

The Author & the End of Theology

by James Arminius

The sermon explores the Author and End of Theology, highlighting God as the Author of both Legal and Evangelical Theology and the necessity of the divine manifestation.

Scripture: Amos 3:8, 1 Timothy 4:6, 2 Timothy 2:15, Titus 3:1, 2 Peter 1:8

Topics: "Sacred Theology", "Union With God"

Description

James Arminius preaches about the importance of embracing Sacred Theology, focusing on the Object, Author, End, and Certainty of this divine science. He emphasizes the necessity of understanding Theology's Object, which is God, and its Author, who is God Himself for Legal Theology and God through Christ for Evangelical Theology. Arminius delves into the End of Theology, highlighting the ultimate goal of union with God and Christ, leading to salvation and eternal glory. He urges his audience, especially the chosen youths, to diligently study the Scriptures, be inspired by the Spirit of Prophecy, and become good ministers of Jesus Christ, sowing the gospel with patience and diligence.

Transcript

ORATION II

THE AUTHOR AND THE END OF THEOLOGY

They who are conversant with the demonstrative species of oratory, and choose for themselves any subject of praise or blame, must generally be engaged in removing from themselves, what very readily assails the minds of their auditors, a suspicion that they are impelled to speak by some immoderate feeling of love or hatred; and in showing that they are influenced rather by an approved judgment of the mind; and that they have not followed the ardent flame of their will, but the clear light of their understanding, which accords with the nature of the subject which they are discussing. But to me such a course is not necessary. For that which I have chosen for the subject of my commendation, easily removes from me all ground for such a suspicion.

I do not deny, that here indeed I yield to the feeling of love; but it is on a matter which if any one does not love, he hates himself, and perfidiously prostitutes the life of his soul. Sacred Theology is the subject whose excellence and dignity I now celebrate in this brief and unadorned Oration; and which, I am convinced, is to all of you an object of the greatest regard. Nevertheless, I wish to raise it, if possible, still higher in your esteem. This, indeed, its own merit demands; this the nature of my office requires. Nor is it

any part of my study to amplify its dignity by ornaments borrowed from other objects; for to the perfection of its beauty can be added nothing extraneous that would not tend to its degradation and loss of its comeliness. I only display such ornaments as are, of themselves, its best recommendation. These are, its Object, its Author, its End and its Certainty. Concerning the Object, we have already declared whatever the Lord had imparted; and we will now speak of its Author and its End. God grant that I may, follow the guidance of this Theology in all respects, and may advance nothing except what agrees with its nature, is worthy of God and useful to you, to the glory of his name, and to the uniting of all of us together in the Lord. I pray and beseech you also, my most excellent and courteous hearers, that you will listen to me, now when I am beginning to speak on the Author, and the End of Theology, with the same degree of kindness and attention as that which you evinced when you heard my preceding discourse on its Object.

Being about to treat of the Author, I will not collect together the lengthened reports of his well merited praises, for with you this is unnecessary. I will only declare (1.) Who the Author is; (2.) In what respect he is to be considered; (3.) Which of his properties were employed by him in the revelation of Theology; and (4.) In what manner he has made it know.

I. We have considered the Object of Theology in regard to two particulars. And that each part of our subject may properly and exactly answer to the other, we may also consider its Author in a two-fold respect -- that of Legal and of Evangelical Theology. In both cases, the same person is the Author and the Object, and the person who reveals the doctrine is likewise its matter and argument. This is a peculiarity that belongs to no other of the numerous sciences. For although all of them may boast of God, as their Author, because he a God of knowledge; yet, as we have seen, they have some other object than God, which something is indeed derived from him and of his production.

But they do not partake of God as their efficient cause, in an equal manner with this doctrine, which, for a particular reason, and one entirely distinct from that of the other sciences, lays claim to God, its Author. God, therefore, is the author of Legal Theology; God and his Christ, or God in and through Christ, is the Author of that which is evangelical. For to this the scripture bears witness, and thus the very nature of the object requires, both of which we will separately demonstrate. 1.

Scripture describes to us the Author of legal theology before the fall in these words: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:" (Gen. ii, 16, 17.) A threat was added in express words, in case the man should transgress, and a promise, in the type of the tree of life, if he complied with the command. But there are two things, which, as they preceded this act of legislation, should have been previously known by man: (1.)

The nature of God, which is wise, good, just, and powerful; (2.) The authority by which he issues his commands, the right of which rests on the act of creation. Of both these, man had a previous knowledge, from the manifestation of God, who familiarly conversed with him, and held communication with his own image through that Spirit by whose inspiration he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. ii, 23.) The apostle has attributed the knowledge of both these things to faith, and, therefore, to the manifestation of God.

He speaks of the former in these words: "For he that cometh to God must have believed [so I read it,] that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi, 6.) If a rewarder, therefore, he is a wise, good, just, powerful, and provident guardian of human affairs. Of the latter, he speaks thus:

"Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Heb. xi, 3.)

And although that is not expressly and particularly stated of the moral law, in the primeval state of man; yet when it is affirmed of the typical and ceremonial law, it must be also understood in reference to the moral law. For the typical and ceremonial law was an experiment of obedience to the moral law, that was to be tried on man, and the acknowledgement of his obligation to obey the moral law. This appears still more evidently in the repetition of the moral law by Moses after the fall, which was specially made known to the people of Israel in these words: "And God spake all these words :"(Exod. xx, 1,) and "What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day," (Deut. iv, 8.)

But Moses set it before them according to the manifestation of God to him, and in obedience to his command, as he says: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. xxix, 29.) And according to Paul, "That which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." (Rom. i, 19.)

