, and something in the creature which it was founded upon, therefore he destroys that condition, that he might make way to manifest the love that was according to his own purpose and grace, and merely from himself. And that now is his love; for if God do love like God, this is the love that is his, that is proper unto him. And saith he, 'not according to our works'—that is, it is

founded upon nothing at all in the creature. For by 'works' there, he understands all habitual dispositions of goodness, of what kind soever, as the Scripture usually doth; as when it saith, 'he will judge every man according to his works,' it is not only meant of the outward acts, but of the inward frame of heart. He looks to nothing in the creature, but to his own purpose. It is his love, therefore it is free.—That is the first.

Secondly, His love; it is a love that is firm and absolute, unchangeable and invincible; and such a love it became God to bear us, if he would love us, for that properly is his love. 'Put not your trust in princes,' saith the Psalmist; they will all fail; the men perish, and their thoughts perish; yea, sometimes their thoughts and affections die to their greatest favourites, before they die themselves. But his love is firm and absolute, it is unchangeable and invincible, and this because it is his love. Malachi 3:6, 'I am the Lord, I change not;'—that is, If I be God, and whilst I am God, I will not cease to love you, I will not change —'therefore it is that ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' His love is as immutable as his being. I will not be God, if I be not your God, and love you; he secures it with his Godhead. 'I am the Lord,' saith he, 'I change not; therefore ye are not consumed.' In Romans 9:11, speaking of the election of Jacob, he saith, 'that the purpose of God according to election might stand:' it is a great word that; he fixed it upon such a basis as might stand for ever. It is a true thing that all God's counsels do stand fixed and firm; look how he purposeth them, be they of what kind soever. That Adam should be holy, that counsel did stand firm; but how it stood firm for so long as he purposed it, which was till such time as he fell; it was but for a moment in comparison. And so, that Saul should be king, he purposed it, and it stood firm so far; but he repented that he made Saul king. But when he cometh to speak of election, he speaks of that as of such a counsel that not only standeth as all other his counsels do, but as that which is perpetuated to eternity. His purpose to love Adam was a firm purpose, for so he did; but how? Whilst he was in that state of innocency, and had the image of God upon him. But his purpose according to election, as the distinction is there, that stands, and it stands for ever. Therefore it is not of works, but, as was said before, of his own purpose, that it might stand, that it might have a rock of eternity, for the basis of it to stand upon. It is therefore, as by way of distinction from all purposes else as it were, called the 'purpose according to election.' If you will have this further confirmed, take that place also, which loadeth it with more epithets for the firmness of it, in 2 Timothy 2:19, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.' He speaks of God's purpose in election, and of the persons elected; for he saith it is that which hath this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his.' You have here all sorts of words to make it firm.

1. It is called a foundation; 'The foundation of God,' saith he, 'standeth sure.' There are two great foundations, and of the two, if we may make comparisons, this is the greater. Jesus Christ is a foundation, but the eternal love of God, that is the first foundation; it was the womb of Christ himself: 1 Corinthians 3:11, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' There you see Christ is a foundation, but here is a higher foundation,—'The Lord knoweth them that are his,' loved them and chose them, and so he did Christ himself.

2. It is not only called a foundation, but a sure foundation.

3. It is called the foundation of God, it is founded in him, it is founded upon him, it is as firm as himself; as he is God, he will stand to it, and therefore it must needs stand.

4. It is a foundation that remaineth, it standeth, it is steady.

5. It is sealed: 'having this seal,' saith he; so that it is never to be broken and altered. If the decrees of the Medes and Persians, when they had set their seals to them, were such as were not to be altered; much more God's. His seal is in this respect more than his oath. 'Him hath the Father sealed,' saith he, speaking of Christ. Now you have both his oath and his seal to this; that is, to the invincibleness and unchangeableness of his love. You have his seal in this place, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his;' and his oath you have in Hebrews 6:17. And what doth this oath serve for? To shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel; and the immutability of his counsel respecting persons, and not things only, for it is an oath that God made to Abraham, when he swore concerning Isaac. And therefore the text hath it in Timothy; it hath this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his.' If you will know whence the words are taken, that I may open them a little, you must observe this, that the Apostle handleth the doctrine of election and reprobation in the New Testament out of the speeches and types of the Old: as, 'Esau have I hated, Jacob have I loved,' in Romans 9:1-33. And so, 'I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful;' it was spoken of Moses, in Exodus 33:19. And so likewise those words in Timothy, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his,' are spoken of Aaron and Moses in Numbers 16:3, when Korah and his company gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron, saying, 'You take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy,' and they may be all priests. No, saith he; God hath chosen Aaron and Moses to go before his people, and to-morrow the Lord will shew who are his. So we translate it, and the Septuagint reads it, and it comes all to one; 'The Lord knoweth who are his.'

Now this that was said in this respect of Moses and Aaron in a typical way, and indeed in a decree of election too,—for that God singled out Moses and Aaron, it was his everlasting love,—I say, these very words doth the Apostle here apply, and pertinently too, to the same occasion; for, speaking of divers that seemed to be holy, and yet fell away, however, saith he, 'the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.' And the word 'knoweth who are his,' it is, whom he hath pitched upon to love; it is a knowledge of approval. Exodus 33:12, 'Thee have I known by name,' saith God unto the same Moses, which is all one and to say, 'Thee have I chosen;' for, ver. 19, speaking of Moses also, he saith, 'I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy,' which the Apostle quoteth in Romans 9:1-33 as spoken of election. Now in respect of his love that is thus firm, and firm in respect that it is his love who is God and not man, and therefore changeth not; it is therefore said of the elect that it is impossible that they should be deceived. As I told you there are two foundations, so there are two impossibles made in Scripture; I know there are more, as it is impossible that God should lie, &c., but I speak of impossibles that relate to God's decrees. The one is, Matthew 26:39, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' It was not possible. Why? Because God's eternal love to his saints had decreed it otherwise, and God stuck firm to it. The other impossible is in Matthew 24:24, 'Insomuch that, if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect;' that is impossible too. And the truth is, the reason of this firmness is because it is the love of God, and because it is so great a love; that is the foundation of it. And, my brethren, it is well that love made God's decrees for us; no attribute else would have fixed them so unalterably upon the same persons, in themselves so changeable. Would wisdom alone have gone and obliged God to so fickle a creature as we are? No. But love knew what it did, for it meant to manifest itself to the uttermost; therefore it pitched upon no conditions why God loved us; and if he requires conditions before he saveth us, love shall work those conditions in us.

Therefore out of his infinite love and wisdom, he was able to make absolute promises to love, and to love firmly. It is love that commandeth all in God, and if love will do it, it shall be done; for if all that is in God can keep us and preserve us, and work in us what God requires to make him love us, and continue to love us, it shall be done. It is firm love. And let me add this to it, which may illustrate it more, it is invincible love. You will say, this is the same thing with being unchangeable. I confess it, but only with this difference, that to shew his love is unchangeable, he would have a world of difficulties to run through, which yet his love should overcome. Saith he in Song of Solomon 8:6-7,—and he speaks of his love, having set us as a seal upon his arm, having this seal, 'The Lord knows who are his,'—'Love is as strong as death. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.' They are therefore called the sure mercies of David. And you know how David put them to the trial, and how he put God to it. What difficulties doth the love of God overcome? Do but consider. The purposes of his secret will toward us do overcome all the difficulties of his revealed will, and those were enough. He had given a law of his revealed will, and he had said that heaven and earth should pass away before one tittle of that should perish; and that the soul that sinned should die; and all had sinned and transgressed this law. But now though all were fast locked up under this, yet love breaks open all, for it is an invincible love. That secret purpose of his, I say, overcomes that revealed expression of his, which had so many bolts and bars to it,—all the threatenings and curses of the law,—and finds out a way to reconcile all. And the way whereby he did it, it was an infinite difficulty. For God to overcome his own heart! Do you think it was nothing for him to put his Son to death? When Christ came to die, what a difficulty did he overcome! Do you think it was nothing for him to give up himself and his soul to the wrath of his Father? 'Father,' saith he, 'if it be possible, let this cup pass;' save them, if it be possible, some other way. Why, God's love overcame it, and Christ's love overcame it; his love would not permit him to think of any other course; it was an invincible love. When he comes to call us, hath he no difficulties which love overcometh? A man hath lived twenty, thirty, forty years in sin; love overcomes it. We were dead in sins and trespasses; yet for the great love wherewith he loved us, he quickened us. When we have been dead, and dead forty years in the grave, that 'lo, he stinketh,' then doth God come and conquer us; it is an invincible love. After our calling, how do we provoke God? What a world of difficulties do we run through! Such temptations that, if it were possible, the elect should be deceived! It is so with all Christians. No righteous man but he is 'scarcely saved;' and yet saved he is, because the love of God is invincible, it overcomes all difficulties. Still, as the Apostle saith, in Romans 8:35, Romans 8:37, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall life or death?' &c. In all these, saith he, 'we are more than conquerors.' There is an invincibleness; but how? 'Through him that loveth us,' so it follows; and mark that particle, it is because his love is an invincible love that doth thus make us to be conquerors: because that love is as strong as death, therefore neither death nor life,—it is as strong as hell, therefore neither hell nor devil, shall be able to separate.

Nay, where there is but a mention made by way of supposition, or by way of query, whether God will part with or cast off any of his people or no; you shall find that he throws it away with the highest indignation, his love is so great. Paul doth but put the question because he knew men would put it, in Romans 11:1, 'Hath God cast away his people?' How doth the Holy Ghost answer it? 'God forbid,' saith he. He speaks with the highest detestation that there should be any such thought in God. Even as in another place in the same epistle, Romans 6:1, 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?' Oh, God forbid! He throws it away with all the indignation that can be;

and God may allow the one as soon as do the other. He throws it away, I say, with the highest indignation that ever such supposition could be made, that God should have such a thought. He is so possessed with love to his people that he will hear nothing to the contrary. 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' saith the Apostle; 'it is God that justifieth,' and it is their being elect that carries it. Yea, his love is so strong that if there be any accusation,—the Apostle makes the supposition, 'Who shall lay anything to their charge?' Sin or devil?—that if at any time sin or devil come to accuse, it moves God to bless. His love is so violent, it is so set, that he takes occasion to bless so much the more. In Deuteronomy 23:5, when Balaam would lay something to the charge of the elect people of God there, and accuse them and curse them, what saith the text? 'Nevertheless the Lord thy God would not hearken unto Balaam,' he would not hear of it; and, not only so, 'but the Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee.' And why? 'Because the Lord thy God loved thee.' His love was so strong as it overruled all the accusations Balaam could make, and all his curses. Even as a king that loveth his favourite, if any one comes to accuse him, it provokes him—his love doth—so much the more not only to pardon him, but to shew his love to him. My brethren, if that God be angry with us for our sins, it is for our good; and in the end they do provoke him to bless us so much the more. This must needs be invincible love. 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? In all this we are more than conquerors.' And so much now for the second thing which is proper to this love in God, which the Apostle calls his love, and to no creatures else in the world as it is in God, namely, to love thus invincibly and unchangeably as he doth.