2. The same thing is evinced by the nature of the object. For since God is the Author of the universe, (and that, not by a natural and internal operation, but by one that is voluntary and external, and that imparts to the work as much as he chooses of his own, and as much as the nothing, from which it is produced, will permit,) his excellence and dignity must necessarily far exceed the capacity of the universe, and, for the same reason, that of man. On this account, he is said in scripture, "to dwell in the light unto which no man can approach," (1 Tim. vi, 16,) which strains even the most acute sight of any creature, by a brightness so great and dazzling, that the eye is blunted and overpowered, and would soon be blinded unless God, by some admirable process of attempering that blaze of light, should offer himself to the view of his creatures: This is the very manifestation before which darkness is said to have fixed its habitation.

Nor is he himself alone inaccessible, but, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." (Isa. lv, 9.) The actions of God are called "the ways of God," and the creation especially is called "the beginning of the way of God," (Prov. 8,) by which God began, as it were, to arise and to go forth from the throne of his majesty. Those actions, therefore, could not have been made known and understood, in the manner in which it is allowable to know and understand them, except by the revelation of God. This was also indicated before, in the term "faith" which the apostle employed. But the thoughts of God, and his will, (both that will which he wishes to be done by us, and that which he has resolved to do concerning us,) are of free disposition, which is determined by the divine power and liberty inherent in himself; and since he has, in all this, called in the aid of no counselor, those thoughts and that will are of necessity "unsearchable and past finding out." (Rom. xi, 33.) Of these, Legal Theology consists; and as they could not be known before the revelation of them proceeded from God, it is evidently proved that God is its Author.

To this truth all nations and people assent. What compelled Radamanthus and Minos, those most equitable kings of Crete, to enter the dark cave of Jupiter, and pretend that the laws which they had promulgated among their subjects, were brought from that cave, at the inspiration of Deity? It was because they knew those laws would not meet with general reception, unless they were believed to have been divinely communicated. Before Lycurgus began the work of legislation for his Lacedaemonians, imitating the example of those two kings, he went to Apollo at Delphos, that he might, on his return, confer

on his laws the highest recommendation by means of the authority of the Delphic Oracle. To induce the ferocious minds of the Roman people to submit to religion, Numa Pompilius feigned that he had nocturnal conferences with the goddess Aegeria. These were positive and evident testimonies of a notion which had preoccupied the minds of men, "that no religion except one of divine origin, and deriving its principles from heaven, deserved to be received." Such a truth they considered this, "that no one could know God, or any thing concerning God, except through God himself."

2. Let us now look at Evangelical Theology. We have made the Author of it to be Christ and God, at the command of the same scriptures as those which establish the divine claims of Legal Theology, and because the nature of the object requires it with the greater justice, in proportion as that object is the more deeply hidden in the abyss of the divine wisdom, and as the human mind is the more closely surrounded and enveloped with the shades of ignorance.

(1.) Exceedingly numerous are the passages of scripture which serve to aid and strengthen us in this opinion. We will enumerate a few of them: First, those which ascribe the manifestation of this doctrine to God the Father; Then, those which ascribe it to Christ. "But we" says the apostle, "speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. But God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. ii, 7, 10.) The same apostle says, "The gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God." (Rom. xvi, 25, 26.) When Peter made a correct and just confession of Christ, it was said to him by the saviour, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xvi, 17.) John the Baptist attributed the same to Christ, saying, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared God to us." (John i, 18.) Christ also ascribed this manifestation to himself in these words: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi, 17.) And, in another place, "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world, and they have believed that thou didst send me." (John xvii, 6, 8.)

(2.) Let us consider the necessity of this manifestation from the nature of its Object.

This is indicated by Christ when speaking of Evangelical Theology, in these words: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son." (Matt. xi, 27.) Therefore no man can reveal the Father or the Son, and yet in the knowledge of them are comprised the glad tidings of the gospel. The Baptist is an assertor of the necessity of this manifestation when he declares, that "No man hath seen God at any time." (John i, 18.) It is the wisdom belonging to this Theology, which is said by the Apostle to be "hidden in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew, and which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man." (1 Cor. ii, 7, 8, 9.) It does not come within the cognizance of the understanding, and is not mixed up, as it were, with the first notions or ideas impressed on the mind at the period of its creation; it is not acquired in conversation or reasoning; but it is made known "in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." To this Theology belongs "that manifold wisdom of God which must be made known by the Church unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places," (Ephes. iii, 10,) otherwise it would remain unknown even to the angels themselves. What! Are the deep things of God "which no man knoweth but the Spirit of God which is in himself," explained by this doctrine? Does it also unfold "the length and breadth, and depth and height" of the wisdom of God? As the Apostle speaks in another passage, in a tone of the most impassioned admiration, and almost at a loss what words to employ in expressing the fullness of this Theology, in which are proposed, as objects of

discovery, "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding." (Ephes. iii, 18.) From these passages it most evidently appears, that the Object of Evangelical Theology must have been revealed by God and Christ, or it must otherwise have remained hidden and surrounded by perpetual darkness; or, (which is the same thing,) that Evangelical Theology would not have come within the range of our knowledge, and, on that account, as a necessary consequence, there could have been none at all.

If it be an agreeable occupation to any person, (and such it must always prove,) to look more methodically and distinctly through each part, let him cast the eyes of his mind on those properties of the Divine Nature which this Theology displays, clothed in their own appropriate mode; let him consider those action of God which this doctrine brings to light, and that will of God which he has revealed in his gospel: When he has done this, (and of much more than this the subject is worthy,) he will more distinctly understand the necessity of the Divine manifestation.

If any one would adopt a compendious method, let him only contemplate Christ; and when he has diligently observed that admirable union of the Word and Flesh, his investiture into office and the manner in which its duties were executed; when he has at the same time reflected, that the whole of these arrangements and proceedings are in consequence of the voluntary economy, regulation, and free dispensation of God; he cannot avoid professing openly, that the knowledge of all these things could not have been obtained except by means of the revelation of God and Christ.