Thirdly, His love is the same love wherewith he loveth his Son; Yea, wherewith he loveth himself.

It is the same love wherewith he loveth his Son. For that you have a known place in John 17:23, John 17:26. At John 17:24, saith Christ, Thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world, and hast therefore given me a glory, and thou hast united me unto thyself. Thou art in me, and I in thee, so John 17:21; and thou hast united a company of thine—so he calls them, John 17:6—unto me, I in them, and thou in me, so saith John 17:23; and then what follows? 'That the world may know that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.' As he is united to God, and we to him, so God loveth us with the same love wherewith he loved him. And then again you have the like expression, John 17:26, 'That the love where with thou lovest me may be in them,'—that is, towards them, set upon them, derived to them. It is a phrase of kin to that in the text; 'the love wherewith he loved us,' saith the Apostle; 'the love wherewith thou lovest me,' saith Christ, to note a special love: but that which I quote it for is this, 'that the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them,' or 'on them,' also. God loved all his creatures. He loved Adam, but not with that kind of love wherewith he loved Christ; but he loveth his elect with the same kind of love wherewith he loved him, the same love is set and pitched on them. He loveth him as his Son, and them as daughters married to him: as a father loveth his son, and a daughter married unto him, with the same kind of love, and differing from his love to the servants, or to any else that are about him. And therefore you shall find that still this love comes in with a distinction: Romans 8:39, 'Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.' Mark it, he distinguisheth; there is a love indeed which men have been and are separated from, even Adam in innocency; but, saith he, if it be a love in Christ Jesus, if God loveth us with that kind of love wherewith he loveth Christ, nothing shall separate from that. For as we are said to be chosen in Christ, so we are said to be loved in him; for election, or the act of choosing, is

expressed to us still by an act of love,—it is all one, they are convertible. Now, he is said to choose in Christ, so to love in Christ; and saith the Apostle, nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ. He speaks it by way of distinction from other love which men may be separated from; but from this, saith he, there is no separation.

Yea, let me go higher. God loving us in Christ, his love is in a manner the same wherewith he loveth himself. There is a union betwixt Jesus Christ and us, and there is also a union between God and us: John 17:23, 'I in them, and thou in me.' As our Lord and Saviour Christ loved his people so as that if his people be hurt, he takes it as if it were done to himself,— 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?'—so you shall find that God himself speaks as if his people and he were all one. It is not only, as in John, 'thine they were,' and, 'God knoweth them that are his,'—and these are great words, they are deep words, and deep expressions,—but you shall find that God in the Old Testament speaks in the person of his people, as well as Christ doth in the New. Psalms 81:6, 'This he ordained in Joseph, for a testimony,' speaking of God, 'when he went out of Egypt,' meaning his people. And therefore, in Exodus 11:8, saith he to Pharaoh about midnight 'I will go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the first-born shall die,' &c. 'And after that I will go out,'—that is, my people shall go out. So that now, as the union between Christ and his people is such, and his love such, as that what was done to them, he reckons clone to himself; so between God and us also. 'Thine they were,' saith Christ, 'and thou gavest them me.' They are more God's therefore than Christ's, or first God's, and then given unto Christ. Therefore, in Isaiah 63:9, in all their affliction he is said to be afflicted. Yea, the salvation of his people God accounts his salvation, Isaiah 49:6: 'Thou shalt be,' speaking of Christ, 'my salvation unto the end of the earth.' And though God loveth himself with a natural love, yet this his love to us is now in a manner naturalised, because he is become a father to us. He was happy in himself, and might be so without us for ever; yet now he speaks as if that the want of us would make him imperfect: 'Who shall separate us from the love of God?' The word implies a separation, like the rending of the soul from the body; and as the soul would be imperfect without the body, so the love that God bears us would make him so too, if there could be a separation. Therefore in Zephaniah 3:17, he is said to 'rest in his love;' if he enjoyed us not, he would never be at rest else. To these kind of expressions, my brethren, doth the Scripture rise. And so much now for having opened this, 'this great love wherewith he loved us.' His love, a love that is proper unto God, which therefore must needs be thus great, as you have heard it opened to you. The greatness of this love, in respect of his giving Christ to be our head, and carrying us to, and giving of us heaven, and the like; that follows after, and I shall speak to them in their season and order. I have done, you see, with that which is the main foundation, viz., 'for the great love wherewith he loved us.' I should have first handled the first clause in the verse, viz., 'But God, who is rich in mercy;' but you may remember, I told you that love was in this to have the pre-eminence, because it was an act of love first taken up, and this great love is that which guides and stirs up, manageth, and spends, and draws out all the riches of mercy that are in God towards us, when we were 'dead in sins and trespasses.' Now then there must be something said to that, that he is rich in mercy. But God, who is rich in mercy.—These words, for the opening of them, may be considered two ways:

1. In their relation or reference, in the Apostle's scope here.
2. Simply as they are in themselves.

1. In their relation or reference, they do, first, hold forth, that to save us all the riches of mercy that are in God were necessary. Had not God been thus rich in mercy, and borne so great a love to us, we had not been quickened, such was our misery, and such was our condition. They do imply, secondly, that all the riches of mercy that are in God, and all in God, did move him thus to be merciful and to be gracious to us. And then, thirdly, that where God doth love, there he will shew forth to the uttermost all those riches of mercy that are in him, he will spend them all to save us, he hath engaged them all. 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins and trespasses, hath quickened us, and saved us.'