But lest any one should take occasion, from the remarks which we have now made, to entertain an unjust suspicion or error, as though God the Father alone, to the exclusion of the Son, were the Author of the legal doctrine, and the Father through the Son were the Author of the Evangelical doctrine -- a few observations shall be added, that may serve to solve this difficulty, and further to illustrate the matter of our discourse. As God by his Word, (which is his own Son,) and by his Spirit, created all things, and man according to the image of himself, so it is likewise certain, that no intercourse can take place between him and man, without the agency of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. How is this possible, since the ad extra works of the Deity are indivisible, and when the order of operation ad extra is the same as the order of procession ad intra? We do not, therefore, by any means exclude the Son as the Word of the Father, and the Holy Ghost who is "the Spirit of Prophecy," from efficiency in this revelation.

But there is another consideration in the manifestation of the gospel, not indeed with respect to the persons testifying, but in regard to the manner in which they come to be considered. For the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have not only a natural relation among themselves, but another likewise which derives its origin from the will; yet the latter entirely agrees with the natural relation that subsists among them. There is an internal procession in the persons; and there is an external one, which is called in the scriptures and in the writings of the Father, by the name of "Mission" or "sending." To the latter mode of procession, special regard must be had in this revelation. For the Father manifests the Gospel through his Son and Spirit. (i.) He manifests it through the Son, as to his being, sent for the purpose of performing the office of Mediator between God and sinful men; as to his being the Word made flesh, and God manifest in the flesh; and as to his having died, and to his being raised again to life, whether that was done in reality, or only in the decree and foreknowledge of God. (ii.) He also manifests it through his Spirit, as to his being the Spirit of Christ, whom he asked of his Father by his passion and his death, and whom he obtained when he was raised from the dead, and placed at the right hand of the Father.

I think you will understand the distinction which I imagine to be here employed: I will afford you an opportunity to examine and prove it, by adducing the clearest passages of scripture to aid us in confirming it. (I.) "All things," said Christ, "are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son." (Matt. xi, 27.) They were delivered by the Father, to him as the Mediator, "in whom it was his pleasure that all fullness should dwell." (Col. i, 19. See also ii, 9.) In the same sense must be understood what Christ says in John: "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;" for it is subjoined, "and they have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." (xvii, 8.) From hence it appears, that the Father had given those words to him as the Mediator: on which account he says, in another place, "He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God." (John iii, 34.) With this the saying of the Baptist agrees, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John i, 17.) But in reference to his being opposed to Moses, who accuses and condemns sinners, Christ is considered as the Mediator between God and sinners. The following passage tends to the same point: "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father," [that is, "admitted," in his capacity of Mediator, to the intimate and confidential view and knowledge of his Father's secrets,] "he hath declared him:" (John i, 18.) "For the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand;" (John iii, 35,) and among the things thus given, was the doctrine of the gospel, which he was to expound and declare to others, by the command of God the Father. And in every revelation which has been made to us through Christ, that expression which occurs in the beginning of the Apocalypse of St. John holds good and is of the greatest validity: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants." God has therefore manifested Evangelical Theology through his Son, in reference to his being sent forth by the Father, to execute among men, and in his name, the office of Mediator.

(ii.) Of the Holy Spirit the same scripture testifies, that, as the Spirit of Christ the Mediator, who is the head of his church, he has revealed the Gospel. "Christ, by the Spirit," says Peter, "went and preached to the spirits in prison." (1 Pet. iii, 19.) And what did he preach? Repentance. This therefore, was done through his Spirit, in his capacity of Mediator, For, in this respect alone, the Spirit of God exhorts to repentance. This appears more clearly from the Same Apostle: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

And this was the Spirit of Christ in his character of Mediator and head of the Church, which the very object of the testimony foretold by him sufficiently evinces. A succeeding passage excludes all doubt; for the gospel is said in it, to be preached by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." (1 Pet. i, 12.) For he was sent down by Christ when he was elevated at the right hand of God, as it is mentioned in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; which passage also makes for our purpose, and on that account deserves to have its just meaning here appreciated.

This is its phraseology, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii, 33.) For it was by the Spirit that the Apostles prophesied and spoke in divers languages. These passages might suffice; but I cannot omit that most noble sentence spoken by Christ to console the minds of his disciples, who were grieving on account of his departure, "If I go not away the Comforter [or rather, 'the Advocate, who shall, in my place, discharge the vicarious office,' as Tertullian expresses himself;] If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

And when he is come he will reprove the world, &c. (John xvi, 7, 8.) He shall glorify me: For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Christ, therefore, as Mediator, "will send him," and he "will receive of that which belongs to Christ the Mediator. He shall glorify Christ," as constituted by God the Mediator and the Head of the Church; and he shall glorify him with that glory, which, according to the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, Christ thought it necessary to ask of his Father.

That passage brings another to my recollection, which may be called its parallel in merit: John says, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (vii, 39.) This remark was not to be understood of the person of the Spirit, but of his gifts, and especially that of prophecy. But Christ was glorified in quality of Mediator: and in that glorified capacity he sends the Holy Ghost; therefore, the Holy Spirit was sent by Christ as the Mediator. On this account also, the Spirit of Christ the Mediator is the Author of Evangelical Prophecy.

But the Holy Ghost was sent, even before the glorification of Christ, to reveal the Gospel. The existing state of the Church required it at that period, and the Holy Spirit was sent to meet that necessity. "Christ is likewise the same yesterday, today and forever." (Heb. xiii, 8.) He was also "slain from the foundation of the world;" (Rev. xiii, 8,) and was, therefore, at that same time raised again and glorified; but this was all in the decree and fore-knowledge of God. To make it evident, however, that God has never sent the Holy Spirit to the Church, except through the agency of Christ the Mediator, and in regard to him, God deferred that plentiful and exuberant effusion of his most copious gifts, until Christ, after his exaltation to heaven, should send them down in a communication of the greatest abundance.

Thus he testified by a clear and evident proof, that he had formerly poured out the gifts of the Spirit upon the Church, by the same person, as he by whom, (when through his ascension the dense and overcharged cloud of water above the heavens had been dispersed,) he poured down the most plentiful showers of his graces, inundating and over spreading the whole body of the Church.

III. But the revelation of Evangelical Theology is attributed to Christ in regard to his Mediatorship, and to the Holy Ghost in regard to his being the appointed substitute and Advocate of Christ the Mediator. This is done most consistently and for a very just reason, both because Christ, as Mediator, is placed for the ground-work of this doctrine, and because in the duty of mediation those actions were to be performed, those sufferings endured, and those blessings asked and obtained, which complete a goodly portion of the matters that are disclosed in the gospel of Christ. No wonder, therefore, that Christ in this respect, (in which he is himself the object of the gospel,) should likewise be the revealer of it, and the person who asks and procures all evangelical graces, and who is at once the Lord of them and the communicator. And since the Spirit of Christ, our Mediator and our head, is the bond of our union with Christ, from which we also obtain communion with Christ, and a participation in all his blessings -- it is just and reasonable, that, in the respect which we have just mentioned, Christ should reveal to our minds, and seal upon our hearts, the evangelical charter and evidence of that faith by which he dwelleth in our hearts. The consideration of this matter exhibits to us (1.) the cause why it is possible for God to restrain himself with such great forbearance, patience, and long suffering, until the gospel is obeyed by those to whom it is preached; and (2.) it affords great consolation to our ignorance and infirmities.

I think, my hearers, you perceive that this single view adds no small degree of dignity to our Evangelical Theology, beside that which it possesses from the common consideration of its Author. If we may be allowed further to consider what wisdom, goodness and power God expended when he instituted and revealed this Theology, it will give great importance to our proposition. Indeed, all kinds of sciences have

their origin in the wisdom of God, and are communicated to men by his goodness and power. But, if it be his right, (as it undoubtedly is,) to appoint gradations in the external exercise of his divine properties, we shall say, that all other sciences except this, have arisen from an inferior wisdom of God, and have been revealed by a less degree of goodness and power. It is proper to estimate this matter according to the excellence of its object. As the wisdom of God, by which he knows himself, is greater than that by which he knows other things; so the wisdom employed by him in the manifestation of himself is greater than that employed in the manifestation of other things. The goodness by which he permits himself to be known and acknowledged by man as his Chief Good, is greater than that by which he imparts the knowledge of other things. The power also, by which nature is raised to the knowledge of supernatural things, is greater than that by which it is brought to investigate things that are of the same species and origin with itself. Therefore, although all the sciences may boast of God as their author, yet in these particulars, Theology, soaring above the whole, leaves them at an immense distance.

But as this consideration raises the dignity of Theology, on the whole far above all other sciences, so it likewise demonstrates that Evangelical far surpasses Legal Theology; on which point we may be allowed, with your good leave, to dwell a little. The wisdom, goodness and power, by which God made man, after his own image, to consist of a rational soul and a body, are great, and constitute the claims to precedence on the part of Legal Theology. But the wisdom, goodness and power, by which "the Word was made flesh," (John i, 14,) and God was manifest in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii, 16,) and by which he "who was in the form of God took upon himself the form of a servant," (Phil. ii, 7,) are still greater, and they are the claims by which Evangelical Theology asserts its right to precedence. The wisdom and goodness, by the operation of which the power of God has been revealed to salvation, are great; but that by which is revealed "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth," (Rom. ii, 16,) far exceeds it. Great indeed are the wisdom and goodness by which the righteousness of God by the law is made manifest," and by which the justification of the law was ascribed of debt to perfect obedience; but they are infinitely surpassed by the wisdom and goodness through which the righteousness of God by faith is manifested, and through which it is determined that the man is justified "that worketh not, but [being a sinner,] believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly," according to the most glorious riches of his grace. Conspicuous and excellent were the wisdom and goodness which appointed the manner of union with God in legal righteousness, performed out of conformity to the image of God, after which man was created. But a solemn and substantial triumph is achieved through faith in Christ's blood by the wisdom and goodness, which, having devised and executed the wonderful method of qualifying justice and mercy, appoint the manner of union in Christ., and in his righteousness, "who is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person." (Heb. i, 3.) Lastly, it is the wisdom, goodness and power, which, out of the thickest darkness of ignorance brought forth the marvelous light of the gospel; which, from an infinite multitude of sins, brought in everlasting righteousness; and which, from death and the depths of hell, "brought life and immortality to light." The wisdom, goodness and power which have produced these effects, exceed those in which the light that is added to light, the righteousness that is rewarded by a due recompense, and the animal life that is regulated according to godliness by the command of the law, are each of them swallowed up and consummated in that which is spiritual and eternal.

A deeper consideration of this matter almost compels me to adopt a more confident daring, and to give to the wisdom, goodness and power of God, which are unfolded in Legal Theology, the title of Natural," and as in some sense the beginning of the going forth of God towards his image, which is man, and a commencement of Divine intercourse with him. The others, which are manifested in the gospel, I fearlessly call "Supernatural wisdom, power and goodness," and "the extreme point and the perfect

completion of all revelation;" because in the manifestation of the latter, God appears to have excelled himself, and to have unfolded every one of his blessings. Admirable was the kindness of God, and most stupendous his condescension in admitting man to the most intimate communion with himself -- a privilege full of grace and mercy, after his sins had rendered him unworthy of having the establishment of such an intercourse. But this was required by the unhappy and miserable condition of man, who through his greater unworthiness had become the more indigent, through his deeper blindness required illumination by a stronger light, through his more grievous wickedness demanded reformation by means of a more extensive goodness, and who, the weaker he had become, needed a stronger exertion of power for his restoration and establishment. It is also a happy circumstance, that no aberration of ours can be so great, as to prevent God from recalling us into the good way; no fall so deep, as to disable him from raising us up and causing us to stand erect; and no evil of ours can be of such magnitude, as to prove a difficult conquest to his goodness, provided it be his pleasure to put the whole of it in motion; and this he will actually do, provided we suffer our ignorance and infirmities to be corrected by his light and power, and our wickedness to be subdued by his goodness.