2. If you take the words simply in themselves, they import two things (1.) That God is of a merciful nature and disposition. That there are riches of mercy in that nature of his. The words imply both.

First, I say, that he is merciful in his nature and disposition; which I argue from two things in the text and in the context.

First, if you observe it, when he speaks of his love, he speaks of it as an act taken up by God, though he is of a loving nature, which is the foundation of that act. 'The love wherewith he loved us,' saith he. But when he speaks of mercy, he speaks of it as of a disposition which love stirred up, which love expendeth and commandeth, guideth and directeth. God, saith he, being in himself rich in mercy, and in his own nature, and having pitched an act of love upon us, for that great love wherewith he loved us, setting aside that nature of mercy that is in him, hath saved us, and quickened us. Secondly, though I do not much urge the participle, *wn*, God being rich, which being in God is his essence; for though that word *wn*, is not always taken for participium essendi, yet notwithstanding, look upon the words just before, he speaks of what we were by nature: we were by nature, saith he, and by our natural disposition, children of wrath; and so on the contrary, speaking of God: God, saith he, *plousioV wn*, who is in his nature, in his disposition merciful and 'rich in mercy, even when we were dead,' &c. So that, I say, the words simply considered in themselves import, first, that God is in his nature and disposition merciful, which is the foundation of our salvation. And then, that the mercy that is in him is a rich mercy; there are riches of mercy in him.

I shall speak a word or two to the first. It is his disposition thus to be merciful. You have an expression in 2 Corinthians 1:3, where God is said to be the 'Father of mercies;' which imports that as he is the spring of all mercy, so it is natural to him, as it is to a father to beget children. He is not only said to be a father unto us, and like a father to be merciful to us; but he is said to be the Father of all the mercies which he doth bestow upon us, more the Father of mercies than Satan is said to be the father of sin; yet he is said to be the father of sin, and when he sinneth, he sinneth of his own, John 8:44. I say, it is his nature, it is his disposition. 'God,' saith he, 'who is rich in mercy;' it is his being. We are by nature children of wrath, he is by nature merciful.

Mercy is his delight, and therefore natural to him, as in all acts of nature you know there is a delight, Micah 7:18, 'He retaineth not his anger for ever, because,' saith he, 'he delighteth in mercy.' The mercies of God are called in Scripture his bowels; now there is nothing so intimate or so natural to a man as his bowels are. And they are called his bowels because they are his inwards; and all that is within him, his whole being and nature inclines him to it. Luke 1:78 'Through the tender mercy of our God;' so we translate it, look in your margins, it is the bowels of God.' So in James 5:11, he is called *polusplagcnoV*, full of bowels. You know the bowels are the

most inward and the most natural, more than outward members. A man may lose an outward member and be a man still; but he cannot lose his inwards, his bowels. They are said to be his bowels, because all the mercy he sheweth, he doth it from within. Hosea 2:19, 'I will betroth thee unto me in loving-kindness and in mercies;' in the original it is, 'I will betroth thee unto me in mercy and in bowels;' yea, in the womb of mercy, as the word signifies. Now, as Sanctius well observes, he doth not only make a covenant to be a husband to us and to betroth us to himself in mercy; but, saith he, thou shalt have my bowels, thou shalt have the womb itself that conceives them, thou shalt have the mother of mercies, as he himself is said to be the Father of mercies, because that mercy is his inwards, and he begets it, he conceives it; he is both the womb of mercies and the Father of mercies. All these expressions the Scripture hath, to shew how natural they are to him as himself. 'God, who is rich in mercy,' saith he. And then again; it is his nature and disposition, because when he doth shew mercy, he doth it with his whole heart. 1 Chronicles 17:19, 'According to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness,' saith David, when he speaks of God's shewing mercy; that is, thou hast shewn mercy like thyself, like the great God, 'according to thine own heart.' My brethren, though God is just, yet his mercy may be in some respect to be more natural to him than all acts of justice itself that God doth shew, I mean vindicative justice; in them there is a satisfaction to an attribute, in that he meets and is even with sinners; yet notwithstanding there is a kind of violence done to himself in it, the Scripture so expresseth it; there is something in it that is contrary to him. And so many interpret that place, 'I will not the death of a sinner;' that is, I delight not simply in it, I will not do it animi causa, for pleasure's sake, because I delight in the thing (as those that are of the Remonstrants' opinion slander the other party, that they make God to delight in the death of a sinner). No; when he exerciseth acts of justice, it is for a higher end, it is not simply for the thing itself; there is always something in his heart against it. But when he comes to shew mercy, to manifest that it is his nature and disposition, it is said that he doth it with his whole heart; there is nothing at all in him that is against it, the act itself pleaseth him for itself, there is no reluctancy in him. Therefore, in Lamentations 3:33, when he speaks of punishing, he saith, 'He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' But when he comes to speak of shewing mercy, he saith he doth do it 'with his whole heart, and with his whole soul;' so the expression is, Jeremiah 32:41. And therefore acts of justice, you know, are called opus alienum, his 'strange work,' and his 'strange act,' in Isaiah 28:21. But when he comes to shew mercy, he rejoices over them, to do them good, with his whole heart, and with his whole soul; as it is in that Jeremiah 32:41.

S. The Wisdom of Patience

The Wisdom of Patience by Thomas Goodwin Word format PDF format (Fourth in a series of four sermons.)

Although I have despatched the subject I first intended, yet I find myself obliged to proceed a little further in the opening ver. 5, in order unto a relieving against a great discouragement, which I know hath, or may have been, in many readers' hearts, whilst I have been thus discoursing these great things about the perfect work of patience, &c.; and also to leave behind me the most apposite direction how to obtain this patience, in the perfect work of it: and I will not go out of my text for these things neither. An Exposition of James 1:5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. The discouragement I know is: Oh, how remote are and have our hearts been from this perfect work of patience! which yet some saints have in so great a measure attained, as those great examples given have shewn, both of saints out of the Old and New Testaments. What then shall I think of myself for the present? will such a soul say; or for the future, what shall I do?

Why, truly, God hath provided sufficiently in the text for answer to these queries and complaints of yours, whereby both to relieve you against your discouragement at your want of the exercise of these things, and also to direct you to the most proper and effectual, if not the only means to obtain them.

1. As to this present discouragement about your want, and so great falling short of this hitherto, which you are so sensible of, those first words in the text, 'If any of you lack wisdom,' will be found greatly speaking to your relief therein.
2. As to a direction what you should do for the future to obtain it, those other words, 'Let him ask of God,' point us to the most proper and effectual remedy and way of supply in the case.
3. With this great encouragement added, first drawn from the nature of God, 'Ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not;' then seconded with this promise, 'and it shall be given him.' Of these three heads in what follows, briefly:

I.—To the discouragement. The opening of these words, 'If any of you lack wisdom,' will greatly conduce to ease your heart as to that; the effect of which is, that the Apostle plainly supposeth that true believers may both really, and in their own apprehensions especially, be found greatly lacking in point of patience when trials do befall them. And this I am sure hath reason to relieve you in what is like to be the great discouragement that usually falls out. This to be the supposition of the Apostle is made good by opening four things:—

1. That by 'wisdom' here is plainly meant patience, together with the perfect work of it which he had spoken of.

2. That he speaks this unto those that were true believers; 'if any of you.'
3. How it may or can be said that true believers, who have all grace and the principles thereof in them, lack such or such a grace.
4. The intimate reason and occasion upon which the Apostle utters himself in this supposition; 'if any,' &c. For the first; wisdom sometimes is taken largely for all grace and gracious actings whatsoever; sometimes strictly for a particular grace. To find out the difference of which, the measure is to be taken from the scope of the place where either of these is mentioned. Now wisdom, in this place, is to be taken strictly; that is, for that particular grace, or piece of gracious wisdom, whereby to know how to be able to manage a man's self under trials, especially great, sore, and sudden ones, patiently; which is done when we have taken in and digested by faith such principles as our Christianity affords plenty of, as grounds that instruct and enable the soul joyfully to entertain such trials and tentations, and to endure and go through them with a constancy of joy. For look, as the word 'grace' is taken either strictly or largely; that is, either for all grace, and yet again for any or every particular grace, each of which is called grace also: 'As ye abound in every grace, so ye abound in this grace also;' thus, a11 grace is called wisdom in a large sense, as usually throughout the Book of Proverbs, but withal a particular grace is called wisdom too, as the third chapter of this epistle, ver. 13, shews. The grace of meekness shown in speech and conversation, he styles it 'meekness of wisdom,' or a 'wise meekness,' or a meekness accompanied with and proceeding out of wisdom. And thus Calvin and most others understand wisdom here in this my text of this special grace; the scope and coherence with the former words carrying it thereunto. True patience being from such a wisdom as whereby the soul hath the skill and ability to manage a man's self patiently under tentations, to such an issue as that patience should have a perfect work in us; and unto this it is here to be restrained; for this grace it is he had been, and still is, discoursing of. And there is a special and more peculiar reason why this skill of patience should be styled wisdom in a more eminent sense. For what he had before uttered of rejoicing in afflictions and tentations, and exhorted unto, that patience should have its perfect work; these things being the hardest lessons in Christianity, do therefore need and require the highest principles of divine wisdom, both doctrinal and practical, to be deeply inlaid and fixed in the soul, so as to bow and frame the heart unto a real practice and willing performance of such dictates and conformity thereunto. For then it is that knowledge is termed wisdom; and for that reason it is that our whole religion is styled wisdom, because it rests not in bare notional knowledge, which is a differing thing from wisdom, but makes men proportionably wise to the practice of the things in which it instructs. And particularly this skill of enduring tentations, such as hath been described, doth deserve this style more eminently, for it so far outvies, and is above the sphere of all principles, whether of philosophy or what other profession or professors of patience whatsoever, who whilst, in a sullen patience, for all of theirs was no better, they professed to be wise, they became foolish; and Christianity infinitely outshoots them in what they most gloried in.