IV. We have seen that, (1.) God is the Author of Legal Theology; and God and his Christ, that of Evangelical Theology. We have seen at the same time (2.) in what respect God and Christ are to be viewed in making known this revelation, and (3.) according to what properties of the Divine Nature of both of them it has been perfected.

We will now just glance at the Manner. The manner of the Divine manifestation appears to be threefold, according to the three instruments or organs of our capacity. (1.) The External Senses, (2.) The Inward Fancy or Imagination, and (3.) The Mind or Understanding. God sometimes reveals himself and his will by an image or representation offered to the external sight, or through an audible speech or discourse addressed to the ear. Sometimes he introduces himself by the same method to the imagination; and sometimes he addresses the mind in a manner ineffable, which is called Inspiration. Of all these modes scripture most clearly supplies us with luminous examples. But time will not permit me to be detained in enumerating them, lest I should appear to be yet more tedious to this most accomplished assembly.

THE END OF THEOLOGY

We have been engaged in viewing the Author; let us now advert to the End. This is the more eminent and divine according to the greater excellence of that matter of which it is the end. In that light, therefore, this science is far more illustrious and transcendent than all others; because it alone has a relation to the life that is spiritual and supernatural, and has an End beyond the boundaries of the present life: while all other sciences have respect to this animal life, and each has an End proposed to itself, extending from the center of this earthly life and included within its circumference. Of this science, then, that may be truly said which the poet declared concerning his wise friend, "For those things alone he feels any relish, the rest like shadows fly." I repeat it, "they fly away," unless they be referred to this science, and firmly fix their foot upon it and be at rest. But the same person who is the Author and Object, is also the End of Theology. The very proportion and analogy of these things make such a connection requisite. For since the Author is the First and the Chief Being, it is of necessity that he be the First and Chief Good. He is, therefore, the extreme End of all things. And since He, the Chief Being and the Chief Good, subjects, lowers and spreads himself out, as an object to some power or faculty of a rational creature, that by its action or motion it may be employed and occupied concerning him, nay, that it may in a sense be united with him; it cannot possibly be, that the creature, after having performed its part respecting that object, should fly beyond it and extend itself further for the sake of acquiring a greater good. It is, therefore, of necessity that

it restrain itself within him, not only as within a boundary beyond which it is impossible for it to pass on account of the infinitude of the object and on account of its own importance, but also as within its End and its Good, beyond which, because they are both the Chief in degree, it neither wishes nor is capable of desiring anything; provided this object be united with it as far as the capacity of the creature will admit. God is, therefore, the End of our Theology, proposed by God himself, in the acts prescribed in it; intended by man in the performance of those actions, and to be bestowed by God, after man shall have piously and religiously performed his duty. But because the chief good was not placed in the promise of it, nor in the desire of obtaining it, but in actually receiving it, the end of Theology may with the utmost propriety be called THE UNION OF GOD WITH MAN.

But it is not an Essential union, as if two essences, (for instance that of God and man,) were compacted together or joined into one, or as that by which man might himself be absorbed into God. The former of these modes of union is prohibited by the very nature of the things so united, and the latter is rejected by the nature of the union. Neither is it a formal union, as if God by that union might be made in the form of man, like a Spirit united to a body imparting to it life and motion, and acting upon it at pleasure, although, by dwelling in the body, it should confer on man the gift of life eternal. But it is an objective union by which God, through the agency of his pre-eminent and most faithful faculties and actions, (all of which he wholly occupies and completely fills,) gives such convincing proofs of himself to man, that God may then be said to be "all in all." (1 Cor. xv, 21.) This union is immediate, and without any bond that is different to the limits themselves. For God unites himself to the understanding and to the will of his creature, by means of himself alone, and without the intervention of image, species or appearance. This is what the nature of this last and supreme union requires, as being that in which consists the Chief Good of a rational creature, which cannot find rest except in the greatest union of itself with God. But by this union, the understanding beholds in the clearest vision, and as if "face to face," God himself, and all his goodness and incomparable beauty. And because a good of such magnitude and known by the clearest vision cannot fail of being loved on its own account; from this very consideration the will embraces it with a more intense love, in proportion to the greater degree of knowledge of it which the mind has obtained.

But here a double difficulty presents itself, which must first be removed, in order that our feet may afterwards without stumbling run along a path that will then appear smooth and to have been for some time well trodden. (1.) The one is, "How can it be that the eye of the human understanding does not become dim and beclouded when an object of such transcendent light is presented to it?" (2.) The other is, "How can the understanding, although its eye may not be dim and blinded, receive and contain that object in such great measure and proportion?"

The cause of the first is, that the light exhibits itself to the understanding not in the infinity of its own nature, but in a form that is qualified and attempered. And to what is it thus accommodated? Is it not to the understanding? Undoubtedly, to the understanding; but not according to the capacity which it possessed before the union: otherwise it could not receive and contain as much as would suffice to fill it and make it happy. But it is attempered according to the measure of its extension and enlargement, to admit of which the understanding is exquisitely formed, if it be enlightened and irradiated by the gracious and glorious shining of the light accommodated to that expansion.

If it be thus enlightened, the eye of the understanding will not be overpowered and become dim, and it will receive that object in such a vast proportion as will most abundantly suffice to make man completely happy. This is a solution for both these difficulties. But an extension of the understanding will be followed by an enlargement of the will, either from a proper and adequate object offered to it, and accommodated

to the same rule; or, (which I prefer,) from the native agreement of the will and understanding, and the analogy implanted in both of them, according to which the understanding extends itself to acts of volition, in the very proportion of its understanding and knowledge.