Secondly, That he speaks this to them whom he supposeth true believers, and unto them as such, is evident; although at the first blush, as we say, the words would seem to point at and speak to unregenerate men who wholly want all true wisdom and grace; and so the drift should be an intended direction to or for such to seek true grace, which they lack, at the hands of God, by prayer. But the coherence manifestly shews that he speaks to such whom he supposeth to be already true believers. For in the next words he exhorts the same persons whom he speaks to in

these words, to 'ask in faith;' and therefore supposeth them to have true faith already whom he directs this exhortation unto. And otherwise it had been more proper, yea, requisite to have exhorted them, if he had intended it of unregenerate men, first to seek faith itself, and then out of faith and in that faith to seek for this wisdom, or grace of endurance. And again he speaks to them that were brethren; so he calls them; and in this passage says, 'if any of you,' and such who, being true professors of Christianity, were exposed unto those sundry tentations from persecutions especially. And it is such also whom he exhorts to 'count it all joy,' &c., and here to ask a wisdom of God whereby to be able to suffer for their holy profession. Furthermore, this wisdom lying in patience having its perfect work in them, it supposeth the persons such as had some work of patience and of other graces begun in them already. And, indeed, to have exhorted unregenerate men, that were as yet utterly destitute of all grace, and so out of harm's way as to any sufferings from the gospel, and to direct them to make this the first of their addresses to God, and of their requests, that they might be able to endure tentations, and that patience should have a perfect work in them, and so to have taught them that which is the hardest lesson in Christianity before they had learned the first letters thereof; this had been utterly improper, and a lesson at too great a distance for men in their natural state first to learn.—Thus much for the persons, viz., that he speaks it unto men already regenerate, and supposed in the faith. The third thing proposed was, How it could be he should speak in this manner of believers, that they should lack this grace of wisdom; whenas, if such, they must be supposed to have all true graces in them; why then should he yet say, even of them, 'If any of you lack,' &c.?

Ans.—This expression, to say such and such a Christian 'lacks' such or such a grace, is not uncouth nor unusual in the Scriptures, when he or they have wanted the exercise of it. For though Christians do receive the principles of all graces, as 2 Peter 1:3, yet they may neglect to stir up all graces, or may have been disused to the exercise of some. Why else, and to what end, doth the Apostle in the same place stir them up to add grace to grace, as in ver. 5? And in those cases a Christian may be said, yea, charged to lack that grace or graces which he wants the exercise of. For so in the same chapter, ver. 9, speaking of a dozed, negligent professor, though true, he useth this very language of him, 'He that lacks these things,' as I have elsewhere opened that Scripture. For *idem est non esse, et non uti*;—it is all one for a thing not to be, and not to be used, when the being of a thing is wholly ordained for use and operation. Now such a thing is grace; and such a thing, if not used, is as if it were not. And the opposition that is between adding grace to grace, ver. 5,—that is, the exercise of one grace after another,—and the lacking grace, in that ver. 9, evidently shews that phrase to be so understood, not of the utter want of the grace, but of the exercise. The fourth thing is, the intimate reason or occasion whereupon the Apostle doth utter himself in such a supposition. 'If any of you lack.' This will appear by considering these three things:—

First, In respect that he had exhorted to so hard and difficult a practice; to 'count it all joy,' &c.—which requireth such high principles to be drunk in, about the good and benefit of tentations, in the issue and end of them; which principles must also have been thoroughly concocted in their hearts first who shall attain to this.

And, secondly, there being many poor souls, as of such that were weak, and some new converts, amongst them whom he wrote to, who might, and did then, as many now-a-days, that yet are sincere-hearted, in the sense of their own weakness, find and apprehend themselves so far off and remote from such high principles and attainments, and therefore, upon his thus discoursing,

were like to be utterly discouraged; thinking with themselves, judging themselves by the present frame of their infirm spirits, both that their hearts had never yet, nor would ever be, wrought up to this pitch. What, to count it all joy! think they; is that it you exhort us unto? Alas! our hearts tremble at the very thoughts of entering into such sudden and so great tentations as you here forewarn us of. And of all graces else, it is this of a patient suffering frame, and strength of spirit thereto, that is and hath been our want. This is it we 'lack,' nor do we know how to manage ourselves wisely under such trials, so as to glorify God; yea, and not shamefully to dishonour him. Nay, if we should fall into such trials and sufferings, we are liker utterly to fall away under them, rather than to rejoice when we fall into them.

Further, thirdly, there might be many strong Christians, as to the active part of the life of Christianity, who yet might be to seek as fresh soldiers at the first, when such trials come unexpectedly, and thick and threefold upon them; and that they fall into them as downfalls and precipices. And in this dreadful a manner he had set them out to them, as impendent on them, as was opened. And even such Christians, being surprised, might be at a loss at first, in respect of that confidence of spirit to bear them, till by prayer and faith recollecting themselves, they should anew obtain or regain this wisdom. Even strong Christians are apt to be stounded at first, as men are with a great blow, and cannot well stand or keep their ground.