In this act of the mind and will -- in seeing a present God, in loving him, and therefore in the enjoyment of him, the salvation of man and his perfect happiness consist. To which is added, conformation of our body itself to this glorious state of soul, which, whether it be effected by the immediate action of God on the body, or by means of an agency resulting from the action of the soul on the body, it is neither necessary for us here to inquire, nor at this time to discover.

From hence also arises and shines forth illustriously the chief and infinite glory of God, far surpassing all other glory, that he has displayed in every preceding function which he administered. For since that action is truly great and glorious which is good, and since goodness alone obtains the title of "greatness," according to that elegant saying, *to eu mega* then indeed the best action of God is the greatest and the most glorious. But that is the best action by which he unites himself immediately to the creature and affords himself to be seen, loved and enjoyed in such an abundant measure as agrees with the creature dilated and expanded to that degree which we have mentioned.

This is, therefore, the most glorious of God's actions. Wherefore the end of Theology is the union, God with man, to the salvation of the one and the glory of the other; and to the glory which he declares by his act, not that glory which man ascribes to God when he is united to him. Yet it cannot be otherwise, than that man should be incited to sing forever the high praises of God, when he beholds and enjoys such large and overpowering goodness.

But the observations we have hitherto made on the End of Theology, were accommodated to the manner of that which is legal. We must now consider the End as it is proposed to Evangelical Theology. The End of this is (1.) God and Christ, (2.) the union of man with both of them, and (3.) the sight and fruition of both, to the glory of both Christ and God. On each of these particulars we have some remarks to make from the scriptures, and which most appropriately agree with, and are peculiar to, the Evangelical doctrine.

But before we enter upon these remarks, we must shew that the salvation of man, to the glory of Christ himself, consists also in the love, the sight, and the fruition of Christ. There is a passage in the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, which imposes this necessity upon us, because it appears to exclude Christ from this consideration. For in that place the apostle says, "When Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, then the Son also himself shall be subject unto him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. xv, 24.) From this passage three difficulties are raised, which must be removed by an appropriate explanation. They are these: (1.) "If Christ 'shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father,' he will no longer reign himself in person." (2.) "If he 'shall be subject to the Father,' he will no more preside over his Church:" and (3.) "If 'God shall be all in all,' then our salvation is not placed in the union, sight and fruition of him." I will proceed to give a separate answer to each of these objections. The kingdom of Christ embraces two objects: The Mediatorial function of the regal office, and the Regal glory: The royal function, will be laid aside, because there will then be no necessity or use for it, but the royal glory will remain because it was obtained by the acts of the Mediator, and was conferred on him by the Father according to covenant. The same thing is declared by the expression "shall be subject," which here signifies nothing more than the laying aside of the super-eminent power which Christ had received from the Father, and which he had, as the Father's Vicegerent, administered at the pleasure of his own will: And yet, when he has laid down this power, he will remain, as we shall see,

the head and the husband of his Church. That sentence has a similar tendency in which it is said, "God shall be ALL IN ALL." For it takes away even the intermediate and deputed administration of the creatures which God is accustomed to use in the communication of his benefits; and it indicates that God will likewise immediately from himself communicate his own good, even himself to his creatures. Therefore, on the authority of this passage, nothing is taken away from Christ which we have been wishful to attribute to him in this discourse according to the scriptures.

This we will now shew by some plain and apposite passages. Christ promises an union with himself in these words, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv, 23.) Here is a promise of good: therefore the good of the Church is likewise placed in union with Christ; and an abode is promised, not admitting of termination by the bounds of this life, but which will continue for ever, and shall at length, when this short life is ended, be consummated in heaven. In reference to this, the Apostle says, "I desire to depart and to be with Christ;" and Christ himself says, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." (John xvii, 24.) John says, that the end of his gospel is, "that our fellowship may be with the Father and the Son;" (1 John i, 3,) in which fellowship eternal life must necessarily consist, since in another place he explains the same end in these words, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ: and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." (John xx, 31.) But from the meaning of the same Apostle, it appears, that this fellowship has an union antecedent to itself. These are his words, "If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." (1 John ii, 24.) What! Shall the union between Christ and his Church cease at a period when he shall place before his glorious sight his spouse sanctified to himself by his own blood? Far be the idea from us! For the union, which had commenced here on earth, will then at length be consummated and perfected.

If any one entertain doubts concerning the vision of Christ, let him listen to Christ in this declaration: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John xiv, 21.) Will he thus disclose himself in this world only? Let us again hear Christ when he intercedes with the Father for the faithful: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii, 34) Christ, therefore, promises to his followers the sight of his glory, as something salutary to them; and his Father is intreated to grant this favour. The same truth is confirmed by John when he says, "Then we shall see him as he is." (1 John iii, 2.) This passage may without any impropriety be understood of Christ, and yet not to the exclusion of God the Father. But what do we more distinctly desire than that Christ may become, what it is said he will be, "the light" that shall enlighten the celestial city, and in whose light "the nations shall walk?" (Rev. xxi, 23, 24.)

Although the fruition of Christ is sufficiently established by the same passages as those by which the sight of him is confirmed, yet we will ratify it by two or three others. Since eternal felicity is called by the name of "the supper of the lamb," and is emphatically described by this term, "the marriage of the Lamb," I think it is taught with adequate clearness in these expressions, that happiness consists in the fruition or enjoyment of the Lamb. But the apostle, in his apocalypse, has ascribed both these epithets to Christ, by saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready :." (Rev. xix, 7,) and a little afterwards, he says, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." (verse 9.) It remains for us to treat on the glory of Christ, which is inculcated in these numerous passages of Scripture in which it is stated that "he sits with the Father on his throne," and is adored and glorified both by angels and by men in heaven.

Having finished the proof of those expressions, the truth of which we engaged to demonstrate, we will now proceed to fulfill our promise of explanation, and to show that all and each of these benefits descend to us in a peculiar and more excellent manner, from Evangelical Theology, than they could have done from that which is Legal, if by it we could really have been made alive.

2. And, that we may, in the first place, dispatch the subject of Union, let the brief remarks respecting marriage which we have just made, be brought again to our remembrance. For that word more appropriately honours this union, and adorns it with a double and remarkable privilege; one part of which consists of a deeper combination, the other of a more glorious title. The Scripture speaks thus of the deeper combination; "And the two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church!" (Ephes. v, 31, 32.) It will therefore be a connubial tie that will unite Christ with the church. The espousals of the church on earth are contracted by the agency of the brides- men of Christ, who are the prophets, the apostles, and their successors, and particularly the Holy Ghost, who is in this affair a mediator and arbitrator. The consummation will then follow, when Christ will introduce his spouse into his bride- chamber. From such an union as this, there arises, not only a communion of blessings, but a previous communion of the persons themselves; from which the possession of blessings is likewise assigned, by a more glorious title, to her who is united in the bonds of marriage. The church comes into a participation not only of the blessings of Christ, but also of his title. For, being the wife of the King, she enjoys it as a right due to her to be called QUEEN; which dignified appellation the scripture does not withhold from her. "Upon thy right hand stands the Queen in gold of Ophir:" (Psalm xlv, 9.) "There are three-score queens, and four-score concubines, and virgins without number. "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughter saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines; and they praised her." (Song of Sol. vi, 8, 9.) The church could not have been eligible to the high honour of such an union, unless Christ has been made her beloved, her brother, sucking the breasts of the same mother." (Cant. 8.) But there would have been no necessity for this union, "if righteousness and salvation had come to us by the law." That was, therefore, a happy necessity, which, out of compassion to the emergency of our wretched condition, the divine condescension improved to our benefit, and filled with such a plenitude of dignity! But the manner of this our union with Christ is no small addition to that union which is about to take place between us and God the Father. This will be evident to any one who considers what and how great is the bond of mutual union between Christ and the Father.

3. If we turn our attention to sight or vision, we shall meet with two remarkable characters which are peculiar to Evangelical Theology.

(1.) In the first place, the glory of God, as if accumulated and concentrated together into one body, will be presented to our view in Christ Jesus; which glory would otherwise have been dispersed throughout the most spacious courts of a "heaven immense;" much in the same manner as the light, which had been created on the first day, and equally spread through the whole hemisphere, was on the fourth day collected, united and compacted together into one body, and offered to the eyes as a most conspicuous and shining object. In reference to this, it is said in the Apocalypse, that the heavenly Jerusalem "had no need of the sun, neither of the moon; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb will be the future light thereof," (Rev. xxi, 23,) as a vehicle by which this most delightful glory may diffuse itself into immensity.

(2.) We shall then not only contemplate, in God himself, the most excellent properties of his nature, but shall also perceive that all of them have been employed in and devoted to the procuring of this good for us, which we now possess in hope, but which we shall in reality then possess by means of this union and

open vision.

The excellence, therefore, of this vision far exceeds that which could have been by the law; and from this source arises a fruition of greater abundance and more delicious sweetness. For, as the light in the sun is brighter than that in the stars, so is the sight of the sun, when the human eye is capable of bearing it, more grateful and acceptable, and the enjoyment of it is far more pleasant. From such a view of the Divine attributes, the most delicious sweetness of fruition will seem to be doubled. For the first delight will arise from the contemplation of properties so excellent; the other from the consideration of that immeasurable condescension by which it has pleased God to unfold all those his properties, and the whole of those blessings which he possesses in the exhaustless and immeasurable treasury of his riches, and to give this explanation, that he may procure salvation for man and may impart it to his most miserable creature. This will then be seen in as strong a light, as if the whole of that which is essentially God appeared to exist for the sake of man alone, and for his solo benefit. There is also the addition of this peculiarity concerning it: "Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, [the body of our humiliation,] that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body: (Phil. iii, 21,) and as we have borne the image of the earthy [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv, 49.) Hence it is, that all things are said to be made new in Christ Jesus; (2 Cor. v, 17,) and we are described in the scriptures as "looking, according to his promise, for new heavens and a new earth, (2 Pet. iii, 13,) and a new name written on a white stone, (Rev. ii, 17,) the new name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, (Rev. iii, 12.) and they shall sing a new song to God and his Christ forever." (Rev. v, 9.)

Who does not now see, how greatly the felicity prepared for us by Christ, and offered to us through Evangelical Theology excels that which would have come to us by "the righteousness of the law," if indeed it had been possible for us to fulfill it? We should in that case have been similar to the elect angels; but now we shall be their superiors, if I be permitted to make such a declaration, to the praise of Christ and our God, in this celebrated Hall, and before an assembly among whom we have some of those most blessed spirits themselves as spectators. They now enjoy union with God and Christ, and will probably be more closely united to both of them at the time of the "restitution of all things." But there will be nothing between the two parties similar to that Conjugal Bond which unites us, and in which we may be permitted to glory.