Now unto such, either of these, doth the Apostle in this language, 'If any of you lack,' apply himself, and therein speaks to their very hearts; but especially to the first sort of weak Christians. And, indeed, speaks their very fears, and most inward thoughts and apprehensions, they had or might have of themselves; and so utters their misgivings of heart in their own language. Oh, I lack these things, says the soul. 'If any of you lack,' says the Apostle. And it is no small comfort to such to hear an apostle, from the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to suppose that very true and sincere Christians may thus be lacking and thus surprised.

Thus as to the removal of their main discouragement, which was the first thing proposed.

II.—The direction.

Let him ask of God.—Having thus spoken their hearts, as to the fears and apprehensions of themselves in respect of their falling short of this high duty of joy and patience, &c., he now directs them to the most proper and sovereign means for the obtaining of it of all other, and that is faithful, instant prayer: 'Let him ask of God,' &c. And herein also he speaks the hearts of all true Christians also, even of the weakest; whose refuge in all their wants is to cry to God for a supply of what they lack, especially when they feel, or are apprehensive of their lack and want in any grace that should help them in time of need. And look, what effectual supply of this grace in tentations all the Apostle's persuasions alone would not have effected, that, faith venting itself in constant and fervent prayer, will bring in and obtain; and their hearts will in the end be raised and wrought up. unto, so as they shall be able to abound in this grace also. Weak faith, when it cannot find in its heart to suffer, or so much as to enter into trials, can yet pray; and so doth beg with desires unutterable to have this grace, to be able to suffer these trials in this joyful manner the Apostle exhorts us unto. And the weak heart continuing so to pray and importune God, in the end this shall be given him; as here he promiseth. I shall not enlarge on this further. For when an apostle shall single forth a means, and that one single one, whereby to obtain any eminent grace one needs, that means ought to be with all diligence put into use and practice; and so there needs no more to

urge it.

Only observe how in this directive part he puts them not upon praying chiefly to have tentations and trials averted or kept off, nor to ask deliverance out of them, though that is lawful and may be done; not a word of these in this his exhortation; but he draws the main and great intention of their souls unto praying for grace, how to be patient and joyful, &c.—This as to the direction.

III.—His encouragements to pray. His encouragements, that by seeking a believer shall obtain, are drawn, first, from that gracious wont and disposition of God, that giveth to all men liberally, &c.

1. As being a God 'that giveth to all men.' And this also is to be limitedly understood of all those men who thus do, have, or shall apply themselves unto God by faithful and importunate prayer. For he had said first, 'Let him ask of God;' and therefore God's giving here must be supposed to be a giving to him that asketh. Again, although it be said that faith works patience, yet it is prayer that fetcheth and brings down the power from God into the heart, that works both faith and patience, and all. Prayer is the midwife by which faith, the mother, brings forth patience in the heart.

2. His gracious disposition in giving is further set out—

(1) That he giveth liberally. The word *aplwV* both signifies a free-hearted giving, in a pure way of simplicity of heart; as being neither moved by any respect in us, as of worthiness, or the like, but singly and simply out of such motives and considerations as are in his own heart, and which his own great and gracious divine nature prompts him to: freely. We generally use to say, 'out of his free grace,' which comes all to one with the import of the word which the apostle useth here. Therefore make that grace as thy plea to him in thy prayers for it, or whatever else thou seekest at his hands.

(2.) It signifies largely, abundantly, liberally, richly; as the word is used in 2 Corinthians 8:2, and so translated there. You have both in that passage of David's, 2 Samuel 3:21, 'According to thine own heart'—there is freely or simply—'hast thou done all these great things,'—there is liberally. And upbraideth not.—That is a second property or disposition in God and his giving; the sense whereof is, first, that when he hath given liberally, never so often, nor so much, yet he upbraideth not, as men are wont to do. Among men, he that is most liberal, yet if the same man he hath formerly given unto will come often to him to be relieved, in the end he at least will excuse himself, or else say, Why do you come so often, thus again and again? which is a tacit and implicit way of upbraiding, or insinuation of foregone benefits. Surely Calvin, and Estius from him, have hit it, who put this scope and drift upon this clause: that no man should be afraid or solicitous to come, though never so often, to this free and generous giver, nor be discouraged within himself that he should need to come so often to him, nor forbear to continue his incessant importunities, though it be never so long a time ere he obtains. And thus understood, it is as if he had said, God is so free, so simple-hearted and liberal in giving, as the oftener you come the welcomer, especially when for grace; yea, he hereby inviteth us of his own free heart to come always, to ask and pray continually and incessantly, as that parable, Luke 18:1, made on set purpose, shews. So then, a frequent, constant, importunate continuing in prayer to obtain is hereby exhorted unto. A second scope in his adding this clause is, that though we find that God doth indeed upbraid impenitent men for their sins, as Christ those cities, yet he never did, or ever will do, any sinners in this case wherein it is

proposed,—namely, when they shall come and humble themselves for their sins, seeking for more grace to help in time of need against their corruption; and this much rather than from deliverance from or out of troubles,—in this case he will not twit them with any of their unworthiness that hath been past; he will pass by their iniquity, and not upbraid them. And this is a great encouragement indeed; for the guilt of sin and former ingratitude do above all things deter men from coming to God, lest he should remember their iniquities and upbraid them with them. And it shall be given him.—He follows and confirms this hope of obtaining with this sure and certain promise, 'and it shall be given him.' For when the souls of men, being made thoroughly apprehensive of their own want of a grace, are carried forth (to choose) to seek for grace, or such or such a gracious disposition; and that before and above all deliverance out of the trials they are in, as was before observed the Apostle had directed; in this case, God—that is, the God of all grace—is the most ready giver of grace that he is of anything else. There are no requests more pleasing to him, or that suit his divine and blessed disposition so as this doth of praying for grace, as thus stated. For the bestowing and giving of grace thus prayed for doth tend, above all things else, to the glorifying of himself; and it is the aiming thereat that must and doth carry out such a heart to make this to be the top and chief of its most earnest petitions. The God of grace is the most free of grace. Thus Christ says, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Our Apostle hath also told us that though the spirit that is in us lusteth to envy, that yet God gives more grace—that is, a counterpoise of grace unto that lust—unto all them that humbly seek for it; as, chap. 4:5-7, 'Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. He resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.'

I shall now go forth of my text but to fetch in one thing. I observe, when the Apostle particularly comes to that part of his prayer made for the Colossians, that they might have all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, —which exactly agrees with what is the matter exhorted unto in this text,—he implores the glorious power of God, in these words, Colossians 1:11, 'That ye may be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.' And to draw and fix your hearts on this glorious power of God, and point your prayers thereto, is the thing which I mean and intend. And indeed the consideration of this one thing will have a general influence into all those three heads have been treated of in this last fourth section. As, first, it may be no great wonder if many of us have been so deficient and lacking in this grace; for it is not an ordinary power, such as in ordinary walkings holily doth assist us, but a glorious power is requisite to perfect this grace: which argues this to be so difficult an exercise above any other, and that our natures are infinitely remote from it of ourselves, which we not minding nor considering, have not perhaps with answerable vehemency implored the aid of so great a power. And, secondly, this gives us a clear reason why prayer, of all other means, should be directed by the Apostle, and extraordinarily set upon by us, as the most effectual, yet, as an only means to obtain this. For seeing that power lies out of ourselves, in God, which must effect this in us, then surely nothing can be judged so prevailing as faith and prayer, which are the graces in and by which the soul, going out of itself, in a sense of its utter insufficiency, supplicates the grace in God's heart to exert this power of his good pleasure, and so do draw it forth and bring it down into the heart. And then, thirdly, this gives us the highest encouragement, that we may obtain this perfect work of it, however remote from it the present temper of our spirits may seem to be to us, seeing that no less than such a glorious power is requisite to effect it in the strongest

Christians, and a power so glorious is able to work it in the weakest.

Let us pray, therefore, with all vehemency for ourselves, as the Apostle did for those Colossians, that this glorious power may come upon us, and strengthen our inward man—as it is elsewhere, Ephesians 3:16 —with all might; which might in us is the effect of that power in God as the cause. For is this patience is to be an 'all patience,' or else it hath not its perfect work, so this might must be an 'all might' you must be strengthened with unto such a patience, or you will not be perfect at it. That might you had in such or such a trial will not serve to strengthen you against the next trial that shall come; but you must still have a new special might for every new trial. Your dependence, therefore, is great upon God for this perfect work of patience, and yet your encouragements are great. For as it must be that, if God will please to strengthen us under any great unusual tentations, that he should put forth no less than this 'glorious power:' so we have heard how, in our Apostle, he hath promised he will give it, and give it freely and liberally to them that make it their main, constant, earnest business to ask it; and therefore, his grace, if applied to, is engaged to put this power forth.

It cannot but be a great support to a weak heart that finds itself so remote and distant from such a work of patience, and weak also in comparison of finding such an inward might, that it should have ground and cause to think and to believe that God's glorious power is engaged most freely, to be abundantly and readily put forth, if continued to be sought unto. Why, this, says the weak heart, will do it; namely, this glorious power; and I have found by some trials already that the strong God and a weak heart will be too hard for any thing, yea, for the whole world. And therefore, when you think your present trials that are come upon you far greater than you can bear, think withal of the glorious power of God that is at hand to help you. It is a great word that, 'his glorious power,'—a greater attribute could not have been named or found out for our comfort,—and is a word of virtue, force, and power, to hearten to or against anything whatever. It is true thy present trial may be, and is, above that inward strength which serves and hath served hitherto to act thy graces in thy ordinary walkings with God, holily and sincerely. A child may by its ordinary strength be able to walk up and down a room by stools (suppose) supporting it, without any other extraordinary help; but if it be to go up a pair of stairs, the strength that enabled it to these lesser performances will not be sufficient thereunto; he must be carried and held up in the arms of one who is strong and mighty. And so it is here. That other part of our Christian obedience, the active life of a Christian, prayed for by the Apostle in that place to the Colossians also, whereby he walks fruitfully, &c., as in the seventh verse of that chapter, requires indeed God's power, for by it it is we are kept unto salvation all along. But when it comes to patience and long-suffering, and all patience, and that such a trial comes as will try all patience in you; then it is he makes mention of that glorious power, and not before. For it must be no less that must go to that than God's glorious power. And the promise therefore is, in such a case, that the Spirit of glory shall rest upon us, and not the Spirit of grace only, as 1 Peter 4:14. Relieve and comfort, therefore, yourselves with these things, and specially with this: that as your trials abound, so this glorious power of God will abound also towards you, for your support. Amen.

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