They will behold God himself "face to face," and will contemplate the most eminent properties of his nature; but they will see some among those properties devoted to the purpose of man's salvation, which God has not unfolded for their benefit, because that was not necessary; and which he would not have unfolded, even if it had been necessary. These things they will see, but they will not be moved by envy; it will rather be a subject of admiration and wonder to them, that God, the Creator of both orders, conferred on man, (who was inferior to them in nature,) that dignity which he had of old denied to the spirits that partook with themselves of the same nature. They will behold Christ, that most brilliant and shining light of the city of the living God, of which they also are inhabitants: and, from this very circumstance their happiness will be rendered more illustrious through Christ. Christ "took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham;" (Heb. ii, 16,) to whom also, in that assumed nature, they will present adoration and honour, at the command of God, when he introduces his First begotten into the world to come. Of that future world, and of its blessings, they also will be partakers: but "it is not put in subjection to them," (Heb. ii, 5,) but to Christ and his Brethren, who are partakers of the same nature, and are sanctified by himself. A malignant spirit, yet of the same order as the angels, had hurled against God the crimes of falsehood and envy. But we see how signally God in Christ and in the salvation procured by him, has repelled both these accusations from himself. The falsehood intimated an unwillingness on the part of God that man should be

reconciled to him, except by the intervention of the death of his Son. His envy was excited, because God had raised man, not only to the angelical happiness, (to which even that impure one would have attained had "he kept his first estate,") but to a state of blessedness far superior to that of angels.

That I may not be yet more prolix, I leave it as a subject of reflection to the devoted piety of your private meditations, most accomplished auditors, to estimate the vast and amazing greatness of the glory of God which has here manifested itself, and to calculate the glory due from us to him for such transcendent goodness.

In the mean time, let all of us, however great our number, consider with a devout and attentive mind, what duty is required of us by this doctrine, which having received its manifestation from God and Christ, plainly and fully announces to us such a great salvation, and to the participation of which we are most graciously invited. It requires to be received, understood, believed, and fulfilled, in deed and in reality. It is worthy of all acceptance, on account of its Author; and necessary to be received on account of its End.

1. Being delivered by so great an Author, it is worthy to be received with a humble and submissive mind; to have much diligence and care bestowed on a knowledge and perception of it; and not to be laid aside from the hand, the mind, or the heart, until we shall have "obtained the End of it -- THE SALVATION OF OUR SOULS." Why should this be done? Shall the Holy God open his mouth, and our ears remain stopped? Shall our Heavenly Master be willing to communicate instruction, and we refuse to learn? Shall he desire to inspire our hearts with the knowledge of his Divine truth, and we, by closing the entrance to our hearts, exclude the most evident and mild breathings of his Spirit? Does Christ, who is the Father's Wisdom, announce to us that gospel which he has brought from the bosom of the Father, and shall we disdain to hide it in the inmost recesses of our heart? And shall we act thus, especially when we have received this binding command of the Father, which says, "Hear ye him!" (Matt. xvii, 5,) to which he has added a threat, that "if we hear him not, our souls shall be destroyed from among the people; (Acts iii, 23,) that is, from the commonwealth of Israel? Let none of us fall into the commission of such a heinous offense! "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape 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 ," (Heb. ii, 2, 3.)

2. To all the preceding considerations, let the End of this doctrine be added, and it will be of the greatest utility in enforcing this the work of persuasion on minds that are not prodigal of their own proper and Chief Good -- an employment in which its potency and excellence are most apparent. Let us reflect, for what cause God has brought us out of darkness into this marvelous light; has furnished us with a mind, understanding, and reason; and has adorned us with his image. Let this question be revolved in our minds, "For what purpose or End has God restored the fallen to their pristine state of integrity, reconciled sinners to himself, and received enemies into favour," and we shall plainly discover all this to have been done, that we might be made partakers of eternal salvation, and might sing praises to him forever. But we shall not be able to aspire after this End, much less to attain it, except in the way which is pointed out by that Theological Doctrine which has been the topic of our discourse. If we wander from this End, our wanderings from it extend, not only beyond the whole earth and sea, but beyond heaven itself -- that city of which nevertheless it is essentially necessary for us to be made free men, and to have our names enrolled among the living. This doctrine is "the gate of heaven," and the door of paradise; the ladder of Jacob, by which Christ descends to us, and we shall in turn ascend to him; and the golden chain, which connects heaven with earth. Let us enter into this gate; let us ascend this ladder; and let us cling to this chain. Ample and wide is the opening of the gate, and it will easily admit believers; the position of the

ladder is movable, and will not suffer those who ascend it to be shaken or moved; the joining which unites one link of the chain with another is indissoluble, and will not permit those to fall down who cling to it, until we come to "him that liveth forever and ever," and are raised to the throne of the Most High; till we be united to the living God, and Jesus Christ our Lord, "the Son of the Highest."

But on you, O chosen youths, this care is a duty peculiarly incumbent; for God has destined you to become "workers together with him," in the manifestation of the gospel, and instruments to administer to the salvation of others. Let the Majesty of the Holy Author of your studies, and the necessity of the End, be always placed before your eyes. (1.) On attentively viewing the Author, let the words of the Prophet Amos recur to your remembrance and rest on your mind: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos ii, 8.) But you cannot prophesy, unless you be instructed by the Spirit of Prophecy. In our days he addresses no one in that manner, except in the Scriptures; he inspires no one, except by means of the Scriptures, which are divinely inspired. (2.) In contemplating the End, you will discover, that it is not possible to confer on any one, in his intercourse with mankind, an office of greater dignity and utility, or an office that is more salutary in its consequences, than this, by which he may conduct them from error into the way of truth, from wickedness to righteousness, from the deepest misery to the highest felicity; and by which he may contribute much towards their everlasting salvation. But this truth is taught by Theology alone; there is nothing except this heavenly science that prescribes the true righteousness; and by it alone is this felicity disclosed, and our salvation made known and revealed. Let the sacred Scriptures therefore be your models:

"Night and day read them, read them day and night. Colman.

If you thus peruse them, "they will make you that you shall not be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; (2 Pet. i, 8,) but you will become good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine; (1 Tim. iv, 6,) and ready to every good work; (Tit. iii, 1,) workmen who need not to be ashamed;" (2 Tim. ii, 15,) sowing the gospel with diligence and patience; and returning to your Lord with rejoicing, bringing with you an ample harvest, through the blessing of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and glory from this time, even forever more! Amen !

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